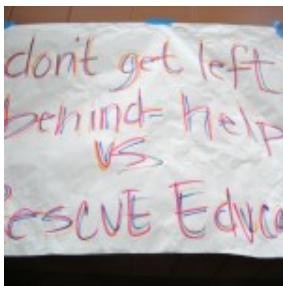


Lake Tahoe students, teachers protest education cuts

By Kathryn Reed

Students, educators and concerned citizens on Thursday took to the streets up and down California and in many other states to protest the spigot being turned off on education spending.

“I was supposed to transfer a year ago. I had to stay here,” said Rachel Sa-Onoy, president of Lake Tahoe Community College’s student council.



A sign at Lake Tahoe Community College on Thursday.

Not enough sections of required classes were offered to allow Sa-Onoy to accumulate the needed credits to transfer to a four-year college.

She and more than three dozen protesters, mostly students, carried handmade signs as they made their way through the main building of the South Lake Tahoe school Thursday afternoon to show their frustration with lawmakers.

This is just the prelude to March 22 when a group of LTCC students heads to Sacramento with compatriots from across the

state to give legislators an earful about spending cuts.

Each campus within Lake Tahoe Unified School District also planned protests on Thursday. Some cars in faculty parking lots said "save our schools."

California is facing a \$10 billion budget deficit. Everything is getting cut. K-12 and community colleges are what's affected in the Lake Tahoe Basin in California.

But the cuts at the university level affect local students because the cost of higher education keeps skyrocketing.

To compensate for last year's cutbacks the University of California raised tuition 32 percent. The California State University system upped its fees, too. The cuts were \$813 million to the UC system, \$564 million to the CSU.

It was apparently a dismal day for California education. Washington let Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger know the state didn't qualify for part of the \$4.3 billion Race to the Top grants.

Sacramento will be forthcoming this spring with more concrete figures for the next fiscal year, but no one is anticipating it will be something to look forward to.