

# Declaration to Defend Public Education

We, the students, staff, and educators of California's public schools, colleges, and universities, call upon the people of the state to recommit to and reinvest in public education as the principal foundation of a democratic society.

Public education is a sacred trust and needs to be protected from those who would see the state divest even further from its constitutional obligations.

Public education is a public good and needs to be protected from the for-profit interests of the private sector.

We call upon the people of California to recognize that, though an educated workforce is essential to our prosperity, education itself has a social value that cannot be reduced to monetary considerations alone.

Public education brings together diverse communities of educators, staff and students in ways that prepare learners for a productive yet socially responsible life.

Public education creates spaces that promote the intellectual and emotional development of tolerant, critically-engaged citizens.

Public education is by definition open to all Californians, regardless of geographic location or socioeconomic status, and is thus the very cornerstone of a vibrant, principled, and fundamentally compassionate democracy.

**Everyone** has the right to a quality public education.

As Californians we expect:

Increased funding for public education.

Fair and equitable access for all students to a full range of educational programs, resources, experiences, and opportunities. The failure to support an accessible, fully-funded public education system will condemn many Californians to perpetual poverty and second-class status.

Fair and equitable contracts that respect and value the work done by teachers, lecturers, professors, academic professionals and staff on all levels from pre-school through university.

A commitment from administrators, school boards, teachers unions, staff unions, student organizations, parent groups, professional associations, community-based organizations, and postsecondary institutions to work together with the State to provide quality education for all people regardless of gender and economic, social, ethnic, or racial status.

*"A general diffusion of knowledge and intelligence being essential to the preservation of the rights and liberties of the people, the Legislature shall encourage by all suitable means the promotion of intellectual, scientific, moral, and agricultural improvement."*

State of California  
Constitution, Article 9—  
Education (Section 1)

*"The sobering reality of California's education system is that too few schools can now provide the conditions in which the State can fairly ask students to learn to the highest standards, let alone prepare themselves to meet their future learning needs."*

Joint Committee to Develop a  
Master Plan for Education—  
Kindergarten through  
University (July 2002)

For the full text of the declaration go to [www.werisettogether.org](http://www.werisettogether.org)

Dear CSU Board of Trustees,

Public education is in crisis, and our university is in danger.

While students pay more and more, the number of faculty has been reduced. Students can't get the classes they need to graduate. As if to add insult to injury, the chancellor refuses to bargain for fair contracts with the faculty and staff who serve students.

I call on you, as individuals and as a board, to recommit to the democratic values of public education and to the founding principles of the CSU.

Now is not the time to divest from the university's mission to provide quality education to the people of California.

Now is not the time to abandon the university's mission to provide an affordable education to all who qualify academically for the CSU.

Now, more than ever, we need leaders with vision and courage to speak out against attacks on public education.

As leaders of the largest state-supported university system in the United States, you have a civic obligation to protect the CSU and to put pressure on the governor and the state legislature to reinvest immediately in students, staff, and faculty.

Real leaders stand up for the people, and for what is right.

Will you lead us?

Name

Campus

Signature

I Am...

☐

CSU Faculty

☐

CSU Staff

☐

CSU Student

☐

CSU Supporter