



Governor Brown Advocates for School Funding, Energy Efficiency

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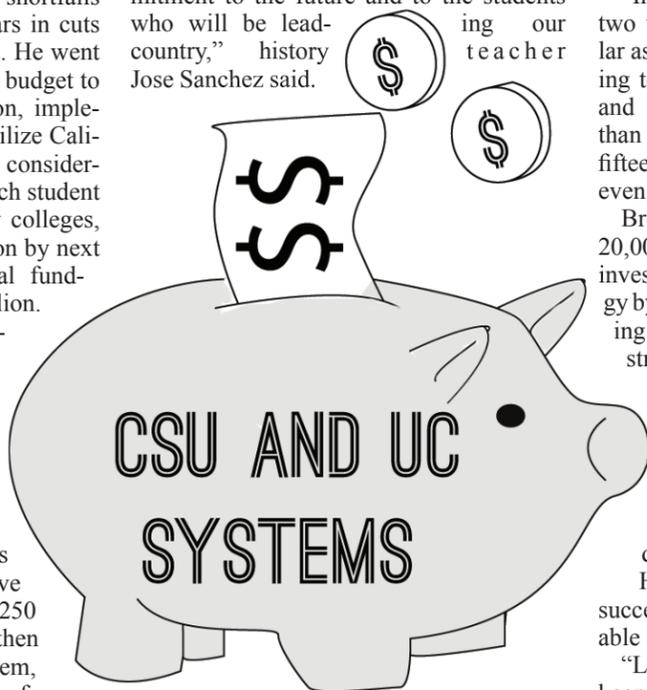
In 2011, California faced a \$26.6 billion budget deficit. When Governor Brown took office, he eliminated these shortfalls in revenue with billions of dollars in cuts in the previous two state budgets. He went on to advocate a 2013-2014 state budget to increase investments in education, implement health care reform and stabilize California's finances. Brown plans to considerably increase state funding for each student in K-12 schools and community colleges, which will increase by \$2.7 billion by next year. By 2016-2017, the annual funding will increase by \$19 billion.

"Education has such high value and, as high school students, we are pushed to go to college and have a successful life. [...] The governor's plan could help lower the costs of tuition and send many students to college," junior Vivian Phang said.

The state budget also increases funds for UCs and CSUs by five percent, which is an additional \$250 million. Brown plans to strengthen California's higher education system, reduce student debt and ensure affordability with a stable funding plan. Due to the rapidly rising cost of higher education, low and middle-income students are paying the price. By having UCs and CSUs use their resources more effectively and shorten the time it takes for students to complete

their degree, the system will be more affordable for both the students and the state.

"It's a great idea that Governor Brown is rededicating funds to universities and colleges because we should be showing commitment to the future and to the students who will be leading our country," history teacher Jose Sanchez said.



Brown has also proposed to provide half of the revenue from Proposition 39, around \$400 to 450 million, to fund energy-efficiency projects at K-12 campuses and community colleges. He hopes to build facilities that use renewable en-

ergy so that schools can cut utility costs.

The governor also proposed another plan that will invest in renewable energy technology and create more than half a million green jobs.

"Investments in clean energy produce two to three times as many jobs per dollar as gas, oil or coal," Brown said, according to jerrybrown.org. "Clean energy jobs and businesses have grown much faster than the economy as a whole in the past fifteen years and have continued to grow even during the economic downturn."

Brown's plan includes setting a goal of 20,000 megawatts in renewable energy, plus investments in original efficiency technology by 2020. His goals include making existing buildings more efficient and adopting stronger appliance efficiency standards.

According to jerrybrown.org, investing in clean energy and increasing efficiency are critical components in rebuilding the economy. Doing so will create hundreds of thousands of jobs, increase energy independence and protect public health.

However, some believe that the success will be short-lived and not viable as a long-term solution for California.

"Like anything else, we will have to keep looking at the situation and evaluate it. [...] In order for it to last long term, we need to look at a better way to generate a steady stream of revenue," Government and Economics teacher Paul Stein said.

MOOR graphic by SHARON XU



Celiac Disease Leads to Lawsuit Against School

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Last December, Lesley University faced a settlement that now requires the school to serve gluten-free foods. The U.S. Justice Department received a complaint in 2009 alleging that the university violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by not accommodating students with celiac disease, a common genetic disorder that interferes with gluten tolerance and other food allergies.

Although the case affects only that university, this settlement sets a precedent in favor of students with food allergies, who can file lawsuits against restaurants and public schools for not meeting their dietary needs.

"Because there is an increasing amount of people with a need for a gluten-free diet, public eateries should learn to adapt to the growing needs of the population they feed," senior Rebecca Vilaylak said.

This settlement holds implications on the food served at public schools. Currently, AHS is in the green; AUSD allows students with valid medical statements to request special meals by completing an application.

"As a person with food allergies, it's important for a school to have a [wide] variety of food served in its cafeteria," junior Shaina Kim said. "However, it is also important for students to be responsible for what they eat."

MOOR graphic by SHARON XU

Custodians Maintain School Grounds, Help Foster Education

DIANA LI
News Editor

The amount of work custodians put into their jobs is immeasurable. In Orlando, Florida schools, those applying for the position of custodian must pass a fitness test to be hired for the job; this measure was designed to select the most able applicants to potentially reduce work-related injuries. However, more than one quarter of the applicants did not pass the fitness test. According to National Public Radio, the high cost of workers' compensation, which ranges from \$500,000 to \$800,000 annually, encourages schools to hire selectively for a more qualified staff.

The dilemma that schools face is between filling the vacancies within the custodial staff with

unqualified applicants or having a smaller staff work overtime to complete jobs meant for a larger staff. With the latter scenario, the custodial staff is often strained to complete both their own jobs and the jobs of unfilled positions.

Custodial workers have one of the highest rates of job-related injuries, oftentimes missing more work days than police officers due to work injuries. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), custodians can suffer injuries, such as cuts, bruises and burns from using machines, tools

and chemicals on the job. Furthermore, custodians' jobs often involve repeated movements, which can result in strained



muscles and fatigue. A survey by the BLS showed that more than 15,000 custodians in the U.S. were injured on the job in 2010.

At AHS, the day crew often lifts heavy objects, while the night crew cleans the campus, including pathogen-filled bathrooms. Workers must take many precautions in order to prevent injuries and sickness, such as wearing gloves while cleaning restrooms.

Manny Molina, the former plant foreman and head of the AHS custodial staff, has had first-hand experience of these dangers. Molina, who retired from AHS after first semester, worked with AUSD for 26 years and nine and a half years at AHS. He began as a technician at SGHS but later transferred to AHS in 2003. After spending many years working as a foreman around the high school

environment, Molina emphasizes the importance of positive school environment for successful learning.

"We are in the safety business before anything [else]; it is the absolute number one priority," Molina said. "Safety, health and welfare are conducive to [creating] a good learning environment."

With the school campus being integral to students' education, the significance of an able-bodied custodial staff is undeniable.

"AHS is a very big school, and it takes a lot to clean [the campus] each day," junior Kathy Castro said. "I really appreciate the hard work [the staff is] doing to keep our school in tip-top shape and clean."

MOOR graphic by SHARON XU

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