

# Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

JUNE 2024

## School funding preserved in governor's May revise budget

Although California continues to grapple with a huge revenue gap, Governor Newsom's May revise budget maintains most of the funding for K-12 schools, with few changes from his original budget proposal in January.

"The thing that's astounding to us, that we all have to appreciate as education advocates, is that the governor put together a plan that would essentially not exact any cuts out of K-12 schools," said Kevin Gordon, partner with Capitol Advisors, in a California State PTA Budget Call last month.

The governor's plan proposes a 1.07 percent cost of living increase for K-14 education. No other area of the budget includes this increase.

Since January, when the revenue problem first became apparent, the legislature has reduced the size of the overall budget deficit by \$17.3 billion through a combination of cuts, savings and deferred spending. The budget shortfall still stands at \$27.6 billion for the three-year period from 2022 through 2025.

The governor's plan uses all of the \$9.6 billion in the state's Prop. 98 reserve fund. There would be about \$1 billion in cuts, with funding reductions for children's health, expansion of child care, teacher grants, middle class scholarships and facilities. The governor hopes to get funding for facilities through a school bond to be placed on the November ballot. Proposals for a bond are being considered in both the Assembly and state Senate.

Governor Newsom had proposed a controversial budget maneuver that would have taken \$8.8 billion out of the 2022-23 Prop. 98 budget, reclassifying money already spent as a loan to be repaid. Education groups objected, saying this would devastate school budgets for years and set a dangerous precedent. After threats of a lawsuit by the California School Boards Association and the California Teachers Association, Newsom agreed to negotiate a different solution, which will likely involve suspending Prop. 98, as was done during the Great Recession, and deferring payments from one fiscal year to the next. Suspension of Prop. 98 would create a "maintenance factor," money that the state would owe to school districts and repay when the economy improves.

While the budget news is generally good, school districts are tackling increasing costs for things like salaries, utilities, health care, cyber security, and insurance, said Barrett Snider, also with Capitol Advisors. A new challenge has arisen because the statute of limitations on child

abuse claims has been lifted. School districts all over the state are being sued for child abuse cases going back decades. These can result in huge settlements. One school district is dealing with a \$100 million settlement; the debt service to pay that accounts for a third of the district's budget, Snider said. Insurance costs are increasing by 300 to 1,000 percent due to this issue.

For more information about the budget, see:

- A [recording](#) of the CAPTA Budget Call
- Articles at EdSource.org [here](#) and [here](#)
- [Report](#) from the Legislative Analyst's Office

## Get ready to be involved in your school district's LCAP process

Before the end of June, your school district will approve a budget for the next year along with a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), as required under the state's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF).

Do you know what is in your district's LCAP? Were you involved in putting it together?

The LCAP is a three-year plan that describes how your school district will spend its budget to serve the students in your local schools. It must address 10 priority areas: basic services, state standards, course access, expelled youth, foster youth, parent involvement, student engagement, school climate, student achievement, and student outcomes. It must also show how your district will address the needs of children from low-income families, foster youth, English learners and homeless children.

The LCAP is reviewed and updated every year with the help of parents, staff, students and community members. Getting involved in that process is one of the most important things you can do on the local level.

You can get ready for the next round by learning more about the LCAP and the school system and by taking a look at the resources that are available to you.

California State PTA [website](#) has lots of information and links to other resources. ED100.org, an excellent source of information about the California education system, has a [blog](#) by Jeff Camp that explains the importance of the LCAP.

Take some time this summer to develop your expertise and you'll be ready to roll when the new school year begins!

## Three resolutions approved at CAPTA State Convention

Delegates at this year's California State PTA Convention voted to approve three resolutions. PTA units, councils and districts can take action based on these resolutions. To read the full text of the resolutions, see the [Convention Chronicle](#).

Here are summaries of each of the resolutions:

### Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Children, and Two-Spirit Individuals

Indigenous women, children and two-spirit individuals are at disproportionately high risk for abduction, abuse, homicide, assault and enslavement in California and nationwide. ("Two-spirit individuals" generally refers to individuals who embody multiple genders.) California ranks fifth in the nation for cases of missing and murdered individuals in these groups, but until recently, law enforcement has not prioritized tracking these cases. The California Feather Alert Act, passed in 2022, involves the public in helping law enforcement locate, recover, and protect victims from these crimes.

This resolution urges PTA at all levels to raise public awareness of this issue and the Feather Alert Act, and to advocate for better data collection and more accurate reporting by law enforcement.

### Returning to the Classroom Following Student Concussions

Students who suffer from concussion may experience an increase in psychological and academic stress and poor academic performance in addition to physical symptoms. California has a "Return to Play" law governing when students may resume sports and activity, but no regulations regarding return to academic activity. Students recovering from concussion need a "Return to Learn" plan to reduce their cognitive load while also preventing them from falling too far behind in the classroom, which would add additional psychological stress.

This resolution calls for PTA at all levels to increase awareness of the need for physical and cognitive recovery protocols for concussed students and to advocate for policy changes at schools and for state legislation requiring Return to Learn as well as Return to Play protocols.

### Cannabis and Youth Health and Safety

Cannabis has become more potent in the last 40 years. Young users are at risk for a variety of acute and long-term negative impacts. Cannabis use during pregnancy can affect brain growth and development in utero

## CAPTA Legislation Action Report

California State PTA has issued its Legislation Action Committee [Report](#) for May, 2024, listing state bills and CAPTA's positions. To find out the status of a measure, click on the bill number and go to the Status tab.

and in early childhood. Labeling on cannabis products lacks dosing and safety information, leading to increasing numbers of children who are unintentionally exposed and require medical care. Cannabis products are readily available and marketed in a way to appeal to youth.

This resolution urges PTA at all levels to seek and support efforts to:

- Educate families and educators about the risks of cannabis use by youth.
- Regulate youth driving under the influence of cannabis.
- Educate families about the risks to mother and baby from use of cannabis during pregnancy.
- Educate families about properly securing and disposing of cannabis products.
- Legislate safety measures including child resistant packaging that does not appeal to children and clear labeling about safe storage and dosage.
- Restrict the sale of products outside the legal cannabis market.
- Restrict the sale of flavored products.
- Discourage cannabis smoking in areas where all ages are present.
- Educate communities about regulations regarding cannabis dispensaries near schools, playgrounds and other youth-oriented facilities.

## PTA Advocacy Leadership Guide

If you have taken on the position of PTA council advocacy chair for next year—thank you! Advocating for children is central to the role of PTA and you have taken on a very important responsibility.

To help you do a great job, California State PTA offers the **PTA Advocacy Leadership Guide** for districts and councils. The [guide](#) has a wealth of information to help you develop an advocacy team, set goals and take action at the local and state levels. Learn how to host a candidate forum, organize a local rally, run a voter registration drive, write a convention resolution, and more. There is also an extensive list of resources.

Unit advocacy chairs can also find a lot of useful information in the guide. Take a look!

### Fourth District PTA Sacramento Safari 2025 February 24 and 25

Don't miss the most exciting advocacy event of the year! Include about \$900 for each participant in your PTA budget.

