



Fourth District PTA Advocacy Team

Sacramento Advocacy Trip

May 27, 2015

PTA Representatives:

Kim Anderson, Gisela Meier, Chrystie Adams, Kathleen Fay

Meeting #1

California State PTA President **Colleen A. R. You**

California State PTA Executive Director **Paul Richman**

We met to get an update from California State PTA on current legislation, direction, and events. With consideration of the timing of the meeting at the close of the PTA term, we also discussed what lessons had been learned about PTA advocacy, and ideas for improving engagement at the unit and council levels.

Meeting #2

California State Assembly Member **Patrick O'Donnell**

Democrat representing the 70th district, encompassing parts of Long Beach and the Los Angeles Harbor Region.

▶ *Chairman of the Assembly Standing Committee on Education, whose primary jurisdictions are education generally, certificated employees of schools, school finance, and school facilities.*

▶ *Also serves on the committees for Budget; Judiciary; Transportation; and Public Employees, Retirement, and Social Security; as well as the subcommittee on Education Finance.*



From left to right: Chrystie Adams, Kim Anderson, Sophia Kwong Kim (Ed Committee Consultant), Assembly Member Patrick O'Donnell, Gisela Meier, Kathleen Fay and Chelsea Kelley (Ed Committee Consultant)

Our primary focus was to discuss two education bills:

- Teacher Evaluations - AB 575
- School Facilities - AB 1088

Teacher Evaluations AB 575 (CAPTA has “Support if Amended” position)

- He is open to amendments
- This bill would replace the Stull Act¹
- He emphasized that there could be no negotiating away parts of the bill - what his bill says, you MUST do. It is the collective bargaining portion that has management groups (ACSA, CSBA) opposed.
- Teacher groups have not taken a position on these bills yet
- Some people/groups want teachers to be evaluated on test scores only – not a good idea
- Kim told him what amendments PTA is seeking to his bill, according to Donna Artukovic (PTA advocate for both Fourth District and California State PTA); these changes are already being considered for inclusion
- Might his bill be merged with Carol Liu’s (SB 499)? “Yes, that is possible.”
- Timeframe? “It should be coming off suspense tomorrow, and should be going to a floor vote by next Friday. It has already been through the Assembly committees and could be amended in the Senate.”

School Facilities AB 1088 (CAPTA has “Watch” position)

- What is the current likelihood of new funding for school facilities? “Unknown. The Governor is resistant to the state having a role in school facilities funding; an extension of Prop 30 is being discussed among various groups and *Californians for Quality Schools* is gathering signatures now to have a \$9 billion bond placed on the November 2016 ballot.

Other Topics:

- LCAP (Local Control and Accountability Plans) and civil rights groups are coming out against the flexibility that the CDE (California Dept. of Education) is proposing.
- The feedback he has received on LCAPs has been very supportive.
- Kim asked Mr. O’Donnell about his long-term goals and he said:
 - He wants to see LCFF (Local Control Funding Formula) fully implemented
 - He would like to see technology for each student in classrooms, like tablets for all school books.
 - He does not want to see a lot of new laws telling schools what to do.
 - He wants to see more emphasis on CTE (Career/Technical Education)
 - Teachers need better tools to teach Common Core.
 - Teacher Recruitment – Old APLE programs² are being brought back, stop blaming teachers and give them more support, there should be more collaboration between teachers.
- Mr. O’Donnell told us about a Senate action to put childcare, except for Cal Works Stage 1, into Prop 98. He feels that would increase competition for Prop 98 money.
- Both the Senate and the Assembly are proposing spending millions more on childcare and preschool than the Governor did in his May Revise
- Both houses are in favor of the Governor’s proposed \$400 million in the budget for CTE BUT they want those funds to be based on ADA instead of a competitive grant.

¹ Under the current law, known as the Stull Act, teachers can negotiate evaluation procedures, such as the timing and frequency of classroom observations, but not the criteria for evaluations, such as how to judge how teachers plan their lessons, whether to use student surveys of teacher performance and what tests to use to measure student academic progress. The Stull Act requires that teachers be evaluated on instructional techniques, classroom management, implementation of the curriculum and student growth, but leaves the specifics of how to judge performance to districts. *Source: EdSource*

² Assumption Program of Loans for Education (APLE) is a competitive teacher incentive program designed to encourage outstanding students, district interns, and currently credentialed teachers to seek and teach in specified K-12 teaching positions in designated California public schools.

Meeting #3

Allison Wescott, Communications Director for Assembly Member Kristin Olsen

Olsen is a Republican representing the 12th district, encompassing parts of San Joaquin and Stanislaus Counties in California's Central Valley.

