

# Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

SEPTEMBER 2016

## Advocacy Training

Friday, September 30 — 9:15 a.m. to Noon

Fountain Valley School District  
10055 Slater Avenue, Fountain Valley

**Breakout sessions for beginners and advanced advocates**

**Free! All PTA members are welcome to attend. Every unit and council should send at least one representative.**

**Walk-ins accepted, but pre-registration at [www.fourthdistrictpta.org](http://www.fourthdistrictpta.org) is appreciated!**

## Guest Speakers from the Orange County Department of Education

**Dr. Jeff Hittenberger**  
Chief Academic Officer  
**OCDE's role in the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) process**



**Ron Wenkart**  
General Counsel  
**School Boards and the Brown Act**

## California State PTA supports five state propositions

California State PTA supports the following propositions on the November 8 ballot:

**Prop. 51: School Bonds. Funding for K-12 School and Community College Facilities.** Authorizes \$9 billion in general obligation bonds, with \$3 billion for new construction and \$3 billion for modernization of K-12 public school facilities, \$1 billion for charter schools and vocational education facilities, and \$2 billion for community college facilities.

**Prop. 55: Tax Extension to Fund Education and Healthcare.** Extends for 12 years the Prop. 30 personal income tax increases on incomes over \$250,000. Eighty-nine percent of the funding would go to K-12 schools and 11 percent to community colleges. Up to \$2 billion would be allocated to healthcare programs in certain years. School districts would decide how to spend the funding but would not be allowed to use it for administrative costs.

**Prop. 56: Cigarette Tax to Fund Healthcare, Tobacco Use Prevention, Research, and Law Enforcement.** Increases cigarette tax by \$2 per pack, with an equivalent increase on other tobacco products and electronic cigarettes containing nicotine, and allocates the funding to various healthcare programs and law enforcement.

**Prop. 58: Language Education Acquisition Readiness Now.** Repeals Prop 227 (1998), which prohibited the teaching of multiple languages in the classroom. It replaces the waiver process with a petition process, so parents can request a multilingual program or be allowed to transfer to another school that offers such curriculum.

**Prop. 63: Firearms. Ammunition Sales.** Prohibits possession of large-capacity ammunition magazines, and requires their disposal by sale to dealer, destruction, or removal from state. Requires most individuals to pass a background check and obtain Department of Justice authorization to purchase ammunition. Includes other regulations for ammunition sales.

## Two education lawsuits come to an end in state Supreme Court

Two lawsuits dealing with education were tossed out by the California Supreme Court in August, bringing an end to six-year-old legal cases that attempted to change public school policy in the state.

The justices declined to hear **Robles-Wong v. California**, which claimed that California had a constitutional obligation to provide more funding for education, and **Vergara v. California**, which attempted to eliminate existing tenure, layoff and dismissal laws affecting teachers.

Both cases were denied in lower court decisions. Those decisions remain in place as a result of the Supreme Court's refusal to reconsider either matter.

Supporters of both cases say they will continue to pursue their efforts, either through legislation or renewed lawsuits.

For additional information, see the John Fensterwald article at [edsources.org](http://edsources.org).

## Four Resolutions approved at 2016 National PTA Convention

The following resolutions were approved at the National PTA Convention in Orlando, FL, this summer. The resolutions empower PTA at the National, State and local levels to take action on these issues.

**Electronic Cigarettes and Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) and Youth.** E-cigarettes and other ENDS may contain nicotine, which is highly addictive and alters adolescent brain development. These products are marketed to young people and their use among students in grades 6 through 12 has tripled in one year's time. PTA supports measures to:

- Address the manufacturing and ingredients in e-cigarettes and ENDS products.
- Prohibit sales and marketing to children under 18.
- Prohibit use in public places and schools.
- Educate youth, parents, school boards and local officials about the dangers of e-cigarettes and ENDS.

**Homework: Quality over Quantity.** Quality homework that is age appropriate can help students learn. However, high quantities of homework or work that relies heavily on parental input can add stress and harm family interactions, while not increasing academic achievement. PTA advocates for quality homework that motivates students based on grade and ability and evidence-based guidelines on homework assignments that are considerate of children's lives and family interactions.

**Recognition of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) Individuals as a Protected Class.** All children and youth should be able to attend school in a safe and inclusive environment. PTA supports:

- Federal legislation that protects all children.
- Local action to prevent bullying.

- Training for school staff on LGBTQ issues.
- Age-appropriate curricula on LGBTQ issues.

**Water Safety and Instruction.** Drowning is the third highest cause of death of youth 19 and under and the leading cause of death among children under 4. PTA supports:

- Education regarding the risks of water activities.
- The development of water safety instruction that is accessible to all students.
- Public school curriculum that includes water safety.

The complete resolutions can be found at [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org) under Advocacy/Resolutions and Position Statements.

## Fourth District Advocacy Program

Advocating for children, families and public schools is a vital part of Fourth District PTA's program. Our goal is to create a network of council and unit advocates to help inform our members about important issues and empower them to speak out on behalf of children and youth.

The Fourth District PTA Advocacy Committee (the "A-Team") provides programs, resources and activities to meet this goal. These include:

- **Advocacy Training and Forums**, with expert speakers on a variety of topics. Open to all PTA members.
- **Sacramento Safari**, February 27-28, brings about 90 PTA members to Sacramento to learn about the issues and visit legislators' offices.
- The *Advocacy Communicator*, for advocates to use and share. Published monthly, September through June, and available at [www.fourthdistrictpta.org](http://www.fourthdistrictpta.org).
- **Talking Points** with a brief summary of current information accompany each issue of the *Advocacy Communicator*. Advocates can use these to make oral reports to their units or councils.
- **Speaker's Bureau**, A-Team members come to your meeting to talk about a variety of advocacy issues.
- **LegLinks**, emails are sent to inform members about legislative activities and alert them when action is needed. Sign up at [www.fourthdistrictpta.org](http://www.fourthdistrictpta.org).
- **Advocacy Resource Notebooks** with information and resources for local advocates. May be purchased for \$15 at the Fourth District PTA office.
- **Council Legislative/Advocacy Chair Meetings** to discuss our advocacy programs, get feedback, and support local efforts.

For more information, contact Kathleen Fay, Fourth District PTA Vice President for Advocacy, at [advocacy@fourthdistrictpta.org](mailto:advocacy@fourthdistrictpta.org).

### Plan Your Advocacy Year

#### Advocacy Training Workshop

September 30 9:15 a.m.—noon

#### Advocacy Forums

October 28 9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

January 18 9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

March 21 9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

#### Sacramento Safari

Orientation, February 3, 9:30 a.m.—11 a.m.

Trip, February 27-28

#### CAPTA Legislative Conference

March 13-14, in Sacramento