

# SACRAMENTO UPDATE

CALIFORNIA  
STATE PTA

INCLUDING

THE D.C.  
CORNER

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## Budget Accord Reached, Focus Shifts to November 8 Special Election

Late Tuesday evening, July 5, Governor Schwarzenegger announced a 2005-06 budget agreement with Legislative leaders. The roughly \$116 billion spending plan was approved by the Assembly and the Senate last week and sent to the Governor for his signature.

In the final budget there was a compromise involving the Governor's plans to shift from the state to local school districts the burden of paying \$469 million in teacher retirement funds. Half of that amount will be paid by the state, but the other half will be paid by settle up money that had been set aside to pay down mandate costs owed to school districts. The budget agreement reached Tuesday contained \$3 billion to pay for the growth in student population and provide a cost-of-living increase to schools, but no new dollars. In fact it allocates billions less than schools are owed under an agreement made with Governor Schwarzenegger last year.

On July 6 the Education Coalition, which includes the California State PTA, issued the following statement:

*The more than 1.7 million parents, teachers, school board members, school employees and administrators represented by the Education Coalition are deeply disappointed that the budget passed today does not keep the promise to provide adequate funding for California's students and public schools.*

*This budget is certainly not "terrific" nor is it the "best budget agreement ever" as the Governor claimed. This budget fails to mend the Governor's broken promises to education, it fails to meet the Constitutional requirements of the voter-approved Proposition 98, and it underfunds our schools by \$3.1 billion at a time when they receive nearly \$1,000 less per pupil than the national average. We are further disappointed that the Governor now plans to make things worse by campaigning for an initiative that gives him the power to gut Proposition 98, reduce education funding below the minimum funding guarantees, and slash base funding for our schools by the billions.*

*The Education Coalition will continue its campaign to protect Proposition 98, make sure schools receive the funds required under current law approved by voters, and secure long-term, adequate and stable funding for public education. The Governor's agreement, State statute and the California Constitution all require an additional \$1.8 billion in funding this past fiscal year and \$1.3 billion in the new budget year. We hope that the Governor and the Legislature will work to find a way to address the ongoing fiscal shortfalls in school districts throughout the state – shortfalls which guarantee more school closures, increase in class sizes, lay offs of teachers and support staff, and a devastating short*

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*age of librarians, counselors and nurses. The future of our state depends on giving our students access to a quality education. Our students and schools deserve better.*

Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell said, "While this budget unfortunately represents a status quo for our schools, we now must focus on the November special election and defeating the Governor's Live Within Our Means Act. That initiative would do serious long-term damage to our schools by eviscerating the state's Constitutional guarantee of stable school funding."

The California State PTA has taken an OPPOSE position on the Living Within Our Means Act, Proposition 76 on the November 8 ballot. The defeat of his measure will be the highest priority for PTA in coming months.

Now that the budget bill has been enacted, the Legislature will adjourn for Summer Recess at the end of the day's session on July 15 and return to Sacramento on August 15 to conclude the business of the 2005-06 regular session by the September 9 deadline. The Governor will have until October 9 to sign or veto bills passed by the Legislature on or before September 9.

*Cecelia Mansfield, 2003-05 Director of Legislation*

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## Meet the 2005-07 Legislation Team

**New Team Gears Up for Remaining  
Weeks of Current Legislative Year**

On July 1 **Nancy Adalian** assumed the office of Director of Legislation for the 2005-07 term. Nancy resides in Visalia and has served as Vice President for both Health and Parent Involvement. In addition to a new Director, the Legislation Team is delighted to welcome three new advocates:

**Pat Dingsdale**, who lives in Sacramento, joins **Carol Kocivar** and **Cecelia Mansfield** as an advocate for Education bills. Pat served as Vice President for Education and Vice President for Leadership Services before serving as President of the California State PTA from 1993-95.

**Debbie Look**, who lives in Pleasanton and is currently serving as the Pleasanton Council PTA president, is the new advocate for Community Concerns bills. **Kathy Moffat**, former Community Concerns advocate, is the new advocate for Health bills, as Health advocate **Michael Butler** is now serving as a consultant.

**Barbara Paxton**, who lives in Orange County and is a former Fourth District president, has replaced Kathy Steinberg as the advocate for federal issues. During the last term, Barbara served as a member of the Education Commission and represented the California State PTA as the liaison to the Special Education Advisory Commission.

Along with **Vicky Reinke**, who is continuing as the Parent Involvement Advocate, and **Betty DeFea**, who is returning as a consultant, the other members of the Team, Nancy, Pat, Debbie and Barbara will be contributors to future issues of the *Sacramento Update*.

