

The district expects decreased property tax revenue, a drop in private donations to avoid cuts next year, and reserves, although

- Feb 3, 2009 -

» SCHOOL MATTERS

PIE pushes for much-needed donations

The deadline to donate to Palo Alto Partners in Education is Feb. 12. This organization provides the Palo Alto Unified School District with money for supplemental staff at every school in town, doling out the money equitably.

In this year of serious budget uncertainty at the state level, every citizen who can afford it should try to make an additional donation. Enrichment, individualized education and technology support are all important initiatives your donations help fund. You can donate using Paypal or a credit card by visiting www.papie.org.

As the California State PTA tries to pass the 1 million member mark, the Palo Alto PTA Council is making it easier to join. Most local PTAs have experienced a decline in membership over the past



**PREEVA
TRAMMIEL**

couple of years, so there will now be, for the first time ever, one form on the Palo Alto PTA Council Web site that covers all 17 Palo Alto schools. Now, people can join by filling in a line on a one-check form at the beginning of the year.

"From what I can tell, this new option for joining basically makes it easier for people who choose to join more than one school or those people who may not have a

student in a particular school," said Barb Spreng, who is on the California State PTA Council.

PTA is a membership organization open to anyone who pays the dues, which range from \$7 to \$15 per year per school. You can join at the school, county or state level, and receive discounts like 14 percent off your T-Mobile charges.

Camille Townsend, PAUSD board president, makes it a point to join every PTA in Palo Alto each year, but since she has no children in school, it has not been a simple process.

"It took some persistent effort to join," she said.

Townsend sought out local PTA presidents with the aid of school secretaries.

"My preference for doing my bills and membership is online registration," she said.

Such a system is not yet in place for the Palo Alto PTA Council, but the comprehensive form is a first.

"Baby steps," said Dan Dykwel at the last council general meeting, which was held Jan. 28. "It should not be hard to join PTA."

The new form will be available at www.paloaltopta.org.