

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

OCTOBER 2022

How your PTA can be involved in the General Election

PTA is a nonpartisan organization, which means we never support or oppose candidates or political parties. It is important that we maintain this neutrality in order to protect our nonprofit tax-exempt status.

There are still many ways we can be involved in the election process. When California State PTA takes a position to support or oppose a ballot proposition, we can use PTA resources to encourage voters in the community to follow PTA's lead. (This does not mean you are required to vote as requested by PTA. However, you should not use your PTA to contradict a position taken by CAPTA.)

Here are other things your PTA can do:

- Encourage high school seniors and others in your community to register to vote. The voter registration deadline for the November election is October 24.
- Provide information about how to vote in Orange County.
- Sponsor a candidate forum, or send questionnaires to school board candidates and publish the results. Make sure all candidates are invited to participate.

Sacramento, here we come!



If all goes well, we will be back in the state capitol for Sacramento Safari in 2023.

Why go to the trouble when it's easier just to stay at home and watch a Zoom Safari? It would be more convenient and less expensive.

This is true, but anyone who has been to the Safari in Sacramento will tell you that you are missing a big part of the experience. It's exciting to have in-person meetings with state officials, decision-makers and education experts. It's great to be among other interested and actively-involved PTA members. It's a thrill to be in our beautiful state capitol building and to meet with lawmakers or their staff members in their own offices.

Doing all of this by Zoom just isn't the same. Plus, when you're home it's too easy to get distracted by the day-to-day responsibilities of a parent.

The cost for participating in Sacramento Safari is a legitimate PTA expense justified by the information and enthusiasm you will bring back to your PTA.

More information is available [here](#).

Here are some ways to assure that your PTA remains nonpartisan and nonbiased during an election:

- Do not allow campaign literature, buttons, t-shirts and similar items at your PTA meetings. ([Here](#) is a sign you can post to remind your members.)
- Do not invite a single candidate to attend your PTA meeting. Do not allow a candidate who appears at your meeting to make a [speech](#).
- Do not ask a candidate to sign a pledge.
- Do not use your PTA affiliation if you endorse a candidate. Current PTA officers who are well-known in their community should refrain from endorsing any candidates. PTA leaders should also consider whether privately endorsing a candidate (without using a PTA title) could negatively affect a future relationship with an elected official should the other candidate win.

CAPTA supports Props. 28 and 31

Prop. 28, The California Art and Music K-12 Education Funding Initiative. Vote YES to allocate revenue that will provide music and arts education for all students at public schools, pre-kindergarten through high school.

Prop. 31, Referendum on Flavored Tobacco Products Ban. Vote YES to approve the ban on sales of flavored tobacco products which have led to an increase in tobacco use by young people.

Voting in the General Election begins soon

Election Day is November 8, but voting will start after October 10, when the Orange County Registrar of Voters begins mailing ballots to all registered voters.

When you complete your ballot, be sure to sign the outer envelope so the Registrar can verify that you are a valid voter. Return the ballot by mailing it (no postage required) or by depositing it in one of the secure Ballot Drop Boxes that are posted throughout the county.

If you prefer to vote in person you can go to any Vote Center in Orange County and ask for your ballot. Some Vote Centers will open on October 29, with more open on Election Day and the three days prior.

For more information, including the locations of Ballot Drop Boxes and Voter Centers, go to [OCVote.gov](#).

School funding basics: Where does the money come from?



Where does the funding that pays for our public schools come from? Property taxes? The state? The federal government? The Lottery?

The answer is all of the above, although in different proportions than you may think.

Many people believe that local property taxes provide the bulk of school funding. However, property tax accounts for only about 21 percent of the statewide K-12 budget. Property taxes are collected at the county level and then divided by the county auditor among numerous local government agencies, including school districts, cities, public utilities, and county services. Each entity receives its share based on a complex system that was developed in the 1970s. Most school districts do not receive enough money through this process to run their schools.

School districts have only a few other options to raise money locally. These include local school bonds (which must be approved by voters), Mello-Roos fees, sale or lease of district properties, and donations. These sources provide about 12 percent of school funding statewide.

California's Constitution requires the state to provide public education and state law mandates a certain level of funding for each district based on the number of students, grade levels, and the needs of students who are served. To fulfill this obligation, the state provides money from its general fund, filling in about 58 percent of the statewide education budget. Most of the general fund comes from income taxes and about 40 percent of those taxes are paid by the top one percent of income earners. These wealthy folks get much of their income from the proceeds of stock market investments, which tend to fluctuate wildly. This accounts for the repeated boom and bust cycles in California's budget and consequently in state education funding.

In 1988, California voters passed Prop. 98 in an attempt to assure that 40 percent of each state budget would be allocated to K-12 schools and community colleges. This sounds like a simple, straightforward plan, but in practice Prop. 98 is implemented through complex formulas that almost never result in schools receiving their 40 percent. During economic downturns, the legislature has found ways to suspend Prop. 98, shift revenues, and postpone payments to school districts. What was intended to be a floor for education funding has become more of a

ceiling.

Some school districts do receive enough local property tax revenues to fulfill or surpass their state requirements. These are known as "basic aid" districts because the state must only provide "basic aid" to fulfill its constitutional requirement. About 100 of the nearly 1,000 California school districts fall in this category. School districts can shift into and out of basic aid status as circumstances change.

Federal funding, which amounts to about 8 percent of education funding statewide, comes in the form of money for particular purposes, such as Title I programs for high poverty schools, and services for special needs children through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). During the past few years, California has received billions in additional funding in response to the COVID pandemic. This funding is not likely to continue.

"What about the Lottery? Didn't that solve school funding?" Absolutely not! While many people believe the California Lottery was created to support education, in reality it was placed on the ballot and promoted by Scientific Games, a company that produces lottery materials. It has never provided more than about one percent of the state education budget.

Save the date
Fourth District PTA
Advocacy Forum
Friday, November 18
9:30 a.m.

PTA-sponsored bill to increase LCFF base grant fails to pass

A bill that would have increased the base grants school districts receive through the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) failed to pass during the recently-ended legislative session.

[AB 1614](#), introduced by Assemblymembers Al Muratsuchi and Patrick O'Donnell, was sponsored by California State PTA. It would have increased the base amount by about \$3.4 billion statewide.

LCFF provides base grants for all school districts, with differing amounts for the grade levels served. Additional grants go to districts that serve students who are English learners, low-income, homeless, or in foster care. LCFF gives school districts flexibility in deciding how the funding is spent.

During the next few weeks the legislators will decide whether to reintroduce the bill in the next session, according to a staffer in Muratsuchi's office.



Use this QR code to register to vote. You will need your driver's license number and the last four digits of your Social Security number.