

Fourth District Legislative Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

OCTOBER 2012

Help make our dreams for California schools come true!

By Celia Jaffe, Fourth District PTA President

Finally, we have a dream to fight for in our advocacy efforts!

After years of working to minimize cuts to public education, PTA's campaign for Prop 38 is a chance to bring transformational improvements to each and every public school in California.

As early as a year from now, an elementary school might again have credentialed music and art teachers. A high school might have the counseling resources that kids in other states enjoy to help them plan their futures and stay on a constructive path. A middle school could offer more electives.

These kinds of tangible, significant changes to the school experience of all students in California public schools are within our reach through the resources Prop. 38 will bring to each school on behalf of every student.

Learn about Prop. 38 and find out how you can be involved at www.fourthdistrictpta.org, under Advocacy.

What will you do to make the dream real? Get the word out! Make this campaign visible among friends and family. Your actions make a difference!

Plan to attend Sacramento Safari

One of the highlights of our advocacy year is Sacramento Safari, our annual two-day trip to the state Capitol. Join us and you will hear from a variety of experts in public education policy and state government. Past speakers have included state legislators, the Legislative Analyst, representatives from the California Board of Education, and noted Sacramento journalists.

This is followed by pre-arranged small group visits to the offices of our local legislators in the Capitol.

The trip is open to PTA members who are appointed by their unit or council. The cost is about \$600, including hotel stay and travel expenses. This is a legitimate PTA expense.

Plan now to send at least one representative on this exciting, informative trip! For more information go to www.fourthdistrictpta.org and click on Advocacy.

Calendar of Events

Election Day

Tuesday, November 6, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

★Be sure to vote!

Advocacy Roundtable

Friday, November 30, 10:30 a.m. to noon

A bipartisan report from Sacramento with Rick Simpson and a local legislator (to be announced).

★Open to all PTA members. Please RSVP to Fran Sdao at roundtables@fourthdistrictpta.org

PTA encourages voter registration

PTA is nonpartisan, but we do get involved in elections in a number of ways. One way is by encouraging people to register and vote. You can make it easy for new voters by setting up a table with voter registration forms at back-to-school night or other school events.

Where else can you register to vote? Many post offices, libraries, city halls, and DMV offices have voter registration forms that you can fill out, sign and mail to the Registrar. You can call a toll-free number and request a form be mailed to you, in English (1-800-345-VOTE) or in Spanish (1-800-345-VOTA).

You may go to www.ocvote.com, the website for the Orange County Registrar of Voters. On the home page, click "Registration" and follow the directions. When you complete and submit the information, a printable registration form will be presented. State law requires your original signature to appear on voter registration documents, so you must print and sign the form, and mail or deliver it to the Registrar's office at the address provided. Your registration will not be processed until this is done.

You can also complete your registration online with a new system recently announced by Secretary of State Debra Bowen. Citizens who register through the secretary's website, www.sos.ca.gov, can authorize election officials to search the Department of Motor Vehicles database, match it to the voter registration form and use an electronic image of their signature to complete the application. Those without a driver's license or state identification card will still need to register on paper.

In order to register to vote, you must be 18 years of age on or before election day.

California State PTA takes positions on statewide propositions

California State PTA takes positions on proposed legislation and ballot measures that impact the education, health and well-being of children. These positions are based on the Purposes of PTA and on the legislation platform and resolutions approved by delegates at State and National PTA conventions.

In addition to Prop. 38, California State PTA supports Prop. 35, which would expand the definition of human trafficking, increase penalties for traffickers and require them to register as sex offenders, and require additional training for law enforcement officers.

PTA has not taken a position on Prop. 37, which mandates the labeling of Genetically Engineered Foods. A study group was formed for additional research.

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Speakers Bureau

Need help explaining the issues?

A knowledgeable speaker from the Fourth District PTA Advocacy Team will come to your unit or council meeting and give a short presentation on Prop. 38, education funding in California, or other advocacy topics.

Contact Shereen Walter at
speakers@fourthdistrictpta.org

PTA gets involved in elections

Local, state and national elections have a huge impact on public education, so it is important for PTA members to be actively involved.

As a nonpartisan organization, PTA never supports or opposes candidates or political parties. However, PTA units, councils and districts can:

- Provide information about candidates for office through candidate forums or questionnaires. Every candidate must be given an equal opportunity to participate.
- Direct voters to nonpartisan websites such as smart-voter.com (League of Women Voters).
- Urge voters to support or oppose a ballot measure when California State PTA has taken a position.
- Participate in an effort to pass a school bond or local parcel tax, if the local PTA board and/or membership has voted to support the campaign.
- Register voters and encourage people to vote.

For more information, go to the Advocacy section of the *California State PTA Toolkit* or click on Advocacy at www.fourthdistrictpta.org.

CAPTA issued the following statement on Prop. 30:

Based on conflicting authorities in our resolutions and position statements, a "neutral" position was taken on Proposition 30, sponsored by the Governor. This initiative proposes to help address the state's budget deficit, which impacts overall school funding, but it does not guarantee new, additional funding for schools, since the legislature may supplant existing funding for schools with monies raised by Proposition 30.

According to the PTA Toolkit, a neutral position means, "The initiative may be relevant to the welfare of children and youth, but after careful analysis, the California State PTA has chosen to neither support nor oppose this particular initiative due to either lack of existing specific authority or conflicting authorities." PTA will not support or oppose passage of the initiative.

CAPTA added: "Based on our resolutions and position statements, the PTA does not have the authority to take positions on any of the remaining ballot measures."

A position adopted by the California State PTA on a statewide measure is the official PTA position for all PTA districts, councils, and units. Therefore, any local unit, council or district PTA may participate in the campaign in support of the PTA position without a vote or other formal action by their local PTA board or association.

Important Dates for the General Election

October 8

Last day to register to vote and receive a mailed sample ballot pamphlet. Voters registering after October 8 will NOT be mailed a Sample Ballot Pamphlet.

October 22

Last day to register to vote in this election.

October 23 through November 6

Voter registration open for new citizens.

October 30

Vote-by-mail applications must be received by the Registrar by this date. (Applications at www.ocvote.com)

November 6

Election Day; polls open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Vote-by-mail ballots must be turned in by mail or in person by 8 p.m.

Questions? Go to the Orange County Registrar of Voters at www.ocvote.com or call (714) 567-7600.