

Letter to the editor of the *Poway News Chieftain*

February 21, 2005

While we appreciate the press coverage for the formation of the Poway Unified Education Advocates, we take exception to the statement, "The women also noted that the state PTA is not an effective lobbying group because of its bureaucratic structure and unwillingness to consider innovative ideas." Clearly, we are PTA Legislative Representatives. Indeed, with over one million members state-wide, the California State PTA is a very effective lobbying group. On February 17th, the PTA's Founder's Day, the California State PTA held their Advocacy Day. PTA parents and community members in California contacted the governor and their legislators asking them to keep the provisions of Proposition 98, which protect education funding for the children in the state, intact.

The Poway Unified Education Advocates would provide a lobbying group for the community (including present and former parents, teachers, staff, and administrators) to address legislative bills and portions of the governor's budget that affect local children and children in similar school districts in the state. These efforts may include bills for which the California State PTA has not taken a SUPPORT position. The California State PTA will often not take a position on bills that do not affect all of the children in California. An example is equalization funding. Poway Unified is a "low-wealth" school district and equalization raises the base level of funding that low-wealth school districts receive.

We look forward to working with the local community and the PTA in advocating for our children.

Linda Cialeo and Lorene Joosten
Palomar Council PTA Legislative Representatives