

Opinion: Brown's scheme to fund schools is sketchy at best

By Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee

The campaign to establish a state lottery nearly 30 years ago adopted "schools win too" as its theme. And it worked.

Voters responded because education is the single most popular category of public spending, even though in reality, the lottery provides schools with little or nothing in extra money.

This year, Gov. Jerry Brown is using the same theme to sell voters on raising sales and income taxes. The opening words of his measure's official ballot title are "Temporary taxes to fund education ..."

Whether schools would actually benefit from the taxes is very uncertain; he has, however, signed a bill that would slash school spending by \$5.5 billion should it fail.

It's a very risky strategy for a measure that, at the moment, has no better than a 50-50 chance of passage.

For one thing, a recent Field Poll found that voters don't like school funds being on the chopping block. They could conclude that Brown is holding schools hostage and resent the implied extortion.

Read the whole story