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Advocacy news from the California State PTA Legislation Team

To learn more about the California State PTA positions on bills currently before the California Legislature, click [HERE](#).

1-State Board of Education to Begin Work on Defining Rules of New Funding

Governor Brown's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) will dramatically reshape how schools are funded in California. **SB 91**, the budget "trailer" bill containing the statutory changes necessary for implementation of the new funding system, calls for the State Board of Education to make many of the key decisions regarding oversight and accountability in the development of regulations.

Over the next several months, the State Board of Education will develop a template for the required local education plans to determine the process that must be followed to ensure that the extra money will be used to improve or expand programs and services for serving disadvantaged students. The State Board will also be developing a rubric for a range of accountability measures – such as attendance rates and how well students are prepared for college – that local districts will be expected to meet. See www.leginfo.ca.gov for the text of **SB 91**.

During the regulatory process, PTA will continue to advocate for transparency and for explicit requirements for parental involvement and engagement at the school site level in the development of the local plan.

For more information, contact Cecelia Mansfield, State Board of Education Representative at cmansfield@capta.org.

2-State Senate Holds Marathon Firearms Hearing

In the wake of the mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut on December 14, 2012, a range of gun control measures were introduced in both houses of the California State Legislature. These bills are now winding their way through committee hearings.

Over in the State Senate, the Public Safety Committee, chaired by Senator Loni Hancock, took up firearms bills originating in the Senate on April 16th beginning at 9

a.m., in a marathon session that lasted all day. The committee didn't adjourn until around 8 p.m. that evening. Ordinarily, testimony is limited to two or three speakers on each side speaking for three minutes apiece. Then members of the public are allowed to come forward and simply state whether they, or their organization, supports or opposes the bill. However, because the issue of gun control is so important, Senator Hancock allowed everyone to have their say, no matter how long it took.

California State PTA has a support position on three bills heard that day.

- **SB 47 (Yee) Firearms: assault weapons.** This bill would close a loophole in California's assault weapons ban that allows a legal weapon to quickly be turned into an illegal assault weapon with a simple tool.
- **SB 108 (Yee) Firearms: residential storage.** This bill would mandate safe storage of all firearms. One of the risk factors in suicides is easy access to lethal methods of suicides, especially guns. One of the protective factors is restricted access to highly lethal methods of suicide.
- **SB 396 (Hancock) Firearms: magazine capacity.** This bill bans possession of large-capacity ammunition magazines containing more than 10 rounds. High-capacity magazines are directly related to the ability of criminals to fire large numbers of bullets without having to reload.

Written by Michael Butler. For more information on community concerns issues, contact Shereen Walter, Community Concerns Advocate at swalter@capta.org.

3-State Budget for 2013-14 Includes New Funding Formula for Schools

Recently the Legislature passed and the Governor signed into law the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) as part of the state budget. LCFF is a new funding formula designed to assist children who need additional resources, and consists of a base grant which varies by grade level, and two additional grants for qualifying districts.

There is a supplemental grant calculated at 20% of the base grant for all students who receive free and reduced lunch (FRL), are English language learners (ELL), or foster children. There is also an added concentration grant in the budget which is calculated at 50% of the base grant. School districts where at least 55% of schools have children eligible for FRL, ELL or foster children will receive this additional concentration grant.

While PTA supported the concept of LCFF, we believed the Governor's proposed funding level for the base grant was insufficient. We asked for your help lobbying legislators and the Governor to increase the base grant and you responded. The

base grant for all schools was increased in the final budget. The phone calls you made were heard in Sacramento.

This formula begins to restore the cuts schools have suffered over the past few years, but it will take several years for districts to be restored to their 2007-08 funding levels. While that year was an historic high for school funding, we all know that the 2007-08 funding level was insufficient to educate children to be prepared for the demands of the 21st century. It is crucial that we continue to lobby our legislators and the Governor in the future to ensure that more dollars are directed to the needs of children.

For more information, contact Shayne Silva, Budget and Education Finance Advocate at ssilva@capta.org.

4-The Affordable Health Care Act for California's Families

Health care has been in the news frequently these days and issues surrounding health care have undergone one of the biggest changes in decades. The Patient Protection and Affordable Health Care Act (ACA) requires Americans to carry some form of health insurance by 2014.

The California legislature has done much to facilitate the transition for Californians. Governor Brown has called a special session to legislate the implementation. This was accelerated by last year's fiscal crisis. In order to balance the state's budget, California's Healthy Families program was eliminated and Medi-Cal expanded. Changes to Medi-Cal eligibility through the ACA will ensure these families and foster care youth can continue to get the medical care they need. The California State PTA supports **SBX1 1** and **ABX1 1** that will legislate eligibility and continuing care. Newsflash! The Governor signed them in the last days of June!

CAPTA also supports legislation that helps families get information on health care insurance eligibility and health care exchanges in an easy to understand way. **AB 422** asks that this information be supplied to families with information on the National School Lunch Program. We expect to see children's care preserved through medical, dental and vision programs and protection for children diagnosed with autism.

As with any big change to a large bureaucratic system, the transition will bear watching to make sure our most vulnerable children are continuing to receive the health care services they need and deserve to grow, learn and reach their full potential as adults.

