



Council News

Saddleback Valley Council PTA * Fourth District PTA * CCPTS
25631 Peter Hartman Way * Mission Viejo, CA 92691 * www.svpta.org
President: Julie Schwarz * Newsletter Editor: Ann Shaver

President's Message

By Julie Schwarz,
SVPTA President
svpresident@svpta.org

Happy March! A priority this past month has been the State Budget Crisis and the direct impact it will have on the Saddleback Valley School District. I truly applaud all of the letter campaigns your units have made to let our legislators "hear our voice". It is through our collaborative efforts that we can make a difference. Please continue to urge your parents to speak out. You will continue to receive "Call to Action" items – continue to promote them. There are several projects in the works ... phone campaigns, a neighborhood rally, visits to the Legislator's local offices and more. Continue to refer to the district website for accurate information (www.svusd.k12.ca.us). The school district will also be sponsoring Community Forums to help disseminate accurate information and to answer questions. Please encourage your parents to attend these information sessions. (Four dates: March 10, March 18, March 31 and April 2 from 6:30 pm to 8 pm). Again, please refer to the school district website to confirm dates and locations.

It is hard to believe that it is already time for our Annual General Elections. All of our units should have or should soon be electing their executive boards for next year. Remind all your current officers and chairman to help with a smooth transition by:

- Remembering to finish their term by completing any final responsibilities. Meet with the current board to evaluate the year and make recommendations for the next year;
- Meet with the new officers/chairmen to review expectations and review the Procedure Books (hopefully they have kept one);

(Continued on Page 2)

Inside this issue:

Special Education—Budget Concerns and Abilities Awareness	2
Financial Notes	3
Membership	3
Convention News	4
Calling all Historians	4
Advocacy Events	5
Fourth District PTA Works with Coalition to Protest Governor's Proposed Budget Cuts	6
Council Calendar	7

Upcoming Events:

March:

- 7th—All Membership money due to Molly O'Grady
 - 12th—4th District Administrators Dinner TBA
 - 13th—Council Meeting—7:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room
- No President's Roundtable this month

April:

- 1-2 Sacramento Safari
- 10th—Council Meeting—7:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room
President's Roundtable—
Fun...Fun...Fun...(President's Mixer)— 6:15PM @
District Board Room
- 16th—Superintendent's Forum—9:30 AM @ SVUSD Board Conf Room

Items to bring to March meeting:

- ✓ A copy of the adopted Audit for the period ended 12/31/2007 (**worth 1 incentive point**)
- ✓ Two copies of your Unit Annual Report
- ✓ Board-elect listing, particularly with the name and contact information for the incoming President (**worth 1 incentive point**)
- ✓ Orders for next year's membership envelopes
- ✓ A copy of the minutes from your most recent Association meeting
- ✓ A copy of your most recent Treasurer's Report
- ✓ Any items past due from prior meetings, such as a copy of your tax return.

(President's Message continued from Page 1)

- Invite new officers to a current board meeting (if not already a member) and to a PTA Council meeting;
- Provide all officers and chairmen with dates and times of all training opportunities (Convention, District, and Council training)
- Send officers' and chairmen's names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses to PTA Council/District. Officer lists will be available soon;
- Turn over all PTA materials they will need. Give them positive support to do their job.

As you complete your elections, please ask all of your officers to "Save the Date" – May 22, 2008. We will be holding our annual training and dinner at the school district offices. I am planning for 100% attendance. A well trained Executive Board lends itself to a smooth transition and smooth subsequent year.

The last week of this month is our Spring Break. I hope that all of you will spend some time with your families. Let's not forget the reason we volunteer our time for PTA in the first place. It is all about the kids!!

Special Education Committee – Budget Concerns and Abilities Awareness Activities

Caroline Paltin, Ph.D.
SVPTA Special Education Chair
svspecaled@svpta.org

As the issues of the impact of the proposed budget become a rising concern, I want to encourage everyone to become aware of the need for requesting that the government make good on its mandate to fund Special Education in our schools. The governor's current proposal includes \$360 million in cuts by eliminating the COLA "growth" funding for special education, as well as additional cuts to special education, which is already chronically under funded. Last year, SVUSD was under funded by approximately \$13.7 million. With the proposed budget cuts, it becomes even more important to demand that we receive proper funding. This is important to *every* family in SVUSD, because the deficits in Special Education effect spending in general education. As we continue to seek ways to work together, it becomes increasingly beneficial to us to work collaboratively to ensure that *all* children receive the best education possible, with the proper support of the Federal and State governments. Voice your concerns and encourage your friends and family to do the same, by writing to legislators, and go to the SVPTA website for more information at www.svpta.org.

