

Fourth District Legislative Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

APRIL 2013

Proposed school funding formula is a hot topic in Sacramento

Gov. Brown's proposed Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) for public education was a major topic of discussion for speakers at the recent Sacramento Safari.

Under LCFF, revenue limits and most categorical funds would be replaced with a statewide per pupil base amount. School districts would receive an additional 35 percent for students who are low income, English learners or in foster care. Districts with more than 50 percent of such students would receive an additional "concentration factor" of 35 percent for each designated student above the 50 percent mark.

Spending decisions would be made by school districts, with input from parents, teachers and community members, and districts would be required to report how they use the funding.

While many would welcome a simplified, transparent funding system with more local control, there are a number of questions and concerns, as described by several speakers at Sacramento Safari.

- PTA and other education experts point out that LCFF will not provide adequate funding for California's schools. The state's public education funding will continue to be far below the national average.
- Although the governor promises that no school district will receive less than it did in 2012-13, school districts are still seen as being "winners" or "losers" under LCFF. Districts with high populations of high needs children will receive substantially larger funding increases than districts with fewer students in those categories. Most of the Safari speakers agreed that the base amount should be increased, with some suggesting that the money used for the concentration factor should instead be distributed among all the districts to reduce the disparity.
- According to the Legislative Analyst's Office, the proposal

"perpetuates irrational funding differences" by keeping two of the "largest and most outdated" programs outside the LCFF. One of these is Home to School Transportation (HST), which allocates funds based on historical costs rather than current conditions. According to Assembly Member Joan Buchanan, a school district in Palmdale receives \$302,000 in HST funds, while a district in Pasadena receives \$3.2 million, even though both spend more than \$4 million to provide student transportation.

- The other outdated program is the Targeted Instructional Improvement Block Grant, which stems from a desegregation case. Four large school districts – San Diego, San Jose, Los Angeles and San Francisco – are the primary recipients, receiving almost \$900 per student, while Santa Ana Unified receives \$8 per student, said Assembly Member Buchanan.
- Eliminating funding for specific programs and giving school districts more control over spending can have unintended consequences, especially in times of reduced revenues. Ron Bennett, from School Services of California, predicted that local ROP programs will disappear within seven years as districts shift funding to other priorities.

California State PTA and other education groups are urging the legislature to vet the LCFF proposal through policy committees and public hearings before making a decision, and not simply pass it as part of the state budget.



Sacramento Safari participants in front of the State Capitol

Advocacy Workshops offered at California State PTA Convention

This year's California State PTA Convention in San Jose will offer several workshops on advocacy topics, including one presented by Fourth District PTA Advocates Kim Anderson and Shereen Walter!

Workshop T11—Effective Advocacy – Getting Your Key Message Across, May 2, 1-3 p.m.

Effective advocacy happens when key messages are communicated to decision makers. Learn communications skill building such as setting message agendas and identifying key points as well as staying on, and bridging back to, key messages. Learn the four C's of messaging and how clear, concise, compelling and consistent messages increase your chances of having an impact.

Workshop F56—HOT TOPICS: Get the Inside Scoop on Key Issues in Sacramento! May 3, 1:30–3:30 p.m.

What's happening in the state capitol? How will pending legislation impact children, families and education in California? Get the answers to these, and many other questions about California politics and policy, as we hear directly from leading experts. Join us for this popular workshop to get the latest information.

Workshop S01—School Funding: How it Works and the Impact on Local Schools, May 5, 8:30–10:30 a.m.

Participate in a panel discussion with state and local experts on school funding and the state budget process. Trace the path of tax dollars from Sacramento to your local school and discover where and how the money is allocated, spent, or sometimes even withheld. Learn how YOU can get involved.

Workshop S05—Creating Powerful Advocacy Leaders! Presented by Kim Anderson and Shereen Walter

May 5, 8:30–10:30 a.m.

A step-by-step strategy to recruit, encourage, inspire and maintain legislative leaders/chairs in units, councils and districts which will result in members becoming passionate about advocacy issues and engaged in working to effect change. Feel confident that you can be a highly-effective advocacy chair at any level!

Reminder: This year there is open seating at convention workshops. You don't need to sign up in advance, but plan to arrive early so you get a seat. Digital handouts will be available online beginning April 18. All attendees will receive digital handouts on a USB drive onsite at convention.

Advocacy Roundtable

Friday, April 26 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 .m.
Fountain Valley School District
10055 Slater Ave., Fountain Valley 92708

What's going on in our local school districts? How are they dealing with school safety, implementation of Common Core Standards, the Governor's proposed budget, and other current issues? Find out from the people who know!

Guest School District Superintendents:

Mr. Michael Christensen, Orange Unified School District

Dr. Joseph Farley, Capistrano Unified School District

Dr. Sherry Kropp, Los Alamitos Unified School District

Dr. Robert Pletka, Fullerton School District

**All PTA members are welcome.
No RSVP needed.**

A successful trip to Sacramento

Seventy-five PTA members from Orange County attended the 2013 Sacramento Safari. They heard from State PTA leaders and a variety of thought-provoking speakers, including State Legislative Analyst Mac Taylor, Assemblymember Joan Buchanan, chair of the Assembly Education Committee, and Ron Bennett from School Services of California. Staff members from the State Department of Education, the Assembly Speaker's Office and the Assembly Human Services Committee also presented important information.

Hot topics included the proposed Local Control Funding Formula, adequate funding for education, Common Core Standards and new state assessments.

Small group visits to legislators' offices in the Capitol were very successful, with most groups reporting positive and productive meetings.

EdSource Conference in San Jose

The 2013 EdSource Symposium will again be presented in partnership with California State PTA on Saturday, May 4, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at the San Jose Convention Center.

"Transforming Public Education: What's Next for Students, Teachers and Schools" will offer presentations on the state budget, the proposed Local Control Funding Formula, teacher quality and evaluation, and new school performance tests.

The registration fee of \$48 includes continental breakfast. For more information go to www.edsource.org.