

Mission

The mission of the California State PTA is to positively impact the lives of all children and families by representing our members, and empowering and supporting them with skills in advocacy, leadership and communications.

Nearly 1 million members strong, California State PTA is committed to the well-being of every child. We believe every adult has a responsibility to ensure that all children develop to their full potential. Our responsibility includes advocating for the safety and welfare of all children, as well as the opportunity for every child to obtain a high quality public education. Our advocacy efforts focus on four major areas:

- Parent Involvement
- Education
- Health
- Community Concerns



MAJOR LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2010-2011

- Reforming the state budget process and school finance system.
- Securing adequate funding for education and children's services.
- Eliminating the achievement gap.
- Ensuring access for all children to a complete and comprehensive education.

California State PTA Legislative Priorities by Issue Area

Overall State Budget and School Finance Reform

- Support constitutional amendments to reduce the voting margin in the state legislature for passage of the state budget and revenue measures from the current two-thirds to a 55 percent vote or simple majority.
- Support legislation and/or ballot measures to lower the requirement to pass a local school parcel tax from the current two-thirds threshold to a 55 percent supermajority.
- Reform the school finance system to ensure alignment of resource allocations with the programs and services all children need to meet academic standards.



Parent Involvement

Parental Involvement in the Education, Success and Development of Children

- Promote, acknowledge, and increase quality parental involvement.
- Support funding for:
 - Research and evidence-based outreach, programs and support services to parents/guardians from low-performing schools that include but are not limited to culturally appropriate workshops and home-visit programs
 - Outreach partnerships between schools and parents of special needs students that would include but not be limited to workshops on parent rights and special education laws
 - Programs that promote improved parenting skills in areas such as health, nutrition, discipline, literacy, teen suicide, and education options with a focus on parents of pre-K-12 children
 - Development and implementation of a longitudinal database measuring the efforts of schools, districts and the state to build school, family and community partnerships that include parental involvement practices
- Provide or require teacher and administrator research and evidence-based leadership development in the areas of parental involvement and school, family and community partnerships.
- Give higher funding priority to programs serving students and parents through California School Aged Families Education (Cal-SAFE).
- Promote the hiring and retention of credentialed school staff and superintendents who value the importance of parental involvement.

Foster Care

- Strengthen the independent living programs and services available to foster youth who are “aging out” of the foster care system.
- Provide every foster youth with close, dependable, and regularly involved caregivers, including foster families, kinship care and guardians.
- Protect and restore the reimbursement to foster parents and kinship foster parents to cover costs for the needs of the children in their care.
- Support budget appropriations to the Transitional Housing Placement-Plus (THP Plus) Programs for former foster youth.

Early Care and Education

- Ensure that any system or effort to raise the quality of subsidized preschool includes:
 - A system that reaches out to parent/guardians and presents quality components that are understandable and can be used by parents in selecting early care and education programs for their children
 - A system of rating or measuring quality that includes parent involvement as one of the quality components
- Provide early intervention services to infants, toddlers and their families, especially those children who are at risk of abuse, neglect, or extreme poverty.
- Ensure that sufficient funds are appropriated to increase the rate of annual unannounced visits of all licensed early care and education programs to ensure compliance with licensing requirements.

Education

Eliminating the Achievement Gap

Support legislation and efforts to ensure:

- High quality pre-kindergarten programs
- Greater alignment of the educational system from pre-kindergarten to college
- Culturally relevant professional development for all school personnel
- A robust data system that meet the needs of educators as well as policy-makers
- Professional development in the use of data for improving student achievement, evaluating teachers and turning around low performing schools
- The accountability system used by schools and districts measures progress toward educating all students

Funding

- Increase and stabilize funding for public education, including early child education, K-14 and higher education.
- Prevent any suspension of, or manipulation to, the Proposition 98 minimum funding guarantee.
- Support claims for school districts to collect reimbursements for unfunded mandates.
- Reduce class sizes.
- Support alternative salary schedules as well as competitive pay to attract and retain high quality teachers.
- Provide full funding for special education mandates.

Higher Education

Align requirements for admission to higher education institutions to include Career Technical Education.

