

CTA Liaison News



By CTA Vice President Eric Heins and Secretary-Treasurer Mikki Cichocki

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Agency Close-Up

Special Education Agency Provides Key Advice to State Policymakers

CTA Liaisons work closely with the Advisory Commission on Special Education, which provides information to the State Board of Education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Legislature, and the Governor about special education programs and research.

Federal law and state statute created the Commission. Its aim is to ensure “free and appropriate” public education to students with exceptional needs. The Commission meets at least four times annually, and its subcommittees may meet more often.

The agency has helped implement the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The State Board of Education, the state Senate, or the State Assembly appoint members to the Commission. Two lawmakers also serve on the commission, and a number of other entities are represented.

At its September hearing, the Commission heard that California experienced a 369% increase in students classified with autism between 2001-2010.

In the coming year, the Commission will be focusing on topics including AB 2632’s implementation and communications between schools, families, and students.

More about the Advisory Commission on Special Education can be found at its web site: www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/as/acse.asp.

The Commission also has a specialized question and answer website at www.askaspecialist.ca.gov.

CTA Liaisons to the Advisory Commission on Special Education are Tim Delia and Barbara Schulman.



CTA Liaison Larry Carlin (at lectern) is one of several Liaisons who pressed the State Board of Education to reject a request by charter school providers for what amounted to a permanent waiver of the Education Code. (Photo by Len Feldman.)

CTA Liaisons Block Effort to Secure Permanent Waivers at State Board

CTA Liaisons to the State Board of Education worked hard during the agency’s September 8 and 9th meeting to block a request by some charter school operators to secure waivers to the Education Code that would be in effect for more than two years.

In other news about the State Board, the state Senate has confirmed all seven of Gov. Jerry Brown’s appointees to the agency, including Board President Michael Kirst, an emeritus professor, and Patricia Rucker, a CTA legislative advocate.

At the Board's July meeting, it overwhelmingly approved a modified version of regulations implementing the parental trigger law. Even with the modifications, CTA has concerns about the measure's provisions that appear to conflict with state law authorizing charter schools.

The Board has been receiving numerous requests for waivers of state law, some of which would affect a local district's compliance with the CTA-backed Quality Investment in Education Act (QEIA).

Most recently, the Los Angeles Unified School District made such a request and then withdrew it.

The State Board's website is www.cde.ca.gov/BE.

CTA's Liaisons to the State Board of Education are Larry Carlin, Margie Granado, Pixie Hayward-Schickele, and Sandra Thorton.

Reading Association to Host Nov. 4-5 Professional Development Institute

The California Reading Association (CRA) has scheduled its 44th annual Professional Development Institute for Nov. 4-5, 2011 at the Solano Community College in Vacaville. A wide variety of speakers will address a broad array of educational subjects covering grades preschool through college. This year's theme is "Plug Content into Literacy."

The CRA website is www.californiareads.org.

CTA's Liaison to CRA is Michael Heyl.

CalPERS Reports 20.7% Earnings in Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2011

The California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) Board reported that it had achieved a 20.7% return on investment through June 30, 2011. The system provides retirement benefits to more than 1.6 million active and retired members and health benefits for nearly 1.3 million members.

In August, the system held its "off-site" meeting in Petaluma, with topics including health care

services, pension benefits and pending proposals, actuarial funding basics, managing and understanding funding risk, and workforce sustainability.

The CalPERS website is www.calpers.ca.gov/.

CTA's Liaisons to CalPERS are Robert Hill and Cathy Jeppson.

CTA Members: Urge Gov. Brown to Veto Rectal Administration Measure



CTA members and other school supporters are being asked to urge Gov. Jerry Brown to veto a CTA-opposed measure that would lead to non-medically certified school personnel —

including teachers and education support professionals — administering the drug Diastat through the rectum of a student experiencing a seizure in a classroom, on school grounds, in a bus, or in other school-related locales.

The legislature has sent the governor the bill — SB 161 by Sen. Bob Huff (R-Diamond Bar) — and its fate is in Gov. Brown's hands.

For more information, go to www.cta.org and surf to the Contact Your Legislator section.

The CTA website will also instruct you how to reach the governor on this critically important issue.

The governor has until October 9 to act on the bill.

You can also sign up for a free subscription to the *CTA Liaison News* by sending your e-mail address to Dawn Basurto at dbasurto@cta.org.

(The summaries include statements made at agency meetings and do not necessarily reflect CTA's policies or views.) *The Liaison News* is a publication of the Governmental Relations Division of the California Teachers Association/NEA, 1118 10th Street, Sacramento, CA 95814, 916/325-1500, ©copyright 2011.

Dean E. Vogel, President
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