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

In Local News:

On Wednesday, March 31st and Thursday, April 1st the district shared information on reopening more fully to in-person instruction starting on Monday, April 26, 2021. If you have any questions regarding these plans, please contact your site principals to find out how these changes are being implemented at your site.

The plan for the Cultural Proficiency Curriculum was pulled off of the February Board Meeting Agenda by staff. It is scheduled to come back before the board in April. Please take time to email the board your support of this work and the need to have curriculum that challenges our students and staff to have the not so fun conversations that guide us to a place where all will feel valued. While these are not easy lessons, they are not intended to make anyone feel less about themselves, but rather to help students develop their empathy skills and awareness that not all are as fortunate as some might be.

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:

Kevin Gordon does a weekly video "podcast" on YouTube that can be found here: [K-12 Politics and Tech - Education - YouTube](#) There is a new video posted each week. I encourage you to take 20 minutes a week to catch up on his latest updates.

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:

March 24, 2021 – Special Board Meeting – Closed Session Only –

[7509463662096375244.pdf \(schoolloop.com\)](https://www.schoolloop.com/file/7509463662096375244.pdf)

March 17, 2021 – Board Meeting - <https://capousd->

[ca.schoolloop.com/file/1514016268888/1531973256666/6638857722782178859.pdf](https://www.schoolloop.com/file/1514016268888/1531973256666/6638857722782178859.pdf)

March 3, 2021 – Special Board Meeting - [4163695457219343984.pdf \(schoolloop.com\)](https://www.schoolloop.com/file/4163695457219343984.pdf)

February 17, 2021 – Board Meeting - <https://capousd->

[ca.schoolloop.com/file/1514016268888/1531973256666/7290119953130700183.pdf](https://www.schoolloop.com/file/1514016268888/1531973256666/7290119953130700183.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](https://www.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.

You can also stream past school board meetings if you want to re-watch something for clarity on their YouTube channel at [CapoUSD BoardMeeting - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCapUSD)

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 How to Be An Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi. We finished reading and discussing White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism by Robin Diangelo in March. The book gave detailed examples of why many White Americans find talking about race and racism to be incredibly difficult. It also at the end provided starting steps we can and need to take to start tackling these hard conversations. Looking forward to our next book club discussions in April.

From Fourth District PTA:

Talking Points for Legislative Chairs, March 2021

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

- Participants in this year's virtual Sacramento Safari heard a lot of discussion about reopening schools and a pair of bills, SB 86 and AB 86, that would provide \$6.6 billion to accomplish that. Those bills were approved on March 4 and signed into law by Gov. Newsom.
- California State PTA took positions on 22 state bills and some of them are listed in the Communicator. Among other things, the bills deal with the extension of the internet into unserved communities, ethnic studies, mandatory kindergarten, and testing children for dyslexia.
- The next Advocacy Forum, on March 19, will be a follow-up to the Safari. All PTA members are welcome to participate. You can watch recordings of the conference at sacsafari.org.
- After listening to the Sacramento Safari speakers, participants met in small groups with state legislators who represent Orange County. Their three key

messages were about the return to in-person learning, the need for more education funding, and the need for mental health support services. Details are in the Communicator.

- Last month California State PTA developed 10 recommendations for the safe reopening of schools. In response to feedback from local members, including some from Orange County, the recommendations were amended. There's a link to the new version in the Communicator. Many of those recommendations were included in the \$6.6 billion bill.

Talking Points for Legislative Chairs, April 2021

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

- California is developing a Cradle-to-Career Data System to track students from early childhood to entrance into working careers. Work on this system began last year. The governor's budget includes \$15 million to continue the development of the data base, which combines information from numerous sources and is designed to help policymakers make more informed budget and policy decisions.
- California State PTA has a "watch" position on AB 99, which authorizes the continuing development of the data base. A resolution approved by convention delegates supports the idea of a longitudinal data base.
- The National PTA Legislative Conference in March included virtual visits to Congress to present five requests. The requests dealt with the COVID relief package (which was approved the day of the visits), Statewide Family Engagement Centers (California doesn't have one), an infrastructure package for schools, the federal school meal program, and legislation to prohibit seclusion, restraints and corporal punishment in schools.
- Last month's Communicator listed several state bills that California State PTA is supporting and there are five more in this issue.
- Fourth District PTA hopes to be back in Sacramento for next year's Sacramento Safari. We need to include about \$700 in our PTA budget for that.

