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**CUCPTSA LEGISLATION/ADVOCACY TEAM
February 2021 Report**

In Local News:

At the January 20, 2021, meeting the Board voted to bring back for further discussion the Temporary Grading Policy for Physical Education for Middle and High School students. If this is an issue you or members of your school community feel passionate about, please encourage them to reach out directly to Trustees via email and also to read and "pull a blue card"/register to speak at the February Board Meeting on this topic. It is through outreach by families that this policy was even being brought back to the Board in January. Advocacy works, and it is through our voices that changes can be made.

As you read the report, things are changing fast and I compile this report starting the day the last one was sent to the day I send the next report. So, I am including the dates articles are written, so you can see what has changed, but also look for ideas and how they evolved over a period of a month.

A couple of websites that I am tracking at the moment are:

For COVID-19 cases in Orange County:

<https://occovid19.ochealthinfo.com/coronavirus-in-oc>

California Blueprint for a Safer Economy:

<https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/> This site updates every Tuesday with new data and updated county color coding.

Orange County COVID-19 Dashboard:

<https://ochca.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/cc4859c8c522496b9f21c451de2fedae> where you can track daily reported cases, deaths, cumulative numbers and other statistics specific to Orange County.

Agendas from the most recent Board of Trustee meetings can be found here:

January 20, 2021 – <https://capousd->

[ca.schoolloop.com/file/1514016268888/1531973256666/3151138416294557890.pdf](https://capousd-ca.schoolloop.com/file/1514016268888/1531973256666/3151138416294557890.pdf)

January 6, 2021 – Special Board Meeting – Closed session only - <https://capousd->

[ca.schoolloop.com/file/1514016268888/1531973256666/4679134360524795183.pdf](https://capousd-ca.schoolloop.com/file/1514016268888/1531973256666/4679134360524795183.pdf)

December 16, 2020 – Board Meeting - <https://capousd->

[ca.schoolloop.com/file/1514016268888/1531973256666/3589579702101818026.pdf](https://capousd-ca.schoolloop.com/file/1514016268888/1531973256666/3589579702101818026.pdf)

Minutes and Audio Recordings of Meetings can be found at https://capousd-ca.schoolloop.com/pf4/cms2/view_page?d=x&group_id=1514016268888&vdid=wi10b1qsopu12s Minutes are listed once approved, audio is typically posted within a day or two of the meeting. Also, on this page are links to 2018-2019 minutes/agendas/audio and previous years.

CUCPTSA Legislation/Advocacy Racial Equity Book Club –

We have formed our own Racial Equity Book Club – we will provide summaries of what we learned from each book read. Other updates from the book club will be included here as well. We are currently reading So You Want to Talk About Race by Ijeoma Oluo. A synopsis of the book will be provided after our book club discussion in February.

From Fourth District PTA:

SACRAMENTO SAFARI – Save the Dates – February 22-23, 2021

Sacramento Safari is being held virtually this year with workshops on Monday – Tuesday. Sacramento Safari is FREE this year, so please consider registering. There are two sets of sessions each day, one morning one and one afternoon – so hopefully it will fit within your schedule for at least a session or two. Please register at <https://forms.gle/vkt7u5QpmlXLLCNM7> Registration is open till February 17, 2021 – so register today!

Talking Points for Legislative Chairs, January 2021

Details are in the January issue of the *Advocacy Communicator*.

- California schools will receive \$6.8 billion from the federal Covid-19 relief package that was signed into law in December. The *Communicator* has a link to a database that shows how much each school district will receive.
- The California legislature will reconvene on January 11. Lawmakers will start looking at the budget, which will include deciding what to do with an unexpected windfall that could go as high as \$36 billion.
- State lawmakers have started introducing bills. One bill would make Kindergarten mandatory; another would require a one-semester ethnics class in high school, and an emergency measure would require all schools to open for in-person instruction two weeks after state and county health departments determine it is safe to do so. California State PTA has not yet taken a position on any of these bills.
- California State PTA participated in the development of Governor Newsom's school reopening plan. The *Communicator* has links to three documents regarding that plan.
- The newsletter also has information about four PTA virtual advocacy events:
 - The Fourth District PTA Advocacy Forum, January 22
 - California State PTA Legislation Conference, February 8 and 9
 - Sacramento Safari, February 22 and 23
 - National PTA Legislative Conference, March 9 to 11

Talking Points for Legislative Chairs, February 2021

Details are in the February issue of the *Advocacy Communicator*.