Access to a Complete and Comprehensive Curriculum

Support legislation, policies and programs to ensure:

- Every student has access to a broad and varied curriculum that includes language arts, mathematics, science, history-social science, foreign language, visual and performing arts, health, nutrition, safety, physical education, environmental/energy education and career technical education
- Increased and equitable access for every student to high quality arts education
- Alignment of curriculum frameworks and instructional materials, including electronic resources
- Greater access to alternative education options, including Independent Study, Foster Youth Services, Alternative Educational Programs/Opportunity School Incentives, and Specialized Secondary Programs
- Maximum learning opportunities for students with special needs

Assessments

- Revamp the Academic Performance Index/Annual Yearly Progress programs to reflect measurements based on growth models.
- Improve accountability through regular review of the content and administration of the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program, the High School Exit Exam, and the English Language Development Test to ensure they reflect current standards and accommodate the needs of all students.

Health

Healthy Lifestyles

Support programs, policies and funding that:

- Focus on healthy lifestyles for children and families
- Address the underlying causes of obesity, behavioral and mental health issues, nutritional challenges and physical inactivity
- Promote oral health and dental disease prevention
- Promote prevention and/or management of chronic disease
- Ensure all children, including teens, and their family members, have funding for and access to recommended immunizations

Physical Activity

Fulfill the recommended physical education specialist student-teacher ratio of 36:1.

Nurses

- Ensure policies are enacted to provide appropriate health leadership by credentialed school nurses.
- Restore the recommended nurse to student ratio of 1-to-750.

Environment

- Address environmental health issues that affect children such as indoor air quality, cleaning materials, and building materials used in construction of educational facilities, fields and playgrounds.
- Ensure implementation of sun safety policies.

Community Concerns

Foster Care

Support legislation, programs and policies that:

- Strengthen the foster care system, including extension of foster care to age 21, restoration of adequate foster care rates, attention to special needs children in foster care, and support of regular school attendance of foster children
- Provide for transitional housing and implementation of permanency with a trusted adult as mentor
- Restore funding to the foster care system

Achievement Gap

Support legislation, programs, policies and funding that effectively address the following issues, especially in low performing schools:

- Bullying and fear
- Truancy and attendance
- Increasing parent-pupil involvement

Assistance to Families in Need

Address the needs of homeless families, foster care children, and other children, particularly in the juvenile justice system.

Media Safety

Support legislation, programs and policies that target cyber-bullying and misuse of media.

Safe Routes to School and Other Traffic Issues

- Promote the Safe Routes to School movement.
- Support legislation promoting teen driving safety and provisional licensing.

Gangs

- Support gang intervention, awareness and education, as well as gang prevention.
- Support programs and policies that encourage male role models and peer mentors, as well as those that address gang bullying, underachievement of gang members and females within gangs.



PTA Legislation Team

The legislation team includes the director of legislation and advocates who specialize in specific issues regarding education, parent involvement, community concerns, and health, as these affect children and youth. All members of the team are PTA volunteers who serve on the California State PTA Board of Managers.

The advocates work directly with state legislators and their staffs; with members of allied organizations; and with other interested parties on bills selected for PTA advocacy.

Statewide commissions prepare background information and authority for bills in their subject matter area and for recommending appropriate action. The Legislation Action Committee meets and discusses bills to determine positions to be taken. Once a position has been adopted, the legislation team is responsible for all further actions on the legislation. This includes relaying information on PTA positions to legislators and communicating PTA action on legislation related matters to California State PTA members.

Debbie Look
Director of Legislation
E-mail: legislation@capta.org

Patty Scripter
Education Advocate
E-mail: pscripter@capta.org

Shayne Silva
Health Advocate
E-mail: ssilva@capta.org

Rochelle Fanali
Consultant
E-mail: rochelledl@aol.com

Cecelia Mansfield
**Budget and Education
Finance Advocate**
E-mail: cmansfield@capta.org

Nancy Vandell
Education Advocate
E-mail: nvandell@capta.org

Michael Butler
Parent Involvement Advocate
E-mail: mbutler@capta.org

Kim Anderson
Specialist
E-mail: kanderson@capta.org

Patty Christiansen
Community Concerns Advocate
E-mail: pchristiansen@capta.org

Kayla Plourde
Federal Advocate
E-mail: kplourde@capta.org

Barbara Inatsugu
Consultant
E-mail: inatsugub@aol.com

Tamara Sortman
Staff Liaison to Legislation
916-440-1985 ext. 100
E-mail: leginfo@capta.org