## SB 660 Passes Assembly Education Committee

**SB 660** (Kuehl) was heard on June 22 in the Assembly Education Committee and passed by a vote of 7-3. This bill, sponsored by the California State PTA, deals with parent involvement in on-campus student interrogation by law enforcement. This important bill has now passed all votes in the Senate and Assembly with margins greater than 2-1, always with bipartisan support. Noteworthy is the addition of the co-authorship of Assemblyman Chuck DeVore. In the hearing, Assemblyman DeVore reminded members of recent court proceedings in Union City, California, prompted by police interrogation of students that took place without the knowledge of their parents. As a result of the lawsuit, the school district was ordered to pay tens of thousands of dollars to parents of the students and was ordered to notify parents in the future if any such interrogation were to take place. This court decision is powerful testament to the fact that parents must have the ability to be involved when students are made to undergo questioning at school by police.

After clearing Assembly Appropriations, the bill will be voted on by the entire Assembly. Please take a moment **now** to call or write to your Assembly Member and tell her/him how vital it is that SB 660 pass. Personal stories of your own children, or children you know, being questioned at school by law enforcement are very compelling, and should be included in your message. These incidents, commonly very traumatic to children, are why PTA took on this legislative quest. It is our job to tell lawmakers about our true-life experiences in order to keep them focused on the pressing need to protect children.

The final and most challenging step towards passage of SB 660 is gaining the signature of Governor Schwarzenegger. When that stage comes, later this summer, we will need all of you to send letters urging the Governor to sign. Watch for PTA Action Alerts on SB 660. And to all of you who have helped in the effort with your calls, letters, trips to Sacramento, and visits to legislative offices — THANK YOU! We could not be where we are without your assistance.

**SB 682** (Simitian) is a bill dealing with student safety and privacy. In a high-profile case in northern California, a school district adopted an innovative technique of embedding electronic tracking devices in student ID cards. Subsequently, it was found that student information encrypted into the cards could

be accessed undetected by unauthorized persons, even from a distance, thereby compromising student safety. This bill would prohibit the use in identification documents of such devices by public agencies.

PTA has new positions to report. We support **ACR 64** (Chavez) which would proclaim June 2005 as Entertainment Ratings and Labeling Awareness Month. PTA supports **SB 698** (Poochigian), which creates the Clean Air and Schoolbus Safety Program, allowing school districts flexibility to use state funds to purchase newer, safer, more fuel efficient school buses. PTA is seeking amendments to **SB 806** (Speier), a bill dealing with beginning drivers.

*Kathy Moffat*

*2003-05 Community Concerns Advocate*

## Learning Standards for Preschoolers

**AB 1246** (Wolk), a bill sponsored by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, addresses the need for preschool standards to better prepare children for entry into kindergarten. This bill is a companion to the *Preschool for All Initiative* that is currently in circulation with the hope to have it placed on the June 2006 ballot. (See *Sacramento Update* May 2005.) AB 1246 would establish learning standards to be used in implementing preschool for all 4 year-olds in California if the initiative passes. PTA has a Seek Amendments position on AB 1246 and will continue to work with the author as the bill progresses through the legislative process.

The California Department of Education (CDE) is in the beginning stages of developing learning standards for preschool education including, but not limited to, four subject areas: reading/language arts, history/social science, mathematics, and science. The goal is to develop standards that will prepare children for kindergarten through developmentally appropriate learning methods.

The CDE plans to have the preliminary standards developed and ready for distribution by July 2005. CDE will seek input from the various stakeholder groups in early education, including parents, throughout California. We will keep you posted on the progress and provide you with information on how to access the document for comment. Once the input is gathered, CDE will consider feedback, finalize, and approve the preschool learning standards. The goal is to have this done by November 2005.

*Vicky Reinke, Parent Involvement Advocate*

## Kids Are Not Guinea Pigs

“Excuse me. You want to do what??”

This was the initial response to a request made by a representative of a pesticide manufacturing company asking the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Team of the Los Angeles Unified School District for permission to use LAUSD’s schools to test their new experimental pesticide. “I don’t think so” was the second response. The company was not perturbed; after all, they said they had other schools in California lined up that were more than willing to help out. Also, they claimed they were already using the Statue of Liberty as a test site.

It has been said before, and this case proves the point, that legislation arises many times as an idea in the mind of an individual. A member of the IPM Team had the idea that there ought to be a law prohibiting school sites from being test locations for experimental pesticides. She acted upon her idea, and this year **AB 405** (Montañez) was introduced in the Legislature.

The California State PTA has adopted a position of Support on AB 405, which would prohibit the use on a school site of a pesticide that is granted conditional registration or an experimental use permit by the Department of Pesticide Regulation.

