

MARIAN HOPWOOD, REGION 4 CHAIR
LEGISLATIVE POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

The first meeting of the Legislation Policy Committee meeting was held on November 2 in Sacramento. There were new members, so in part, the meeting was an orientation for new members and a review of current pending legislation and a year in review of legislation ACSA lobbied. A more detailed outline of the meeting is described at the end.

First, the goal of the Legislative Policy Committee is to identify, study, discuss, take positions on, and give direction to Governmental Relations staff on legislative issues facing public education as well as proposed legislation based on ACSA's Legislative Platform and the best interests of California students and members of ACSA. ACSA's legislative platform is reviewed every two years by the committee, ACSA membership and the board of directors. The document reflects the values, goals and vivid description of our organization. It then guides the work of the committee and our governmental relations staff throughout the year.

In addition, the committee sponsors/co-sponsors legislative proposals, reviews new legislation and amendments to existing bills using ACSA's legislative platform for guidance and I will seek input from the Region, when appropriate.

The committee's task is to also recommend positions on proposed legislation that advocate for the best interests of students and educational leaders based on ACSA's legislative platform.

We will also be involved on legislative policy issues by providing updates and information to committee members by staff of guest speakers.

So periodically, I will be e-mailing you requesting input as well as continuing to forward ACSA alerts on items needing attention. (You may be receiving them in duplicate or triplicate as ACSA staff and legislative advocates have their own mailing lists.) I may be contacting region members on legislative issues.

The following is an excerpt of our meeting:

- ❖ **Legislative Agenda 2008: Gerry Shelton, Chief Consultant, Assembly Education Committee**
 - Committee handles K-12 issues only.
 - Gerry gave brief bio of himself and Chair of the Committee – Gene Mullen (D)
 - Other members are Joe Coto, Julia Brownley, 8 other members.
 - All members have some connection to education.
 - Committee has 3-permanent staff members.
 - Gerry discussed the Committee's caseload, past, present and future.
 - 2007 Session – Committee dealt with 294 bills.
 - Will be starting January with carry over bills from first year of the session.
 - 2008 is going to be the "Year of Education" meaning that a large number of education proposals are expected to be introduced.
 - Gerry gave some examples of issues expected to be addressed.
 - Governor's Committee for Education Excellence is expected to release its recommendations on education reform soon.

- The Superintendent has a number of bills addressing the achievement gap from both socio-economic and ethnic viewpoints.
- The Latino Caucus announced that they are introducing a legislative package of education bills.
- Challenges being faced this year include economic issues such as residential foreclosures, high oil prices, etc. Results will be decline in general fund and property tax revenues which will trigger a Test 3 condition for Prop 98 and higher COLA.
- LAO is releasing its Fiscal Outlook on November 14th.
- Unresolved Legislative Issues that still need to be addressed in addition to Education.
 - *Health* – issue is being addressed in a special session and may be resolved prior to regular session resuming.
 - *Prisons* – actions earlier in the year are being looked upon favorably and it may be recommended to the Judge that the restrictions on prisons be lifted.
- Possible major reforms this year.
 - Flexibility in categorical funding
 - Facilities (AB100)
 - Changes in early education.
- Will see “News of the Day” Bills introduced as well, such as legislation addressing:
 - Sex offenders
 - Fires
 - Charter Schools
 - School Choice
 - High School Athletic Programs
- Presentation concluded with question and answer session.

❖ **2007-08 Committee Program Plan**

- **Legislative Policy Committee Positions**
 - Chairperson reviewed page 18 of Orientation Packet explaining definition of each position available to Committee.
 - Committee members were urged to watch for “Spot Bills”. They do not include much language when introduced but are used as placeholders with main language presented at a later date.
 - Committee members must read each bill analysis presented and take positions.
 - The strength of the Committee depends upon regular participation.
 - Advocates will provide suggestions regarding positions on bills to assist Committee members.
 - An email is sent to all members approximately 1-week prior to Committee meetings outlining suggested positions on Bills to be reviewed in the next scheduled meeting.
 - Committee members provide their perspective along with input from others in their region or on their committee/council.
 - It is important for members to review all bills and not narrow focus to only those issues being addressed by their Subcommittee.
 - Members were urged to get input from experts in their districts regarding issues.
- **Legislative Action Day**
 - Legislative contacts are important for Committee members.
 - Leg Action Day is March 9-10, 2008.