- Governor Newsom is asking state lawmakers to take quick budget action on \$4.6 billion in one-time funding to address student learning loss through an extended school year, summer school, or other programs. He is also asking for quick approval of \$2 billion to help school districts re-open classrooms for pre-kindergarten through grade 6. The Communicator has additional details about the Governor's proposed budget.
- As PTA advocates for all children, it's important to be well informed. A good resource is the **Annual Report on the Conditions of Children**, which is published every year by the Orange County Health Care Department. The Communicator has a link to the report.
- State Superintendent of Schools Tony Thurmond says the top priority of the California Department of Education is to reopen schools by making them as safe as possible. He is not in favor of state-mandated reopening because circumstances differ at districts throughout the state. His department will apply to the federal government for permission to cancel this year's statewide assessment testing.
- Virtual advocacy events are planned by Fourth District, State PTA and National PTA in February and March. So many opportunities to get important information! Details are in the Communicator.

Back issues of the Communicator can be found at:

<http://www.fourthdistrictpta.org/advocacy-communicator/>

CA PTA Monthly Advocacy Calls:

Join California State PTA Director of Legislation Shereen Walter and members of the Legislation Team on Wednesdays.

Here is the schedule of upcoming advocacy webinars through June 2021. The webinars generally take place the first Wednesday of every month, from 7:00-8:00 p.m. (with some exceptions):

- March 3, 2021
- April 7, 2021
- May 5, 2021
- June 2, 2021

To register for any or all of these webinars, click here:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/rt/31940121174953740>

California PTA News:

California State PTA is excited to announce that we will be holding an **all-virtual** Legislation Conference on **February 8-9, 2021**. We hope you will join us for this new and exciting format!

During the conference, whose theme is "**A Path to Equity**," you'll hear from legislators and other leaders from around the state on matters that are important to the children and families of California. There will also be a strong focus on how to schedule, plan and execute a meeting with your legislators.

The cost is \$50. Registration information is on the California State PTA website - <https://capta.org/programs-events/legislation-conference/> , and our social media accounts!

We have at least 7 participants from CUCPTSA attending this event.

In State News:

Gov. Newsom proposes \$4.6 billion for summer school, more learning time in 2021-22 budget: He calls for quick action to reopen TK to 6 schools, wants 3% more for UC and CSU – by John Fensterwald – January 8, 2021 – What a difference a year makes. Confident of a continued economic recovery from Covid recession, Gov. Gavin Newsom on Friday presented a record \$89.2 billion for K-12 schools and community colleges next year that will provide billions in additional revenue and news spending – plus 3% more for the University of California and the California State University. Read EdSource's complete analysis of the budget at: [Gov. Newsom proposes \\$4.6 billion for summer school, more learning time in 2021-22 budget | EdSource](#)

California public schools suffer record enrollment drop – by Richardo Cano – January 26, 2021 – California's K-12 public-school enrollment has precipitously declined during the pandemic, dropping by a record 155,000 students, according to new state projects. ... That drop-off is about five times greater than California's annual rate of enrollment decline in recent years. The state, which boasts the largest student enrollment in the country, has seen a steady decline of between 20,000 and 30,000 students in its public schools in the two years prior partly due to declining birth rates, and the state had predicted a similar rate of decline to continue. Read the complete article at: [California public schools suffer record enrollment drop | CalMatters](#) Why this matters for us in CUSD – school funding is based off of enrollment and ADA (Average Daily Attendance) – when we have fewer students, we receive fewer funds and cuts must be made. Under COVID-19, there has been a stay put on ADA, so we are still being funded under the 2019/2020 school year numbers, but this is not going to remain in place. As for enrollment decline in CUSD, enrollment declined approximately 2,800 students from last year to this year. Over 500 fewer kindergarten students enrolled this year. Trying to figure out where these students went and encouraging them to re-enroll in CUSD will be critical to the district's budget over the coming years.

California school official push for standardized testing waiver amid Covid-19 spike – by Sydney Johnson – January 14, 2021 - As Covid-19 cases continue to soar in California, a majority of the State Board of Education is now in favor of pursuing a waiver from the federal government that would remove the obligation to carry out standardized testing for the second year in a row. The board is grappling with what

to do about standardized tests like the Smarter Balanced assessments in math and English language arts that students in certain grades are required to take each spring. The U.S. Department of Education waived federal testing requirements following abrupt school closures for in-person instruction in March 2020 due to the pandemic, but this school year, the department intends to resume required testing. Now, as California faces the largest daily number of cases it's experienced yet, State Board of Education members say they want a testing waiver to be made available for states. Read the complete article at: [California school officials push for standardized testing waiver amid Covid-19 spike | EdSource](#) If this happens will be dependent upon what happens at the National level. Currently we are waiting on Biden's Education Secretary to be confirmed by the Senate. As of now he has not indicated one way or the other on this issue.

