

# California Association of Student Councils



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**Student Advisory Board on  
Legislation in Education**

**2009 Proposals**

Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education (SABLE)  
*Proposals Developed February 23-25, 2009*

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# COMMENDATIONS

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, is honored to extend the following commendations:

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education commends the State Senate and Assembly Education Committees for their dedication to enhancing the quality of public education in California and for their encouragement of student input in decision-making, especially by considering the proposals of the Student Advisory Board.

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education commends the Honorable Jack O'Connell, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, for supporting student voice and for addressing the Student Advisory Board delegation this year.

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education commends James Wilson, the Chief Consultant to the Senate Education Committee, for sharing his extensive expertise and for providing generous help in arranging for the Student Advisory Board presentations each year.

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education commends Gerry Shelton, the Chief Consultant to the Assembly Education Committee, for sharing his extensive expertise and for providing generous help in arranging for the Student Advisory Board presentations each year.

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education commends Regina Wilson, Communications Analyst for the California State Board of Education, for her invaluable knowledge, desire to promote students to influential positions in education, and continued support of the California Association of Student Councils and the Student Advisory Board.

# STAFF MEMBERS

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*Research Team (ResTeam):* Jonathan Haderlein, North Hollywood High; Diana Li, Mira Loma High



## **Campus Culture and Environment**

Presenters: Janet Basurto, Rialto High, Rialto; Evan Boggs, Oakdale High, Oakdale; Jason Colombini, Linden High, Linden; Evan Maclin, Beckman High, Irvine; Gillian Moffitt, Phoebe Hearst Elementary, Sacramento; James Pollack, Burlingame High, Burlingame; Emily Smith, Excelsior Learning Center, Victorville

Facilitator: Menelik Tafari, Soka University

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### **I. PRIORITY**

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, establishes (a) informing teachers and students of students' rights, (b) creating an environment of transparency and mutual respect in K-12 education, (c) ensuring a proper transition from middle school to high school, and (d) increasing student engagement in and outside the classroom as priorities.

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### **II. RECOMMENDED LEGISLATIVE ACTION**

The Student Advisory Board recommends that the legislature:

- 1) Adopt a statewide bill of students' rights and responsibilities.
  - 2) Implement a statewide program, like the successful World of Difference and Camp Everytown programs, to strengthen student-teacher relationships, peer-to-peer understanding, and open communication between students and administrators. This program will include teacher bias prevention programs and seminars on student empathy.
  - 3) Promote in high schools peer mentorship program, like Link Crew, for integrating 9<sup>th</sup> graders into the high school community and environment.
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### **III. PROVEN RESULTS AND RATIONALE**

- The ACLU fights abuses of rights and advocates for knowledge of rights, which has successfully protected rights of minority and underrepresented groups, including students.
- The Camp Everytown program (Burlingame HS) promotes celebration of diversity by exploring their effects and the feelings of students and faculty. This empathy building program for student-student, teacher-student, and administration-student relationships has successfully strengthened understanding and communication between groups.
- The Link Crew program connects upper classmen with freshmen in peer mentoring relationships in order to ease the transition to high school.
- Intercultural/multicultural day and events (Beckman and Burlingame HS) provide displays and celebrations of diversity and background, which have improved understanding between different groups on campus.
- The Anti-Defamation League (World of Difference Program at Culver City HS) runs empathy-building programs, which have promoted student-to-student bias prevention.

- The San Mateo County Bill of Rights for Children and Youth has improved youths' awareness of their own rights and respect for their rights by others.
- IBM's bias prevention program is an online program that looks at responses to real life simulations and evaluates their implications in acceptance, which has successfully combated prejudice and bias on school campuses.
- Peer mentorship leads to friendlier school social environments and stronger personal interest in education.
- An environment of mutual respect allows students to better focus their energy on academic success.

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#### **IV. KEY ISSUES**

##### **Student Rights**

- 1) Students and teachers are uninformed about student rights.

##### **Student Engagement**

- 2) Individual students' problems aren't addressed during or after school.
- 3) Students are not respected by their teachers.
- 4) Students do not have an outlet to communicate with their teachers and administrators about problems they are having either personally or academically.
- 5) Students aren't treated as equals in educational institutions or discussions.



