



## News from Florida PTA Legislative Committee

Florida's Legislative Session is quickly approaching with opening day on March 8, 2011. Over the past few weeks, Interim Legislative meetings have been held and key issues pertaining to public education funding, education reform, teacher accountability, corporate scholarships (vouchers), to name a few are being discussed.

Florida's Governor, Rick Scott, along with many newly elected Legislators are pushing for a "revolutionary education plan" for our state which includes increasing charter schools, vouchers, on-line schooling and home schooling. Supporting and adequately funding our public schools was not mentioned in this plan.

90% of Florida's students attend public schools and we must take a stand in support of public education and our children.

Over the years, Florida PTA has taken an unprecedented stance against any budget cuts to public education and critical policy changes. PTA's/PTSA's throughout the state, parents, teachers and students, have banded together in record numbers taking our message to Florida's Capitol.

Our efforts helped hold the line on additional cuts to the classroom, but the solutions were temporary in nature. Florida's current state budget is \$70.38 billion, which includes \$5.2 billion in federal assistance that sunsets June 30, 2011. The federal economic stimulus dollars provided us all a short-term reprieve, but the clock is ticking. What will happen during the 2011-2012 school year when these funds disappear?

It is vital that all stakeholders become aware of the critical decisions that will be made during the 2011 Legislative Session.

Florida PTA is prepared to continue working diligently to keep you informed and involved. You can help by encouraging your parents, teachers, friends, and family to get involved in our legislative advocacy efforts by registering for Florida PTA's Action Alert system at <http://www.floridapta.org/CapWiz.html>

We suggest having a computer at your PTA/PTSA meetings for easy registration, placing this information on your website and utilizing social media such as Facebook and/or Twitter with Florida PTA's CapWiz link.

Together we will make a difference for everychild with onevoice.

Respectfully,  
Florida PTA Legislation Team