

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

SEPTEMBER 2018

What you need to know as a new PTA advocacy chair

If you are the new advocacy chair or legislative officer for your PTA, thank you for taking this important position. PTA has a proud history of advocating for programs and legislation that help children be safe, healthy and successful. Now you are a part of that vital mission.

If you have never done this job before, you may wonder how to begin. The state legislative process is complex and the issues can be confusing. There is a lot to learn.

Never fear! Fourth District PTA is here to make your job as easy as possible.

Get training! Fourth District PTA **Advocacy Training** will be held on Friday, September 14. (Details below.) A workshop for beginners will give you the basic information you need. You should also plan to attend Fourth District PTA **Advocacy Forums** to get important updates on current topics in education and PTA advocacy, presented by expert speakers. (Schedule on page 2.)

Educate yourself! The **Advocacy Resource Notebook**, packed with important information, will be on sale at the Advocacy Training for \$15. (This expense should be reimbursed by your PTA.) The Notebook is also available at the Fourth District PTA office.

There is a wealth of information available online, beginning with the Fourth District and State PTA websites (fourthdistrictpta.org and capta.org). An invaluable resource is **Ed100.org**, a free online course on California education, broken into brief lessons. Encourage your

members to access this course to become informed parents and to win possible prizes for your school.

Stay connected! Sign up to receive this newsletter every month, September through June. Go to fourthdistrictpta.org and sign up under Communications/Publication and Resources. You will be notified every month when the *Advocacy Communicator* is ready.

Each issue of the newsletter is accompanied by **Talking Points**. Make copies of the newsletter for your members or send it to them electronically. Make sure Advocacy is on the agenda for your PTA meeting and use the Talking Points to make your report. And just like that, you have completed an important part of your job: informing your members about current advocacy issues.

While you are at fourthdistrictpta.org, sign up for **LegLinks**. You will receive emails about legislative activities and alerts when action is needed. Often you can complete the action with just a few clicks on the National or State PTA website.

We are here to help! If you have a problem or question contact your council legislative officer, or Vivien Moreno, Fourth District PTA vice president for advocacy, at advocacy@fourthdistrictpta.org.

PTA Advocacy Conference Calls

Get up-to-date information about education issues and bills directly from our California State PTA advocates by participating in conference calls. Calls are scheduled at 7 p.m. on the following dates:

September 24, 2018
October 22, 2018
November 26, 2018
January 28, 2019
February 25, 2019
March 25, 2019
April 22, 2019
May 28, 2019

Call-in Directions:

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

If you encounter any phone issues like dropped calls or long periods of silence, please hang up and dial (805) 360-1075. This reroutes you to a different port in their system so you can enter the dial-in number directly.

Fourth District PTA

Advocacy Training

Friday, September 14

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

Fountain Valley School District

10055 Slater Avenue, Fountain Valley

Choose your level:

Beginning Advocacy

Focus on the Local Level

Advanced Workshop

The Legislative Process and the Life Cycle of a Bill

Free and open to all PTA members.

Walk-ins are welcome, but please register at

www.fourthdistrictpta.org

Ed100.org offers an informative blog on current education issues

Ed100.org is a great place to get a free education on how our California school system works. The brief lessons describe student issues, funding, facilities, what is taught in schools, and much more.

In addition to the basic lessons, Ed100 has a blog with updates on advocacy issues. Recent topics include:

- **Five Strategies for Family Engagement in Schools.** Making real change happen in a school system, succinctly expressed in five points.
- **More Money for Schools? No, Not Really.** The budget for education grew. But the costs of pensions and special education grew more, so cut, cut, cut!

PTA supports arts for all children

Research shows that the arts play an important role in human development. Arts education helps students succeed in all academic areas. All students – not just those with special talents – should have the opportunity to express their unique individuality through creating and learning in and through the arts.

For all these reasons, California State PTA is a strong supporter of arts education for all students.

To help parents advocate for the arts in their schools, CAPTA and CreateCA have developed the **Parents' Guide to the Visual and Performing Arts in California Public Schools**. It provides an overview of what children should learn in dance, music, theatre and the visual arts by the end of each grade level. To obtain a copy of the handbook go to capta.org/resources.

In addition, the CAPTA School Smarts Parent Engagement Program will show you how to make sure that arts education is included in your school's Local Control and Accountability Plan. You can find this resource at CAPTA.org/programs-events.

- **Flunking Democracy.** America depends on an informed public to engage in issues with intelligence and compassion. Are our schools delivering?
- **Suicide Prevention: The Role of Parents.** Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for teens. Here's what your school can do to save lives.
- **Are Charter Schools Good or Evil?** It's a false choice, but the topic has become polarized. What you need to know to have productive conversations.
- **New Rules for Teachers Unions.** Overturning 40 years of precedent, the Supreme Court has ruled that teachers cannot be compelled to pay union fees. Here's why it matters to teachers, and how it might affect families.

Family engagement bill advances

AB 2878, which would define family engagement in the State Education Code, was approved by both the Assembly and the Senate. It is now in a concurrence process to approve an amendment that was added by the Senate.

AB 2878 is sponsored by California State PTA (CAPTA) and was introduced by Assembly Member Rocky Chávez. Assemblyman Kevin McCarty is a co-author. Seeing this bill passed into law 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 create a more specific description of family engagement to guide school districts in developing their LCAPs.

Two candidates for state superintendent

California voters will select a new state superintendent of public education in the November 6 election. Two candidates are running for the office: Tony Thurmond and Marshall Tuck.

You can get information about both of these candidates at EdSource.org. The website offers articles about each of the men, a comparison of their positions on various issues, and a video of a candidate forum sponsored by EdSource.

The state superintendent heads the California Department of Education, which administers and enforces state and federal education laws, provides technical assistance to school districts, and collects, analyzes and disseminates data about the state's school system. The superintendent has limited authority to set policy, but often serves as an advocate for policy changes.

Plan Your Advocacy Year

Advocacy Training Workshop

September 14 9:30 a.m.—noon

Advocacy Forums

November 16 9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

January 25 9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

March 29 9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

Sacramento Safari

Orientation, February 8, 9:30 a.m.—11 a.m.

Trip, February 25 - 26

CAPTA Legislative Conference

January 14 - 15, in Sacramento