Over the past several years, Carlsbad Unified School District has been in the difficult position of having to find new ways to cut the budget. Temporary teachers haven’t had their contracts renewed, positions have been cut, and class sizes are among the highest in the county. Now, however, we can finally see the light at the end of the tunnel. With the passing of Prop 30 and the implementation of the Local Control Funding Formula, CUSD is looking at a projected increase of revenue.

The graphs before you clearly demonstrate the trend which has taken place in the past few years. As early as 2010, CUSD projected a deficit of nearly $8 million. However, you can see that each year the projected income versus actual income has been off by at least three and upwards of ten million dollars. While it is important to remain fiscally sound, students are suffering due to the district leadership’s unwillingness to recognize that we are not, and haven’t truly ever been, financially insolvent.

By the same token, over the past three years, we have seen our reserves grow to 17%, nearly six times the State’s requirement of a 3% reserve. At this time, CUSD currently holds $14 million in unrestricted reserves which could be used to hire teachers, which would, in turn lower class sizes. It could be used to offer permanent contracts to deserving teachers with temporary contracts. Finally, it could be used to provide raises for a staff that hasn’t received a salary increase in several years. I am so grateful that we are finally in the lucky position to discuss these much needed improvements, and I know this is just one of the first steps toward reestablishing a balance between the priorities of teachers and district management.

I understand that it is the responsibility of the board to ensure fiscal solvency, but we have gone far beyond that point. Every year, the district projects deficit spending and decreasing reserves. Yet, you can see in front of you that this fear has yet to be realized. Since we see a projected increase ahead, we can, for a change, move forward by discussing ways to revitalize the classroom and meet the safety and educational needs of our students.

It is now time to prove to the hardworking staff and community that we are in fact a "World Class District" by putting us on par with surrounding districts in terms of professional respect, compensation, and class size. Thank you.