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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS RALLY AGAINST BUDGET CUTS THIS FRIDAY

Aided by Web technologies and social networking, students across California to hold distributed actions

CALIFORNIA – Thousands of California high school students will take action on April 18 to protest more than \$4.4 billion in proposed education funding cuts, just days before Sacramento legislators begin to debate in earnest about how to resolve the state’s budget crisis.

“Students are using April 18 as an opportunity to tell our leaders in Sacramento what they think about these indiscriminate cuts,” said Right To Learn Campaign Director Trey Csar. “They are sending a clear message that the state cannot balance its budget on the backs of public schoolchildren.”

Students at more than 30 public high schools throughout the state organized, coordinated and communicated about their actions online through the Right To Learn Web site (www.RightToLearnCA.org), one more example of how the Internet is helping renew a sense of political activism among a younger generation.

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger proposed the cuts as part of a 10 percent across-the-board reduction in state expenditures in January. The cuts could result in the state’s school districts having to lay off more than 107,000 teachers, increase class sizes by up to 35 percent and would push California from 46th in the country in per-pupil spending to 50th.

Actions planned for Friday, April 18 include:

FRESNO – At Sunnyside High, Fresno City Councilmember and candidate for Mayor Mike Dages, will be speaking to students, parents and teachers about the budget cuts at 5:30 p.m.

SAN FRANCISCO – Students from three area high schools, Galileo High, John A. O’Connell High and Thurgood Marshall Academic High, will march from their schools to the state building, where they will hold a poetry slam to denounce the cuts.

MIRANDA (Humboldt County) – Students from South Fork Junior-Senior High School will travel en masse to Sacramento to meet with lawmakers and learn about how California schools are funded.

SAN DIEGO – After already organizing a “12K for K-12” march on March 29, students at seven San Diego high schools are hoping to collect thousands of signed petitions against the cuts.

On April 18, the Right To Learn Web site will feature digital pictures and video from each action—uploaded by participating students from cell phones, computers and digital cameras—uniting the collective and powerful student voice from students statewide denouncing these budget cuts.

For more information, or to see a list of all schools participating in the Right To Learn Day of Action, please visit www.RightToLearnCA.org.

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