## **Student Wellness**

Presenters: Barbara Magana, Foothill Technology High School, Ventura County; Nicholas Molencupp, Lower Lake High School, Santa Rosa; Kevin Siegel, Walnut High School, Los Angeles; Michelle Wu, Walnut High School, Los Angeles; Bijan Khodavandi, Arroyo Grande High School, San Luis Obispo; Frederick Horowitz, North Hollywood High School, Los Angeles; Helen Veazey, Phoebe Hearst Elementary School, Sacramento; Ottolia Biondi, Phoebe Hearst Elementary School, Sacramento

Facilitator: Natalya Subbotina, South Pasadena High School, Los Angeles

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### **I. PRIORITY**

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, establishes (a) cleaning school facilities more frequently, (b) promote awareness of the consequences of drugs and alcohol, (c) encouraging student respect for campus environment, (d) encouraging safe sex practices, (e) healthiness of food on campus, (g) providing adequate nursing staff, and (h) promoting personal relationships between students and an adult on campus as priorities.

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### **II. RECOMMENDED LEGISLATIVE ACTION**

The Student Advisory Board recommends that the legislature:

- 1) Require schools to have a fulltime nurse.
- 2) Establish standards for the care school nurses provide to students.
- 3) Promote in schools interactive program about the consequences of drugs, alcohol, and sex for students and parents.
- 4) Mandate monthly meetings between students and their counselors to ensure student mental health.
- 5) Implement salad bar programs.
- 6) Hire health inspectors to monitor each school’s adherence to health standards for food preparation and cleanliness.
- 7) Enforce cleanliness standards for bathrooms, cafeterias, and classrooms through routine checks by administrators.

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### **III. PROVEN RESULTS AND RATIONALE**

- Many schools have the “Every 15 Minutes” program, which warns of the dangers of drunk driving through simulation and assemblies. Surveys showed that students who participated in the program reported drinking less and being more aware in situations involving alcohol (i.e. less likely to be a passenger with a drunk driver, more likely to have a designated driver, etc.).
- Ventura Unified School District’s “Straight Up” program uses workshops and interactive assemblies to inform students of the consequences of drinking. The program effectively

encouraged student involvement and increased awareness of negative drinking consequences in Ventura.

- Students feel more capable of learning and able to focus on their schoolwork in a clean, safe environment.
- Having adequate nursing staff on campus will improve attendance by keeping students in school when they are sick or hurt.
- A personal connection between students and counselors allows them to succeed academically and socially.
- A study done by American School Health Associations has shown that increased diet quality significantly lessened likelihood of students to fail on literary assessments performed, specifically 18% and 30% less likely.

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#### IV. KEY ISSUES

##### **Nursing Staff**

- There are not enough nurses to meet student health needs.
- Nurses are not required to be present every day.

##### **Awareness of the Consequences of Drugs and Unprotected Sex**

- Students abuse drugs and alcohol and participate in unsafe sexual activities.

##### **Personal Relationships Between Students and an Adult on Campus**

- Students do not have enough access to their counselors to create a personal relationship with an adult on campus.

##### **Food Available at School**

- Nutritious food is not sufficiently available on campuses for students.

##### **Sufficient Facility Maintenance**

- School restrooms and facilities are hygienically unclean, vandalized, and not properly maintained.

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#### V. FISCAL ANALYSIS

- *What will cost money?*
  - Salad bar set up
  - Nurses
  - Hands-on programs
  - Health inspections
  - Cleaning supplies
  - First aid supplies
- *What will not cost money?*
  - Volunteers for programs
  - Ongoing salad bar operation (costs same as standard hot food)



## **Teaching and Instruction**

Presenters: Imaobong Etim, De Anza High School, Richmond; Liora Simozar, Beverley Hills High School, Los Angeles; Marissa Wong, High Tech High International, San Diego; Vanessa Chen, Walnut High School, Los Angeles; Jennifer Phan, Santa Teresa High School, San Jose; Thailina Saetern, Rio Linda High School, Sacramento

Facilitator: Jenn Guan, Gunn High School, Palo Alto

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### **I. PRIORITY**

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, establishes (a) creating opportunities for students to provide feedback to their teachers, (b) evaluating teachers in terms of how their students absorb the material, (c) creating a teacher evaluation system that ensures accurate results, and (d) providing teachers with resources on effective teaching techniques as priorities.

