

CUCPTSA ADVOCACY NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2016

FEDERAL

National PTA expresses opposition to the “Improving Child Nutrition and Education Act of 2016” (H.R. 5003) on May 17

PTA Backs the Family Engagement Act

Research shows that family engagement in a child’s education increases student achievement, improves attendance and reduces dropout rates. The Family Engagement in Education Act of 2015 seeks to target capacity-building and technical assistance for effective family engagement strategies by promoting district flexibility to identify programming that works best for individual communities. Through the advocacy efforts of PTA members, some of the provisions of the Family Engagement in Education Act were included in the reauthorization of the [Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\) of 2015](#). Click [here](#) to view National PTA's resource document to learn more about the family engagement provisions in ESSA.

STATE

PTA never comments on, endorses or supports individual candidates for office. PTA is a non-partisan association with a long track record of speaking up for all children and connecting families, schools and communities.

However, while PTA does not endorse individuals, the association does consider and take positions on statewide initiatives that impact the education, health and well-being of California’s children and families. Listed below are the propositions the California State PTA has taken a “support” position on for the November election:

- **PROPOSITION 51 — SUPPORT *School Bonds. Funding for K-12 School and Community College Facilities. Initiative Statutory Amendment.*** PTA supports safe and up to-date schools. The \$9 billion in bond money will go for new construction and modernization of K-12 public schools, charter schools, vocational-education facilities and California community colleges. It’s been nearly 10 years since California last authorized a statewide school bond to build new neighborhood schools and upgrade older classrooms, and the state’s school bond fund has been depleted.

As a result, there is now a growing \$2 billion backlog of K-12 school district projects awaiting funding that have been submitted to the state under the current program to make safety repairs, complete seismic renovations, build new schools, and make technology improvements.

Estimates also project future school construction funding needs of more than \$20 billion over the next decade. Additionally, there are nearly \$500 million in high priority Community College projects awaiting state funding support.

- **PROPOSITION 55 — SUPPORT *Tax Extension to Fund Education and Healthcare*.** Initiative Constitutional Amendment. This initiative extends the temporary personal-income tax increases on high-income earners. Money will go to schools and community colleges, budget reserves/debt payments and health programs. About half of the estimated tax money would go to schools (about \$4 billion). If these taxes disappear, it would hurt our already underfunded education system.
- **PROPOSITION 56 — SUPPORT *Cigarette Tax to Fund Healthcare, Tobacco Use Prevention, Research, and Law Enforcement*.** Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute. We know that education and smoking cessation programs work to save lives by preventing teens –who have been shown to be sensitive to the price of tobacco products — from choosing to smoke in the first place. This increases the cigarette tax by \$2 per pack, with equivalent increase on other tobacco products and electronic cigarettes containing nicotine. The money would go to increase funding for existing health-care programs, tobacco-use prevention/control programs, tobacco-related disease research and law enforcement, physician training, dental-disease prevention programs and administrations.
- **PROPOSITION 58 — SUPPORT *SB 1174 (Chapter 753, Statutes of 2014), Lara. The California Education for a Global Economy Initiative (California EdGE)*.** In 1998, voters approved Proposition 227 requiring that all students be taught in English, and that English learners be taught in sheltered English courses. PTA opposed Proposition 227 because it forced English Language Learners (ELLs) to take English-only classes regardless of students' individual needs. In addition, it took away parents' right to choose what is best for their children. This initiative deletes the sheltered English provisions. It requires students be taught in programs with access to core academic standards, and that school districts provide effective and appropriate methods for language acquisition. Parents and guardians may choose language-acquisition programs that best meet the needs of their children.
- **PROPOSITION 63 — SUPPORT *Firearms. Ammunition Sales*.** Initiative Statute. We believe that limiting access to the kinds of guns and ammunition that can kill large amounts of people in a short amount of time is common sense. We must fight gun violence by limiting the types and number of guns and ammunition available to those who would use them to do harm to others. Reasonable, common-sense gun laws reduce gun deaths and injuries, keep guns away from criminals and fight illegal gun trafficking.

California Court Case Affecting Public Education Will Not Proceed

Oral arguments in *Robles-Wong v. California* took place in the Court of Appeal in San Francisco on Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2016. At issue in this case is whether the fundamental right to an education – a right which was articulated by the California Supreme Court more than 45 years ago – requires the State to provide our students an education that gives them an opportunity to

succeed in the global economy and to become informed citizens able to participate in civic and social life. As a plaintiff in the case, California State PTA offered a [statement](#).

“California State PTA believes that state funding must be adequate to ensure all children have the opportunity to succeed and that we begin to close the opportunity and achievement gap. We remain optimistic that the court will affirm the state’s obligation to provide an adequate education for California’s students and return the matter to the superior court for trial.

LOCAL

PTA Backs Measure M School Facilities Bond on Ballot in November for CUSD

On August 10, 2016, Capistrano Unified School Board of Trustees voted 6-1 to place Measure M, a \$889 million SFID bond on the November 9, 2016 ballot. The bond would cost property owners within the CUSD boundary area \$43 per \$100,000 of assessed property value (NOT market value) for no more than 10 years. The funds are specifically limited by the CUSD Board for usage on facilities upgrades and new construction ONLY—funds may not be used for salaries, pensions or administrative costs. Text for the bond measure can be found at <http://capousd.ca.schoolloop.com/> at the bottom of the home page under the button marked “Get the Facts on Measure M Here”. At this location, there is the bond text, the detailed proposed list of projects by school site, the Community Facilities Committee Consensus report that was published December 2015. There are also additional educational informational links at that location. On August 17, 2016, CUSD Board of Trustees voted to eliminate “pay as you go” funds for CFD areas within the district in a concerted effort to reduce the tax burden on local families and property owners.

On August 29, 2016, the Capistrano Unified Council PTSA completed a thorough bond study of the measure and drafted a resolution of support for Measure M. CUCPTSA council (the executive board and all school unit PTA/PTSA presidents) voted to accept the study analysis and resolution of support for Measure M as a means of meeting the funding needs for CUSD’s facility needs.

The passage of Measure M would allow CUSD to be eligible for up to \$249 million in matching funds from the state for facilities upgrades and construction if the state school facilities bond, Proposition 51 on the November ballot, passes as well. EdSource.org research this month shows support for Proposition 51 polling at more than 63% with voters statewide.