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Parents' Introduce 'Crisis' Plan To Narrow Schools' Budget Gap

By : Robert Souza : 5/5/09
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Declaring "We decided to take emergency action," Castro Valley parents Allen Mueller and Brett Pletcher went before the Castro Valley School Board ...

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... last Thursday with a plan to help compensate for the \$4.4 million in program and staffing cuts facing the district.

"Something needs to happen soon to replace the budget cuts," Mueller told The Forum. He and Pletcher represent Save Our Schools Castro Valley (SOSCV). Their plan is set to go before school trustees again tomorrow night for possible adoption.

"Mike Bush and I have been working with the founders of SOSCV for the past month to forge a partnership," said Interim Superintendent Jerry Macy.

"Allen and Brett's introductory presentation to the school board last Thursday was well received. We're moving forward with an operating agreement to formalize the relationship."

With district cuts translating to some \$500 per student, Mueller hopes the SOSCV can raise \$350 per student within a year—totaling \$3 million—through an aggressive campaign.

"I think everyone will understand the impact these cuts will have on our district. These are historic cuts here in Castro Valley and this is a huge emergency. It will have significant drops in service to our kids," he said.

Last month, trustees approved a motion to issue preliminary layoff notices to 26 employees, the first such layoffs in the district in 17 years and the result of a new state budget that essentially siphons off some \$10 billion from education in California.

"The district benefits from having parents who are engaged and looking to work with us," said Macy. "These are two dads, who are in Castro Valley because they value the school system, are looking at measures to mitigate, or hold off, cuts that may hurt us this year."

Mueller said the SOSCV wants as much of every donated dollar as possible to go directly to the school district and that all documentation and financial filings will be available on the organization's Website.

"We are interested parents who want to get something done and we're looking for other parents who feel the same," he added.

Visit www.soscv.org for more information on the agreement between the School District and SOSCV. Thursday night's school board meeting will be at 7 p.m. at district headquarters, 4400 Alma Ave. Visit www.cv.k12.ca.us

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