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### **II. RECOMMENDED LEGISLATIVE ACTION**

The Student Advisory Board recommends that the legislature work to:

- 1) Require that as part of the teacher credentialing process, teachers must observe 5 other teachers who have been teaching for at least 5 years, each for a period of at least one month. Teachers must observe teachers from at least two different schools.
  - 2) Mandate that school administrations perform random evaluations of teachers with state-wide evaluation forms every two months
  - 3) Mandate that teachers whose students do not show improvement take professional development workshops.
  - 4) Require that, as part of the process wherein teachers renew their credentials, teachers must provide a report of how they have targeted at least two different teaching styles (other than auditory) and how they have either increased their test scores or maintained within a respectable score range.
  - 5) Create a statewide initiative to provide teacher evaluations based on student-defined criteria to every classroom. Evaluation forms should have a universal list of criteria ranging from management to effectiveness of instruction, professionalism, and personal attributes. Evaluation developers must ensure that survey questions are unbiased. Evaluations have date, course title, etc. so teachers may document improvement.
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### **III. PROVEN RESULTS AND RATIONALE**

- Working with other teachers gives teachers the opportunity and means to improve their own teaching styles with innovative methods.
- Evaluations allow teachers to realize what is working in the classroom and target what needs to be improved.



- Observations of other teachers provide teachers with experience and knowledge regarding what has worked or not worked in other classrooms.
- Evaluation forms provide teachers with valuable information regarding what is important to students, how students would like to learn, and what can be done in order to help them better cater their teaching styles to student needs.
- Evaluation forms allow teachers to track their own progress in meeting student needs as well as students' academic progress, which helps them to target what needs to be improved.
- Students feel more engaged and responsible for their work in a project-based environment, which teachers are able to provide with more innovative teaching styles.
- Evaluations allow teachers to focus on the specific, relevant subject matters that students need more help with.

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#### IV. KEY ISSUES

##### **Student Feedback for teachers**

- Students typically cannot provide feedback to teachers
- Teachers often have little incentive to incorporate student feedback

##### **Effective Evaluation of Teachers**

- Teacher credentialing does not sufficiently emphasize the student-teacher relationship
- Annually scheduled assessments leave room for misrepresentation of teacher's actual qualities in the classroom by giving teachers advance warning, as the teachers appear effective while being evaluated even as their students are not performing well.

##### **Teacher Resources**

- Teachers are not provided with sufficient training on how to effectively teach materials
- Current training programs are under-attended, optional, and ineffective.

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#### V. FISCAL ANALYSIS

##### **Professional Development Workshops**

- Unfortunately, running and establishing the programs themselves will cost money as well as the placement of substitutes for teachers who are absent.
- However, these costs could easily be avoided by organizing these specific programs on Staff Development Days.

##### **Teacher Observation of Fellow Educators**

- Paying for substitutes to watch classes of supervising teachers will cost money.
- Teachers can arrange their own visits with administrative guidance; therefore no one needs to be hired or paid to arrange visits.

##### **Student Evaluations**

- There are minimal organizational costs
- Using online resources to evaluate to teachers can reduce costs



## **Preparation for Life after High School**

Presenters: Andrew Bustos, Paloma Valley High School, Riverside; Carmen Garrett, Hamilton Union High School, Chico; Lindsey Lippert, Santa Paula High School, Ventura County; Clarissa Toll, Excelsior Education Center, Victorville; Mike Adkins, Modesto High School, Modesto  
Facilitator: Bryan Martinez, Chapman University, Orange County

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### **I. PRIORITY**

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, establishes (a) encouraging equal emphasis on Regional Occupation Programs (ROP), vocation, and fine arts as on core academic courses, (b) providing adequate counselors, (c) promoting awareness of career technology, application, and life skills, and (d) students' awareness of and ability to meet A-G requirements as priorities.