The California State PTA believes that pesticides are by nature poisons, and exposure even at low levels may cause serious adverse health effects. Children, because of their higher metabolism, their developing organs and life-systems, and their play behavior patterns, are particularly vulnerable to the health impact of pesticides. Children are at an increased risk of cancer, neuro-behavioral impairment, and other health problems as a result of exposure to both active and inert ingredients in pesticides. Pesticides residues can be persistent indoors, and children spend most of their time indoors when they are at school. Some pesticides have been detected at indoor concentrations potentially hazardous to children weeks and months after application. So we support efforts to use least toxic pesticides and alternatives to toxic pesticides when dealing with the problem of pests and vermin at school locations. The California State PTA believes that school sites are not the place to conduct trials of experimental pesticides.

AB 405 has passed out of the Assembly and is currently headed to the Senate floor. PTA members are encouraged to contact their State Senators and voice their support for AB 405.

*Michael Butler, 2003-05 Health Advocate*

## Got Art?

### Not in the California Education Budget!

Setting aside about one dollar per student out of the State Budget to support arts education should be a “no-brainer.” Well, think again...

On June 15, the Budget Conference Committee put exactly ZERO into funding for arts education. While schools and parents report cuts in arts programs in their local classrooms, the proposed State Budget contains NO funding for arts education.

Here is the saga:

#### No Funding from The Governor

\$6 million for the Arts Work Visual and Performing Arts Education Grant Program was reinstated by the Legislature in the 2004-05 budget, but eliminated at the final budget signing. Funding was not included in the proposed budget for 2005-06.

#### Letter Writing Campaign to Restore Funds

Senator Jack Scott and Assembly Member Carol Liu took the lead in circulating a letter to legislators urging restoration of the \$6 million for the California Department of Education Arts Work Grant Program. Signing on to the campaign: Senators Dean Florez, Christine Kehoe, Sheila Kuehl, Nell Soto, Dave Cox, Gil Cedillo, Debra Bowen, Joe Dunn and Tom Torlakson, and Assembly Members Betty Karquette, Lois Wolk, Joe Coto, Mark Leno, and Ed Chavez. Until last year, the Arts Work Grant Program was the only source of state funding for arts education. Funded under Proposition 98, this program received \$6 million in 2003-04 —less than 1/100 of 1% of total K-12 funding. The Arts Work Program awards grants to local educational agencies to develop instructional programs based on the state adopted visual and performing arts content standards for pupils in kindergarten and grades 1 to 12.

#### Senate Sub Committee Restores Funding

As a first step in restoring funding for the arts, the Senate Subcommittee on Education, chaired by State Senator Jack Scott (D-Pasadena), restored \$6 million for Arts Education funding in K-12 schools.

#### The Assembly Fails to Restore Funding

The Assembly Education budget subcommittee failed to act on the \$6 million that was approved by the Senate. The Budget Conference Committee on June 15 failed to include funding for the program.

#### The Result:

ZERO...NADA...ZILCH...NONE in the proposed Conference Committee budget. While efforts continue to urge funding for arts education in the State Budget, this saga should not be happening.

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A letter from Senator Jack Scott and Assembly Member Carol Liu to the Legislature affirms that exiting policies and research support the visual and performing arts as essential to the education of California students. There are several State and Federal Laws regarding arts education:

- Under the No Child Left Behind Act, visual and performing arts are included as a core subject area.
- In California, the State Board of Education adopted visual and performing arts standards in 2001 in accordance with standards-based education reform efforts.
- All students entering the UC and CSU systems must satisfy a new visual and performing arts requirement by completing an appropriate single course in a year-long sequence in dance, music, theatre or the visual arts.

Research confirms the arts promote learning:

3 Teaching through the arts motivates children and increases their aptitude for learning. Eric Jensen, *Arts With the Brain in Mind*, 2001.

3 Students of lower socioeconomic status gain as much or more from arts instruction than those of higher socioeconomic status. James Catterall et al., 1999.

3 Arts education increases interest in academic learning, cognitive and basic skills development and the development of academic achievement skills. Konrad, R.R., *Empathy, Arts and Social Studies*, 2000.

3 Students who participate in school band or orchestra have the lowest levels of current and lifelong use of alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs among any group in our society. H. Con. Res. 266, United States Senate, June 13, 2000.

3 According to the College Board, SAT scores in 1995 for students who studied the arts for more than four years were 59 points higher on the verbal and 44 points higher on the math portion than students with no coursework or experience in the arts.

3 The arts provide a reason, sometimes the only reason, for students who have been disengaged from schools and other community institutions to re-engage in educational and other community organizations. *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning*, Edited by Edward B. Fiske, published by the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, March 2000.

