

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

OCTOBER 2020

California State PTA calls for long-term funding solutions

In spite of a projected \$17.8 billion shortfall in K-12 education funding, California lawmakers ended their two-year session with no new funding for schools. So far, the federal government is not sending financial help either.

“We can’t continue to kick the can down the road when it comes to funding our schools and students,” said Celia Jaffe, California State PTA President. “We need to address the growing student equity gap that is continuing to worsen during this global pandemic and we call on our state leaders to take this opportunity to create a long-term, stable funding source for schools.”

At this point, the state’s solution is to issue deferrals to school districts, a tactic that was also used during the Great Recession. Districts are allowed to spend as much money as they should have received from the state. They make up the shortfall in state funding by borrowing money from their own budget reserves, from county offices of

education, or from the private market. When the economy improves, the state repays the deferrals.

California State PTA, along with the Education Coalition (nine statewide K-12 education associations), is calling for:

- **Additional revenue streams**, such as suspending or eliminating tax expenditures (which includes credits, deductions, exemptions, and exclusions) and imposing additional taxes on high income individuals, or corporate tax changes.
- **Passage of Prop. 15**, a measure on the November ballot that would tax commercial and industrial property based on current market value, rather than the purchase price. This would raise an additional \$2.6 to \$4.6 billion for schools and community colleges. It would not change property tax on private or rental residential property or farm land.

You have many options to cast your ballot in the General Election

Voting will be different this year. But your choices are many!

Every registered voter will receive a ballot in the mail. When you get your ballot, vote! Then be sure to **sign the return envelope** so the Registrar of Voters can verify that you are a legitimate voter.

You have several options to return the ballot:

- ☐ Mail it back, no postage required. This year only, ballots will be accepted by the registrar for 17 days after Election Day, but **they must be postmarked by Election Day** to be counted.
- ☐ Deposit your ballot in any one of more than 100 drop boxes stationed throughout Orange County.
- ☐ Bring the ballot to any one of 188 Vote Centers in Orange County.

- ☐ Deliver your ballot to the Registrar of Voters office: 1300 S. Grand Avenue, Building C, Santa Ana

If you prefer to vote in person, you can do so at any Voter Center in Orange County. The centers will be open on Election Day and four days prior. Many of the locations offer drive-through voting. There will even be a “Mega Vote Center” at the Honda Center. Health and safety protocols will be in place at all locations.

Vote Center hours:

- ☐ October 30 through November 2 — 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- ☐ Election Day, November 3 — 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

To find the drop box or Voter Center that is most convenient for you, go to www.ocvote.com

Advocacy Webinar cancelled

The Advocacy Webinar scheduled for October 7 has been cancelled due to the national vice presidential candidate debate. The previously announced schedule will resume on November 11.

Get the latest advocacy news from the California State PTA **Advocacy Insider**.

You can read recent issues and sign up to receive the newsletter via email [here](#).

Save the Date! Superintendents Forum

Thursday, November 12
(Please note date change)
9:30 to 11:30 a.m. via Zoom

Guest superintendents to be announced.
Hear how our Orange County school superintendents are dealing with the new challenges they face this school year.

Resources to help you advocate for children and schools

There are numerous resources that will help you be a well-informed advocate for children. Here are just a few:

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Resource Notebook

A comprehensive guide for local PTA members, available for \$15 at the Fourth District PTA office. This is a legitimate PTA expense. (Your PTA will reimburse you; we provide receipts.)

California State PTA – www.capta.org

CAPTA advocacy activities, and links to information about the state legislature, the state's education finance system, statistical information and much more!

National PTA – www.pta.org/advocacy

PTA advocacy from a national perspective.

Ed100 – www.edsource.org

Detailed information about California's education system presented in brief lessons, plus informative blogs on current education issues.

Ban on flavored smoking products becomes law, but may be challenged

The sale of flavored tobacco and vaping products to adults and children is now banned in California, thanks to the efforts of the California State PTA and a broad coalition of health organizations and local municipalities.

SB 793 (Hill), which prohibits these products statewide, was approved by state lawmakers and signed into law by Gov. Gavin Newsom.

This was a sweet victory since the tobacco and vaping industry worked hard to defeat the bill.

CAPTA based its work on a resolution passed by the membership at this year's state convention, which called for the prohibition of all sales of flavored tobacco, not just to kids.

In a letter to the legislature, CAPTA pointed out that flavored smoking products drive the demand for use, with 97 percent of young e-cigarette users preferring flavored products and 70 percent saying that this was the reason for their use. More than 5.3 million kids in the U.S (27.5 percent) now use e-cigarettes.

"While we understand the tax implications and potential loss of revenue as a result of this bill, we believe the health benefits to our children and youth should hold more sway," CAPTA stated.

The tobacco industry is funding a petition drive to require a referendum. If this effort succeeds in collecting 623,212 signatures by December 10, 2020, the law will be on hold until the next general election in 2022, when voters statewide will decide whether to reject or keep the law.

EdSource – www.EdSource.org

Basic information about California education from pre-school through college as well as up-to-date reports and commentaries on current education issues.

California Legislative Information –

www.leginfo.ca.gov

Official information about bills that are being considered by the state legislature. Hint: If you are researching a bill, enter the number on the search page, then look at "Bill Analysis" for background information and an explanation of why the author thinks the bill is needed.

Few bills supported by CAPTA are passed and signed by the Governor

In the second year of a legislative session overshadowed by the pandemic, only a handful of the bills supported by the California State PTA were passed. Among those signed by the governor are:

- **AB 465 (Eggman):** requires that if mental health professionals participate in a program assisting law enforcement in serving the community, or respond to calls for service instead of law enforcement, that those mental health professionals are supervised by licensed mental health professionals.
- **AB 2112 (Ramos):** establishes the Office of Suicide Prevention to provide information, assistance and coordination of resources statewide, with an emphasis on the needs of youth and other vulnerable populations at risk of suicide.
- **SB 1383 (Jackson):** broadens the Family-School Partnership Act to apply to all parents of K-12 children and enable them to take time off to tend to child care responsibilities including a school-closure pursuant to a state of emergency declaration without fear of discharge or discrimination by their employer.

www.votersedge.org

- ★ Nonpartisan information on federal, state, and local candidates
- ★ An in-depth look at the ballot measures, including supporters, opponents, and money spent on campaigns
- ★ Information on voting



Voter's Edge California is a joint project of MapLight and the League of Women Voters of California Education Fund.