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### **II. RECOMMENDED LEGISLATIVE ACTION**

The Student Advisory Board recommends that the legislature work to:

- 1) Promote availability of college student mentors to serve as resources to students about college life and the application process
  - 2) Hire more counselors to meet recommended student to counselor ratio of 250:1, and have counselors specialize in the following areas: finance, college, jobs, and scholarships.
  - 3) Offer additional fine-arts, vocational, and ROP opportunities.
  - 4) Offer upperclassmen orientations at the beginning of the year to track general academic progress.
  - 5) Promote small group seminars between students and counselors to help students understand career and college pathways
  - 6) Designate an area on campus where schools provide updated materials and resources for higher education and career opportunities
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### **III. PROVEN RESULTS AND RATIONALE**

- In a study done by the California Department of Education, help from guidance counselors has proven effective in improving academic achievement, teaching social skills, assisting in career path awareness and choices, and reducing violence.
- Increased opportunities for career and vocational training significantly lower dropout rates for high school students.
- College student mentors can offer students an understanding of college life and the current college experience.
- In Modesto, a new peer tutoring program implemented for middle and high school students significantly improved students' GPAs.

- Regular counselor visits improve graduation and college matriculation rates because the counselors help students stay on track with their graduation requirements and keep them and their parents aware of their A-G requirements.
- At Santa Paula High School, establishing a designated area for providing college and career materials has increased student awareness of opportunities, and more students are entering colleges and careers.

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#### IV. KEY ISSUES

##### **Equal Emphasis on ROP, vocation, and fine arts**

- Schools are not placing emphasis on ROP, vocation, and fine arts, often because standardized testing does not emphasize those subjects.

##### **Adequate Counselors**

- Overburdened guidance counselors are unavailable to provide students with information regarding preparation for college and work after graduation.

##### **Awareness of Career Technology, Application, and Life Skills**

- Students are not aware of the career, technology, and life skills that can be gained from ROP, fine art, and vocational classes.

##### **Awareness and Means to Meet Postsecondary Education Requirements**

- Students and parents are not aware of the A-G requirements to attend University of California Schools or do not have access to classes that allow them to meet the requirements.

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#### V. FISCAL ANALYSIS

- *What will cost money?*
  - Hiring of more counselors and specialization training for them
  - Teacher salaries for additional ROP/vocational classes
- *What will not cost money?*
  - Regional Occupation Program can be offered without cost through internships.
  - Volunteer college student mentors/tutors
  - Establishing a designated area for college and career information on campuses
  - Counselor seminars and orientations for students



## **Student Academic Support**

Presenters: Bronson Brenzien, Excelsior Education Center, Victorville; Adam Lentz, Phoebe Hearst Elementary School, Sacramento; Toni Deguire, Pitman High School, Turlock; Alvaro Alvarez, West Valley High School, Riverside; Kelly Mendoza, Middle College High School, Orange County; Lauren Nitta, Modesto High School, Modesto; Rosa Lima, North Hollywood High School, Los Angeles; Stephanie Muir, Bonita High School, Pomona; Juneil Roi “JR” Baruela, Rio Mesa High School, Ventura County

Facilitator: Bianca Beltran, Santa Clara High School, Ventura County

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### **I. PRIORITY**

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, establishes (a) removing the social barriers associated with tutoring, (b) establishing use and awareness of local collegiate resources (c) promoting parent involvement and awareness, (d) providing methods for students to establish new programs, and (e) providing adequate counselors as priorities.

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### **II. RECOMMENDED LEGISLATIVE ACTION**

The Student Advisory Board recommends that the legislature work to:

- 1) Promote college programs available for high school academic aid and tutoring as a student resource
- 2) Encourage high schools to utilize local institutions and available college resources to supplement the education of their students by creating a mentoring connection between students at colleges and high schools
- 3) Establish phone and email communication between schools and parents about available programs, especially those for struggling students
- 4) Require schools to make suggestion forms available so students can identify needed programs or other recommendations for improving the schools.
- 5) Establish office hours for teachers to provide additional aid to students.

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### **III. PROVEN RESULTS AND RATIONALE**

- Emotional and social factors impede students’ classroom performance.
- Some students may feel more comfortable being tutored by college students rather than their peers due to the social barrier and perceived intimidation and embarrassment of being tutored by someone of the same grade level.
- Middle College High School offers college courses and college level tutoring, which results in higher test scores, grade progress, and general comprehension.
- Communication between schools and parents to improve their awareness of programs allows parents to become better involved in their students’ lives. Students with parent involvement perform better academically and are more motivated to do well in school.

