

Fourth District Legislative Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT ADVOCACY TEAM

NOVEMBER 2010

School governance roles

Who gets the credit? Who's to blame?

California schools have many layers of governance. Here's a run-down of who's who when it comes to decision-making in education.

LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Board

District Superintendent

Local school districts are responsible for local

policies. Your local governing school board makes education policy decisions, sets programs, and allocates funds received for all schools within that district.



Members are typically elected to serve a specified number of years. The school board hires a superintendent to manage the district; the superintendent has authority over the district's operating practices and procedures. The local school district is responsible to:

- Identify community's educational needs
- Assure conformity with governing rules and regulations
- Make policy. Establish goals and strategic plans
- Set district funding priorities
- Approve curriculum and adopt textbooks
- Determine personnel selection procedures
- Represent public interest in collective bargaining and negotiating employee contracts
- Oversee education programs and business operations
- Exercise fiscal authority (forecast and adopt budget; approve expenditures)
- Limits: School boards have little control over the amount of total funding they receive, and decisions are often limited by state and federal requirements.

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Governor & Legislature

State Board of Education

Department of Education

Superintendent of Public Instruction

The state makes laws and sets the budget. The state legislature passes bills, signed into law or vetoed by

Calendar of Events

Advocacy Roundtables:

- Friday, November 5, 10:30–12 noon, Capo Ed Center (33122 Valle Rd., San Juan Capistrano)
- Friday, January 21, 9:30-11:00 a.m. FVUSD
- Friday, April 15, 9:30-11:00 a.m. FVUSD
Fountain Valley School District Board Room (10055 Slater Avenue, Fountain Valley, CA)

2011 Sacramento Safari:

- Monday, March 21 – Tuesday, March 22
Be sure to include this line item in your budget!
- Orientation: Friday, February 25, 9:30-11:00 a.m. at Fountain Valley School District Board Room

California's November 2nd General Election:

- Election Day: Polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 2nd.
- ▶ Orange County Registrar of Voters – For local election details, see: www.ocvote.com.
- ▶ For California's Official Voter Information Guide, see www.sos.ca.gov.

WHAT'S NEW?

Go to www.capta.org to see the Special Election Edition of PTA in California.

the governor, and has the budgetary authority to restrict decisions made at the local level. The governor appoints the Secretary of Education and the 11 members of the State Board of Education (SBE), which governs, makes policies, and sets standards to be implemented by the California Department of Education. The Department of Education is operationally headed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), who is elected independently by California voters for a four-year term. The state is responsible for:

- Assessment oversight
- Accountability
- Implementation of adopted standards and materials

THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

U.S. Department of Education

U.S. Secretary of Education



The federal government makes laws and provides funding at a national level. The U.S. Department of Education distributes federal education funding and monitors its use. It is led by the U.S. Secretary of Education, appointed by the President.

- No Child Left Behind Act
- Title I funds for low income students
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for Special Education
- English Learners programs
- Vocational Education



THE COUNTY

County Board of Education
County Superintendent

County education offices provide ancillary services. Voters elect members of the County Board of Education, which serves students who can't be accommodated by regular school districts. It is headed by the independently-elected County Superintendent, who provides guidance, while the Board itself handles transfers, appeals, and advocacy. A county board of education is considered to be at the same level as any other school district within the county; it does not oversee school districts.

- Students needing special or alternative education
- Homeless students
- Youth in juvenile detention schools
- Students requiring extra attention, with special problems

SCHOOL SITE LEADERSHIP

Principal
School Site Council



Principals are charged with running the day-to-day operations of their schools. However, their authority on particular issues can vary substantially between districts, and is always limited by district policies and state law. The principal is usually the person parents consult when concerns or issues arise.

School Site Councils are advisory bodies that include principals, teachers, parents, and students (at middle and high schools). They are charged with developing a Student Plan for School Achievement. The plan, which is approved by the school board, includes goals, strategies, funding sources, and budget. It is a requirement of specific funding that the school receives.

CURRENT OFFICE HOLDERS

- ♦U.S. Secretary of Education: Arne Duncan
- ♦California Secretary of Education: Bonnie Reiss

Ask the Advocacy Team

If you have any questions concerning advocacy issues, please contact us at: advocacy@fourthdistrictpta.org.

Key PTA Links

www.fourthdistrictpta.org – Click on Advocacy
www.capta.org – Select from menu: **Programs and Services: Advocacy** and **Children's Issues: Legislation**
www.pta.org – Click on Take Action

- ♦Superintendent of Public Instruction: Jack O'Connell
- ♦Orange County Superintendent: William M. Habermehl

Prop 98 suspended

California state budget finally signed

It was a record 100 days late, but on October 8, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed the \$87.5 billion 2010-2011 state budget into law after legislators struggled for over three months to achieve the two-thirds majority needed for passage.

Negotiations began with the state facing a \$17.9 billion deficit. The approved budget includes spending reductions of \$7.4 billion, with no new taxes. Reductions included \$256 million from a child care program for families going back to work, \$133 million from mental health services for special education students, and a suspension of the Prop. 98 minimum funding requirement.

According to the California State Legislative Analyst's Office, ongoing Prop. 98 funding for 2010-11 will be \$49.7 billion; absent suspension, the minimum guarantee would have required \$53.8 billion, which is \$4.1 billion higher than the amount being appropriated. The state also is ending 2009-10 with a "settle-up obligation," estimated at \$1.8 billion, meaning that the state appropriated less than the revised estimate of the minimum guarantee [a deferral].

California State PTA President Jo A.S. Loss was disappointed at additional cuts to education, especially on top of the \$17 billion already cut from schools in recent years "at a time when public education is so clearly the single most important factor in our state's future economic and job growth." She asserts that this budget provides strong evidence that the state's school finance system is fundamentally broken, stating, "That is why California State PTA is part of a broad coalition of educators and parents who have filed a lawsuit, *Robles-Wong v. State of California*, to declare the current school finance system unconstitutional. The time to deal with our broken system in a systemic way is now; we can't keep deferring the matter, just as our children can't defer their childhood until a time when the state might be more willing to provide them with the educational opportunities they have a right to."