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):

- 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:

In State News:

Local assessments an option if statewide tests aren't viable during pandemic, California officials signal by Sydney Johnson – April 2, 2021 – California education officials have been told verbally that the state may not need to submit a waiver application to the U.S. Department of Education, thus opening the door for more flexibility this spring when it comes to standardized testing, as school districts continue to navigate reopening plans during the pandemic. ... California's plan would still offer the state's Smarter Balanced assessments in mathematics and English language arts, the California Science Test, as well as tests for English learners and other special populations. But in situations where it is not viable for districts to administer those assessments due to challenges such as assuring Covid-19 safety or broadband limitations while students are at home, the policy would also permit school districts to select their own assessments if they met a set of criteria prescribed by the state. ... These assessments would have to be aligned with Common Core state standards; be available to assess students in grades 3-8 and 11; be uniformly administered across a grade span, school or district; and provide disaggregated results for parents, educators and the public. Read the complete article at: <https://edsource.org/2021/california-school-districts-get-ok-to-choose-local-assessments-over-statewide-tests-this-spring/>

One year later: Covid's impact on California education by Dana Amihere, Yuxuan Xie, Justin Allen, and Ali Tadayon – March 15, 2021 – For most of California's 10 million K-12 and college students, the beginning of March marks one year of learning online. Though a return to in-person instruction is now on the horizon for many as the number of new Covid-19 cases drops and millions receive vaccines, the last year for the education community has been characterized by anxiety, disruption, reckoning and uncertainty. Here's a glance through key milestones over the past year, and EdSource's reporting about them. Read through the timeline at <https://edsource.org/2021/one-year-later-covids-impact-on-california-education/>

California schools to get \$15.3 billion in federal aid under American Rescue Plan by John Fensterwald – March 11, 2021 – The nearly \$2 trillion American Rescue Plan that President Joe Biden signed Thursday will send \$15.3 billion in assistance to California's K-12 schools. It will be by far the biggest of the three relief acts that Congress passed in less than a year to combat the pandemic and the recession. Read the complete article that details how funds are distributed at: <https://edsource.org/2021/california-schools-to-get-15-3-billion-in-federal-aid-under-american-rescue-plan/>

Find out how much California school districts and charter schools will get in Covid relief Database by Daniel J. Willis and Justin Allen – March 11, 2021 – Take some time to explore the database, find out how much Capistrano has received over the various packages at: <https://edsource.org/2021/california-districts-and-charter-schools-get-covid-relief-funding-under-american-rescue-plan-act/>

California moving to pioneer free meals for all students: East Bay senator's bill could make California the first state in the country to provide universal school meals by Ali Tadayon – April 8, 2021 – The “Free School Meals For All” bill, SB 364, introduced last month by East Bay Sen. Nancy Skinner, D-Berkeley, would establish a statewide Universal Meal Plan starting in the 2022-2023 school year. It would guarantee free breakfast and lunch for all California students and eliminate the application process that proved a barrier to many families. Though New York City, Chicago and other U.S. cities have created such program, California would be the first to do it statewide. ... Skinner presented the bill Tuesday at the California Senate Standing Committee on Education where it was met with unanimous bipartisan support and no opposition. Read the complete article at: <https://edsource.org/2021/california-moving-to-pioneer-free-meals-for-all-students/>

Some districts looking to cut back PE as campuses reopen by Carolyn Jones – April 1, 2021 – As many students begin returning to campus after a year of being mostly stuck indoors during school hours staring at screens, some districts in California are cutting the programs that advocates say students need more than ever: physical education. In Capistrano Unified in Orange County, about half the PE teachers have been reassigned, leaving some remaining PE teachers with rosters of more than 500 students. Read the complete article at: <https://edsource.org/2021/some-districts-looking-to-cut-back-p-e-as-campuses-reopen/>

California adopts CDC's recommendation to reduce social distancing in school to 3 feet: Change could significantly increase number of students who can attend class at the same time by John Fensterwald – March 19, 2021 – In alignment with new federal guidance, Gov. Gavin Newsom and the California Department of Public Health have halved the minimum social distancing requirement in schools from 6 feet to 3 feet. Read the complete article at: <https://edsource.org/2021/california-to-follow-cdcs-recommendation-to-reduce-social-distancing-in-school-to-3-feet/> Note – that while social distancing guidelines have changed, the contact tracing guidelines are still at the 6 foot mark.