In order to allow everyone to focus on these impending concerns, we will not be holding a Special Education Committee Meeting this month. However, we are very excited to announce that **O'Neill Elementary will host an Ability Awareness Day for its students on April 18th**, and we invite all Presidents and Special Education Chairs to come observe and gain ideas for their own projects for the coming school year. An invitation detailing the time and activities will be coming shortly.

Financial Notes for February

By Molly O'Grady
SVPTA Treasurer
svtreasurer@svpta.org



I want to remind you about changes in IRS Tax Rules. In August 2006, President Bush signed the "Pension Protection Act of 2006," that affects nonprofit organizations, including requirements for PTAs.

First, PTAs should voluntarily provide their donors with thank you letters with the following information, or a receipt with the following information. It will be easier to do this in a timely manner after the donation is made. To claim a deduction for a charitable contribution of money to a PTA ~ *regardless of the amount* ~ a donor must have a canceled check, a bank record, or a receipt that shows (1) the name of the PTA, (2) the date, and (3) the amount of the contribution.

Beginning next November, all PTAs will be required to file a tax return with the IRS. Previously, if your unit's annual gross receipts were less than \$25,000.00 you did not. This will no longer be true in 2008. The California State PTA will post more information with about this on their website as the date gets closer. Please contact me if you have any questions!

MEMBERSHIP

By Andrea Padian
SVPTA Membership Chair
Svmembership@svpta.org

All membership dues must be submitted to Molly O'Grady (SVPTA Treasurer) **no later than March 7, 2008**. Any memberships received after that time will be for the 2008-09 school year and you should submit those dues at the upcoming meetings as usual. And so, with membership checks still coming in this month, recognition awards for units with outstanding membership numbers will be given out sometime in April or May once all records are current.

Please make sure your Membership Chair or VP for next year will attend convention in Long Beach this year. There are many classes available to attend that will give them priceless information regarding the OMDR program, PTA membership information and an exchange of great ideas. If the chairperson is unable to attend some of those classes, especially the OMDR class, the president or another person that will be helping with membership next year, should go in their place. School funding will be hard to get next year and that makes retaining a large membership extra important. The convention provides many useful tools to further that goal. Take advantage of them and sign up for your classes early so you don't miss out.



THAR BE TREASURRR AWAITIN
MATEYS COMING TO CONVENTION!!

Convention registrations are going fine. Don't miss out on this wonderful opportunity to get your unit's treasure! That treasure is the excellent training, education and networking your officers and chairmen will receive by attending. And it couldn't be easier with Long Beach Convention Center being so close to us. **Remember:** If you have folks who wish to attend, but you are short on funds, apply for the scholarship through Fourth District PTA or log onto www.CAPTA.org and click on Convention to find all the information on volunteering. Volunteers also get the opportunity to attend (space permitting). So no excuses, get your unit represented at convention. You can't spend your money any better than this.....developing future leadership will GROW your PTA!

Dolores Winchell
Convention Chairman
svconvention@svpta.org

Calling all Historians!

By Shannon Lloyd
SVPTA Historian
svhistorian@svpta.org



Attention all Presidents - please let your Unit Historians know that your Annual Report is due at our March council meeting. If you are unable to attend that meeting, please contact me to make other arrangements. If your Historian has any questions, feel free to contact me at svhistorian@svpta.org. Thanks so much!

ADVOCACY

By Dorelle Kmetz
SVPTA Legislative Chair
svlegislative@svpta.org

It isn't enough that we've had to live with previous severe budget cuts within our District. We've also had to live with funding based on attendance vs. enrollment, non-equalization funding, large class sizes, mandated programs without funding flexibility and local control driven by Government.

