

April 20, 2010 Sacramento Advocacy Trip - Executive Summary

By: Alli Maier – Sacramento Advocacy Chair

8 schools were represented:

3 High Schools – Aliso Niguel, Dana Hills & Tesoro

3 Middle Schools – Arroyo Vista, Las Flores and Marco Forster

2 Elementary School – Arroyo Vista and John Malcom

6 Attendees:

Kim Anderson – CUCPTSA Legislative Co-Chair and Dana Hills High School
Legislation Co-Chair

Lori Abbott – CUCPTSA Legislative Co-Chair and Las Flores Middle School

Kathy Fischer – Legislative State Co-Chair and Aliso Niguel High
High School Legislation Chair

Alli Maier – Sacramento Advocacy Chair, Malcom Elem /Marco
Forster Middle School Legislation Chair

Fran Sdao – Tesoro Legislation Chair

Kathy Spencer – Legislative State Co-Chair and Arroyo Vista K-8 Legislation Chair

Held 8 meetings:

- **Reggie Fair** – Legislative Director, Senator Curren Price
- **Edmundo Cuevas** – *Education Consultant, Assembly member Mike Eng*
- **Paul Navarro** – *Deputy Legislative Secretary to Governor Schwarzenegger*
- **Paul Richman/Debbie Look** – *Exec. Director & VP Advocacy, CAPTA*
- **Rachel Ehlers** – *Fiscal & Policy Analyst, LAO*
- **Juan Salazar** – *Senate Fellow, Senator Carol Liu*
- **Stephen Rhoads** – *Principal, Strategic Education Services*
- **Rick Simpson** – *Deputy Chief of Staff to Speaker of the Assembly, John Perez*

Things we heard consistently:

Budget

- The current deficit is around \$20B.
- Tax revenue signs are encouraging. The income tax return reports from the Franchise Tax Board indicate that the revenue situation is not worsening or improving.
- The Gov's. Budget included \$7B from the Fed's – very unlikely. \$2-\$3B is best case scenario
- Economy is showing some signs of turning around.
- Still have not fixed the current year deficit, therefore, any increases in state revenues are needed to plug holes in the January budget proposal.
- School payments will be deferred until July (or even Oct.)
- The revenue "pie" will need to increase for Education to receive more money.

May Revise

- The Governor has 3 options: 1. Ignore the July 2009 Budget deal. 2. Fund Prop 98 under current law. 3. Suspend Prop 98.
- Suspension may be the best option for now & create a Maintenance Factor to be repaid later.
- If revenue stays low and the Gas Tax Swap does not work, we'll have to suspend.

Race to the Top Funding ("RTTT")

- There's uncertainty, at all levels, whether or not CA will apply in the 2nd round of funding, based on the lack of success we had in the first round allocation.
- There may be additional Federal dollars coming to CA schools through other programs.

Reform

- There's significant "buzz" centered on the word "flexibility" as it applies to local school districts.
- CSR is gone for now & the LAO recommends cutting the 07/08 funding level by 20% & eliminating penalties resulting in 100% flexibility.
- Last year, major reforms in Education Funding were enacted due to large amounts of flexibility granted in Categorical Funding.
- Part of the problem is the 2/3 vote requirement to pass the budget. Creates a barrier, gridlock & forces decisions no one is happy with.
- CA Forward proposals are still being considered. They include performance-based budgets, legislative oversight, longer forecasts & pay-as-you-go.
- There is movement afoot to push all decisions to the local level. Parents are the consumers.

SB955 – The Huff Bill

- Background: this bill would, partly, end the practice of laying off teachers based on seniority & would allow districts to lay off & transfer teachers based on effectiveness & subject need.
- It has advanced out of the Senate Educ. Comm. (5-4).
- There is a feeling that this bill will die, in the Assembly, due to opposition from CTA.
- Rank & file teachers should generally agree with what is in the bill, even if the union does not.
- There is no parental or student evaluations of teachers included in this bill.
- This bill has momentum, currently.

Notable Quotables:

- "School districts need to frame every decision based on what's best for the kids." – Paul Navarro
- "We are losing an entire generation of teachers because they are concerned that they can be pink-slipped 7 or 8 years down the road due to seniority." - Paul Navarro
- "It is ironic that Republicans are teaming with the ACLU to fight on behalf of young teachers in poor areas with high job turnover." - Paul Navarro
- Re: National Common Core Standards – "the attempt will be to keep standards away from being 'a mile wide & an inch deep'. We do not want to confuse quantity with quality." – Rick Simpson