

# **Legislation Newsletter—October 2009**

## **LOCAL**

### **Orange County Committee on School District Organization Hearing**

- A petition to change the way CUSD voters elect trustees was submitted to the county with the requisite number of qualified signatures. Therefore, the Orange County Committee held a public hearing on September 30 in the CUSD Board room to consider the petition.

### **Results of the Orange County Committee Hearing**

- The OC Committee approved the petition and set an election date for June 8, 2010. Since the CUSD Board of Trustees voted earlier in the month not to pursue a waiver request, the election could cost \$400,000 - \$500,000 plus demographer fees.

### **CUCPTSA Position**

- Now that this issue has become a ballot measure, a committee will be formed to determine if PTA can take a position on the issue, and if so, to determine a position.

### **CUSD Budget**

The Board will now begin to look for ways to cut \$25 million from the 2010/2011 budget. Discussions will be held at each monthly CUSD board meeting leading to a first interim report to OCDE in mid-December, in which a reasonable list of \$25 million worth of cuts will be identified. Mid-year cuts are likely, but will hopefully be offset by the federal stimulus money.

### **CUSD Contract Negotiations Update**

CSEA - The last negotiation session was on Monday, Oct 5. The District presented their suggestions for language changes to the contract. CSEA partially presented their proposal for language changes. They will continue to present at the next meeting. There were some areas of mutual interest for change. They are expected to meet again at the end of October or early Nov.

Teamsters - The first session was held on September 24. It was a productive session with areas of mutual agreement and shared ideas. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, October 13.

CUEA - On Friday, Sept 25 the mediator worked with the Budget team from the District and CUEA. The next mediation session with the full teams from CUEA and the District will be on Monday, Oct 12.

### **Major District Objectives**

CUSD has identified 3 District Objectives:

1. Accelerate Learning of All Students
2. Provide a Safe and Healthy Environment at Each School Site
3. Communicate Effectively with all Stakeholders

Further details of these objectives can be found at the capousd website.

### **Academic Update**

Test results from the 2008-2009 school year have been released showing tremendous growth and achievement in the district.

- API for CUSD is 857 – Note: CUSD is the only large (more than 30,000 students) school district in California with an API over 800
- 84% of CUSD schools exceeded 800 (minimum target)
- 96% of CUSD schools met school-wide growth target
- 79% of CUSD schools met school-wide and subgroup growth target
- 32 out of 37 CUSD elementary schools scored 800 or higher, and 12 of the elementary schools scored over 900

- 11 out of 12 CUSD middle schools scored 800 or higher and 3 of the middle schools scored over 900
- All 6 CUSD high schools scored 800 or higher
- CUSD met 40 out of 44 district-wide AYP targets

### **San Juan Elementary Update**

San Juan Elementary is working toward becoming a K-8 School. The addition of 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades will allow for a better focus on the dual language immersion curriculum. This will also solve the problem of where 5<sup>th</sup> graders will go to continue their dual language education.

### **CUCPTSA Legislation Team Facebook Page**

The CUCPTSA Legislation Team has requested approval from CUCPTSA Council to create a Legislation Team Facebook group page. This page will be used for networking with key education policy stakeholders at the local, state, and federal level.

## **STATE**

### **Legislative Update**

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has until October 11 to sign or veto about 700 bills on his desk (including 66 education bills). Normally, he would have dealt with hundreds of bills by now, but is standing by a threat to veto hundreds of bills on his desk unless a deal can be reached on the state's water problem. He has suggested to Senate leader Darrell Steinberg that bills should be withdrawn from the Governor's desk until a water deal is reached.

AB 8 (Julia Brownley) is among the bills awaiting the governor's signature. This bill establishes a working group to make findings and recommendations to the Legislature and the Governor regarding restructuring the state's school finance system. CAPTA has a "Support" position on this bill.

There are two new bills that have been introduced during the 5<sup>th</sup> extraordinary special session that Governor Schwarzenegger convened to address the Race to the Top funding:

- SBx5 1 is Senator Romero's bill that would allow the pupil data system (CALPADS) to be used in conjunction with the teacher data system (CALTIDES) for the purpose of making employment decisions related to teachers. Romero's bill contains language that would specifically require CALTIDES to be used as a means for evaluating teacher performance.
- Senator Simitian has introduced another bill, SBx5 2, more limited in scope than SBx5 1, which would delete the current statutory prohibition on data use. It would authorize data in the California Education Information System, either solely or in conjunction with data from CALPADS, to be used for purposes of teacher evaluation; the provision does not specifically reference CALTIDES. Moreover, it does not add language that would require CALTIDES to be used to provide a means for evaluating teacher performance. This bill has only just been introduced.

Note: Senator Simitian's bill, SB 19, which would remove the prohibition of not allowing student progress data to be tied in to teacher evaluations (but does not deal with any other changes requested by the Governor) has passed both houses of the legislature and is now on the Governor's desk for his signature or veto. CAPTA has a "Support" position on this bill.

### **Finance Reform**

- At Governor Schwarzenegger's and legislative leaders direction, a 14 member, bipartisan "Commission on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Economy" was formed to re-examine, modernize and stabilize California's revenue laws that contribute to feast-or-famine state budget cycles.

- On Sept 29<sup>th</sup>, the Commission submitted its final report and recommendations on ways to improve California's out-dated revenue system to Governor Schwarzenegger and the legislative leaders.
- The same day, Gov. Schwarzenegger called a Special Session of Legislature to review these recommendations.

