



Gifted and Talented Education
Tucson Unified School District
PO Box 40400
Tucson, AZ 85717

Dear GATE parents,

I am writing this letter in response to your inquiries regarding the State's proposed budget cuts for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school year. The proposed cuts affect the state grant for Gifted and Talented Education and other critical State funded school programs.

The Governor's proposed budget would reduce this school year's Gifted and Talented State Grant by 50% and eliminate the Gifted and Talented State Grant funds for the 2010-2011 school year.

At TUSD, we rely on Gifted and Talented State Grant funds for curriculum enhancements, including GATE kits, classroom supplies, and teacher training initiatives. These funds also support field trips, after-school tutoring, summer school transition programs, staff development, test administration trainings, and student computers. We rely on these funds for identification and recruitment of eligible students.

The loss of Gifted and Talented State Grant funds will seriously impact the quality of our services. We are committed to continuing the same level of self-contained, pull-out, and resource services to our gifted and talented students, as these services are vital to each student's achievement of his or her potential. The Gifted and Talented State Grant funds are intended to supplement, not replace, the gifted services required by law. However, to fully implement our program, without compromising other district projects, we rely on these grant funds.

If you are concerned about the elimination of the GATE Grant as well as other State funded programs you may wish to contact the Governor's office, your State House of Representatives, Senate Representatives, and the Arizona Department of Education to let them know that these programs are important to you. Information on how to contact these officials is attached. Other programs that we may lose are listed on the attached e-mail from Chuck Essigs with the Arizona Association of School Business Officials (AASBO).

Sincerely,

David Niecikowski, MAED/CI, Coordinator
Gifted and Talented Education
David.Niecikowski@tusd1.org

CC: Dr. Elizabeth Celania-Fagen, Superintendent
Dr. Lupita Cavazos-Garcia, Assistant Superintendent for Government Programs
Ms. Bonnie Betz, Chief Financial Officer
Mr. Rob Ross, District Counsel



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From: Chuck Essigs (Arizona Association of School Business Officials (AASBO))
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2010 2:18 PM
To: Betz, Bonnie
Subject: Additional Budget Information

The Legislature still has not specified their proposed budget cuts to balance the current year's budget (FY2010) and next year's budget. However, one major difference exists between where the Legislature is starting and where the Governor is starting. The Governor's budget includes a 1.3% inflation increase to both the base level and transportation. The Legislature's baseline budget only includes a 1.2% inflation increase for transportation. (Remember, Prop. 301 requires a 2% increase or inflation, whichever is less.) Inflation appears to be in the 1.3% range.

An issue that is now getting a lot of attention is the proposal in the Executive Budget to eliminate funding for non-formula state programs. The programs impacted include:

- * AIMS Intervention
- * Adult Education and GED
- * Chemical Abuse
- * Gifted Support
- * Early Education Block Grant
- * Vocational Education Block Grant
- * Teacher Training

The proposal is to eliminate funding for these programs effective January 1, 2010. This means that if the Legislature approves, districts would lose 50% of their funding for these programs for this year (FY2010) and all of the funding for next year (FY2011).

We are still watching for the proposed legislative budget cuts for FY2010 and FY2011.