

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

FEBRUARY 2019

Governor's proposed budget has good news for families

Governor Gavin Newsom's proposed 2019-20 state budget has lots of good news for children and families.

The new governor is pushing for a strong investment in early childhood programs, more money for the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), increased funding for special education, and assistance to school districts in dealing with rising pension costs.

California is starting the year with a \$21 billion surplus, thanks to the state's continuing economic expansion. The governor plans to use substantial amounts of that money to address his priorities in education and other areas, while also paying down the state debt and adding to the rainy day fund.

Governor Newsom wants to spend \$1.8 billion on early childhood programs, including plans to:

- Add 200,000 slots for full-day state-subsidized preschool for low-income 4-year-olds.
- Build or expand kindergarten classrooms so all school districts can offer full-day kindergarten programs.
- Build or expand child care facilities and provide training for child care providers.
- Expand screening and early intervention programs for babies and toddlers.
- Increase paid family leave for newborns to six months.

LCFF funding would increase by about \$2 billion and the allocation for special education would go up by \$576 million under the governor's plan. The state would make a one-time \$3 billion payment into the state retirement

fund to reduce the long-term liability school districts face. This means districts would be able to spend more of their funding on education programs, rather than pension contributions.

The budget contains a number of other important initiatives to help families, including:

- Expansion of the Working Families Tax Credit, to be funded as part of a revenue-neutral tax package.
- Support for the homeless through money to build emergency shelters, navigation centers, or supportive housing.
- The creation of a student data system—from early education through higher education and employment—to track how well students are doing.
- An online platform that merges the Dashboard, the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) electronic template, and other school site and school district reporting tools, including the School Accountability Report Card (SARC), to make it easier for parents and community to access and understand information.

"California State PTA applauds the governor on this budget and looks forward to working with the governor and legislature in supporting programs to help our children and families," said California State PTA President Dianna MacDonald. "We also will continue to advocate for a long-term plan to bring California education funding to the levels of the top 10 highest funded and achieving states."

Sacramento Safari

February 25 and 26

Registration deadline extended!

Register at: www.fourthdistrictpta.org

Sacramento Safari Orientation Meeting

Friday, February 8

9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Fountain Valley School District
10055 Slater Avenue, Fountain Valley

Get important information and materials
for your Sacramento experience!

Save the Date!

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Forum

Friday, March 29, 9:30 a.m.

Program to be announced.

CAPTA Advocacy Conference Call

The next California State PTA advocacy conference call is scheduled for Monday, February 25, at 7 p.m.

Call-in Directions:

- Conference Dial-In Number: 1 (641) 715-3276
- Participant Access Code: 604265#
- To mute or unmute during the session, press *6.

Resources to help you participate in your district's LCAP process

As the school year moves into the spring season, PTA parents should be actively involved in the development of their school district's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).

The LCAP describes your district's goals, actions, services and expenditures to support positive outcomes for all students and meet the needs of low-income students, English learners and foster children. It must address eight state priorities dealing with basic services, state standards, course access, student achievement, other student outcomes, student engagement, parent involvement and school climate.

California State PTA offers brief guides that explain each of these priorities, how they can be measured, and key questions to ask as you discuss these issues. The LCAP Quick Guides can be found at CAPTA.org under Resources.

You also should know how your school and school district are doing and what specific areas need improvement. For this information, go to the **California School Dashboard** (caschooldashboard.org). The newly re-

Superintendents promote parent involvement in their districts

A big thank you to the school district superintendents who participated in the Advocacy Forum in January:

- **Gunn Marie Hansen, Ph.D.**, Orange Unified
- **Michael Matsuda, Ph.D.**, Anaheim Union High
- **Frederick Navarro, Ed.D.**, Newport-Mesa Unified
- **Robert Pletka, Ed.D.**, Fullerton

The superintendents talked about parent involvement, school climate, teacher evaluations, and school safety.

One point that came through loud and clear was that superintendents want and actively seek the participation of parents. In their school districts, parents serve on ongoing district committees, participate in focus groups, and/or go on district-wide tours of schools. They also participate in meetings and surveys to help develop their district's Local Control and Accountability Plan. "We're trying to get everyone's fingerprints on the final document," said Dr. Navarro.

Parent involvement has made a difference! At parent request, Fullerton schools are offering more family activities. Anaheim Union High and Orange Unified added more support staff in response to parent concerns about the emotional health of students.

Another bonus: parent involvement in the LCAP process has led to a high rate of PTA membership in the Anaheim Union High School District, said Dr. Matsuda.

Good news all around!

designed accountability system shows your school and district performance using a number of different measures, including test scores, English learner progress, attendance, graduation rate, suspensions, and college and career readiness. It shows the current status and indicates whether there has been progress in each area.

If you are new to the Dashboard, go to Ed100.org and click on "Blog." There is a series of five blogs that will help you understand and use the Dashboard.

Ed100 also offers information on the LCAP process, including an *LCAP Checklist for Parents*, created with the help of California State PTA. This resource will help you cut through the education jargon and launch meaningful conversations among the people who care about your school. You can find it at Ed100.org under "Resources."

Another excellent resource is EdSource.org. In addition to articles on current education issues, EdSource offers basic information, including a nine-question primer on the Local Control Funding Formula, the basis for the LCAP. You can find it under "Resources."

From California State PTA PTA joins arts advocacy effort

Every student has the right to a dynamic, creative education that includes the arts – California Education Code requires it. Yet, 88 percent of California schools are failing to meet this standard.

This. Must. Change.

That's why California State PTA joined forces with Create CA to launch one of

the most impactful public will campaigns for the arts in recent history to demand arts education for all students.

Simply put – creativity is not optional! The goal of the campaign is to spark a movement with the public, parents, educators, artists and policy makers to demand a comprehensive, sequential arts curriculum for all children in grades K-12.

"At California State PTA, we know the arts are essential to a quality education, and we are extremely proud to be part of this important arts equity movement," said California State PTA President Dianna MacDonald.

The campaign brings awareness to demand a quality education for every student in California, and is currently building a base of engaging, passionate people – on the local level – across the state. Join California's movement for arts education. Sign up at www.createca.org.