3 Young children who engage in dramatic enactments of stories and text improve their reading comprehension, story understanding and ability to read

new materials they have not seen before. The effects are even more significant for children from economically disadvantaged circumstances and those with reading difficulties in the early and middle grades. *Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development, Arts Education Partnership 2002.*

*Carol Kocivar, Education Advocate*

## 2005 Legislative Session Winds Down

The first year of the two-year 2005-05 Legislative session is rapidly winding down to its final day on September 9, and a number of bills on which PTA has positions did not meet deadlines to continue moving through the legislative process this year. These bills have become "two year bills" and will be considered again when the Legislature reconvenes in January 2006. Among these two-year bills are several bills that PTA strongly supported:

- **AB 572** (Wolk), sponsored by the California State PTA, would extend to kindergarten and first grade the supplemental instruction program currently available to students enrolled in grades 2 to 9 who have been retained or have been recommended for retention. PTA believes that among the important components of a productive learning environment for young children are intervention strategies that include appropriate resources to provide needed assistance for students identified as not meeting grade-level expectations. AB 572 would provide resources for remediation for students in the early grades where remediation is most effective, would help to ensure that students do not become at risk for retention in the higher grades, could result in fewer children being identified for special education, and finally may be the most effect way to reduce the "achievement gap."

- **AB 1191** (Benoit) would require the Superintendent of Public Instruction to apportion to each school district or county office of education an amount that will ensure the state's share of the school district's or county office's home-to-school transportation cost is equal to at least 90%. This bill was introduced as a result of a resolution, *School Transportation: Equitable and Adequate Funding*, approved by delegates to the 2004 California State PTA convention.

Two bills supported by PTA that are still active this session include:

- **AB 1196** (Coto), currently awaiting a hearing in the Senate Education Committee, would establish a  
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State Seal of Biliteracy to be awarded to students who have mastered speaking, reading and writing skills in one or more languages in addition to English.

- **SB 912** (Ducheny), currently in the Assembly Appropriations Committee, seeks ways to introduce more diversity among members of the State Board of Education.

Finally, an Assembly concurrent resolution, **ACR 30** (McCarthy) strongly supported by PTA, which would urge the State Board of Education and local governing boards to increase and broaden emphasis on the principles of democracy in the schools of California, has been chaptered by the Secretary of State.

*Ann Desmond, 2003-05 Education Advocate*

## **DC Corner**

### **Federal Budget**

The House of Representatives has approved a fiscal year 2006 (FY06) spending bill for the departments of Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), and Education. The bill closely resembles the one passed by the House Appropriations Committee. Education received an increase of only \$115 million, or 0.2 percent, for FY06, the smallest increase in a decade.

Among the budget items left out of the President's budget recommendation was funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). The Appropriations Committee restored \$400 million for the CPB for FY08, and the full House agreed to a measure that would restore \$100 million in funding for CPB for FY06. However, the House did not provide the \$23.3 million needed to save the Ready to Learn program which, funds development of such educational television programs as Sesame Street, Reading Rainbow, Maya and Miguel, as well as online learning resources and outreach workshops. If the Senate does not restore funding for the Ready to Learn program when it considers its education-spending bill next month, production of new episodes of PBS children's shows could end.

National PTA has been advocating for the restoration of funding for CPB, including funding for the Ready to Learn program. Given the important role that PBS programs play in children's educational and social development, PTA believes the funding

of these programs is a vital investment for our children.

### **Parent Information Resource Centers (PIRC)**

Funding for Parent Information Resource Centers (PIRCs) has been eliminated in the House Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. The elimination of PIRC funding would undermine parent education efforts in the communities they serve, and most if not all, PIRCs would be forced to close. By helping schools fulfill the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and implement effective parent involvement policies, programs, and activities that lead to improved academic achievement for all students, PIRCs help parents and schools become effective partners. PIRC funding is the only source of federal funding solely intended to help schools and communities meet NCLB requirements for parent involvement. National PTA is working to ensure that the Senate Appropriations subcommittee restores funding for PIRCs

### **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)**

The TANF program serves 2 million low-income families with services such as childcare. The program originally expired in October 2002 and has been extended 10 times, including the most recent extension by **HR 3021**. Rewriting the program has proven difficult given disagreements among lawmakers regarding such issues as childcare and work requirements.

PTA supports programs that help low-income families and urges national, state, and local governments and agencies to adequately fund programs that creatively address the complex issues of meeting the special needs of children and families in poverty. In addition, PTA supports federal legislation that assists states in providing necessary public health and welfare services to children, youth, and families.

### **Military Recruitment**

The Department of Defense (DOD) has announced its intention to create a Joint Advertising Database (JAD) through a commercial direct marketing company to assist in military recruiting among other uses. Information to be collected on 16-18 year olds, as well as college students to age 23, includes social security numbers, schools attended, grade point averages as well as other personal information. Students and parents can opt out of military recruitment solicitations under NCLB, but cannot opt out of the proposed database. PTA has concerns about privacy issues raised by the creation of such a database by the DOD particularly since the information is to be entrusted to a commercial entity. PTA supports **HR 551** (Honda), which provides pro-

tections of student information unless the student/parents opt in for disclosure of the information.

*Kathy Steinberg, 2003-05 Federal Advocate*