- ▶ *Assembly Member Olsen has partnered with colleagues to get important education reform measures passed, such as AB 215, which expedites the dismissal process for teachers who have participated in egregious misconduct such as abuse, sexual abuse and drug crimes, and also improves a school's ability to remove ineffective teachers.*
- ▶ *In 2013, Olsen was instrumental in garnering support for the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), allowing schools to determine the best use of funds for their unique districts.*
- ▶ *Olsen now serves on the Board for CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates), an organization promoting volunteer advocacy for abused and neglected children.*

Our meeting was set to discuss education bills and issues affecting youth.

- **AB 1099 School Transparency and Accountability** (no CAPTA position) would require school district Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAP) to show how funding is spent at individual school sites, so that parents can see that the money is going where it is supposed to go. It received full support from the Assembly Education Committee. Teachers are opposed because of concerns about variations in teacher pay. *The bill was presented in the Senate on May 28. Currently with the Committee on Rules, for assignment.*
- **AB 699 Education Technology Grants** (no CAPTA position) is now a two-year bill.
- **AB 1161 Expanding Pre-School** (CAPTA position: watch) would establish a pilot program in five counties to provide pre-school for low-income and English-learner students through private investments, in exchange for state tax credits. *Records show this was read for a second time in the Assembly on May 28 and is scheduled for a third reading on June 1.*
- **AB 1078 Improving Teacher Evaluations** (CAPTA position: watch): Assembly Member Olsen is still working on this; last location was in the Assembly Committee on Education. She does not support Assembly Member Patrick O'Donnell's teacher evaluation bill because she says there is no enforcement tool.
- **AB 604 Electrically-Motorized Skateboards** – Gas-powered skateboards are illegal, but this bill would legalize battery-powered skateboards, under local regulation.

Meeting #4

California State Senator **John Moorlach**

Republican representing the 37th district, encompassing much of Orange County, including all or portions of Anaheim, Corona Del Mar, Costa Mesa, El Toro, Foothill Ranch, Huntington Beach, Irvine, Laguna Beach, Laguna Woods, Lake Forest, Newport Beach, Orange, Tustin and Villa Park.

▶ *Serves on the Senate Standing Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, and its Subcommittee 1 on Education; the Governance and Finance Committee; and is the Vice Chair of the Standing Committee on Judiciary.*

Moorlach is new to the Senate via a special election held in March.³ The purpose of the meeting was to introduce Fourth District PTA and discuss his legislative priorities.

- Moorlach discussed his background: Born in the Netherlands, moved with his family at age 4 to the US, grew up in Long Beach, California. He is a CPA. His children are grown; grandchildren are in Wisconsin.
- We introduced Fourth District PTA and our organization's role in advocating for children, youth, and families.
- Moorlach talked about his familiarity with school district finances, especially local school bonds, due to his experience as the OC Treasurer-Tax Collector (12 years, 1994-2006).

³ Elected in March 17, 2015, special election for Senate District 37 (for Mimi Walters seat, against Don Wagner). Results = 37K vs. 33K votes with a 15% turnout.

- He believes that there is a lot of money in Prop 98 now benefitting schools (“Schools have too much money”), and expressed concerns regarding programs now in the general fund that should be funded instead out of Prop 98.
- He asserted that Senator Liu’s bill to authorize more bond funding for schools should come out of Prop 98 funds, not the general fund.
- He thinks that California is essentially broke due to its unrestricted net deficit of \$117 billion (this includes all of California’s long-term debt liabilities, but not pension obligations). He discussed the history of the dot-com bubble and its implications on the state’s current financial situation.
- When asked about lifting the cap on school district reserves, he discussed the need for school districts to save their money to build and maintain facilities, rather than issue bonds to fund new facilities.

Meeting #5

California Dept. of Education Government Affairs Legislative Representative **Debbie Look**

Areas of responsibility include Preschool/Child Care; Kindergarten & TK; Educator Credentialing & Preparation; Classified Employees; Libraries; School Choice; Parental Involvement; Accountability & School Improvement; LCAPs; Data; Student Wellness; School Climate; and Special Education.

