

TO ALL PTA MEMBERS TAKE ACTION NOW!

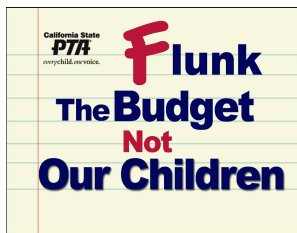
The next several months are critical for PTA to make sure the voices of all California children are heard in Sacramento. We urge every PTA member to participate in three vital advocacy activities to prevent harmful budget cuts:

1. **RESPOND** to action alerts issued by California State PTA and forwarded to you by your PTA district, council and/or unit. You will receive periodic email alerts and phone “blasts” urging you to contact your local legislators by phone, fax, email and/or letter with key messages to oppose the budget cuts. Sample letters, phone scripts and instructions will always be included. Please respond immediately to these requests – and pass them along to others in your community and encourage them to respond.
2. **MEET** directly with your state assembly and senate representatives. Their job is to represent you. As PTA leaders and members, you are a very important and credible part of their constituency! This is the most important action you can take.

Call your legislators’ district offices (not the Sacramento office), and request a meeting. Remember to coordinate with your local PTA council and/or district. If you’ve never met with your state assembly member or senator before, this is the time to introduce yourself and let them know PTA’s concerns. If the legislator is not available, schedule a meeting with a staff member. (Please contact Pat Dingsdale, Director of Legislation at legislation@capta.org to let her know if you have scheduled a meeting so we can keep track of who is visiting with whom, and so we may provide you with updated information before you go into your meeting.) To find your legislator’s district office, check out: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/yourleg.html>.

3. **PARTICIPATE** in at least one “Flunk-the-Budget Fridays” activities along with your local unit, council and/or district. PTA encourages communities around the state to raise their voices in opposition to the budget cuts on each and every Friday – that’s the day most legislators are at home in their own districts. These activities include press conferences, rallies, adopting a resolution, etc. Be sure to check with your local PTA leaders for planned upcoming activities. (See attached page for more ideas about “Flunk-the-Budget Fridays” activities.)

Visit the website at www.capta.org for the latest updates and to see how your advocacy efforts are making a difference for California’s children!



TIPS FOR PLANNING “FLUNK-THE-BUDGET FRIDAYS” ACTIVITIES

In addition to taking the two most vital actions: responding to action alerts and meeting directly with your legislators (See “Take Action”); we encourage local PTAs to be creative in planning local “Flunk-the-Budget Fridays” activities.

WHAT IS A “FLUNK-THE- BUDGET- FRIDAY”?

Friday is the day that state legislators typically spend in their home districts, instead of in Sacramento. To make sure legislators hear directly from the people they listen to most – their local parents and constituents – PTAs across the state are planning to hold “**Flunk-the-Budget Fridays**” activities that call special attention to the harmful impact the proposed state budget cuts will have on children.

“Flunk-the-Budget Fridays” are any activities that you and your PTA organize in opposition to the proposed budget cuts. This document offers just a few examples. You can try a different one each Friday or concentrate your efforts on a single Friday each month. The goal is to make sure your local legislators hear PTA’s voice loud and clear in their legislative district each and every week!

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

- **“Can You Hear Us Now?”** Ask parents and students at your PTA meeting or at a rally in front of the campus after school to take out their cell phones all at the same time and call their legislators on the spot! All you need is a list of your local legislators and their local office phone numbers. Follow-up the phone calls by asking everyone to send an email when they get home. Invite your local news reporters to observe the calls.
- **Field Trip.** Take a group trip to your local legislators’ offices. Meet at a public place and walk together, if possible. Bring parents, students, teachers, business leaders, community members, etc. Bring signs and wear buttons. Call your local reporters and bring them along as well. Be respectful of the legislators and let them know ahead of time that you plan to gather in front of their office – invite them to come out and speak to your group and to listen to your concerns.

- **Meet the Press.** Make sure your local newspapers and news stations understand PTA's opposition to the budget cuts by inviting them to a press event in your community. Emphasize that local parents are the ones taking the lead in opposing this budget. Select 3-5 representatives to speak. Use sample talking points from PTA – but remember to personalize the story. The press is most interested in the local angle – how will the proposed cuts affect the children in your communities? Contact your district PTA or the State PTA for assistance, and for opportunities to collaborate on press events with others in your area.
- **Local Forum.** Hold a special meeting that allows local parents, students, teachers and others in the community to express how budgets cuts will affect them. Multiple groups in your area can collaborate to demonstrate their concern for the state's children. You can download a PowerPoint presentation on the budget from the California State PTA website. Invite local legislators and the press to attend these forums. Also invite friends and family who are not yet PTA members, but support our cause.
- **Letters and More Letters.** Many PTA's have already delivered tens-of-thousands of letters to their legislators and the governor opposing the budget cuts. This is a great way to show how strongly your community feels about protecting children. Everyone can take a few minutes to write a letter. Letters should be as personal as possible, though they do not need to be long. (Samples are available from PTA.) Collect all the letters and deliver them in-person to your legislators in their home offices on Fridays. Invite local media along on your deliveries.

BE CREATIVE. “Flunk-the-Budget Fridays” are an opportunity for local PTAs to demonstrate in creative ways their passion for the well-being of all children. The best ideas are local ones that you think up and carry out – and that stick to the main message of California State PTA: Flunk the budget!