What 3-foot social distance means for reopening of California schools: The largest impact could be eliminating the need for hybrid learning in the fall by Diana Lambert and John Fensterwald – March 26, 2021 – New state and federal Covid safety guidelines that reduce the recommended minimum distance between students from 6 feet to 3 feet should make it easier for California schools to return students to classrooms full time, but most districts are not likely to make the change until the fall. Read the complete article at: <https://edsource.org/2021/what-3-foot-social-distance-means-for-reopening-of-california-schools/>

After 8 hours, 250-plus speakers, California board adopts ethnic studies model curriculum: It's not a mandate; school districts can add or ignore lesson plans and guidance By John Fensterwald – March 19, 2021 - ... “Adopting the model curriculum today that is balanced, focused and bold is an extraordinary test that may not please everyone, but facing our history is an uncomfortable endeavor and making landmark educational change is never easy,” said Alejo, who is now a Monterey County

supervisor. Read the complete article at: <https://edsources.org/2021/after-8-hours-250-plus-speakers-california-board-adopts-ethnic-studies-model-curriculum/>

A final vote, after many rewrites, for California’s controversial ethnic Studies curriculum: State Board faces deadline to pass curriculum that districts can choose how to use by John Fensterwald – March 17, 2021 - ... The (Ethnic Studies) model curriculum, while voluntary for districts to adopt, is intended to build upon ethnic studies courses already offered as electives in hundreds of high schools. ... Over the past two years, the language of ethnic studies – white privilege, implicit bias, white supremacy – has seeped into everyday speech. Searing events outside of California – police killings of Blacks, insurrectionists on Capitol Hill wielding Confederate flags, violent attacks on Asian Americans, blatant efforts to disenfranchise minority voters – have underscored the need for ethnic studies courses, as the draft document states, to “address the causes of racism and other forms of bigotry ... within our culture and governmental policies.” Read the complete article at: <https://edsources.org/2021/a-final-vote-after-many-rewrites-for-californias-controversial-ethnic-studies-curriculum/>

Should kindergarten be mandatory in California? By Karen D’Souza – March 3, 2021 - ... The vast disparity in skills that students bring with them when they first go to school is one of the key factors that struck Sen. Susan Rubio, D-Baldwin Park, in her 17 years as a public-school teacher and principal. She also discovered that the gaps tended to widen over time. ... That inequity is one of the key reasons Rubio introduced Senate Bill 70, which would require all students in California to complete one year of kindergarten before entering the 1st grade, beginning with the 2022-23 school year. Kindergarten is not compulsory in California and most other states, although it is mandated in 19 states and the District of Columbia, according to the Education Commission of the States, a research group that tracks education policy. Children are required to be enrolled in school at age 6 in California. Read the complete article at: <https://edsources.org/2021/should-kindergarten-be-mandatory-in-california/>

At the National Level:

As support for LGBT-inclusive curricula grows, districts navigate persistent challenges: Five states have mandates for LGBT-inclusive curricula, but experts say navigating pushback and supporting educators are ongoing struggles. By Lauren Barack – March 24, 2021 – New Jersey is one of five states including California, Illinois, Oregon, and Colorado with mandates for public schools to teach LGBT-inclusive curriculum, which varies from the roles and contributions of LGBT figures in history to sex education. Yet experts say there is very little to enforce these requirements, whether that’s districts implementing the curriculum to teachers using it in their classrooms. Read the complete article at: <https://www.k12dive.com/news/as-support-for-lgbt-inclusive-curricula-grows-districts-navigate-persisten/>

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:

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