



Fourth District PTA - Sacramento Safari

Use Your Voice

# Sacramento Safari

## Advocacy in Action

### 2024 Talking Points

Thank you for meeting with us today and for your past work in support of [insert these common ground issues:]

**About us:** We represent the nation's largest PTA district, encompassing all of Orange County and the southeast portion of Los Angeles County, with more than 90,000 members and half a million K-12 students. PTA believes that input from members of the public is essential in making policy at all levels of governance—state, county, and local school district. Our all-volunteer delegation comes to the Capitol annually to advocate on behalf of children, youth, and families.

**Progress made:** After years of advocating for the funds and resources necessary to provide all children with the education they need to succeed, we appreciate that California’s per-pupil funding is now closer to the national average than the bottom of the rankings, and we are glad to see that education funding remains a state priority in the Governor’s budget. Early education gives kids a stronger start, and schools serving high-needs students are getting the extra resources they require towards bridging the achievement gap. State leaders have demonstrated a concerted effort to help students recover from pandemic-related problems by providing dedicated resources, special recovery programs, and mental health services to support student success. We want you to know that we acknowledge and sincerely appreciate these accomplishments.

**Mental health and safety issues remain a key challenge:** In our area, with roughly half of students now reporting mental health concerns, there remains a critical need for students to gain access to mental health services to support their overall well-being and help them to engage in effective learning. Hiring additional counselors has helped, but the ratio of counselors to students falls short of meeting the need. Safety concerns that persist include ongoing problems with bullying, social media pressures, and fears of gun violence. Addressing these matters will involve special efforts to reestablish connections between students and schools and bolster engagement with their families, as well as the need to protect students from those who would persecute them in hate and discrimination.

**Prioritize kids:** When considering how to address California’s anticipated budget shortfall this year, we ask that you prioritize the needs of children, youth, and families by sustaining those measures that help them the most and give them hope for their future. There are many competing interests vying for your attention, which is why we’re here today, using our voice to speak up on behalf of kids. We ask you to safeguard their health, safety, welfare, culture, and well-being – especially those who are most vulnerable. Support their healing and humanity through access to the arts. Support their learning and development through equitable access to broadband technology. And finally, we ask you to consider solutions that will eventually provide for the long-term stability of public education and less volatile funding sources.

**Let’s talk again.** Thank you once again for meeting with us today. We hope that we can come visit with [you/legislator] again soon in your district office. Please consider PTA as your go-to resource whenever you’re seeking input on issues affecting the welfare of California’s children, youth, and families – we’re here to help. [Photo op?]

TALKING POINTS