We met with Debbie Look to talk about impact of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (**ESEA**) reauthorization on California and the legislative priorities of the CDE. We began by discussing seven bills that the CDE is sponsoring:

- **SB 62 (Pavley)** (CAPTA supports) Providing loan assumption opportunities and scholarships for students to attain their teaching credentials if they meet certain need requirements and they commit to teaching for a certain period of time in high-needs subject areas or schools. *(Passed out of Senate Appropriations Committee May 28.)*
- **AB 625 (Bonta)** Strengthens the coordination between the California Department of Education and State Controller’s office prior to an audit on a state controlled district.
- **AB 740 (Weber)** (CAPTA supports) Requires the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to recommend to the State Board of Education (SBE) a schedule for the regular updating of academic content standards, and upon approval by the SBE and appropriation from the Legislature, an Academic Content Standards Advisory Committee would be convened to recommend to the SBE updates of the standards. *(Passed out of Senate Appropriations Committee May 28.)*
- **AB 220 (Holden)** (CAPTA supports) Aligns the Algebra 1 high school graduation requirement to the new mathematics content standards by specifying that completion of Mathematics 1 in addition to Algebra 1 or courses of equal rigor satisfies this high school graduation requirement.
- **SB 652 (Allen)** Extends the statutory timeline by one year for the SBE to adopt the Next Generation Science Standards framework to January 31, 2017. California is the lead state on science standards.
- **SB 750 (Mendoza)** Clarifies the grade level in which a long-term English learner (LTEL) and an English learner at-risk of becoming LTEL can be identified and aligns the English language arts assessment requirement for a student to receive the State Seal of Biliteracy to the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress.
- **SB 172 (Liu)** (CAPTA supports) Suspends the administration of the California High School Exit Examination for the 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 school years, and requires the SSPI to convene an advisory panel to make recommendations on alternative pathways to demonstrate competency of state standards by March 1, 2016. *(Passed out of Senate Appropriations Committee May 28.)*

The CDE supports **AB 575 (O’Donnell), Best practices teacher evaluation system**. CAPTA is seeking amendments on this bill (see O’Donnell report).

Regarding ESEA:

- In Washington D.C., the Senate version of the reauthorization of ESEA/NCLB has been delayed. Earliest action is expected mid-June. There has been no action on the House version since February. Both CDE and PTA are opposed to the concept of “portability,” which would allow Title I dollars to follow a student to another school, instead of directing those dollars to schools with high percentages of children from

low-income families. This was taken out of the bill during committee hearings, but there are rumors that there will be attempts to put it back in when the bill is heard by the Senate. The CDE has a full time lobbyist in Washington D.C. who is working on this. If the reauthorization is not completed this year, it won't happen next year because it is an election year.

Additional topics:

- CDE has not heard a lot from school districts about the implementation of Local Control and Accountability Plans.
- Smarter Balanced assessment testing seems to be going well, although there have been some technical problems. There is no widespread opting out in California.

Meeting #6

Edgar Cabral, California Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) Principal Fiscal & Policy Analyst for Standards, Assessments, Accountability

Areas of responsibility include programs for Instructional Materials, Academic Content Standards, Assessments, School Improvement, and Accountability; budget areas involving the CDE and the Education Audit Appeals Panel; and control sections pertaining to Prop 98, Flexibility, Categorical Contingency Transfer Authority for Deficiencies, State School Fund Allocations, Reading Instruction, Transfer School Building Rental Income to the General Fund, and Local Educational Agency Fiscal Accountability.

Our meeting with Edgar Cabral was slated to cover Governor Brown's May Revise.

- Projected revenues are \$6.7 billion higher in the May Revise of the budget; most of it is going to education so the Prop. 98 guarantee increases by \$6.1 billion over three fiscal years in relation to the Governor's January budget proposal.
- Local Control Funding Formula will get an additional \$2.1 billion, which closes the remaining gap to full implementation by 53%. After this year, there will be less Prop. 98 growth because Prop. 30 tax increases phase out.
- State spending is now \$600 + per student more than before the recession.
- Governor is proposing \$3.5 billion for the reimbursement of unfunded mandates.
- He offers \$400 million for Career and Technical Education.
- Special Education would get \$60 million in new funding.
- Both the Senate and the Assembly have approved their versions of the state budget based on the LAO's revenue estimate, which is \$3 billion higher than the governor's estimate in his May revise.
- Both houses want to include more money for teacher training/induction programs.
- Both Assembly and Senate are seeking more funding for child care. The Senate would include this funding under Prop. 98, the Assembly version would not.

Meeting #7

Rick Simpson, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Speaker (Toni G. Atkins), California State Assembly

For our meeting with Rick Simpson, we broadly covered the state of education in the Capitol, and discussed his expectations for the passage of legislation, as well as the reasons behind those expectations. We also addressed the reasonableness of existing debt for California in terms of utilizing long-term debt to fund long-term projects.