

# Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

MAY 2018

## CAPTA bill on family engagement advances to the Assembly floor

A bill that creates a more specific definition of family engagement in the State Education Code has been unanimously approved by two State Assembly committees and is on its way to the full Assembly for approval.

AB 2878 is sponsored by California State PTA (CAPTA) and was introduced by Assembly Member Rocky Chávez, from San Diego. Seeing this bill passed into law this year is a top priority for CAPTA.

Parental involvement is one of eight state priorities that a school district must address in the development of its Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). However, the term is not clearly defined and is interpreted differently throughout the state.

AB 2878 would add the term 'family engagement' to the Education Code and would specify that this includes:

- Welcoming all families into the school community
- Engaging in effective two-way communication
- Supporting pupil success
- Empowering families to advocate for equity and access

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## Get ready for a next year!

Advocating for children, families and public education is central to PTA's mission. Make sure your PTA is ready to participate in this important role next year.

What can you do now to get ready?

- **Make sure your PTA picks an advocacy representative.** This can be an elected office or an appointed chair position.
- **Attend the Advocacy Session at the Fourth District PTA Annual Spring Workshops on June 2.** The workshop is open to all interested PTA members. To register, go to [www.fourthdistrictpta.org/trainingworkshops](http://www.fourthdistrictpta.org/trainingworkshops)
- **Educate your advocacy representative about Fourth District PTA resources that make the job easy.** These include this newsletter, talking points to present at PTA meetings, free informative Advocacy Forums, the Advocacy Resource Notebook, a speakers bureau and more!
- **Include advocacy in your PTA budget for next year.**
- **Plan to send a representative to Sacramento Safari,** scheduled for February 25 and 26 in 2019. Include about \$650 in your PTA budget for the trip.

- Treating families as partners to inform, influence, and create practices and programs that support pupil success and collaboration with families and the broader community
- Expanding pupil learning opportunities and community services
- Promoting civic participation

Research shows authentic family engagement leads to reduced absenteeism, decreased dropout rates, increased student achievement and increased graduation rates, leading to young adults who are college and career ready. According to the Harvard Family Project (2009), "schools would need to spend \$1,000 more per pupil to reap the same gains in student achievement that an involved and engaged parent brings."

If the bill is approved by the Assembly, it must be passed by the State Senate and signed by the Governor in order to become law.

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## Other bills supported by CAPTA

California State PTA supports two bills that would provide crisis information to students. **AB 2390** (Harper) and **SB 972** (Portantino) and would require schools to include phone numbers to suicide prevention hotlines and the Crisis Text Line on student identification cards.

CAPTA also supports the following:

- **AB 1754** (McCarty) This bill would require the state to provide preschool programs to all low-income 4-year-old children. Currently about 33,000 eligible 4-year-olds are not in a school readiness program.
- **AB 1871** (Bonta) This bill would require charter schools, with the exception of schools that provide non-classroom instruction, to provide a meal during the school day to students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.
- **AB 2303** (Thurmond) This bill would impose a 10 percent tax on private, for-profit prisons and deposit the proceeds in the State Incarceration Prevention Fund to support preschool and after school programs.
- **SB 1362** (Beall) This bill would allow a school district board, county board of education, or the state to deny a petition to open a charter school based on a finding that the school is unlikely to meet its financial obligations, maintain a positive fund balance, and maintain a prudent level of reserves for the duration of the charter agreement.

## Educate yourself about California public education with Ed100

As a PTA advocate, it is important for you to be well-informed about California's public education system. That way, for instance, you'll know how to respond when someone says, "I thought the Lottery took care of school funding." (The correct answer is, "No, dear friend, that was just the way they got voters to approve the proposition that created the Lottery. In actuality, the Lottery provides only about one percent of the state's annual education budget.")

(The California Lottery, by the way, was the brainchild of a company that collects signatures for initiatives. The funding for the signature-collecting effort and election campaign was provided by a company that produces—surprise!—lottery materials.)

Happily, there is an easy way to learn just about everything you need to know about California schools. Simply go to Ed100.org. There you'll find a free, self-paced online course that prepares you to make a difference in your school or school district.

The lessons are brief, readable and even entertaining. (What do Tom Cruise and Danny DeVito have to do with school-related statistics? Find out in Lesson 2.2)

Who is behind this treasure trove of information?

The founder and primary writer is Jeff Camp, who was one of our speakers at Sacramento Safari. He formerly worked for Microsoft, but after surviving a brain tumor re-evaluated his life and decided that "the education of more than 6 million students seemed like a very valuable use of my time." He started the website to get more people to think deeper and better about education.

One of the main writers is Carol Kocivar, who was also a Safari speaker. Carol is an attorney and journalist from San Francisco, a former California State PTA president and a current member of the State PTA Legislation Team.

Carol and Jeff constantly revise and update Ed100, so you know you are getting the latest information. At the end of each lesson there is a test (only one question!) and an opportunity to leave comments or questions.

Along with the valuable information, you can also win up to \$1,000 for your school. Every time you complete a lesson your school is entered into a raffle. Draw-

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### PTA Advocacy Conference Call

The next California State PTA advocacy conference call is scheduled for Tuesday, May 29, at 7 p.m.

#### Call-in Directions:

- Conference Dial-In Number: 1 (712) 775-7300
- Participant Access Code: 960878#
- To mute or unmute during the session, press \*6.

ings are held every few months.

To get you interested in Ed100, we challenge you to an information scavenger hunt. How many of these questions can you answer? The lesson where you'll find the answer is provided.

Ready? Go!

- When it comes to education data, California is "flying blind." Why? (Lesson 9.5)
- What was the ratio of California school nurses to students in 2015? (Lesson 2.7)
- Is it true that half of new teachers quit the profession within five years? (Lesson 3.3)
- How does the Anna Karenina Principle apply to schools that are not functioning well? (Lesson 7.9)
- What is differentiated instruction? (Lesson 4.5)
- Which was the last state to make school attendance through elementary grades mandatory? (Lesson 1.7)
- Where can you find a list of questions to ask if you get to participate in the interview process for a new principal? (Lesson 5.8)
- Which does America have more of: teachers or soldiers? (Lesson 10.1)
- What is the State Seal of Biliteracy? (Lesson 6.16)
- How did the Serrano v. Priest case change school funding in California? (Lesson 8.3)
- Is the school lunch program an accurate measure of the level of poverty in a community? (Lesson 2.2)

Did you learn a bunch of new information? We bet you did!

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### Federal budget increases funding for child care and education

California will receive more than \$230 million in additional funding from the federal government this year to support a child care program. This will allow about 12,000 more children to receive child care in the state, according to the Center for Law and Social Policy.

The funding comes from a \$2.4 billion increase for the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program, which provides child care to low-income parents so they can work or attend school or job training. The program currently serves about 108,000 children in the state.

The increase was included in the federal budget that was approved by Congress and signed by President Trump. It includes an additional \$610 million for the Head Start program nationwide.

The federal budget also increased the overall level of federal education funding by \$2.6 billion.