**Fourth District PTA**

**Sacramento Safari 2019**

Legislator Talking Points

**1. Our kids need mental health resources and support services now.**

California’s mental health resources and support services fall far behind those provided to children in other states. Our students have suffered because of severe cuts in the numbers of counselors, health professionals, school nurses, learning specialists, librarians, and administrators. As a result, students struggle daily with issues that affect their ability to learn and be socially connected. Consider these facts:

**20% of youth ages 13-18 live with a serious mental illness.** 🛉🛉🛉🛉🛉

* 11% of youth have mood disorder
* 10% have a behavior or conduct disorder
* 8% have an anxiety disorder

**SUICIDE is the #2 cause of death for adolescents ages 10-24, after accidents.**

*Source: CDC July 2018*

**90% of those who die by suicide had an underlying mental illness.**

IMPACT: The average delay between onset of symptoms and intervention is 8-10 years. These kids need resources to get help sooner. Without intervention, we will continue to see 37% of students with a mental health condition drop out of school, or worse: 70% of youth in the juvenile justice systems have a mental illness.

*SUPPORT* **AB 8 (Chu)**

**Pupil health: mental health professionals.**

We support AB 8 (Chu) which increases the numbers of on-site campus mental health professionals from less than 1265:1 to a 600:1 ratio for our students.

**2. PTA supports late school start time.**

The research is clear: The American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Sleep Medicine urge middle and high school students to start school no earlier than 8:30 AM to accommodate natural sleep cycles that shift later during adolescence. Teens who get enough sleep suffer less from depression and obesity, are less likely to be involved in automobile accidents, earn better grades, have higher standardized test scores, and enjoy an overall better quality of life. Please support legislation for middle and high schools to start no earlier than 8:30 AM.

*SUPPORT* **SB 328 (Portantino)**

**Pupil attendance: school start time.**

We support SB 328 (Portantino) to ensure that most middle and high schools would start their school days no earlier than 8:30 a.m.

**3. Arts education is not optional.**

Every student has the right to a dynamic, creative education that includes the arts. The California Education Code requires arts education. Yet **88% of California schools are failing** to meet this standard. Schools have cut Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) education even though studies show that the arts...

* connect students to school,
* increase the graduation rate,
* raise academic performance, and
* boost a student’s ability to create, collaborate, think critically, and communicate.

Please support the fair provision of arts education in all our schools to meet established state standards.

*Ref: California Ed Code 51210;*

*and* [*www.createca.dreamhosters.com/resources/*](http://www.createca.dreamhosters.com/resources/)

**4. California needs a stable, long-term funding system.**

**California must examine options towards creating stability in our long-term funding sources for education and other important priorities.** The current system is too volatile and leaves California’s children behind the levels of education, health, and welfare enjoyed by children across the rest of the nation. Our state should plan to support its future.

Stable funding is needed to improve student access to:

* Counselors (current ratio is beyond 800:1 – should be 250:1)
* Psychologists (1,265:1)
* Nurses (2,784:1)
* Special Education Resource Specialists (1,452:1)
* Librarians (15,904:1)
* Programs that serve children in the areas of emotional and mental wellness
* Effective ways to curb falling student achievement in math (below 45 states) and reading (below 39 states)

*Ref:* [*www.gettingdowntofacts.com*](http://www.gettingdowntofacts.com)

*SUPPORT* **AB 39 (Muratsuchi)**

**Education finance: LCFF funding increase.**

We support AB 39 (Muratsuchi) that will raise the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) base grant as well as the supplemental and concentration grant amounts throughout the state for the 2019-20 school year.