

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

APRIL 2024

Bill would require schools to teach the science of reading

A bill that would require all California schools to teach reading according to evidence-based methods is working its way through the state legislature.

[AB 2222](#) was introduced by Assembly Member Blanca Rubio, a former elementary school teacher, with the backing of 13 bipartisan co-authors. It is co-sponsored by advocacy nonprofits EdVoice, Decoding Dyslexia CA, and Families in Schools and supported by California State PTA.

“California is facing a literacy crisis,” the bill states. Statewide, only 4 in 10 third graders are reading at grade level. The numbers are worse for children who are Black, Latino, low-income or English learners. About 28 percent of adults in California are illiterate.

AB 2222 would mandate that all schools teach literacy through the science of reading, which is defined as “evidence-based explicit and systematic instruction in phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary and oral language development, fluency, comprehension, and writing.”

All TK to 5th grade teachers would be trained in this method and all instructional materials would adhere to the science of reading. Teacher preparation programs would also be aligned to the new requirements.

For more information, see these articles at [EdSource](#) and [Ed100](#).

Here are some other bills that CAPTA supports:

[AB 1252](#) (Wicks) Would create the Office of Gun Violence Prevention within the Department of Justice and establishes a Commission to End Gun Violence. Within one year the Commission must report on the implementation and effectiveness of gun violence prevention laws.

[AB 1588](#) (Wilson) Would establish minimum service standards for low-cost Internet service and require Internet service providers to offer a low-cost plan.

[AB 1805](#) (Ta) Would incorporate the case of Mendez v. Westminster School District of Orange County into standards for history and social science.

[AB 1815](#) (Weber) Would prohibit amateur sports organizations from discriminating against any person on the basis of race, including hair texture and hairstyles.

[AB 1821](#) (Ramos) Would require social science classes on Spanish missions and the Gold Rush to include instruction regarding the treatment of Native Americans.

[AB 1871](#) (Alanis) Would require social sciences and career technical education for grades 7 to 12 to include instruction on personal financial literacy.

[AB 1915](#) (Arambula) High schools that maintain supplies

of emergency opioid overdose medication would be required to keep it in an easily-accessible place and train students to identify and respond to an opioid overdose.

[AB 1917](#) (Muratsuchi) Would require all members of school district, county, or charter school boards to receive training in K–12 public education governance laws at least once every four years.

[AB 2053](#) (Mathis) Would require sex education classes to include information and resources regarding relationship abuse and violence.

[AB 2226](#) (Muratsuchi) Would require all children to attend kindergarten before being admitted to first grade. Children who are judged by school district administration to be ready may be admitted to first grade.

[SB 483](#) (Cortese) Would prohibit schools from using prone restraint, which holds a student in a face-down position.

[SB 920](#) (Seyarto) Would establish a California Purple Heart School Program to assist military families and to publicly recognize schools that provide that assistance.

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Forum

Depolarizing School Communities: Skills for Challenging Conversations

Thursday, April 25 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

(Please note date change!)

Irvine Creekside Learning Center
3387 Barranca Parkway, Room 6

In this time of polarization, many of us avoid or dread conversations with others, even in our community, whose perspectives and opinions differ from our own. We worry that any attempts at discussions will devolve into arguments and acrimony, and result in anger and further divisiveness.

This workshop builds skills in conversations when differences arise - as well as helps reframe how one views the “other side” in the face of disagreements and the social-cultural conflicts dividing our country.

Speaker:

Mary Thomas-Vallens, with Braver Angels, a national organization dedicated to bringing Americans together and strengthening our democratic republic.

Free, but you must register [here](#). You must be a PTA member to attend.

More information about Braver Angels [here](#).

Art of Regeneration: a report on this year's Creative Edge Lecture

By Shanin Ziemer, Arts Now Ambassador, Create CA

Once again, the Creative Edge Lecture was an event full of ideas to inspire creativity!

Nina Simon spoke on *The Art of Regeneration; planting the seeds for a creative, inclusive, vibrant future*. Simon is a museum visionary and advocate for community engagement in cultural institutions. She is best known for making museums more welcoming, interactive, and inclusive. She's also the best-selling author of *Mother-Daughter Murder Mystery*.

Post-covid is a wonderful time to "throw away what was working in the past and find a new way forward," Simon said. How many times have we heard, "But we've always done it this way!" when we're suggesting a new idea? Sometimes PTAs (and our own lives and careers) can get stuck in a rut, and Simon shared five pathways towards catalyzing change.

The first pathway is through community. Look around your board and compare it to your school. Who is missing and what can be changed to get them involved? What programs or events could be redesigned to bring in more of your community?

The second is through your vision or mission. "If you want to go somewhere different, you need a shining light." It gives you the excuse, and reason, to make changes. Get consensus on your vision, then work towards that with all you do. At Fourth District PTA, our mission is to positively impact the lives of all children and families. Your unit can create its own mission, or use ours.

Next is unlearning. "If your vision is where you want to go, unlearning is the deliberate work of letting go of that which no longer serves you." What is your unit doing that is no longer working? It might not be easy to do things differently, but it will be worth it!

The fourth route to regeneration is failure. Fear of failure makes people avoid taking risks. "We need to normalize that we are not good only when we're a shining success." She used the example of trapeze artists with two platforms. The leap from one platform to the other is the hard part where you might wonder "What have I done?" But it's where the magic happens. "We need to learn to ask ourselves not will I fail or succeed, but what leap am I willing to take despite and acknowledging the risks?"

How to deal with school closures

Some of our Orange County school districts are facing the difficult prospect of closing schools due to declining enrollments. More districts will likely grapple with this in coming years.

In an important [post](#) at Ed100.org, Carol Kocivar reviews the legal process school districts must use when considering school closures.

And the final pathway she discussed is hope. This is a place for the artist inside you to imagine what could be. Start from a place of joy and think about what you would love to become. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have a PTA community that represented your whole school with strong parent involvement?

And when your organization is going through this process of regeneration, when they are in the middle of the leap, it might seem odd or scary, but be compassionate and supportive. When we're supportive of others, it helps you to be more supportive of yourself in your own life. It isn't easy to let go and take a leap, but sometimes you just need to be a really good quitter!

Fourth District PTA Sacramento Safari 2025 February 24 and 25

Plan ahead! Include about \$900 for each participant in your PTA budget for next year.

Advocacy Workshops at State Convention

This year's California State PTA Convention will be held at the Ontario Convention Center. Delegates will conduct the important business of our statewide organization, network with members from around the state, and attend valuable training sessions. The following workshops will be presented for PTA advocates:

Friday, May 3

- **Resolutions: Our Link to Membership-Guided Advocacy** An interactive workshop highlighting the why and how of the PTA Resolutions process.
- **Holding Schools Accountable for Family Engagement – It's The Law** How your PTA can and should be involved in the development of your school district's Local Control and Accountability Plan
- **Show Me The Arts Education Money!** An overview of Prop 28 funding and how to implement arts programs at your school.

Saturday, May 4

- **Advocacy: Hot Topics** Learn the inside story behind current state legislation and ballot initiatives, and how to take action on the bills and initiatives that are important to your PTA.

Sunday, May 5

- **PTA in an Election Year** Learn about PTA guidelines for campaigns, how to host a candidates' forum, launch a voter registration drive, create positions for ballot measures, and more!