

To those whom it may concern,

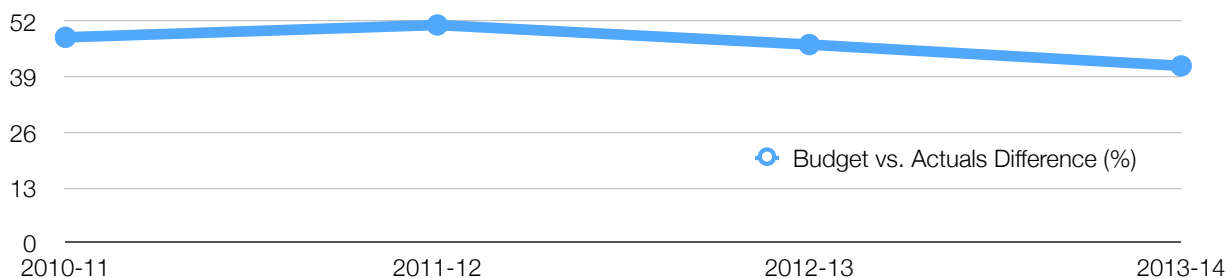
My name is Yash Plorer and I am currently attending San Mateo High School as a junior. In the following letter, I request that the San Mateo Union High School District (SMUHSD) initiate conservation measures on its use of copy paper and alter its current paper source, *Kelly Paper* by the *Central National-Gottesman Incorporation*, to the *U.S. Government Printing Office's Paper Store* (partnered with the *Unisource Worldwide Incorporation*).

Recently, I have noticed that the SMUHSD uses much paper in order to educate its students in academics, life, sports, and social intricacies. I really appreciate the district's efforts to provide for students' and teachers' paper needs in uses that include the following:

- Handouts
  - o Worksheets
  - o Primary Sources (i.e. documents, short stories, etc.)
  - o Organizational Diagrams (i.e. charts, timelines, etc.)
  - o Instructional Guides (i.e. how-to lists, sample outlines, etc.)
- Tests and Quizzes
- Homework
- Publicity (i.e. flyers, coupons, etc.)
  - o Events
  - o Clubs
  - o Products (i.e. t-shirts, yearbooks, etc.)

Unfortunately, I've noticed two significant characteristics of current use that could be improved; they're articulated below.

- A. **For (at least) the past 4 years (further district budget information is not provided online), the district has exceeded its budget by nearly 50% for its "Materials and Supplies" component (object code 4300).** This suggests that the use of components classified under 4300, including paper, has increased over the years and done so in a manner that is consistently far more than projected. In the featured graph, I portray the percentage difference between the projected budget and the estimated actuals of the year prior for each respective (school) year for 4300—in other words, the depicted values indirectly quantify projected inaccuracies in the budget, specifically regarding 4300. Although we are slowly improving the difference percentage, any inaccuracy that is above 15% should be considered as significant—these numbers near 50% and action is more than necessary.
- B. **Much paper is wasted.** Currently, faculty and staff have no limits on the amount of paper they use—generally, there is little effort to conserve paper usage when supplies seem unlimited. Most of the teachers I see interacting with paper use the paper appropriately, and I applaud this courtesy;



however, some faculty or staff privilege students access to copy paper (mainly for publicity—specific publicity use cases are described above), which often leads to unsustainable use due to the lack of effort necessary to produce copies (as opposed to that involved in creating a hand drawn poster or graphic, etc.).

To address my concerns, I propose a two part plan to reduce costs and further the conservation of paper resources.

1. Standardize and reform paper source.

- A. **Reform paper source.** Currently, majority of the schools in the district supply from Kelly Paper, specifically the 8.5 x 11in 20lb. Bond Kelly Copy Paper (item 11045A). The price of this paper is **\$4.13 per ream** (500 sheets). An alternative to this paper is that sold by the Government Printing Office. Paper 20# White with 30% Post-Consumer Waste (PCW) Recycled Papers is government recommended, environmentally beneficial, paper that contains recycled fibers and appears nearly identical to paper without. The price of this paper is **\$3.61 per ream**. Not only is this a nearly 15% decrease in costs, but it is also a movement towards a lesser environmental impact.
- B. **Standardize paper source.** Today, each school is given a certain allocated budget for 4300 to spend from however it pleases. I suggest that the SMUHSD purchase and provide all the copy paper that each school intends to use, and provides it to each respective school. This way, the district can purchase larger quantities of paper—for greater discounts—and potentially monitor paper usage, a useful competence in part two of my plan.
2. **Start conserving paper.** To further reduce the amount spent on 4300 and to lesser impact the environment, we can work toward reducing the amount of paper we use on a daily basis by making habits of paper saving techniques including those articulated below:
- i. Printing on both sides of a paper.
  - ii. Printing two pages side by side on one page of paper.
  - iii. Setting a limit on number of flyers made for a given event.
  - iv. Promoting use of *Schoolloop* for teachers to communicate material that need not be written upon, and just read.
  - v. Saving paper that has only been partially used (i.e. only one side is printed upon)
  - vi. Encouraging students to use mobile electronic devices (i.e. internet-accessing phones or tablets) to read documents or short stories in class instead of printing, reading, and disposing of copies.
  - vii. Using more class-sets of copies as opposed to documents for individual students.
  - viii. Monitoring paper usage between schools to understand which schools could improve on their paper use technique.
  - ix. Setting goals/holding competitions between schools to encourage lesser use of paper.

I understand that this plan may seem complex and unnecessary at first glance; however, I think that if the district slowly begins to implement it, it should take little effort and in the long run not only reduce costs, but help balance the budget, and lessen the district's environmental impact.

Many thanks for your reading and generosity,

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Alex Ma  
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Jacqueline Pei  
Aragon High School  
President of the Environmental Impact Committee  
Class of 2014

### Sources:

Proposed paper source: [http://www.gpo.gov/pdfs/customers/GPO\\_PaperStore\\_pricelist\\_3.3.14.pdf](http://www.gpo.gov/pdfs/customers/GPO_PaperStore_pricelist_3.3.14.pdf)

Current paper source: <http://kellypaper.com/shop/paper/copy-multipurpose/8-5-x-11-20lb-bond-kelly-copy>

District budget information: [http://www.smuhsd.org/cms/page\\_view?d=x&piid=&vpid=1267280719467](http://www.smuhsd.org/cms/page_view?d=x&piid=&vpid=1267280719467)