### **State Government Reform Movement**

- California's state government is increasingly dysfunctional so as a result, there is a growing push to reconstruct the way state government is run.
- Two groups (outside of state government) in particular are leading the charge – *California Forward* and The Bay Area Council.
- *California Forward* has submitted its list of reform proposals to Governor Schwarzenegger and the four legislative leaders.
- The Bay Area Council, a group of business organizations which are part of a larger coalition called **Repair California**, is calling for a California Constitutional Convention. In this scenario, California residents would look at the state's problems and draft a new blueprint for statewide government to go on a statewide ballot.
- The legislature has also announced its own Select Committee on Reform, which is tasked with "making government more efficient and accountable" and "diminishing the influence of special interests." This committee started meeting on October 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Candidates for Statewide Office**

As a PTA, we do not ever take a position on candidates, only issues, but the information provided below is to keep you informed about important upcoming statewide races.

Former U.S. Congressman Tom Campbell, State Insurance Commissioner Steve Poizner and businesswoman Meg Whitman are the three Republicans who have entered the race for Governor. On the Democratic side, only San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom has officially declared that he is running, although Attorney General Jerry Brown is widely expected to enter the race. The primary election will be held on June 8, 2010.

Former teacher, principal, and superintendent, Larry Aceves, State Senator Gloria Romero and Assembly Member Tom Torlakson are running for State Superintendent of Public Instruction. This is a non-partisan position. The deadline for filing is March 12, 2010 with the election on June 8.

### **Assembly District 72 – Special Election**

A special primary election has been set for November 17, 2009. Republicans Linda Ackerman, Richard Faher and Chris Norby, Democrat John MacMurray, and Jane Rands, Green Party have all announced they are running for this seat which represents the cities of Fullerton, Anaheim, Placentia, Orange, Brea, Yorba Linda, and La Habra. Mike Duvall resigned the seat on September 9, 2009.

### **Parcel Taxes**

- In light of the economic conditions, many school districts are turning to parcel taxes to fill in money that is no longer coming from the state.
- Twenty-three school districts have put education parcel taxes on the ballot in 2009 so far and of them 15 have passed. An additional 21 districts put measures on the ballot last year, mostly in November and 17 of those passed. The new taxes range in amount from \$78 to \$795.
- The Senate Constitutional Amendment authored by Senator Joseph Simitian (SCA 6), which would allow for school districts to approve a local parcel tax with a 55 percent majority rather than the two-thirds majority, is currently pending in the legislature. State PTA has a support position on this.

## **FEDERAL**

### **Federal Stimulus Funds**

- **State Fiscal Stabilization** - Although California filed a request at the end of August to receive up to 90% of the state fiscal stabilization funds immediately, there has been no response yet from the federal government to this request. The state has already received 66% of the allotted state fiscal stabilization funds, but had the option to request these additional funds in the first phase of payments due to the economic situation in California.
- **IDEA/Title I** - Additional IDEA and Title I funds were released to the states at the beginning of September (ahead of schedule), but the California Department of Education has not released any details about how much money CUSD will receive in this second round of payments.
- **Investing in Innovation Grants (i3)** – The U.S. Department of Education has issued draft guidance for these competitive grants available to school districts and nonprofits for cutting edge innovation. The grants will range from \$5 million to \$50 million, with a total pool of \$650 million available nationwide. Applications will be due next spring. As the law is currently written, districts must have met all AYP targets in order to be eligible to apply for these funds. There are efforts underway to change this provision to allow more districts to apply.
- **Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) ARRA funds** – California received over \$71 million in EETT funds this summer, and is currently accepting applications for \$33 million in new one-time competitive grants. The notice of award will be made in mid-November. The remaining amount will be distributed according to a formula.

### **No Child Left Behind/Elementary Secondary Education Act Reauthorization**

The U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan gave a speech on September 24, 2009 (<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2009/09/09242009.html>). He wants to move on the reauthorization of ESEA currently known as NCLB. Duncan has repeatedly said that the federal government “should be tight on the goals—with clear standards set by states that truly prepare young people for college and careers—but ... loose on the means for meeting those goals.”

The following quotes tell a little about how the administration plans to change ESEA.

- "Our role here in Washington is to support reform by encouraging high standards, bold approaches to helping struggling schools, closing the achievement gap, strengthening the field of education, reducing the dropout rate, boosting college access. All of this must lead to more students not just attending college but graduating."
- "Over the coming months, the administration will be developing its proposal for reauthorization. Before we do so, however, we have to hear from you."
- "The President has challenged us to boost our college completion rate to 50 percent by the end of the next decade, by 2020."
- "But the biggest problem with NCLB is that it doesn't encourage high learning standards."
- "We are still waiting for a testing and accountability system that accurately and fairly measures student growth and uses data to drive instruction and teacher evaluation. We are still waiting for America to replace an agrarian 19th century school calendar with an information age calendar that increases learning time on par with other countries. We are still waiting, and we can't wait any longer."
- "Our shared goals are absolutely clear higher quality schools, improved student achievement, more students going to college, closing the learning gap, more opportunities for our children to learn and succeed."
- "Let's build a law that demands real accountability tied to growth and gain, both in the individual classroom and in an entire school, rather than simple utopian goals. We need a law that encourages educators to work with children at every level, both the gifted and the struggling, and not just the tiny percent near the middle who can be lifted over a mediocre

bar of proficiency with minimal effort. That is not real education. That is game-playing tied to bad tests with the wrong goals."

- "Let's build a law that discourages a narrowing of the curriculum and promotes a well-rounded education that draws children into sciences and history, languages and the arts, in order to build a society distinguished by both intellectual and economic prowess.
- "...a law that inspires a new generation of young people to go into teaching and aspires all of America to shoulder our responsibility for building a foundation of growth and possibility."