Dear Parent,

As you have undoubtedly heard, public school funding in California is at an all-time low. Over the last ten years, our local schools have lost $35 million in support from the state. These cuts in state funding have forced the Santa Clara Unified School District to make significant changes, including:

- Reduction in the number of instructional days and teacher positions
- Increases in class sizes at all instructional levels
- Cuts to music and other programs
- Reduction in support staff

To cope with this now years-long budget problem, SCUSD has depleted nearly all of its reserve funds. And although SCUSD has effectively managed its own budget, the state cuts and reduced local tax base forced the District to make painful cuts and draw down critical reserves necessary in order for SCUSD to maintain its current programs.

As we plan for 2012-2013, we are again expecting a significant shortfall. I’ve convened a dedicated group of parents, staff, and local citizens who meet with me to help me approach the budget realistically and with a tiered approach hoping that in the end only a few of the cuts will be necessary. All options are on the table.

One such option, which will only be a partial solution, is a modest levy on all parcels in the District. In January, SCUSD’s Board of Education voted unanimously to place a parcel tax measure on the May 8th Mail-in ballot for a modest $7 per month/five year tax to help with this current budgetary shortfall. To ensure the cost of Measure A is not a burden to those living on a fixed income, seniors age 65 and older may apply for exemption from the cost of the Measure.

Measure A, as it is called, will raise funds that must stay local and will be used to keep our school libraries open, and continue our core academic classes in math, science and technology. The District is counting on the passage of this measure to make its budget for the upcoming year.

If you have any questions about this Measure, please ask your site principal. Again, Measure A is just part of the solution for the budget woes of SCUSD. To hear about the variety of options being considered and to learn more about this topic, please attend one of the community budget forums happening in mid-March. The information on these forums is on the reverse side of this letter.

I look forward to seeing you at one of the forums and listening to any ideas you have.

Sincerely,

Bobbie Plough, Ed.D.
Superintendent

“The mission of Santa Clara Unified School District is to prepare students of all ages and abilities to succeed in an ever-changing world.”
You are invited to a budget information session presented by Superintendent Dr. Bobbie Plough. The presentation will provide an overview of the current financial picture for SCUSD as well as the opportunities and challenges SCUSD and the community face and their fiscal implications.

Who: All community members and parents living in SCUSD.

When and Where: 4:00 p.m. Tuesday, March 13th
Santa Clara High School Theater,
3000 Benton Street, Santa Clara, CA 95051

7:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 14th
Don Callejon, Multi-Purpose Room
4176 Lick Mill Blvd., Santa Clara, CA 95014

*The same presentation will be given at both Community Forums.*
Questions are welcome. No copies of the presentation will be given out at the presentation, so please download it from www.santaclarausd.org if you would like a copy.

For more information, please call Tabitha Kappeler-Hurley at (408) 423-2109.