

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

SEPTEMBER 2023

State budget continues to support education priorities

Californian schools are starting the 2023-24 year with a strong education budget.

Although it doesn't match the record-breaking budgets of the last three years, the \$95 billion allocated to K-12 schools continues to support priorities and programs that were initiated during the last several years.

Budget highlights include:

- An 8.2 percent cost of living increase.
- \$4.4 billion for community schools.
- \$4 billion for after-school and summer programs for low-income children.
- \$3.3 billion for the arts, music and instructional grant program. (This is in addition to nearly \$1 billion in Prop. 28 arts funding.)
- \$5.9 billion for learning recovery block grants.
- \$500 million for the Golden State Pathways program, which promotes career opportunities for low-income high school students in high-skill, high-wage fields.
- \$300 million for the "equity multiplier" program that will provide additional funding to schools with the highest concentrations of students who

are low-income, English learners, homeless, or in foster care.

- \$250 million in one-time funding to train and hire literacy coaches at high-poverty schools.
- \$80 million to expand programs at juvenile court and alternative schools.
- \$20 million in professional development grants for bilingual teachers.
- \$3.5 million to provide opioid overdose reversal medication at all middle and high schools.
- \$1 million to create a list of screening instruments schools can use to identify students at risk for dyslexia and other reading difficulties, beginning in 2025-26.
- \$2.8 billion to subsidize child care for low-income families.

The state budget is based on the governor's and legislature's estimates of how much money the state will collect through income taxes. The state's non-partisan Legislative Analyst's Office is less optimistic about that amount and forecasts \$30 billion less in revenues. "The state will very likely face more budget problems over the next few years," the LAO predicts.

For more information about this year's budget:

- This Ed100 [blog](#) by Carol Kocivar explains the sources of the education budget and how it is allocated locally.
- This EdSource [post](#) by John Fensterwald includes budget details.
- The LAO's multiyear budget [outlook](#).

Grand Jury reports on children's issues

The 2022-23 Orange County Grand Jury issued several [reports](#) of interest to advocates for children.

- **Russian Roulette: Fentanyl in Orange County** "In Orange County, fentanyl related deaths have increased from 37 deaths in 2016 to 717 deaths in 2021, with fentanyl being the leading cause of death in coroner-related cases for kids 17 and under in 2021."
- **School Shootings: How Prepared are Orange County Public Schools?** "Based on its investigation, the Grand Jury believes that Orange County public school districts are doing a good job in attempting to maintain safe and secure campuses for their students. However, there is always room for improvement."
- **The ABC's of Educating Children Experiencing Homelessness in Orange County** "There are over 23,000 homeless children in Orange County as reported by the public school system, and more than 30,000 according to a number of non-profit organizations and subject matter experts."

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Training Workshop

Friday, September 29
9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Fountain Valley School District
10055 Slater Ave., Fountain Valley

There is no charge, but you must be a PTA member to attend.

Learn how to inspire and engage your school community and others to advocate for children.

How to get ready for another great year of PTA advocacy

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! Plan to attend the Fourth District PTA **Advocacy Training** on September 29 (details on page 1). 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. (See the schedule below.)

Does your PTA unit or council need information on advocacy in general or on a particular topic? An Advocacy Committee member from our **Speakers Bureau** can come to your meeting to talk to your members about a variety of issues.

Educate yourself! The **Advocacy Resource Notebook**, packed with important information, is available for \$15 at the Fourth District PTA office and at in-person Advocacy events. (This expense should be reimbursed by your PTA.)

Stay connected! This newsletter is published once a month, September through June. Past issues are available [here](#). Each issue of the newsletter is

accompanied by **Talking Points** that you can use to present an advocacy report at every PTA meeting.

Plan to attend Fourth District PTA's **Sacramento Safari**, the most exciting advocacy event of the year. Ask your PTA unit or council to budget about \$900 for the trip, including transportation to the capitol. The information and enthusiasm you bring back to your PTA will be well worth the expense.

Sometimes PTA calls for immediate action to support or oppose a bill that is being considered by lawmakers. A click on a website or a quick phone call or email is usually all that is needed. Sign up for state legislative alerts [here](#) and federal alerts [here](#).

There is a wealth of information available online, beginning with the [Fourth District](#) and [State PTA](#) websites. Other important websites include:

- [Ed100](#), a free online course on California education, presented in brief lessons, as well as blogs on current issues.
- [EdSource](#), basic information about California's public education system and up-to-date articles about issues that impact kindergarten through university education in California.
- [California Legislative Information](#), official information on bills that are being considered by the state legislature.
- The State [Legislative Analyst's Office](#), a nonpartisan state office that provides research on various topics and analysis of the state budget.

We are here to help! If you have a problem or question contact your council legislative officer, or Candi Kern, Fourth District PTA Director of Advocacy, at advocacy@fourthdistrictpta.org.

Plan Your Advocacy Year

Advocacy Training Workshop

September 29 9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

Advocacy Forums

November 9 9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

January 19 9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

April 19 9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

Sacramento Safari

Orientation, February 20

Sacramento Safari, February 26 and 27

Safari Debrief, March 15

California State PTA Legislative Conference

January 22 and 23

California State PTA Convention

May 3 to 5

Plan for a full year of advocacy!

For additional information about the coming year, see the [blog](#) by **Kathleen Fay**, California State PTA Director of Legislation, at capta.org.

What are state lawmakers doing?

California senators and Assembly members are completing their work for the year. September 8 is the last day they may approve amendments to bills. The last day for each house to pass bills is September 14. The legislative session ends on that day. The governor has until October 14 sign or veto bills passed by the legislature.

The lawmakers will reconvene on January 3.