

Fourth District Legislative Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT ADVOCACY TEAM

DECEMBER 2010

The legislative process

How a bill becomes law in California

All legislative bills start as an idea. Any individual or group can bring an idea for a new law or a change in an existing law to a state legislator. If a Senator or Assembly member decides to author the idea and take it through the official steps, it is first drafted into legal language called a bill.

FIRST READING

- A bill is introduced into the Assembly or the Senate and given a number beginning with AB or SB to indicate which house it starts in; then it is sent to the Office of State Printing.
- No bill may be acted upon until it has been in print for 30 days.

COMMITTEE HEARINGS

- Each bill is assigned to appropriate policy committees where it is scheduled for one or more hearings. Bills that require money or have fiscal implications must also be heard in the fiscal committee.
- Anyone can speak for or against a bill before or during hearings. Letters of support or opposition are important and should be mailed to committee members well before the hearing date.
- A majority vote of the full committee is required for a bill to be approved and "passed out" of the committee.

**Got a voice?
Got children?
SPEAK OUT!
Sacramento Safari
March 21-22, 2011**

Register online at www.fourthdistrictpta.org

Learn about education policy and the workings of our state government. Meet with CAPTA legislative advocates. Hear from policy makers and elected representatives. Sign up today!

Calendar of Events

Advocacy Roundtables:

- Friday, January 21, 9:30-11:00 a.m. FVUSD
- Friday, April 15, 9:30-11:00 a.m. FVUSD
Fountain Valley School District Board Room
(10055 Slater Avenue, Fountain Valley, CA)

2011 Sacramento Safari:

- Monday, March 21 – Tuesday, March 22
Be sure to include this line item in your budget!
- **Orientation:** Friday, February 25, 9:30-11:00 a.m.
at Fountain Valley School District Board Room

SECOND AND THIRD READINGS

- Bills passed by committees are read a second time and then placed on file for a third reading.
- When a bill is read the third time it is explained to the full house by its author, discussed by the Members during the floor debate, and voted on by a roll call vote.
- Most bills need a majority vote (21 votes in the Senate and 41 votes in the Assembly) to be passed; but bills that require money or are urgency bills (take effect immediately) require a two-thirds vote (27 in the Senate and 54 in the Assembly) for passage.
- If a bill is defeated the Member may seek reconsideration and another vote.

REPEAT PROCESS IN OTHER HOUSE

Once a bill has been approved by the house of origin, it proceeds through the second house where the same hearing and review procedure is repeated.

RESOLUTION OF DIFFERENCES

- A bill that is amended in the second house must go back to the first house for agreement on the amendments (concurrence). If agreement cannot be reached, the bill moves to a two-house conference committee (3 members of the Assembly and 3 members of Senate) to resolve differences.
- Conference committee hearings are open to the public, and are another time when citizen influence can help legislators arrive at a decision.

- If the committee reaches a compromise, the final version is returned to both houses for a vote.
- When approved by both the Senate and Assembly, the bill then goes to the Governor.

GOVERNOR

- The Governor has three choices when a bill reaches his desk. He can sign it into law, allow it to become law without his signature, or veto it.
- A final and very important time for citizen participation in the bill process is when the bill reaches the Governor's desk. Letters and phone calls received by the Governor's office are taken into consideration when he decides whether to sign or veto a bill.
- If the Governor vetoes the bill, it returns to the house of origin where the author may ask for a vote to override the veto. It requires a two-thirds vote of both houses to override the Governor's veto.
- Urgency measures take effect immediately after they are signed; other bills usually become effective the following January 1st.

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Resources

► Want to know more about a bill? You can track its progress through this website: www.leginfo.ca.gov

► Want to know what to track? Go to the CAPTA website to tap into additional legislation resources and find out the complete status and calendar reports of current legislation being followed by California State PTA, organized by subject area: Community Concerns; Education; Health; Parent Involvement; or Budget/Finance/Taxation:

<http://www.capta.org/sections/advocacy/current-legislation.cfm>



Sacramento Safari registration open

Fourth District PTA's *Sacramento Safari* takes place this school year Monday, March 21, through Tuesday, March 22, 2011. This is a terrific chance to learn about

Ask the Advocacy Team

If you have any questions concerning advocacy issues, please contact us at: advocacy@fourthdistrictpta.org.

Key PTA Links

www.fourthdistrictpta.org – Click on Advocacy
www.capta.org – Select from menu: **Programs and Services: Advocacy** and **Children's Issues: Legislation**
www.pta.org – Click on Take Action

education policy and about the workings of our state government. We meet some of the fine volunteers who serve as advocates at the capitol on behalf of PTA. We get firsthand impressions of our elected representatives. We bring our pro-children message right to the capitol.

All of us on the 4th District A-Team (Advocacy Committee) look forward to our Sacramento adventures with you in March. Don't hesitate to email or call if you have questions.

We have not finalized our speakers for 2011, but here are the featured speakers that were scheduled to appear last year:

- ✓ Glen Thomas, California Secretary of Education
- ✓ Jean Ross, Director of the California Budget Project
- ✓ Rick Miller, California Department of Education
- ✓ Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee columnist
- ✓ Kevin Gordon, President School Innovations and Advocacy
- ✓ Rick Simpson, Deputy Chief of Staff to Karen Bass
- ✓ Paul Navarro, Deputy Legislative Secretary to Governor Schwarzenegger
- ✓ Mac Taylor, Legislative Analyst
- ✓ Assembly member Julia Brownley, Chairman of the Assembly Education Committee
- ✓ Senator Gloria Romero, Chairman of Senate Education Committee
- ✓ Assembly member Tom Torlakson, Member Assembly Education Committee
- ✓ Jo A.S. Loss, President California State PTA
- ✓ Debbie Look, Director of Legislation California State PTA
- ✓ Alison apRoberts, Media Manager California State PTA
- ✓ Paul Richman, Executive Director California State PTA

On-line registration is now available for the 2011 adventure. Registration will not be complete until the Registration Form, Emergency Contact Form, and payment have been received by Fourth District PTA. Go to www.fourthdistrictpta.org and click on the Advocacy tab to go to the Sacramento Safari page to register and get all the details. Before you register, the unit or council that wants you as its representative needs to pass a motion to that effect. A unit or council may vote to be represented by more than one person. Plan on about \$550 per person; see website for pricing details.

*The Advocacy Communicator is published by the Fourth District PTA Advocacy Team and is intended for distribution to local PTA units and councils. Patty Jordan - President; Patty Christiansen - Vice President, Advocacy; Kathleen Fay - Editor.
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