

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

OCTOBER 2015

What does a California State PTA Legislative Advocate do?

By Donna Artukovic, CAPTA Legislative Advocate

The California State PTA has a volunteer legislative team that includes, among others, six state advocates. The legislative advocate is an appointed position, ratified by the State PTA Board of Managers. Each advocate is responsible for a specific area of legislation. Three advocates address education, and one each works on family engagement, health, and community concerns.

Beginning in December, when legislators begin writing and submitting bills, the advocates search an online computer bill service daily and mark every bill that covers their area. Depending on the year, each advocate could mark between 80 and 120 bills submitted by legislators before the bill deadline in February.

The next task is to read the bills and decide which ones meet the following criteria:

1. Is it within the scope of PTA concern? (Check PTA legislative platforms and planks.)
2. Does it have a significant impact on children or families?
3. Does it have statewide significance?
4. Do we have the authority to take a position? (Check convention resolutions, legislative platform and policies, position statements, purposes of the PTA.)
5. Does it fit within the specific goals of the commission? (Education, Family Engagement, Health, Community Concerns)
6. Is it consistent with recorded PTA positions?

The bills that meet the criteria are scrutinized more carefully. The advocate may contact the office of the author of the bill and request additional information, including a Fact Sheet describing the problem the bill addresses and the proposed solution. Research is conducted to discover if there is a sponsor for the bill. (Often organizations such as the California School Boards Association or California Teachers Association will sponsor a bill.) Additional research may include contacting organizations which support or oppose the bill.

Advocates then choose one to eight bills for each Legislation Action Committee Meeting. Before the meeting, the advocate consults with the appropriate PTA Com-

mission to discuss the bills, research appropriate authorities and decide on a recommended position. Positions include Support, Oppose, Oppose Unless Amended, Support if Amended, Seek Amendments, Approve, or Watch.

The Legislation Action Committee (LAC) includes the president, president-elect, director of legislation, advocates, two district presidents, the vice-president and one other member of each commission. The LAC, on behalf of the State PTA Board of Managers, meets four times a year to discuss the bills and vote on a position. After the committee meets, a Legislation Action Report is prepared and distributed.

The advocates are responsible for further actions once a position has been adopted. They communicate the position to the legislators and their staff. They write letters, testify in front of committees, write articles and urge PTA members to engage in an advocacy campaign if the matter is of high priority. In addition, the advocates prepare and give reports on pending legislation and legislative issues to their commission and the Board of Managers.

The work of the state advocates is significant. Our support or opposition has helped pass or defeat numerous bills which have had a significant effect on the education and welfare of the children of our state.

For further information, subscribe to Sacramento Update, Legislation Action Report, and/or Legislation Information Alerts at www.capta.org.

Get ready to go!

**Fourth District PTA
Sacramento Safari
February 22-23, 2016**



A great opportunity to learn about the issues from a variety of education experts, meet the decision-makers and make your voice heard.

For more information, go to www.fourthdistrictpta.org under Advocacy.

Registration opens online on October 1.

Voting procedures in California may change with two bills

Voter registration and voting procedures in California will change dramatically if two proposed bills are enacted as law, said Orange County Registrar of Voters Neal Kelley at the Fourth District PTA Advocacy Training

The California New Motor Voter Act (AB1461) was passed by the legislature and sent to Governor Brown's desk for signature in late September. If it is enacted, every eligible citizen who goes to the Department of Motor Vehicles to obtain or renew a driver's license will automatically be registered to vote, unless he or she opts out. The data collected by the DMV would be reviewed by the California Secretary of State's Office to verify each resident's eligibility to vote. Governor Brown has until October 11 to sign or veto the bill.

The way Californians vote would change if SB 450 is enacted. Counties would be allowed conduct all voting by mail. Voters would fill out their ballots and mail them back or return them to secure boxes stationed at various locations during a 29-day period, including Election Day. According to Kelley, this voting method would result in a considerable cost savings for Orange County.

SB 450 has been put on hold until the legislature reconvenes in January. It was sponsored by California Secretary of State Alex Padilla and has the support of the Senate and Assembly leaders, so there is a good chance it will be passed by lawmakers.

Other highlights from Kelley's presentation:

- Every vote counts! A recent election in Yorba Linda was decided by a single vote.
- Orange County has 1.6 million registered voters — more than 21 entire states.
- Vote-by-Mail is increasing in popularity. In the 214 General Election, about 390,000 Orange County residents voted by mail, while 250,000 went to the polls.
- The fastest growing political party designation is Decline to State.

- Orange County does not have a problem with fraudulent voting, but it does have a problem with fraudulent voter registration, such as people turning in fake voter registrations in order to make money.
- To watch a 28-minute documentary on what it takes to organize an election and count the ballots, go to www.ocvote.com/documentary.



Count me in.

Register voters at PTA events

Voting in every election is one of the most important things a person can do, as a citizen and as a PTA member.

Education policy is determined by the lawmakers elected to office and by propositions that must be approved by voters.

PTA can play a vital role by providing opportunities for citizens to register to vote. Back-to-School nights and other school events are perfect places for PTA-sponsored voter registration tables.

Steps to take:

- Get the approval of your association for the activity.
- Get a facilities use permit from your school district, if needed.
- Registration forms and assistance are available from the Orange County Registrar of Voters in Santa Ana. Go to www.ocvote.com for more information.
- Rules for conducting voter registration drives may also be found at the Secretary of State website, www.sos.ca.gov.
- Remember that PTA is non-partisan. We do not support or oppose any political party or candidate.



Rick Simpson
Deputy Chief of Staff to
Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins

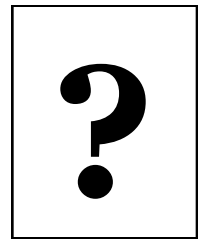
Fourth District PTA Advocacy Forum

Get the inside scoop on what's happening
in Sacramento from two points of view.

Friday, November 6
10:30 a.m. to 12 noon

Fountain Valley School District, Board Room
10055 Slater Avenue, Fountain Valley

All PTA members are welcome to attend.



To be announced!

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