



# Friends of Penngrove PTA PANTHER PRESS

Volume 4

November 30, 2011

## November - December 9th

Toys for Tots Drive - we have partnered with Penngrove Fire dept to collect new unwrapped gifts in the barrel in the office

## November - December 10th

Canned Food Drive bring your items into class

## December 8th

PTA Meeting 7:00pm in the Library

## December 13th

Dine and Donate at Season's Bar & Grill in Rohnert Park 11:00am - until close

## December 16th

5th & 6th Grade Music Concert 1:40pm

## December 16th

Skate Night at Cal Skate in Rohnert Park 5:30pm - 7:30pm

## December 23rd -

January 6th Winter Break - No School

Also visit

<http://penngroveelementary.org/Calendar.php> for a complete calendar

## Attendance matters from the beginning

After years of viewing poor attendance as mostly a middle and high school problem, school districts across California are now realizing they need to look more closely at attendance in the early grades.



Research shows that one in 10 kindergarten and first grade students nationwide is chronically absent, missing 10 percent of the school year, or about 18 days annually. Chronic absence isn't just truancy, it includes students missing too much school for any reason, not just unexcused absences. One study found that only 17 percent of students who were chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade read at grade level by the end of third grade, compared to 64 percent of students who attend school regularly.

Another problem with poor attendance is the cost to schools. Financially, each absence costs a school approximately \$30 to \$40 in state aid.

Hedy Chang, a San Francisco-based researcher who heads the national Attendance Works initiative, has analyzed data from selected California districts and found absenteeism rates higher than the national average. In Oakland, for instance, nearly one in seven students was chronically absent. In rural Del Norte, it was one in six. There is no statewide number, because California does not track attendance in this way.

In July, Chang urged the State Board of Education to help schools and districts monitor and address chronic absence starting in the early grades.

Attendance is one of the issues that has been a focus of California State PTA's Community Concerns Commission.

Visit [www.attendanceworks.org](http://www.attendanceworks.org) to learn more.

### Up Coming Bullet Issue

I am pleased to provide an update to you about California State PTA's important efforts to pursue more funding for public education. A recent survey showed that "adequate school funding" is extremely important or important to 98.5 percent of you — the highest-rated issue by far.

California State PTA has taken a position in support of a proposed initiative for the November, 2012 statewide ballot — The Our Children, Our Future: Local Schools and Early Education Investment Act. This measure would generate substantial additional funding to begin restoring educational programs for all students that have been cut or eliminated. This measure would:

### Knitting Club Needs a Hand

Knitting club is looking for some yarn donations in seasonal colors. The club could also use a couple of extra instructors due to its popularity among students. If you know how to knit and would like to help. Contact Samantha Bolinger at [samanthabolinger@yahoo.com](mailto:samanthabolinger@yahoo.com)



## What Every Parent Can Do to Prevent Bullying



### Ask Questions:

Asking questions about your child's day will help strengthen your relationship and help you know whether or not your child is being bullied. Make it a habit to talk about your child's school day. Ask about experiences on the way to and from school; ask about recess on the school playground, lunch time in the cafeteria and experiences in the classroom. Taking time out of your day to talk to your child will have many benefits. Make sure you ask questions to have your child divulge deeper information. Find out who their friends are, why they are having a good or bad day, and how they treat other children.

### Get Involved:

If you hear that your child is being bullied do not ignore it. This will tell your child that bullying is ok. Give your child the proper support by taking cases of bullying seriously. Never tell your child that this may be their fault. Instead encourage your child to report the incident to a teacher or staff member. If the situation does not improve or stop it will be important for you to contact the teacher or school.

### Stay Calm:

It may not be easy to hear that your child is being bullied. However, it is important to stay calm in order to handle the situation appropriately. Talk to your child about not resorting to verbal or physical retaliation. When speaking to teachers or school staff, remember to use specific information and not let your emotions take over. Getting upset will not help ease the situation, nor will it help reach a solution.

### Document the Bullying:

Keep a log of where, when and who is involved in the bullying situation so that school staff will know the details.

### Look for Help:

Ask your school administrator or your child's teacher if they have a policy on bullying. There are many resources available to inform parents on how to deal with bullying, as well as resources for children on bullying.

Visit the resources on the PTA.org website, or reach out to your local PTA.

Together we can all become involved in preventing bullying and keep our children and schools safe.

## Ballet Article Cont.

- Raise approximately \$1,300 per pupil in new funding per year to help restore programs, including instruction in the arts, physical education, science, technology and engineering (STEM); reduced class sizes; and more counselors, librarians, and nurses.

- Allocate the money on a per-student basis to be spent directly at school sites, after required public meetings that allow for input on priorities and spending.

- Establish accountability and transparency for how the money is used.

- Provide that approximately 85 percent of the money goes to local K-12 public schools, including charter schools, and 15 percent to improve and expand public preschool and early childhood education programs.

- Include an additional allocation for English language learners and low-income students.

- Generate the additional revenues through a graduated increase to the personal income tax, which our PTA authorities would support as a broad-based, equitable tax with maximum local control that makes the needs of children a priority.

There are a number of other potential ideas for ballot measures being discussed for November 2012. Our state's leaders have met with many different organizations and individuals and researched the various initiative ideas. We believe this measure, sponsored by the Advancement Project, a nonprofit public policy group, is the one that best meets California's need for substantial new revenues to begin restoring education programs.

The initiative is expected to be filed with the Attorney General's office this week. We plan to play an active role in the initial announcement and in uniting other organizations, leaders and individuals across the state to qualify and pass this measure.

This is a bold measure. We will need the support of all of our PTA units, councils and districts, and I know we are up to the task. This initiative will help give all of our children the programs and resources they should receive as part of a well-rounded education. November 2012 is an opportunity our children can't afford to miss. Now more than ever, California State PTA needs to take the lead. If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact Patty Scriptor, Director of Legislation, at [pscriptor@capta.org](mailto:pscriptor@capta.org).

**"If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail."**

**- Abraham Maslow**