These alone have been a hardship to the quality of education within our District. Now, we face a more uncertain future with a potential **19 Million** dollars cut from the District's General Fund in 2008/09.

Please continue to encourage all PTA members and spouses to write letters to their local legislators. Sample letters can be found on the following web sites:

www.svpta.org/legislative
www.svusd.k12.ca.us (click on State Budget Crisis item)

Thanks for reading...Dorelle Kmetz (svlegislative@svpta.org)

Get the latest information on statewide education issues!

Fourth District PTA's Sacramento Safari

April 1—2, 2008

Safari registration forms are available online at www.fourthdistrictpta.org, at the Fourth District PTA Office, from your council president, or from Celia Jaffe, Fourth District PTA Vice President, Advocacy.

For more information about these events., contact Celia Jaffe at (714) 963-5468 or advocacy@fourthdistrictpta.org

Edsource Conference

April 17, 2008

Fourth District PTA Works with Coalition to Protest Governor's Proposed Budget Cuts

By Celia Jaffe, Fourth District PTA Vice President, Advocacy

As published in Orange Leaves, March 2008

The Governor's proposed budget unveiled in January has sent waves of concern and outrage throughout the education community.

THE PROPOSED BUDGET

For the second time in four years, Governor Schwarzenegger is proposing the suspension of Proposition 98, the voter-approved funding protection for K-14 education.

He includes most aspects of education funding in his proposed 10% across-the-board cuts. This is a 10% reduction from the expected 2008-09 state funding for Class Size Reduction and other categorical programs, and for the state contribution to revenue limits, the basic per-pupil funding of school districts.

According to Jean Ross of the California Budget Project, this averages to cutting approximately \$787 per Average Daily Attendance (ADA) statewide. While in many instances items that are termed "cuts" are actually only reductions in expected funding growth, in this budget actual funding per student is reduced for 2008-09 from this year's levels by over 2%.

THE REACTION

Reaction was quick and vehement. State PTA issued an immediate Legislation Alert (see the Fourth District PTA website for its contents), the focus of the State PTA Legislation conference shifted to funding concerns, and the message we brought to our legislators as part of that conference focused on the need for reliable, adequate funding.

Locally, the Orange County Education Coalition has been reconstituted with Fourth District PTA as an active member. On February 6, a press conference and the first large organizational meeting and rally took place at Westminster School District. Wendy Bokota of the Fourth District "A-Team" served as our parent spokesperson. Her statement included the following:

Parents in Orange County call on the legislature and governor to deal with the budget in a way that shows that our children and our schools are a priority. Let's keep our schools on the right track, not set them back with massive cuts. Public education is too important; we need a state budget that reflects that, and legislators who will ensure our schools get the resources they need to do the job. Our kids deserve the chance to succeed.

The Orange County Education Coalition is a local version of the California Education Coalition. Both are groups of organizations united in the cause of furthering public education. Participating groups include PTA, teacher organizations, school district administrators, school board trustees, and classified employees.

A CALL FOR YOUR ACTION

All Fourth District PTA members are urged to help deliver a message to our state elected representatives. You do not need to understand the figures and complexities of the state budget. You simply need to communicate your priorities as a citizen to the people elected to represent you.

A very basic statement can be very effective. For example:

"Schools cannot absorb these cuts without harming my child's education. Please find other solutions to the financial crisis."

To find your legislator contact information, go to www.assembly.ca.gov, click on "Find My District" in the left-hand column, and enter your address. The names and contact information for your assemblymember and senator will appear. Write a note or email, call or fax. Do it today.

2007—2008 SVPTA CALENDAR

April 2008

- 1-2 Sacramento Safari
- 10th Council Meeting 7:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room
(Executive Board Meeting 6PM in Facilities Conf Room)
- 16th Superintendent's Forum 9:30 AM @ SVUSD Board Conf Room
- 17th High School Open House Time TBD by individual school
- 24th Intermediate School Open House Time TBD by individual school

May 2008

- 1—4 CA PTA Convention
- 22nd Council Training - Workshops 6:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room
- 29 Elementary School Open House Time TBD by individual school

June 2008

- 5th SVPTA Council Dinner Time/Date TBD