DeVos balked at more state testing waivers. What will Biden's Ed Dept do? K-12 Dive spoke with testing and policy experts about the likelihood education secretary nominee Miguel Cardona would issue waivers for 2020-21 – by Naaz Modan – January 26, 2021 – While the purpose and effectiveness of standardized testing was a hot topic prior to the coronavirus pandemic, the debate has gathered more steam in the wake of school closures and predicted learning loss for students. Under President Joe Biden, who nominated Miguel Cardona as secretary of education, that issue could be revisited. Testing and potential flexibilities provided to states will be among the early decisions the new team at the U.S. Department of Education will have to address, and many are waiting in anticipation to see whether Cardona will grant additional waivers. Read the complete articles at: <https://www.k12dive.com/news/devos-denied-states-another-round-of-testing-waivers-what-will-bidens-ed/>

California education issues to watch in 2021 – and predictions of what will happen by John Fensterwald and Yuxuan Xie – January 6, 2021 – Each year EdSource makes some predictions for the coming year. – Were it not for a pandemic..... A couple of months into 2020, I was on track to crown myself pundit of the year. Then came COVID in March to create suffering for so many people – and wreck my annual predictions column. I know: it's shallow to equate the two. But it's my best excuse. This year promises to be no easier than last to forecast, with variables and pitfalls that will defy oddsmakers. But with false humility, I'll look ahead and assume that like a stopped clock, I'll get at least one guess right. Read all of John Fensterwald's predictions at: [California education issues to watch in 2021 – and predictions of what will happen | EdSource](#)

With Gov. Newsom's back-to-school plan all but doomed, what might it take to salvage it? Negotiations continue to meet objections of school districts, alternative ideas of the Legislature – by John Fensterwald – January 27, 2021 – Odds are increasingly remote that Gov. Gavin Newsom's plan to provide financial incentives for districts to reopen schools in February and March will get off the ground. During two hearings on the proposal, legislators repeated districts' complaints that the initial Feb. 1 deadline to apply was unrealistic and should be pushed back. ... There's no indication that the Legislature will act this week to approve the \$2 billion the state would offer to districts that meet Newsom's timeline and conditions. That needs to happen before the proposal can take effect. But the demise of one plan could lead to

the birth of another. Read the complete article at: [With Gov. Newsom's back-to-school plan all but doomed, what might it take to salvage it? | EdSource](#)

Quick Guide: How does Gov. Newsom's 'Safe Schools for All' plan work? By EdSource Staff – January 4, 2021 – On December 30, 2020, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced a \$2 billion “Safe Schools for All” plan to encourage more schools to reopen for in-person instruction in 2021. You can check out the “Safe Schools for All Hub” published on January 14, 2021 at [CA Covid-19 School Readiness Hub](#) EdSource has provided answers to some questions on how this plan is supposed to operate here: [Quick Guide: How does Gov. Newsom's 'Safe Schools for All' plan work? | EdSource](#) CUSD is working on their grant application for this program. It is due by February 1, 2021. If we are granted the funds, our district would receive additional funds to help offset the costs of testing staff and students, ppe, and other expenses related to operating during a global pandemic.

California teachers could get Covid-19 vaccinations starting in February – by Diana Lambert and Ali Tadayon – January 26, 2021 – A state effort to develop a more streamlined approach to vaccinating California residents against Covid-19 may get teachers their shots sooner. ... Gov. Gavin Newsom announced the changes, which include a transition to an age-based eligibility system, in a press conference Monday. Starting next month, teachers and others in Phase 1B of the state's vaccination priority list could begin to be vaccinated, even in counties where healthcare workers, who are in Phase 1A, are still being vaccinated. Read the complete article at: [California teachers could get Covid-19 vaccinations starting in February | EdSource](#)

Inconsistent vaccine supply, lack of state coordination complicate teacher vaccinations by Diana Lambert – January 22, 2021 – An unpredictable vaccine supply and lack of statewide coordination has school districts across California struggling to figure out how to vaccinate their teachers and other school staff – and equally importantly, when. ... After health care workers and staff at long-term care facilities, teachers and other school employees are included in the next phase (Phase 1B) of the state's vaccine rollout. Read the complete article at: [Inconsistent vaccine supply, lack of state coordination complicate teacher vaccinations | EdSource](#)

California schools struggle to pay for ventilation upgrades, key to safely reopen campuses – by Betty Marquez Rosales and Carolyn Jones – January 8, 2021 – Upgrading ventilation systems is a key way schools can reduce the spread of the coronavirus when campuses reopen, but some districts in California are finding the cost of those upgrades to be insurmountable. ... Some districts have recently been able to upgrade their HVAC systems using local bond money. Some hope that the Legislature will place a multi-billion bond on the 2022 state ballot to provide new money for school facilities. Others are hoping President-elect Joe Biden will push through infrastructure legislation that includes money for schools. But few funding streams are guaranteed, and they may not be sufficient to cover the regular inspections and stringent filter replacements that HVAC systems require. Read the complete article at: [California schools struggle to pay for ventilation upgrades, key to safely reopen campuses | EdSource](#)

