

Broken Promises, What Can We Do Now?

The state promised Englewood \$4,000,000 for school year 2008-2009 budget. The voters approved that budget and the school district implemented the budget. Mid-year without any consultation with the district administration, the Governor **cut** the allocation by **\$2,000,000. No other school district in the state has been required to absorb a cut of this magnitude.** The Governor's cut of already certified funds has undermined what the district has done and is doing that benefit our children. We do not want to lose any of this funding. It is unfair!

Over the past few years Englewood has improved in many ways, especially at the elementary and middle school levels. The AVID, Academy Prep and IVY programs are examples of this. Programs like these have helped to make the schools more attractive to the community. In fact, we know families that have moved into Englewood to take part in the aforementioned programs. We are worried that the supports for these programs that was provided by the **Integration Assistance Aid** has been **cut by \$2,000,000 this year and next year Englewood get \$0.** These programs need to grow and enroll more students, not get cut backs. We need your help to get and keep receiving the funds to help nurture the programs.

In September, 2009, Englewood will complete the referendum work. We will have a totally new elementary school and an expanded Cleveland Elementary School. Unfortunately, the referendum did not provide the materials for the library/media center and supports in the school to advance education. Most of the funding for this was to come from the Integration Assistance Aid. With the cut in that funding in this year's budget, we are afraid that our schools will not be complete. Not having any of this money next year means that we may have to wait 2 or 3 year to get school libraries.

The district brought in Bergen Tech to create the Academies@Englewood to desegregate the high school. This has worked well. However, there was supposed to be money to help more Englewood students qualify for the Academy programs. This year, the Governor without any consultation and without any consideration cut \$2,000,000 from money that was to assist our children to qualify for honors level programs. For next school year, there is to be NO money for this purpose! It is strange that the state is willing to give money for White and Asian students to come to Englewood to desegregate the high school campus, BUT not for Black and Latino students to be able to prepare to make it into the Academies. Why should we support the Democratic Party when it views us and treats our children like this?

The district has tried to get answers from the state on what to do about the loss of Integration Assistance Aid. The answer the district gets is the money will come from the stimulus package! As we understand this, this does not make sense for our community over the long-term. Stimulus aid is a one time event, not sustained funding. It is also coming with many strings attached that will keep it focused on the lowest performing students. Integration Assistance Aid was used for the middle performing student to raise their skills and expectations. The response from the state supports keeping Englewood at the bottom of the county. We need funds that will help the students in the middle, help the average student become above average and reach a level of performance in which they can thrive in the Academies@Englewood and continues to desegregate our high school!

Join Us at <http://trcxchange.com> and let us know what you think and Join us on Thursday April 16, 2009 from 11:00 to 3:00 to here from some of our local politicians regarding the stimulus money.