

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT PTA ADVOCACY TEAM

NOVEMBER 2024

PTA members should participate in the LCAP process

Every year, you have an opportunity to get involved in decisions regarding how money is spent in your schools. You do this through the development of your school district's the Local Control and Accountability Plan, or LCAP. Now is a good time to get started by educating yourself.

What is the LCAP? It's a plan that every school district, charter school, and county department of education must develop to show how money will be spent to support positive outcomes for all students and to meet the special needs of students who are low-income, English learners, homeless, or in foster care. The LCAP is required by the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), California's school funding law.

The three-year plan is updated every year and is approved by school district trustees along with the district budget in June.

Districts must involve parents in the LCAP process, along with students, staff, and the community. Your PTA should be actively involved in making sure that all parents have an opportunity to participate.

What can you do to get involved? Start by looking at your school district's current LCAP, which should be posted on your district's website. Is it easy to read? Does it effectively describe your district's priorities?

Here are some online resources that will help you get involved in a meaningful way:

- Basic [information](#) from California State PTA in six languages.
- [Information](#) from Ed100.
- An LCAP [Checklist](#) for Parents and Student Leaders, developed by CAPTA and Ed100.
- [Information](#) from the California State Department of Education

Get involved in developing your school district's cellphone policy

There's a good chance that banning cellphones in the classroom is a big topic of conversation in your school district.

That's because the governor recently signed into law a bill that requires every school district, county office of education and charter school to develop and implement a policy limiting or prohibiting student use of smartphones in the classroom.

[AB 3216](#) requires the policy to be in place by July 1, 2026. It's up to school communities to decide what kind of restrictions they want to adopt. The policy must be developed with "significant stakeholder participation" and "ensure that the policies are responsive to the unique needs and desires of pupils, parents, and educators in each community."

According to California State PTA, "Your PTA can take several actions to assure your school district sets a policy supported by the community, and that students and families stay informed about the policy process.

"PTAs can call for a meeting about smartphone use, inviting administrators to fully explain the new law and district plans for policy development and adoption. You can also make sure district officials involve students and parents/caregivers in the decision-making process, including ways to effectively implement the policy once it is adopted.

"Some parents/caregivers have concerns that their school district does not have an effective communication

system when there is a crisis at the school. You can collaborate with other PTAs, with assistance from council or district, to make sure every school has an effective system for communicating both internally and externally in an emergency. That can include the use of strategies such as text messaging and social media."

You can get more information [here](#).

New California laws that affect children

What new laws affecting children, families, and education were enacted during the past year?

Carol Kocivar has compiled a comprehensive survey at [Ed100](#). The bills are listed by subject area and include links to more information. There's also a quick primer on the legislative process.

Fourth District PTA Advocacy Forum

Friday, November 15
9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Fountain Valley School District
10055 Slater Avenue
Fountain Valley

Hear from Orange
County Superintendent
Dr. Stefan Bean
and a panel of Orange
County school district
superintendents.

Open to all
PTA members.

California PTA supports a welcoming environment for all students

California State PTA supported [AB 1955](#), which Governor Newsom signed into law on July 15, 2024. This bill prohibits schools from disclosing a student's sexual orientation or gender identity while safeguarding educators from retaliation for supporting LGBTQ+ students or following curriculum standards.

PTA firmly believes that all students—including LGBTQIA+ students—have the right to a high-quality, equitable education in a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive school. Every student can reach their full potential when the school environment is one in which they are accepted, are truly valued, and can authentically be themselves. The passage of AB 1955 (Ward) will contribute to creating a safer learning environment for LGBTQ+ students.

National PTA works to end gun violence

A founding principle of [National PTA's mission](#) is to promote the safety and well-being of all children and youth. In keeping with this principle, PTA is renewing its efforts to end the epidemic of gun violence in our schools and communities.

PTA has put together a Gun Violence Prevention Blueprint to help parents have critical conversations with leaders and decision-makers from the local to the national level.

Find the Blueprint and additional information and resources [here](#).

Key facts about “The Support Academic Futures and Educators for Today’s Youth, or SAFETY Act” (AB 1955):

- The SAFETY Act prohibits school districts from requiring staff to disclose to parents information related to a student’s sexual orientation or gender identity, and will protect school staff from retaliation if they refuse to notify parents of a child’s gender preference.
- The SAFETY Act does not ban educators from sharing information with parents. It only prohibits policies that require educators to share that information with parents.
- The SAFETY Act will go into effect on January 1, 2025. In the meantime, it has become the subject of multiple lawsuits within just 72 hours of becoming law. California courts will have the next say in what happens to this policy.

Governor vetoes legislation to change Orange County Board of Education

[SB 907](#), which would have changed the composition and election time of the Orange County Board of Education, was vetoed by Governor Newsom.

The bill would have increased the number of trustees from five to seven and would have shifted the board’s election from the primary ballot in the spring to the general election in November. It was supported by Fourth District PTA.

In his veto message, the governor stated, “I appreciate the author’s intent to increase representation on the OC-BOE. However, there are local processes for altering the number of members on a county board of education and changing when local elections are held. State circumvention of these local procedures, especially with respect to a single county board of education, should be avoided absent extraordinary circumstances. Unfortunately, I am not convinced those circumstances exist in the context of this legislation.”

Share your advocacy success story

Do you have an advocacy success story? Did your PTA help bring about an important change in your school or district? Did your PTA help your district have a successful school bond campaign?

Share your wisdom and experience with your fellow PTA members in Orange County by sending a brief description of your success to the Advocacy Communicator at advcomm@fourthdistrictpta.org

You can also share your great ideas statewide by submitting your information to California State PTA [here](#).



Be there with us in 2025!

Sacramento Safari February 24 and 25

Registration opens November 15 at Fourthdistrictpta.org

CAPTA Advocacy Calls

Be sure to participate in monthly Advocacy Calls with the California State PTA Advocacy Team. The virtual meetings will provide you with up-to-date information that will help you do your job as the advocacy representative for your PTA unit or council. The next call is on Monday, November 18 at 7 p.m.

For more information and go to CAPTA.org.

*The [Advocacy Communicator](#) is published by the Fourth District PTA Advocacy Team and is intended for distribution to local PTA units and councils. President: Ellen Gravitt. Director of Advocacy: Candi Kern. Communicator Editor: Gisela Meier
1520 Brookhollow Drive, #40, Santa Ana, CA 92705 (714) 241-0495 www.fourthdistrictpta.org*