



# Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth

Voices of the Next Generation SF Demands a Fair City Budget

There are two key issues regarding budget advocacy for children, youth and families in the city of San Francisco currently. The first issue is budget cuts to critical services for already struggling kids and families for next fiscal year. A summary of those cuts is provided here. The second issue is the threat to the Children's Fund and the Public Education Enrichment Fund (Prop H), from the set-aside reform legislation introduced by Supervisors Mirkarimi, Chiu and Elsbernd. More details about this legislation- and our alternative proposal- are outlined below.

## THE THREAT TO THE FUNDS FOR CHILDREN AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

The current 'set-aside reform' legislation proposes significant alterations to set-asides in the city:

1. The legislation proposes to cap all set-asides at their current 2008-2009 levels;
2. If the city faces a deficit of \$100 million or more, the Board of Supervisors could reduce any or all set-asides up to 25% ;
3. If the city is facing a time of 'emergency', the Board of Supervisors could suspend any set-aides, in part or in whole, for that fiscal year.

The problem with this legislation is that it treats all set-asides identically- but not fairly. In reality, each of the city's 15+ voter-mandated set-aside funds, serve very different purposes, include very different mechanisms, and serve very different populations. Some set-asides are extremely rigid, like police and fire, which as minimum staffing requirements do not adjust in bad budget times. Other set-asides, like the Children's Fund and Prop H, are flexible and include responsible mechanisms, such as a sunset clause, being revenue-driven or having a trigger that can be pulled when the city faces a deficit.

## RESPONSIBLE SET-ASIDE REFORM: AN ALTERNATIVE PROPOSAL

**We have developed an alternative set-aside reform proposal that is fair and impacts all set-asides, but is more reasonable than the current proposal.** We encourage the Board of Supervisors to rewrite the set-aside reform legislation to ensure that each set-aside in San Francisco conforms to a common city policy on **flexible, fair, safety-net set-asides, meeting the following criteria:**

1. Revenue-driven, increasing or decreasing each year in proportion to overall city revenues
2. Have sunset provisions
3. Have accountability measures so funding is linked with outcomes
4. Have allocation/spending plans approved by the Board of Supervisors
5. Limit annual growth of set-aside so that in best of years city has flexibility to use new resources for rainy day fund or other priorities
6. No set aside can be more than 5% of general fund
7. No set aside can dictate and lock-in a specific expenditure or specific staffing level, regardless of cost
8. Majority of funding should go to politically, physically or economically vulnerable populations in need of a protected safety-net.

**This is the time for structural budget and set-aside reform, but reform that is reasonable and doesn't abandon our children and families during a time of crisis.** For more info, contact Chelsea at 239-0161 x19.

## Summary of FY 2009-2010 Proposed Budget Cuts:

- \$6 million in cuts to violence prevention, crisis intervention and case management programs
- \$4 million in cuts to recreation directors
- \$2.5 million in cuts to CalWorks
- \$1.2 million in cuts to community conveners, anchor institutions and the safety network
- \$900,000 in cuts to youth employment
- \$815,000 in cuts to after-school and summer programs
- \$600,000 in cuts to family support services
- \$236,500 in cuts to educational partnerships
- \$114,000 in cuts to wellness centers