

**4<sup>th</sup> District Sacramento Safari: March 30 - 31, 2009  
Sacramento, California**

**Executive Summary**

By: Kim Anderson

**Total Attendees from 4<sup>th</sup> District PTA (all of Orange County & a small part of LA County): 85**

**Capistrano Unified Council PTSA Attendees:**

Kim Anderson: CUCPTSA Legislative Chair  
Dana Hills HS & Niguel Hills MS Legislative Chair  
Lori Abbott: Wagon Wheel Elementary Legislative Chair

We flew up on Monday morning and then spent the rest of that day in the Steamboat/Central Banquet Room at the Embassy Suites. On Tuesday, we spent the morning in the Legislative Office Building (LOB) directly across from the Capitol and Tuesday afternoon advocating to Orange County legislators in the Capitol.

**Guest speakers were:**

- State PTA - Paul Richman, Executive Director**
- **Pat Dingsdale, Director of Legislation,**
- **Debbie Look, Director of Legislation-Elect**
- Jim Mayer, Executive Director, CA Forward**
- Gavin Payne, Chief Deputy Supt. of Public Instruction, CA Dept of Ed**
- Jean Ross, Director, CA Budget Project**
- George Skelton, Political Columnist, Los Angeles Times**
- Scott Plotkin, Executive Director, CA School Boards**
- Ron Bennett, President, School Services of California**
- Rick Simpson, Deputy Chief of Staff to Assembly Speaker Karen Bass**
- Paul Navarro, Deputy Legislative Secretary to Gov. Schwarzenegger**
- Susanna Cooper, Principal Ed Consultant to Sen. President Pro Tem, Darrell Steinberg**
- Mac Taylor, CA Legislative Analyst**
- Chris Finarelli, Legislative Aide to Senator Bob Huff, Vice Chair, Senate Ed Committee**
- Gerry Shelton, Senior Assembly Education Consultant**
- Speaker, Karen Bass**

**Small group legislator/staff meetings on Tuesday afternoon included:**

**Assembly Members: Tony Mendoza, Jeff Miller, Jim Silva, Chuck DeVore, Jose Solario, Mike Duvall, Curt Hagman, Diane Harkey and Van Tran.**  
**Senators: Mark Wyland, Lou Correa, Tom Harman, Mimi Walters and Gloria Romero.**

**Hot topics of discussion included:**

- Major concern about what will happen to our state finances if the May 19 ballot propositions fail and if state revenues are down by a further \$8 billion, as the LAO is projecting. Expect the "May revise" by June 8.
- A sense that Sacramento is becoming increasingly dysfunctional, although there are groups that are currently working to bring forward solutions (California Forward being one of them).

- Some of the biggest obstacles to having a functional state government are: the 2/3 budget passage vote; term limits, gerrymandered districts; too many special interest groups; initiative process that ties legislators hands re funding.
- By mid-April a law suit will be filed by CSBA, ACSA, civil rights groups to get the school funding system declared unconstitutional leading to testing the waters on local control.
- Giving local school districts the ability to raise/lower taxes to meet their own needs.
- There is still a big focus on CTE (Career Tech Education).
- Reauthorization of STAR testing will occur in 2010/2011. There may be no STAR testing for 2<sup>nd</sup> graders which would save the state \$2 million
- Agreement that the federal stimulus dollars must be sent in full and quickly to where they are supposed to go, without Sacramento diverting any funds due to the severity of California's budget crisis.
- States will have to prove the federal money was used for the appropriate reasons or they won't get the second round of money.

**Highlights included:**

- A "Meet & Greet" with Speaker, Karen Bass on the Assembly floor.
- A tour of the "Horseshoe" (the Governor's Office suites), including First Lady, Maria Shriver's office.
- Being introduced on the Senate floor by Senators Gloria Romero & Lou Correa.
- Talking briefly with Senate Pro Tem, Darrell Steinberg, on the Senate floor.