

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

SEPTEMBER 2017

More education money in this year's budget, but is it enough?

Once again, the state education budget for 2017-18 includes both good news and bad.

The Prop. 98 allocation, which funds K-12 and community colleges, was increased \$3.1 billion over last year, to a total of \$74.5 billion. School districts' share of the increase includes \$1.4 million more for the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and \$887 million in one-time discretionary grants for implementation of state standards, teacher training, building maintenance, instructional materials, and technology.

The state pre-school program will be expanded to serve about 3,000 more children. An additional \$93 million is allocated for purposes such as after-school and summer programs, career pathway programs, and the California State Library. The Southern California Regional Occupation Center will receive \$4 million.

With this year's funding increase, the transition to California's new funding system will be 97 percent complete. Full implementation of LCFF will occur when every district receives per-student funding at least equal to what they received in 2007-08, adjusted for inflation.

This will bring schools back to a level where they were already seriously underfunded. Per student funding in California was near the lowest nationwide before the Great Recession began in 2007 and there were severe budget cuts after that.

In addition to the continuing lack of adequate funding, California State PTA is concerned about a provision in the budget that allows the state to suspend Prop. 98 budget increases for three years, beginning in 2018-19.

"This is a three-year suspension that has the effect of cutting funding to schools for the next three years without

knowing if it is necessary," according to the California PTA website, capta.org. "Education is the only area of the budget that was cut into the future. Once again, the state is balancing the budget on the backs of our most vulnerable — our children. California State PTA will continue to advocate for elimination of this cut to educational funding in the future."

Another problem is that about \$1 billion of the increase will not go to education programs because school districts must pay more into the California state retirement systems for teachers and non-teaching staff. Both systems have been underfunded for years and the state is now addressing a \$60 billion unfunded liability by requiring higher payments by the state, school districts and individual teachers.

California State PTA Advocacy Goals for 2017-19

1. Support adequate funding for public education by educating our members and policy makers, and advocating for legislation to bring California within the top 10 states in per pupil funding.
2. Promote schools as a safe and welcoming environment for all students, families and communities, and support children's health and welfare in all aspects of their lives.
3. Support and protect high quality PUBLIC education from efforts that would dismantle or weaken this vital foundation of our democracy.
4. Advocate for authentic and measureable family engagement standards in education policy.

Advocacy Training

Friday, September 15 — 9:30 a.m. to Noon

Fountain Valley School District
10055 Slater Avenue, Fountain Valley

Breakout sessions for beginners and advanced advocates

Free! All PTA members are welcome to attend. Every unit and council should send at least one representative.

Guest Speakers from the Orange County Department of Education

Allison Granger
Coordinator of Language Arts

Steve Venz
Coordinator for Visual and Performing Arts

Walk-ins accepted, but pre-registration at www.fourthdistrictpta.org is appreciated!

Can CAPTA support new revenue sources for education?

Does California State PTA have authority to support legislation that seeks additional sources of revenue for public education?

This question was tackled by a study committee of the CAPTA Legislation Action Committee. A report of the findings was issued in June.

California State PTA derives its authority to support or oppose proposed legislation and statewide ballot measures from its membership. Authority for PTA action is based on:

- Resolutions adopted by California State PTA convention delegates
- The legislation platform principles and planks, adopted every two years by convention delegates
- Position statements and resolutions adopted by the California State PTA Board of Managers
- National PTA resolutions, approved by the delegates at the National PTA convention
- National PTA Board of Directors position statements and legislative directives
- Previous PTA action on the issues
- The Purposes of the PTA.

The committee conducted an extensive review of PTA General Principles, legislation planks, and resolutions adopted during the past 40 years. Ten resolutions have called for increased education funding and six call for the state to find stable and adequate revenue sources

for schools.

“A long sequence of PTA resolutions and position statements, in addition to our current legislative platform, voice this organization’s concerns about inadequate education funding and history of support for strategies to attempt to improve education funding,” the report states.

“Further, we find ample evidence that current funding levels remain inadequate in terms of their ability to support the kinds of educational programs and services necessary for schools to meet the state’s expectations for student outcomes. This is true despite the notable increase in per pupil funding that has occurred since 2014.

“Our PTA authorities call for responsible governance and for tax reforms that will improve the current state process for funding schools. We believe these general authorities give us latitude in the kinds of reforms California State PTA could support.”

The authors of the report are CAPTA Director of Legislation Lea Darrah, Vice President for Education Mary Perry, Vice President for Health and Community Concerns Shereen Walter, and President-elect Celia Jaffe. Both Shereen Walter and Celia Jaffe are former Fourth District PTA vice presidents for advocacy, and Celia is also a former Fourth District president.

The report is available at capta.org under Focus Area/ Advocacy.

Three PTA-supported bills signed into law by governor

Three bills supported by California State PTA have been signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown.

AB37 (O'Donnell) This requires the state to adopt media arts standards by 2019, allowing schools to instruct students in pre-K through 12th grade in media such as video production, sound design, game design and multimedia live production as part of the visual and performing arts requirements.

AB 170 (O'Donnell) This bill removes a long-standing restriction that prohibited the state from awarding multiple subject preliminary teaching credentials to an individual who had a BA in professional education. In other words, prospective elementary and middle school teachers may now major in education.

SB 755 (Beall) When there is credible evidence that a child under 15 years has been sexually assaulted, psychological testing of the child must be conducted by a licensed psychotherapist and limited to no more than three hours, unless the court grants an extension for good cause.

PTA members approve revised advocacy policies and procedures

Updated policies and procedures related to advocacy were approved in May by convention delegates at the California State PTA Convention and the State PTA Board of Managers.

The revised policies clarify the roles of state and local PTAs in adopting positions and taking action on legislative measures. This includes:

- How the State PTA Legislation Action Committee may take action between meetings of the State Board of Managers.
- When a unit, council, or district PTA may take a position on a statewide ballot measure.
- Supporting or expressing disapproval of a CAPTA position on the local level.
- Taking a position on a statewide legislative measure that affects only a local or regional area.
- Unit, council or district PTA action on local issues.
- Sending advocacy materials home with students.

The revised policies are included in the online *California State PTA Toolkit* at www.capta.org.