

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

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California schools will receive \$6.8 billion from federal relief package

This is an abridged version of an article by John Fensterwald and Daniel J. Willis at [EdSource.org](https://www.edsource.org).

The Covid-19 relief package approved by Congress and signed by President Trump will provide at least \$6.8 billion to California's school districts and charter schools. That equals about an eighth of the \$54.9 billion that Congress will award to K-12 schools.

For K-12 schools, the new federal funding is about four times as much as the \$13.5 billion in aid for schools under the CARES Act that Congress passed in March. But the combination of the two — about \$70 billion — is substantially less than the \$98 billion that Congress provided K-12 under the economic recovery act that Congress funded in the midst of the Great Recession a decade ago, said Michael Griffith, senior researcher and policy analyst at the Learning Policy Institute.

The latest round should be “really helpful to meet the short-term costs of Covid and some of the budget shortfalls facing states,” Griffith said. But it won't be enough to address the extra funding needed to address the lost learning that a substantial number of students are experiencing.

The \$6.8 billion in new funding for districts and charter schools in California will vary widely per student, be-

cause it will be tied to how much districts received last year in federal Title I funding — a complex formula determined by the poverty rate and other factors.

Los Angeles Unified, the state's largest district, alone will receive \$1.2 billion — \$2,756 per student, while Capistrano Unified in Orange County, with a low rate of poverty, will receive \$15.4 million — \$331 per student, according to EdSource calculations.

Although the money is distributed by Title I funding, the legislation allows districts to spend the money for students districtwide on a wide range of Covid-related purposes. Districts have until Sept. 30, 2022 to spend it.

Districts that receive negligible Title I funding are likely to complain that they face some of the same health and safety costs, in personal protective equipment, ventilation improvements, teacher training and sanitizing expenses, as high-poverty districts.

Last spring, Gov. Gavin Newsom augmented funding for K-12 schools with an additional \$5.3 billion in “learning loss” funding, much of it in CARES Act dollars he had at his discretion. But in the latest round, Congress funded no new money for county and city governments.

The total funding for education is \$82 billion in the latest round of federal aid. This includes the \$54.9 billion for K-12, \$23 billion for higher education and \$4 billion that governors can decide how to spend on education. However, \$2.75 billion of that discretionary money must be given to private schools, targeting those serving low-income children.

See funding by district

EdSource has calculated how much of the \$6.8 billion in federal coronavirus relief each charter school and school district will receive. Go [here](#) for the database.

Save the dates!

**National PTA
Virtual Legislative Conference
March 9-11**

More information at pta.org

**Fourth District PTA
Virtual Advocacy Forum
January 22 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

Hear from newly-elected Orange County legislators:

- ★ Assembly Member Laurie Davies
- ★ Assembly Member Janet Nguyen
- ★ Senator David Min
- ★ Senator Josh Newman

Watch your email for registration information.

Virtual Sacramento Safari

Sneak Peek

February 5, 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Safari Days

February 22, 9:30 a.m. to noon

February 23, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.



Free and open to all PTA members.

Watch your email for registration information.

Please keep a line item for Sacramento Safari in your unit or council budget. We plan to be back in the Capitol in 2022.

California legislature to reconvene on January 11

December 7 marked the beginning of a new two-year legislative session for California. Senate and Assembly members were sworn in and spent the next few weeks organizing and electing officers before breaking for the holidays.

The real legislative work begins in January. Normally the lawmakers would begin on the first Monday in January, but the new session has been delayed to January 11, due to the high number of COVID-19 cases.

The most important issue lawmakers will tackle when they reconvene is the state budget. Last year the governor and state lawmakers assumed there would be a \$54 billion shortfall in revenues this fiscal year, but in November the Legislative Analyst's Office predicted that higher than expected tax revenues will lead to a \$26 billion windfall, give or take \$10 billion.

How big will the windfall be? How will the state decide to spend what the LAO calls "*entirely* one time" money? California State PTA and other education organizations will undoubtedly urge lawmakers to direct some of that funding to help schools deal with the impacts of the pandemic.

Legislators began introducing bills in December, including several that pertain to education. CAPTA legislative advocates will look at these bills over the next several weeks, decide which ones to study in more detail, and then present the most important ones at a Legislation Action Committee meeting in February. The committee will discuss each bill and decide whether to take a position.

The following are a few of the bills likely to come up for CAPTA consideration.

SB 70 (Rubio) would make Kindergarten attendance, which is now optional, mandatory. CAPTA supported an identical bill when it was under consideration during the last legislative session. It was one of many bills that foundered last year as the state dealt with the pandemic. CAPTA will take a new position on this bill.

Also during the last session, Assembly Member Jose Medina introduced AB 331, which required a one-

semester course in ethnic studies for high school graduation. That bill ran into opposition from a number of groups whose members said they were excluded or misrepresented in the proposed curriculum. Medina has reintroduced the bill as AB 101 and the state Department of Education is working on a revised curriculum. CAPTA supported AB331, but will take another look at the new version.

Currently, school districts throughout the state are responding to the pandemic in a variety of ways, with some providing in-classroom instruction as conditions improve and others planning to stick with distance learning for the rest of the school year. AB 10 (Ting, O'Donnell, McCarty) would require all schools to provide in-person instruction within two weeks after state and county health departments allow school campuses to be open. Students who can't or prefer not to return to the classroom could continue distance learning.

The bill also would require school districts to address the needs of students who are falling behind. By March 1, all districts would be required to implement a plan to identify and provide services for English-learners, low-income children, and foster and homeless students, many of whom are not connecting to distance learning.

As an emergency measure designed to take effect immediately, this bill would require a two-thirds approval of the legislature.

CAPTA assists in creation of state's school reopening plan

Governor Newsom unveiled the Safe Schools for All Plan on December 30. California State PTA has been involved in numerous aspects of the plan including discussions on school centered testing, vaccine priorities, distance learning guidance and more. CAPTA was a part of the Governor's pre-briefing and will continue to share our perspective in follow up briefings. In addition, there will be early action legislation commencing this month that will involve our Director of Legislation.

"A safe return of kids to the classroom is on the wish list of countless California families, and Governor Newsom's Safe and Successful Schools for All Plan paves the way," said CAPTA President Celia Jaffe. "The plan is rooted in science, health and safety – all key tenets to any conversation about returning to in-person instruction."

The following documents are available on line:

- [Safe Schools for All Plan](#)
- [Safe Schools for All Rationale](#)
- [Safe Schools for All Science](#)

California State PTA Legislation Conference February 8 and 9 "A Path to Equity"

Speakers will include:

Kevin Gordon, Capitol Advisors Group
Jeff Bell, California Department of Finance
Chris Hoene, California Budget and Policy Center
John Fensterwald, EdSource

Cost: \$50. More information and registration [here](#).

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