

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

FEBRUARY 2020

Governor Newsom's proposed budget increases school funding

In his proposal for the 2020-21 state budget, Governor Gavin Newsom increases funding for K-12 schools by \$3.8 billion. Most of this increase is dedicated to Newsom's education priorities, which include teacher recruitment, special education, and assisting the lowest-performing districts.

With fewer young people pursuing teaching careers, California is dealing with a teacher shortage, especially in rural and low-income areas and particularly in special education, bilingual education, and science, technology, education and math (STEM) subjects. Newsom's budget would allocate \$900 million for various programs to recruit and train teachers, including \$100 million to provide stipends to 5,000 new teachers who commit to working in high-needs high schools and \$64 million in stipends for school employees who become teachers. Another \$350 million would be designated for teacher training in mental health intervention, special education practices, English learners supports, anti-bullying efforts and STEM development.

The budget provides \$900 million in increased funding for special education, including \$255 million to identify disabilities in children ages 3 to 5, and \$4 million for research and training on dyslexia. The governor proposes a new special education funding formula, phased in over three years, to increase equity in distribution of funds and provide more services.

The governor wants to fund two programs to address low-performing districts. Many students are living with food insecurity, homelessness and inadequate health care, and "schools alone cannot alleviate all of the negative effects of poverty," the budget states. A \$300 million one-time allocation would support community schools, which provide health care, mental health care and social services to children as well as child care before and after school.

An additional \$300 million in one-time funding would assist low-performing schools with the help of the

PTA Advocacy Conference Call

The next California State PTA advocacy conference call is scheduled for Wednesday, March 4, at 7 p.m.

Call-in Directions:

- Conference Dial-In Number: 1 (605) 313-4821
- Participant Access Code: 604265#
- To mute or unmute during the session, press *6.

California Collaborative for Educational Excellence, which would get an \$18 million funding boost.

Among the other features of the proposed budget:

- \$70 million in additional funding for the federal meals program, with efforts to include more fresh fruits and vegetables.
- \$750 million in housing subsidies to assist families at risk of losing their homes or already homeless.
- \$19 million to support computer science education.
- \$75 million to add 10,000 full-time preschool slots for low-income 4-year-olds.
- Continuation of a three-year program to contribute \$3.15 billion into the state retirement system, freeing up school district funding for education programs.
- \$600,000 to create an online Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) portal that would show how each school district and school is spending its LCAP funding to improve outcomes for high-needs students.

About \$1.2 billion of the total increase in funding would go to school districts through the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). School districts decide how to spend this money through the LCAP process.

"For context, each \$1 billion in the state budget is equivalent to about \$160 per student — roughly the cost of a high school textbook," said Carol Kocivar in a blog at Ed100.org.

In May, the Governor will issue a "May revise" budget based on updated tax revenue information. The state Senate and Assembly will develop their own proposals. The lawmakers must pass a completed budget by June 15.

CAPTA supports Prop. 13 (2020)

There is only one statewide proposition on the March 3 Primary ballot and California State PTA supports it!

Prop. 13 (2020) authorizes a \$15 billion bond to construct and modernize school facilities. K-12 schools, including charter schools, would receive \$9 million in funding, with \$2 billion each going to community colleges, Cal State universities, and University of California campuses.

★ **Prop. 13 (2020) has nothing to do with the Prop. 13 that was passed by voters in 1978. This year's Prop. 13 does not abolish the previous Prop. 13 and will not change anyone's property tax bill.** ★

Advocacy Forum report: Thoughts from OC school superintendents

As always, hearing from our Orange County school district superintendents was an enlightening experience. Here are a few of their points:

- At some of the schools in the Anaheim Elementary School District, 20 percent of the students are homeless. Schools become a safe haven where children should be treated with the love and caring they deserve by everyone on the school staff.
- All of the school districts in Orange County are experiencing declining enrollment except for Irvine Unified, which has added one or two schools in each of the past nine years as home construction continues.
- The Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) assists school districts in developing their budgets and Local Control and Accountability Plans and offers help in collective bargaining with employees. The relationship between OCDE and districts is collegial and cooperative.
- The world is changing quickly and we have to be ready to flex, adapt, and evolve.
- Superintendent Walker talked about making sure that parents are given an “intentional invitation to participate,” by modeling the humility of a lifelong learner, to prevent “the façade of a process” and “the illusion of inclusion.”
- All of the superintendents talked about including social-emotional development and mindfulness in their student programs. When students learn empathy, compassion and kindness they are happier and more connected, and they perform better.
- Rather than asking legislators for more money for schools, we should ask for the services that our children need.
- Our children are struggling. Last year 10 Orange County students died by suicide and many more attempted suicide. LGBTQ students are most at risk. We need a sense of awareness and urgency to address this.
- Superintendent Mijares gave an update on the continuing conflict between himself and three county board of education members, which so far has cost more

than \$1 million in legal fees. [Statements by Mijares and the board members regarding this situation can be found at ocde.us.]

Many thanks to superintendents Dr. Christopher Downing (Anaheim Elementary), Dr. Al Mijares (OCDE), Dr. Ramon Miramontes (Buena Park) and Terry Walker (Irvine Unified) for participating in our forum.

Primary Election on March 3: Get ready to vote a new way

The California Primary Election is on March 3. Here is some important information:

Orange County has a new way of voting!

Don't look for your old polling place; it won't be there.

Everyone will receive a vote-by-mail ballot. You can mail it back to the Registrar of Voters, no postage needed. Or, drop it in any one of 110 Ballot Drop Boxes located throughout Orange County. Or, go to any one of 188 Vote Centers in Orange County, have your ballot pulled up and vote on the spot.

Complete instructions are included in your mailer from the Registrar. Go to ocvote.com for more information and a map showing where all of the Ballot Drop Boxes and Vote Centers are located.

Important dates:

- **February 3:** Ballot Drop Boxes are open and ready to receive ballots.
- **February 22 through Election Day:** 38 Vote Centers are open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **February 29 through Election Day:** 188 Vote Centers are open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- **March 3:** Election Day! All Vote Centers are open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Who can vote in the Presidential Primary?

If you are registered as a No Party Preference voter, you may request a ballot for the Democratic, American Independent or Libertarian Party primary. To request a ballot for one of these parties, return the postcard you received from the Registrar of Voters, call the Registrar at (714) 567-7600 or go to ocvote.com/npp. February 25 is the last day to request a vote-by-mail ballot. After this you can request a specific ballot at an Orange County Voter Center.

The Republican Party, Green Party and Peace and Freedom Party do not allow votes by No Party Preference Voters. You must register with those parties to vote in their primaries.

Sacramento Safari Orientation
Friday, February 14 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.
 Fountain Valley School District
 10055 Slater Avenue, Fountain Valley

If you are going to Sacramento Safari, be sure to attend this meeting to receive materials and get important information.