

# Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

SEPTEMBER 2021

## California starts school year with a record-setting education budget

This will be a school year the likes of which none of us has ever known.

On the one hand, schools will face the challenge of keeping children and staff safe as the COVID pandemic continues. They will implement programs to help children overcome the academic shortfalls and mental health struggles they may have experienced during the past year.

On the other hand, schools will be supported by the largest education budget in state history, with \$123.9 billion designated for pre-kindergarten through high school. For the first time in decades, California will likely be above the national average in per-pupil spending.

“This education package is great news for students and families in California,” said Carol Green, President of California State PTA. “It includes funding for top PTA priorities including early childhood education, community schools and wrap-around services, universal school nutrition, and mental health services. PTA also supports the return to in-person instruction that includes a robust option for students who may need distance learning for health or other reasons.

“We are also thrilled with the investment in universal transitional kindergarten for all four-year-olds by 2025.” Green added. “California State PTA has been advocating

for this for years. We know this will go a long way toward closing opportunity and achievement gaps for future generations.”

The record-setting budget is the result of unexpectedly high state tax revenues and \$25 billion in federal assistance.

Details on the education budget can be found in this EdSource [article](#). An EdSource [database](#) will show you how much relief funding from different sources your school district will receive.

This will be an important year for PTA members to stay informed about how their district and schools are spending this money. Is it being used to assist the students who need help? Is it being spent equitably?

Look for information on your school district website. Your district’s Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for 2021-24 should be posted there. Ask your principal for information at your unit meetings. Invite the superintendent to present reports at PTA council meetings (if she or he doesn’t already do so). Attend school board meetings and be prepared to provide input when needed. Get involved in your school district’s [LCAP process](#) to help decide how the funding will be spent in upcoming years.

## September 14 is the last day to vote in the state recall election

Voting in the statewide recall election is underway. Every registered voter in Orange County should have received a vote-by-mail ballot from the Orange County Registrar of Voters. If you did not receive your ballot, contact the Registrar at (714) 567-7600.

Completed ballots must be mailed or returned to the Registrar’s office, or deposited in an official [Ballot Drop Box](#) by September 14.

If you prefer to vote in person, Vote Centers will be open September 4 through 14. Go to the Registrar’s [website](#) for locations and more information.

There are two questions on the ballot:

1. Do you want to recall the governor (remove him from office)?

2. If the governor is recalled, who do you want to replace him?

If more than 50 percent of voters say “no” to the first question, the governor remains in office.

If more than 50 percent of voters say “yes” to the first question, the person who gets the most votes on the second question becomes the governor. A replacement candidate does NOT need more than 50 percent of the votes to win; he or she simply needs more votes than any of the other candidates. No matter how you answer question one you can still vote for a replacement candidate.

You don’t need to answer both questions. You can answer just the first or second question, or both. It’s your choice. Your vote will be counted either way.



PTA does not support or oppose candidates for office.  
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PTA does encourage members to be informed and to vote.

## Resources to help you be an effective advocate for children

If you are the new advocacy chair or legislative officer for your PTA, thank you for taking this important position. PTA has a proud history of advocating for programs and legislation that help children be safe, healthy and successful. Now you are a part of that vital mission.

If you have never done this job before, you may wonder how to begin. The state legislative process is complex and the issues can be confusing. There is a lot to learn.

Never fear! Fourth District PTA is here to make your job as easy as possible.

**Get training!** A virtual Fourth District PTA **Advocacy Training** will be held on October 8. Watch for more details in the next *Communicator*. You should also plan to attend Fourth District PTA **Advocacy Forums** to get important updates on current topics in education and PTA advocacy, presented by expert speakers. (See the schedule below.)

Does your PTA unit or council need information on advocacy in general or on a particular topic? An Advocacy Committee member from our **Speakers Bureau** can come to your meeting to talk to your members about a variety of issues.

**Educate yourself!** The **Advocacy Resource Notebook**, packed with important information, is available for \$15 at the Fourth District PTA office and at in-person Advocacy events. (This expense should be reimbursed by your PTA.)

**Stay connected!** This newsletter is published once a month, September through June. To receive notifications when each issue is ready, sign up for the mailing list at [fourthdistrictpta.org](http://fourthdistrictpta.org). Past issues are available [here](#). Each issue of the newsletter is accompanied by **Talking Points** that you can use to present an advocacy report at every PTA meeting.

Sometimes PTA calls for immediate action to support

or oppose a bill that is being considered by lawmakers. A click on a website or a quick phone call or email is usually all that is needed. Sign up for local, state and federal legislative alerts [here](#).

There is a wealth of information available online, beginning with the [Fourth District](#) and [State PTA](#) websites. Other important websites include:

- [Ed100](#), a free online course on California education, presented in brief lessons, as well as blogs on current issues.
- [EdSource](#), basic information about California's public education system and up-to-date articles about issues that impact kindergarten through university education in California.
- [California Legislative Information](#), official information on bills that are being considered by the state legislature.
- The State [Legislative Analyst's Office](#), a nonpartisan state office that provides research on various topics and analysis of the state budget.

**We are here to help!** If you have a problem or question contact your council legislative officer, or Bev Berryman, Fourth District PTA Director of Advocacy, at [advocacy@fourthdistrictpta.org](mailto:advocacy@fourthdistrictpta.org).



## The Change Maker's Toolkit

Knowledge is power.

When we advocate for our children and schools, it's vitally important to have accurate information to support our proposals and positions. Luckily, a lot of information is readily available on the Internet, if we know where to find it.

For a guided tour of these treasure troves of data, watch *The Change Maker's Toolkit* on the Ed100 website. This workshop was presented at the 2021 Ed100 Academy for Student Leaders by Carrie Hahnel, a fellow at the Opportunity Institute. Hahnel describes the variety of information that can be found on these websites and demonstrates how to dig in and find it.

"Data needs to be part of advocacy," she says. "It's not just sharing what we want and need, it's also making the case with information."

### Plan Your Advocacy Year

#### Advocacy Training Workshop

October 8 9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

#### Advocacy Forums

November 19 9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

January 21 9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

April 8 9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

#### Sacramento Safari

Orientation, TBD

Sacramento Safari, March 7 and 8

Safari Debrief, TBD

#### CAPTA Legislative Conference

January 24 and 25

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