

National PTA®

2012 Public Policy Agenda: Executive Summary



In 2012, PTA will work with U.S. Congress and the Administration to advance the following policy recommendations to ensure that all children reach their highest potential.

This document is a brief summary of the National PTA's *2012 Federal Public Policy Agenda: 112th Congress, Second Session* that is available in its entirety at PTA.org.

A QUALITY EDUCATION FOR EVERY CHILD: PTA continues to advocate for family engagement and overall improvements to general, special, and early childhood education. Additionally, PTA is a strong advocate for increased education funding.

General Education

- Retain and strengthen parent involvement provisions of Section 1118 of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) by creating incentives on the state, district, and school levels to meaningfully engage families in their children's education using research-based strategies practices.
- Codify PTA's National Standards for School-Family Partnerships and provide a statutory definition and framework on effective family engagement in education in Section 1118 of Title I.
- Increase the Local Educational Agency (LEA) reservation of funds for parent involvement activities under Section 1118 from one percent to two percent and amend the distribution of funds to allow for innovative and research-based districtwide activities to increase family engagement.

Special Education

- Include and codify a statutory definition of family engagement in education in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part A Section 602. Codify PTA's research-based National Standards for Family-School Partnerships as a best practice model for family engagement in special education. Disseminate and publicize these standards to family and parent groups and other stakeholders.
- Amend IDEA to require transition planning services for special education students to begin no later than the age of 14.
- Encourage school districts to employ transition planning coordinators to assist in the facilitation of transition planning services for special education students and their families.

Early Childhood Education

- Incentivize and encourage family engagement initiatives that begin at birth, in the home, and other early learning environments, in order to ensure coordinated family engagement throughout a child's lifespan and in all learning settings.
- Encourage local school districts to use Title I ESEA funding to support high-quality early childhood education programs for eligible children aged 0 to 5.

(cont'd on reverse)

Early Childhood Education (cont'd)

- Incentivize and encourage state and local educational agency partnerships with families and community-based organizations to support the alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs and programs for school-age children in order to improve learning outcomes, including developmental milestones and early literacy.

Education Funding

- Restore funding for the Parental Information and Resource Centers (Title V, Part D, Subpart 16 of ESEA).
- Increase funding for Titles I and III of ESEA.
- Increase funding for IDEA state grants so that the federal government provides for at least 20 percent of the excess cost of educating children with disabilities (average per pupil expenditure or APPE). This must be the first step in reaching the 40 percent of APPE Congress promised to pay when the law was first enacted.
- Maintain or increase investments in quality early learning programs, including Early Head Start, Head Start, the Child Care and Development Block Grant, and the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND NUTRITION: PTA prioritizes the health and well-being of every child through implementation of and improvements to nutrition laws.

- Support the implementation of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) proposed update of nutrition standards for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs, as intended by the Healthy and Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.
- Support language in the Healthy and Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 that requires the USDA to set nutrition standards for competitive foods.
- Encourage the USDA to implement regulations that protect school-based fundraisers that have historically played an integral role in fundraising opportunities for student-based school organizations.

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION: PTA fights to protect the rights of children and youth involved in the justice system.

- Eliminate the Valid Court Order exception to the Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders Core Requirement of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP A) to ensure that youth who are truant are kept out of secure juvenile corrections facilities.
- Update JJDP A to decrease over-reliance on secure detention and to promote effective family-focused, school-based interventions for youth who are truant.

**to review all National PTA 2012 Federal Policy Recommendations, please view National PTA's full 2012 Federal Public Policy Agenda: 112th Congress, Second Session, available at PTA.org*

For additional information, please contact National PTA Office of Government Affairs at (703) 518-1200

Elizabeth Rorick
Director of Government Affairs
erorick@pta.org
Ext. 3326

Jacque Chevalier
Senior Policy Strategist
jchevalier@pta.org
Ext. 3351

Mollie Van Lieu
Advocacy Specialist
mvanlieu@pta.org
Ext. 3349

Founded in 1897, the National Parent Teacher Association® (PTA) is comprised of more than five million members, including parents, students, educators, school administrators, and community leaders. With more than 24,000 local units, PTA flourishes in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Department of Defense schools in Europe and the Pacific. Since its inception, PTA has championed every child, regardless of socioeconomic background to address societal ills such as child labor, childhood diseases, and the unfair and punitive treatment of children involved in the justice system. More than 115 years later, PTA continues to work with policymakers in an effort to ensure that all children reach their highest potential.

National Office: 1250 North Pitt Street • Alexandria, VA 22314 • (800) 307-4PTA (4782) • PTA.org

© 2012 PTA All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A. (1/12) • **PTA** and *everychild.onevoice* • are registered service marks of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.