California's 'cradle-to-career' data system in line to receive \$15 million for next phase – by Louis Freedberg – January 12, 2021 – Ending speculation as to how much California will invest in building an ambitious “cradle-to-career” data system, Gov. Gavin Newsom is proposing to spend \$15 million for the next phase of creating a data system that will shed light on effective strategies contributing to student success and to provide useful tools to students trying to plan their education careers. Read more about this next step at: [California's 'cradle-to-career' data system in line to receive \\$15 million for next phase | EdSource](#)

At the National Level:

Turning cameras off to keep student engagement on by Lauren Barack – December 9, 2020 – Requiring students to keep their video cameras on during virtual classes may create privacy issues, according to online learning considerations from the Future of Privacy Forum and the National Education Association. Cameras that peer into a student's home life can blur the boundary between their school environment and personal world, which have merged during the pandemic. That window may also reveal details about a student's life they may not want seen. Read the complete article at: [Turning cameras off to keep student engagement on | K-12 Dive](#)

Report: K-12 schools saw 66% jump in overall safety incidents in fall – by Naaz Modan – January 28, 2021 – K-12 schools saw a 66% jump in the number of overall safety incidents during the first three months of the 2020-21 school year when compared to the same time last school year, according to a report from Gaggle, a security management system used by districts to monitor student activity, that pulled data from 4.5 million students and 3 billion items within school accounts. Specifically, the increases were spread across four kinds of incidents: suicide and self-harm (83%), violence toward others (63%), nudity and sexual content (135%), and drugs and alcohol (59%). Read the complete report and analysis at: [Report: K-12 schools saw 66% jump in overall safety incidents in fall | K-12 Dive](#)

Why special education advocates are hopeful about the Biden administration: As a candidate, Biden promised full funding of programs that benefit students with disabilities. By Carolyn Jones – November 20, 2020 - Last spring, Biden became one of the first presidential candidates in decades to address special education in his [education platform](#), calling for full funding of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the federal law that guarantees students with disabilities a “free and appropriate education;” investments in special education teacher recruitment, anti-bullying measures and job training for students with disabilities, and funding for colleges to better accommodate students with special needs. Read the complete article at: [Why special education advocates are hopeful about the Biden administration | EdSource](#)

Tracking how the coronavirus is impacting school districts: From the shift to distance learning to the impact on school budgets, we're collecting news, analysis and expert advice on how K-12 is responding to the pandemic. By Roger Riddell, Naaz Modan, and Kara Arundel – this is updated almost daily and you can review back to mid-May by week to see what has been happening. The nation's

public school districts faced unprecedented disruption to the school year as the novel coronavirus pandemic shut down buildings and forced learning online, to the extent educators were able to do so. Shutdowns forced districts and policymakers alike to make strides in addressing the "homework gap" resulting from a lack of home internet and device access that already adversely affected many students prior to shutdowns. Further complicating the situation: Educators needed additional training, the delivery of curriculum had to be rethought, and many low-income students' only guaranteed meals throughout the day were through school programs. ... And that's not even considering the impending funding tsunami expected from the economic impacts of the shutdowns, or the challenge of reopening schools in the fall and planning for a variety of scenarios. ... Follow along below as we track major news and analysis of the coronavirus's impact on K-12. Read more of what is happening at:

<https://www.educationdive.com/news/tracking-how-the-coronavirus-is-impacting-school-districts/578628/>

From the National PTA:

Happy New Year and Multi-cultural Calendars from the National PTA: As your PTA starts to plan for 2021, we encourage you to consider the rich diversity of our PTA and school communities. To help, the National PTA has put together an outstanding new multicultural calendar which reflects the observances celebrated by various cultures, religions and populations in 2021. It lists each observance by month and day, and provides links which allow you to learn more about each holiday! View the entire calendar at: [multicultural-calendar-2021.pdf \(pta.org\)](https://www.pta.org/multicultural-calendar-2021.pdf)

Advocacy letters for National PTA:

Please visit the Take Action site <https://www.pta.org/home/advocacy/take-action> to send a letter to your Congress members on the issues of the day/week/month. Here you can keep up-to-date on the latest issues the National PTA is supporting or opposing.

The 117th Congress starts on January 3, 2021, and is considering the following legislation items. The National PTA is supporting (✔ - green checkmarks) or opposing (✘ red x) the following items:

Child Health and Safety

Education Technology and Student Data Privacy

Elementary and Secondary Education

Federal Investments in Education

Gun Safety and Violence Prevention

Post-Secondary Access and Opportunity

Special Education