

ADVOCACY INSIDER

April 7, 2020



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THE PANDEMIC AND CALIFORNIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The California legislature and Governor Newsom have adopted new rules to address COVID-19 and its impact on schools. Many of the changes are the result of advocacy by the [Education Coalition](#), which includes the California State PTA. Linked here is the [letter](#) the Education Coalition sent to state policy makers.

Schools Continue to Get ADA for the Year: Schools that are closed due to COVID-19 will continue to receive funding even though students are not in school. The [executive order](#) issued by Governor Newsom directs this continued funding to pay for high quality educational opportunities, to the extent possible, through distance learning and independent study. It can also be used to pay for school meals and to continue to pay school staff.

Standardized Testing: To reduce the strain on students, families and educators during the COVID-19 outbreak, Governor Newsom issued an [executive order](#) to waive, pending federal approval, this year's statewide testing for California's more than 6 million students in K-12 schools. The federal government followed by also waiving the testing requirements.

More Funding for Protective Equipment/Cleaning: The legislature and the Governor passed [SB 117](#), which provides \$100 million to be used to purchase personal protective equipment, or to pay for supplies and labor related to cleaning school sites, or both. There are a few other changes in the bill:

- **Attendance** for the 2019-20 school year for purposes of school funding include only full school months between July 1, 2019 and February 29, 2020.
- The required days of **school attendance and instructional minutes** are waived during a school closure that is in response to COVID-19.
- **After-School Funding and Safety Programs** do not lose funding due to COVID-19 closures.

School Meals: The U.S. Department of Agriculture issued a special COVID19 waiver through June to allow flexibility in the delivery of school meals to students so that our low income students continue to receive healthy school meals

during this crisis.

Guidance to Schools: The California Department of Education (CDE) and California Health and Human Services Agency have issued extensive [guidance](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/guidance.asp) to schools in the areas of distance learning, school meals, special education, and childcare and student supervision. For additional information, please see the CDE website at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/guidance.asp>.

NATIONAL COVID-19 LEGISLATION

The U.S. Congress has signed three emergency relief packages into law as of today. They include:

- The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, passed on March 27, 2020
- The Families First Coronavirus Response Act, signed into law on March 18, 2020
- The Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, signed into law on March 6, 2020

You can find summaries of each act on the COVID-19 Enacted Legislation page on California State PTA's website. [Click here to visit.](#)

STATE ADVOCACY AWARD

PTA leaders from across California attended the **2020 National PTA Legislative Conference** from March 10-12 in Washington D.C. The conference allowed us the opportunity to network with fellow PTA advocates, meet with policymakers, hear PTA advocacy success stories and learn how to shape public policy on Capitol Hill and at home.

Our delegation of 14 from California met with the offices of Senators Feinstein and Harris, as well as the offices of a number of our Congressional representatives. Our talking points focused on the inclusion of schools in any federal infrastructure legislation as well as the reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act. [Click here](#) for a copy of the National PTA talking points for the conference.



Director of Legislation Shereen Walter and California State PTA President Celia Jaffe presented a standing-room-only workshop on effective grassroots advocacy techniques as one of the Spotlight presentations being highlighted at the conference.

Carol Kocivar and California State PTA were both honored at the National PTA Advocacy Awards Banquet, held during the conference. Carol, CAPTA's former president and current legislative advocate, was the recipient of the **2020 Shirley Igo Advocate of the Year Award**. This award is presented to an individual PTA member who, through their leadership and advocacy efforts,

affected federal policy priorities within PTA's annual Public Policy Agenda. Carol's advocacy includes work on increasing investments in quality public education, school infrastructure, public school choice and charter accountability, as well as safe and supportive school environments.

California State PTA was recognized with the **Outstanding State Advocacy Award** for our efforts in raising awareness about healthier school start times and securing the passage of SB 328, the Late School Start bill. The legislation, which was signed into law by Governor Newsom in October, requires that middle schools in California start no earlier than 8:00 a.m., and high schools no earlier than 8:30 a.m.



CALIFORNIA STATE LEGISLATURE SLATED TO RECONVENE IN MAY

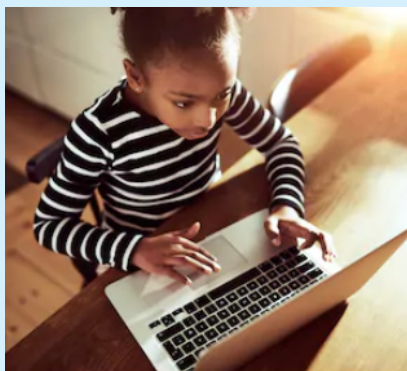
Both the California State Senate and Assembly have pushed back the date they will reconvene until Monday, May 4th. The date could be pushed back even further pending the Governor's lifting of the state of emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

When they do return to the capitol, members will likely see a trimmed bill list with those bills in response to the coronavirus holding top priority. Increased unemployment and a crashing economy will mean less revenue coming to the state forcing lawmakers to return to a shrunken state budget. To read more, [click here](#).

According to a [letter](#) written by Assembly Budget Chair, Phil Ting, the state's 2020-21 budget will have to adjust to the realities of the impact of COVID-19 on the State of California. Budget priorities will focus on COVID-19 related costs with the possibility that the legislature may have to revisit reductions to existing state programs depending on the State's fiscal condition.

TAKE ACTION!

Attend the Digital Inclusion Webinar on April 9



Finding low-cost (or free) internet and computer solutions is more important now than ever. Join our webinar and learn how your family can get connected.

REGISTER NOW

Engage with the Arts at Home!



Our partners at Create CA have curated an amazing list of free resources to help you create at home while schools are closed.

READ MORE

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Whether you are shopping for recognition gifts, need items to promote your unit, or just want something fun for yourself – we've got you covered!

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