- Reviewed Beginning of Year document
 - Discussed draft.
- **Approval of Committee/Council Action document**
 - 1st motion made by Allyn Shapiro.
 - 2nd motion made by John Snavely.

❖ **Legislative Sponsorship Proposals**

- Karen Stapf-Walters introduced 2008 Legislation Sponsorship Proposals and explained that proposals are derived from survey results attached to document.
- **Continuing Issues from 2007**
 - *Textbook Cost Reduction and Savings* – issue summarized by Sherry Skelly Griffith.
 - *Special Education Funding & Costs* – issue summarized by Brett McFadden.
 - *Administrator Training* – Issue summarized by Karen Stapf-Walters.
 - *Accountability Reform* – issue summarized by Sherry Skelly Griffith.
 - *Adequacy of Funding and Reform* – issue summarized by Laura Preston.
 - *Adult Education* – issue summarized by Laura Preston.
- **Survey Issues**
 - *ESEA/No Child Left Behind* – issue summarized by Sherry Skelly Griffith.
 - *CalSTRS Unfunded Liability* – issue summarized by Karen Stapf-Walters.
- **Other Issues**
 - *Health Care Reform* – issue summarized by Laura Preston.
 - *Declining Enrollment* – issue summarized by Brett McFadden.
 - *Preschool/Kindergarten* – issue summarized by Adonai Mack.
 - *Deferred Maintenance Funding* – issue summarized by Laura Preston.
 - *Speech/Language Pathologists* – issue discussed by group.
 - *Special Education & CAHSEE* – issue summarized by Sherry Skelly Griffith.
 - *Parcel Tax Vote Requirement* – issue summarized by Laura Preston.
 - *Charter Schools* – issue summarized by Adonai Mack.
 - *Program Improvement Schools and Districts/Corrective Action* – issue summarized by Sherry Skelly Griffith.
 - *Career Technical Education* – issue summarized by Laura Preston.
 - *Federal Advocacy* – issue summarized by Sherry Skelly Griffith.
 - *Dismissal Process/Probationary Teacher* – issue summarized by Adonai Mack.

❖ **12:15 pm: Lunch/Discussion – Action Matter: Brett McFadden, Adonai Mack**

- **Modified License Act (MLA) School Psychologist and Clinical Psychologist**
 - Committee members were given brief overview of provisions and exemptions of the Act which affects the minimum requirements for providing psychological services in schools.
 - California Organization of School Psychologists has requested that ACSA write a letter to Congress opposing the Act and providing recommendations.
 - Committee members granted approval of this position.
 - ACSA will send details regarding this matter to all Committee members via email at a

State Budget Update: Brett McFadden, Adonai Mack

- **Summary and Outlook Overview** - distributed and reviewed.

- State's deficit may increase
- US economy is in a difficult position due to concerns regarding:
 - Housing Market
 - Gas Prices
 - Federal Reserve lowering interest rates
 - 120% increase in foreclosures
 - Related decline in other markets as well
- Future issues:
 - COLA at around 5%
 - ACSA will fight talks regarding suspension of Prop 98
 - Possibility of cutting programs
- ACSA will keep LPC informed of developments
- **Action Matter presented to Committee Members: If necessary, should COLA deficits occur across board or only in certain areas?**
 - Committee members agreed that they should be done across the board.

❖ **Adequacy/Educational Excellence: Laura Preston**

- Packets were distributed and reviewed.

❖ **Closing Announcements/Adjournment**

- Committee members were reminded to:
 - Turn completed Travel Expense forms in to Suzanne on way out.
 - Contact Adonai Mack regarding a Working Group for Preschool/Kindergarten issue.
- Meeting adjourned at 1:18pm.

In conclusion, I have attached ACSA's 2007 Governmental Relations 2007 Highlights: The Year in Review. It would be important to know the bills that were either signed or vetoed. We must be thankful for ACSA's Legislative Advocates for their determination in working hard with our legislators on these educational issues.