For more information, contact Cathy Hall, Health Advocate at chall@capta.org.

5-Special Education – Funding Challenge!

The special education system in our country, while one of the most heavily regulated and mandated, is consistently under-funded. The original legislation created in 1975 set a goal which stated 40 percent of the cost for special education students would be borne by the federal government. This goal has never been reached. Funding is not the only problem.

Special education is facing a shortage of teachers. In 2011-2012 there were 686,352 individuals who received special education instruction at the K-12 level. However, there are only 31,380 special education teachers in California. Standards for special education students have not kept up with the changing standards of our regular education students. In addition to these educational difficulties, only 14 percent of people with disabilities are employed. This compares to 74.3 percent of the general population. This is an appalling waste of talent and a waste of hundreds of millions of state dollars to support people in non-work related day activities.

This year the state PTA supported the following bills which focused on those challenges:

1. **SB368 (Pavley)** – aids special education credential holders seeking added authorization in various areas of special education. This bill has the potential to ease the shortage of special education teachers. It passed the Assembly Education Committee and will come before the Assembly in July.
2. **AB455 (Medina)** - authorizes the State Board to adopt Braille and American Sign Language English and mathematics standards aligned to the Common Core standards. This bill passed Assembly Education committee in June and will come before the Senate in July.
3. **AB1041 (Chesbro)** – gives disabled students the opportunity for employment information to be included in their Individualized Education Plan. This bill passed the Senate Human Services committee in June and will come before the Senate in July.

These bills begin to address some of the challenges facing special education in California. However, without adequate funding, school districts throughout our state will continue to struggle with the difficulty of helping a highly vulnerable population.

For more information, contact Donna Artukovic, Education Advocate at dartukovic@capta.org.

6-PTA-Supported Education Bills on the Move

Pupil Assessment

AB 484 (Bonilla) which suspends the STAR Program for a year, and then recasts and renames our statewide testing system CalMAPP21, or California Measurement of Academic Performance and Progress for the 21st Century, has passed Senate

Education and is on its way to Senate Appropriations.

SB 247 (Liu) to eliminate second grade statewide testing, and require the CDE to provide to districts diagnostic tests they can give in English Language Arts and math to inform instruction in the classroom is on a similar path, heading now for Assembly Appropriations.

Curriculum-Related Bills

SB 300 (Hancock) that authorizes the adoption of revised science frameworks based on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), **AB 166 (Hernández)** to add financial literacy to high school curricula, and **AB 700 (Gomez)** to require the inclusion of voter education information in high school American government and civics classes, are all, likewise, in the appropriations committees of the second house.

Meanwhile, Assemblymember Buchanan's bill, **AB 375**, to streamline the administrative steps associated with teacher dismissal and suspension while preserving due process, has also progressed having taken author's amendments to address concerns expressed by some education stakeholders, and is re-referred to Senate Education.

For more information, contact Kathy Moffat, Director of Legislation at legislation@capta.org.

7-Teens and Tobacco

Asthma, lung cancer, high blood pressure, oral cancers, rotting teeth and gums, even bad breath and smelly clothes are all linked to the abuse of tobacco by teens. The chemicals in cigarettes, especially nicotine, are highly addictive. The American Cancer society's research indicates 9 out of 10 adults began smoking in their teens or earlier.

<http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/tobaccocancer/childandteentobaccouse/child-and-teen-tobacco-use-child-and-teen-tobacco-use>

Tobacco use by children has been a focus of California State PTA and our national PTA since 1964 when our members passed the Resolution *Smoking and Health*. In order to protect our children from the addictive and adverse health sequel, we have opposed advertising and product placement that makes cigarettes, cigars, and chew attractive to young people. We have supported laws that restrict the sale of tobacco to minors and place these products behind sales counters. While these measures help, they are not the most effective deterrent to teen smoking. What is? MONEY.

~~Increasing the price per pack of cigarettes is the most effective way to keep kids~~

from starting to smoke, and it is the biggest factor in stopping the habit. Tobacco companies keep the price low to encourage use of their product so raising excise taxes keeps our children from buying cigarettes.

SB 768 (DeLeon) asks that we raise the tax on each cigarette to ten cents, or a total of \$2.00 per pack. Taxes on other tobacco products will increase as well. The revenues raised will fund tobacco abuse prevention, education, code enforcement and health services. But most importantly, raising the price of a pack of cigarettes keeps our children from starting this habit, encourages quitting and protects their health. That is why CAPTA supports **SB 768**.

For more information, contact Cathy Hall, Health Advocate at chall@capta.org.

8-California State PTA Legislation Action Committee

The California State PTA Legislation Action Committee (LAC) meets during the legislative session, and takes action on pending state and federal legislation based on the PTA's priorities and adopted authorities.

The LAC includes the president, president-elect, director of legislation, vice president for communications, the legislation team, four subject-matter vice presidents and representatives from their commissions, two district presidents and the executive director.

The committee met June 10, 2013 and took positions on 14 bills. To view the full report, click [here](#).

For more information, please refer to the [Toolkit](#) (section 4.2). Click [here](#) to view currently adopted positions on legislation. For more information or to inquire if a bill is under consideration by the California State PTA, contact the Director of Legislation at legislation@capta.org.

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