

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

DECEMBER 2019

CAPTA supports two school funding initiatives

California State PTA supports two state initiatives that would increase school funding.

Public Preschool, K-12, and College Health and Safety Bond Act of 2020

This initiative authorizes a \$15 billion bond to construct and modernize school facilities. It also changes the way the funds are allocated to school districts, with special provisions for small districts and communities that can't raise local funds. It was passed by the State Legislature and signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom, and will be on the March 2020 ballot for voter approval.

The measure authorizes the state to issue \$15 billion in bonds to be used for K-12 schools, community colleges and universities. The funding will be allocated as follows:

- K-12 public schools -- \$9 billion
 - \$2.8 billion for new construction
 - \$5.2 billion for modernization
 - \$500 million for Career Technical Education facilities
 - \$500 million for charter school facilities
- Community colleges -- \$2 billion
- University of California -- \$2 billion
- California State University -- \$2 billion

School districts generally apply to the state for construction and modernization funding and receive grants on a first-come, first-served basis. This initiative will change the distribution process to focus on the neediest school districts, based on the number of students who are English learners, low income or in foster care.

Up to 10 percent of the construction and modernization funding for K-12 will be set aside for small districts, which often lack the staff and resources to get in line quickly for state grants. Small districts will get technical assistance to plan and complete projects.

Generally, school districts must have a local source of construction money (such as a local school facilities bond) to qualify for state funding. Under this initiative, some districts that are not able to raise local funds will be eligible for full funding from the state.

The bond includes \$150 million in priority funding to test for lead in school water systems and replace systems where contaminated water is found.

The last state school facilities bond was approved by voters in 2016. All of that funding has been spent or allocated.

California Schools and Local Communities Funding Act

This initiative requires that commercial and industrial real estate property be taxed on current market value, as opposed to the purchase price. A property's market value is equivalent to what it could be sold for today.

The initiative will raise between \$6.5 billion and \$11.5 billion in most years, depending on the strength of real estate markets. This money would be allocated to schools (40 percent) and other local governments (60 percent).

The initiative protects all homeowners and renters by maintaining tax protections for all residential property. Residential properties would continue to be taxed based on the purchase price.

Small business owners are exempt from this initiative, which also eliminates taxes on equipment and fixtures for small businesses.

A revised version of the initiative is being circulated for signature collection to place it on the November 2020 ballot. CAPTA urges members to help collect signatures.

Please remember that you may only collect signatures and hold PTA advocacy meetings off of school property. You may use your PTA website and PTA email to distribute advocacy information to your members.

For more information go to capta.org or schoolsandcommunitiesfirst.org.

Why should you go to Sacramento Safari? February 24 and 25



- ★ Hear from key speakers on issues that affect children and youth.
- ★ Learn about the inner workings of state government.
- ★ Advocate directly to our legislators.
- ★ Network and learn from other PTA leaders.
- ★ It's awesome!

Registration fees increase on Dec. 17

Don't miss out on the most exciting advocacy event of the year!

Register now at www.fourthdistrictpta.org

How your PTA can support a local school facilities bond

Your school district has decided to run a school facilities bond. Can your PTA get involved in the campaign?

The answer is yes, but only if your association votes to support the bond.

California State PTA supports efforts to provide safe and adequate school facilities for all students. This has been confirmed by Resolutions passed by the members at several CAPTA State Conventions. However, your PTA should conduct a study to determine whether the bond that is proposed by your district is something your members are willing to support.

The PTA president appoints study committee members and a chair. The committee gathers facts and prepares a report that includes reference materials and other resources. The report is approved by the PTA executive board and then presented to the association for a vote.

With the approval of the association, your PTA can be involved in the bond campaign in a number of ways:

- Participating on the school district committee to recommend to the board of education the feasibility of placing a facilities bond or parcel tax on the local ballot, and what provisions the measure should include.

- Taking an active role in planning and running the campaign.
- Providing speakers to inform the community.
- Developing and/or distributing available campaign material – but not by using student help, unless permitted by the school district (California State PTA Legislation Policies and Procedure No. 11).
- Making use of radio, TV, and print media, including newsletters, editorial board visits, letters to the editor, and other communication resources such as PTA email and Web pages.

More information is available at fourthdistrictpta.org under Advocacy/ PTA and Elections.

OCDE in “uncharted territory”

Just as each school district in Orange County must submit its annual budget to the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) for approval, the OCDE must have its own budget approved by the California State Department of Education.

This year OCDE submitted two competing budgets, neither of which was accepted by the state.

The budget submitted by Orange County Superintendent Al Mijares was rejected because it does not have the approval of the county Board of Education. Three county board members – Ken Williams, Lisa Sparks and Mari Barke – sent their own budget to the state, eliminating \$172,442 from a \$257 million total. That budget was also rejected because it does not include the signature of the county superintendent.

In a letter to the county, State Superintendent Tony Thurmond said the situation is “without precedent” and “uncharted territory.”

In November, the three Orange County board members filed a lawsuit against Mijares and Thurmond, questioning whether the board or the superintendent should have final say over the county’s education budget.

In an opinion piece in the *Orange County Register*, Williams wrote that the board’s last-minute budget changes were “to help our students by scaling back the department’s excessive political and conference travel spending.”

According to an article in the Oct. 28 *Register*, “Mijares...believes the move wasn’t about saving money for students or teachers, but an attempt to wrestle power from his office so the board majority can push a conservative ideology on issues such as charter schools and sex education in the classroom.”

The next OCDE board meeting will be held at 10 a.m. on December 11 at 200 Kalmus Drive in Costa Mesa.

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Forum Friday, January 24

9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Fountain Valley School District Boardroom
10055 Slater Avenue, Fountain Valley

Hear from a panel of Orange County
school district superintendents

- **Christopher Downing**, Ph.D., Anaheim Elementary
- **Ramon Miramontes**, Ph.D. Buena Park
- **Crystal Turner**, Ed.D., Saddleback Valley Unified
- **Terry Walker**, Ed.M., Irvine Unified

and

Al Mijares, Ph.D.
Orange County Superintendent of Schools

Free and open to all PTA members.

PTA Advocacy Conference Call

The next California State PTA advocacy conference call is scheduled for Wednesday, February 5, at 7 p.m.

Call-in Directions:

- Conference Dial-In Number: 1 (605) 313-4821
- Participant Access Code: 604265#
- To mute or unmute during the session, press *6.

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