

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

MAY 2022

Now is a good time to start planning school board candidate forums

Many school districts will hold school board elections during the General Election in November.

PTA is non-partisan and never supports or opposes candidates for public office. However, PTA should be actively involved in helping voters make informed decisions on school board candidates. Many PTAs do this by hosting candidate forums.

Election information and vote-by-mail ballots will be mailed soon after the school year starts, so if your PTA intends to sponsor a candidate forum in the fall, the time to start planning is now.

Here are some things you can do to get ready:

- Form a committee to organize the forum.

- Review the information on candidate forums in the *California State PTA Toolkit*.
- Will the forum be in person or virtual? If in person, identify and reserve a location for the event. Larger school districts may want to organize several forums in different locations. If you plan a virtual forum, do you have someone with technical skills to run that?
- Develop a plan to publicize the events.
- Set up a timeline and assign tasks.
- Estimate costs and include them in your PTA's budget for next year.

Planning ahead will allow you to quickly and efficiently set up your candidate forums in the fall.

How to be a powerful PTA advocate

As you start thinking about the summer ahead you are undoubtedly thinking about fun activities like pool time, excursions to the beach, and relaxing with a good book.

Here's another idea. Use the time to learn all the ins and outs of the California public education system. There's an easy way to do that. Just go to Ed100.org. There you'll find a free, self-paced online course that tells you just about everything you need to know about our schools.

The lessons are brief, readable, and entertaining. The chief writers are Jeff Camp, a former Microsoft employee with a passion for education, and our own Carol Kocivar, attorney, journalist and former California State PTA president.

The website also offers blogs on timely topics. Recent entries include "What's the future for the SAT and ACT?" and "What's an LCAP?"

BONUS! Register on the website before you start reading and earn a ticket for a drawing that could win \$1,000 for your school PTA!

Sign on to Ed100 and by the time the kids go back to school you will be a powerful, well-informed advocate!

In case you missed it...

The candidate forum for Orange County Superintendent of Schools and Orange County Board of Education was recorded.

You can see the video [here](#).

Kevin Gordon will speak on the Governor's May revise budget

You won't want to miss the May California State PTA Advocacy Briefing when Kevin Gordon presents his insights on Governor Newsom's May revise budget.

Gordon is president of Capitol Advisors Group, an expert on the education budget, and a frequent speaker at PTA events. In February, he called the Governor's initial budget proposal "incredibly bold" and said it included substantial funding for programs long supported by PTA.

The May revise budget is based on updated tax revenue information. In January, the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office predicted that revenues would be \$10.5 billion higher than the Governor estimated. This could lead to even more funding for public education.

The Advocacy Briefing will be held on Tuesday, May 24 at 7 p.m. It will be followed by an opportunity to speak with Legislation Team members, in small group settings, to ask questions and discuss effective ways to advocate at your school, district, and greater community.

To register to join the monthly advocacy briefing and office hour zoom meetings click [here](#).

www.votersedge.org

Get the facts before you vote

Nonpartisan information on federal, state, and local candidates



National PTA responds to President Biden's 2023 budget proposal

National PTA issued the following statement on President Joe Biden's budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2023:

"National PTA is pleased to see the Administration's FY23 budget proposal addresses long-standing educational inequities that were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as supports whole child learning and development. The proposal includes more than double the funding for Title I, which assists schools serving low-income families, and increases funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)—the largest funding increases in two decades. It also includes \$1 billion in funding for school-based mental health supports and services in addition to increased investments in full-service community schools, which play a critical role in providing comprehensive wraparound services to students and their families.

"Our association has continuously advocated for improved mental health programs and services for children and families, including access to school and community-based mental health personnel and services. During final FY22 budget negotiations, we mobilized in support of the \$1 billion request. We are grateful for President Biden's inclusion of this crucial ask in his FY23 budget proposal as an urge to Congress and a signal to advocates nationwide that we must come together as a nation to address the mental health crisis facing our youth. Robust and equitable investments in our public education system as well as solutions to ensure the needs of the whole child are met are essential to make sure all children can begin to recover from this pandemic and reach their fullest potential.

"Our association also appreciates the continued investments included in the proposal for the Statewide

The top-two open primary election

California has a top-two open primary system of voting for candidates running for partisan offices, including U.S. senator, U.S. representative, governor, lieutenant governor, state senate and assembly, and several other state offices. All of the candidates for these positions are on everyone's ballot, and you can vote for any of them. The two candidates who receive the most votes, regardless of party affiliation, will advance to the General Election in November.

Your ballot also includes nonpartisan offices: Orange County Superintendent of Schools, Orange County Board of Education, county supervisors, Superior Court judges, and other county offices. The candidate for each position who receives a majority of votes in the Primary is elected to office. If no candidate wins, the two candidates with the most votes proceed to the General Election.

Family Engagement Centers (SFECs) program, which provides much-needed technical assistance and partnership development to states and school districts to foster meaningful family engagement. We will continue to advocate for greater investments in the program to ensure all families nationwide have access to the program.

"The long-term success of our nation depends on all children having access to a fair, equitable, high-quality education and having their social, emotional and mental health needs met. We stand ready to work with the Administration and Congress to make sure the vital investments included in the budget proposal become a reality. We urge everyone to join us in our efforts—and particularly for our upcoming **Hill Day Experience as part of our 125th Anniversary Convention**—as we are louder and stronger together."

Get ready for another year of advocacy

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

- Make sure your PTA picks an advocacy representative. This can be an elected office or an appointed chair position.
- Include advocacy in your PTA budget for next year.
- Plan to send a representative to Sacramento Safari, scheduled for February 27 and 28, 2023. Include about \$700 in your PTA budget for the trip.

COVID vaccine mandate on hold

California students will not be required to be vaccinated against Covid-19 for the 2022-23 school year, according to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH). The mandate cannot be put into effect because the federal Food and Drug Administration has not fully approved COVID-19 vaccines for children in 7th to 12th grades. The FDA has approved the vaccines for emergency use only.

According to a CDPH press release, upon full approval by the FDA, CDPH will consider the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Academy of Family Physicians prior to implementing a school vaccine requirement.

SB 871, which would have required students to receive a COVID immunization and eliminated exemptions for personal beliefs, has been put on hold by its author, Senator Richard Pan. California State PTA did not take a position on this bill.