- Students are more interested in their school life and motivated to learn when they feel that their feedback is valued and utilized to improve their education.

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#### IV. KEY ISSUES

##### **Social Barriers and Tutoring**

- Social barriers prevent students from taking full advantage of available tutoring programs.

##### **Collegiate Resources**

- High schools do not take full advantage of available local academic institutions and resources, such as community colleges, to benefit students.
- High schools do not adequately publicize these available college tutoring and mentoring programs to students.

##### **Parent Involvement and Awareness**

- Schools do not efficiently inform parents of available tutoring programs to help their struggling students.

##### **Establishment of New Programs**

- Schools do not have an open line of communication with students to execute student ideas of new programs needed by students.

##### **Adequate Teachers**

- Student to teacher ratios are too high to provide students with necessary academic attention.
- Students are not receiving the necessary academic attention and assistance from teachers during class time.

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#### V. FISCAL ANALYSIS

- *What will cost money?*
  - Tutoring programs: use of facilities, cost of materials, and stipend to professors
  - Parent contacting program
- *What will not cost money?*
  - Volunteer college student tutors
  - Suggestion box
- *What will save money?*
  - Electronic and phone communication between schools and parents will save money spent on paper, envelopes, material, etc.
  - Using college student volunteer tutors will save money by eliminating the need to hire more teachers.
  - High schools will save money by taking advantage of already existing institutions at high schools.



## **Student Involvement in Decision Making**

Presenters: Lexi Later, Rolling Hills Prep School, San Pedro; Sean Duckworth, Pinole Valley High School, Pinole; Lily Goodwill, Burlingame High School, Burlingame; Kyland Young, Excelsior High School, Victorville; Thomas Flaherty, Paloma High School, Menifee; Zach Hollinger, Centennial High School, Compton, Emily Jorgens, Miramonte High School, Orinda; Hana Girardot, Woodside High School,  
Facilitator: Kimberly Siegel, Walnut High School, Walnut

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### **I. PRIORITY**

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, establishes (a) informing students of policies that will affect their lives before they are enacted, (b) ensuring students understand how school money is being spent, (c) increasing student involvement in decision-making at the school and district level, (d) connecting students with policy makers at every level of government, and (e) creating united student bodies which can effectively represent the student voice across California as priorities.

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### **II. RECOMMENDED LEGISLATIVE ACTION**

The Student Advisory Board recommends that the legislature:

- 1) Establish standards for informing students of upcoming policy decisions that affect them, with advisors and principals informing students about pending decisions that they could weigh in on. (Students should also be able to receive email updates or check a website so they can stay informed.)
- 2) Mandate that schools and school districts provide simple and accessible budget breakdowns for students to analyze
- 3) Create a district wide gathering that connects students from other schools with time to discuss budget cuts and other educational issues.
- 4) Mandate that superintendent and/or board members come to the school at lunchtime once a month (or so) and is available for question and answers.

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### **III. PROVEN RESULTS AND RATIONALE**

- Woodside High School - Shared Decision making council for parents, students, teachers, administration
- Burlingame High School / San Mateo Unified / Sequoia Union- UASB meeting between all SB's in district
- Miramonte High School- superintendent sends weekly emails regarding budget and comes at lunch for Q&A session regarding budget. He also considers student input on budget.

- Woodside High School / Sequoia Union- Students from each high school in the district meet with superintendent and student board member once a month. Superintendent and student board member then report to entire board issues discussed.
- As the primary stakeholders in education, students have a fundamental right to have their voices heard.

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#### IV. **KEY ISSUES**

##### **Informing Students**

- Students are often not aware of policies until the rules come into effect
- Students have no opportunity to voice concerns and suggestions about policies if they are not informed in advance
- Students are not given information about how their schools' money is being used

##### **Student Involvement in Decision Making**

- Meaningful student input is for the most part not institutionalized at the school, district, and state levels
- Decision makers do not look to student input before making their decisions.

##### **Student Unity**

- Students are not connected outside of their own schools, limiting their ability to analyze and address general problems in their education communities