

New York State

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**Proposed
Resolutions
2015**

**Mission Possible...
Act Today for a
Better Tomorrow**

To: All Unit/Council Presidents
Re: Resolutions for Convention 2015

Greetings! As your unit embarks on an exciting new PTA year, one of its first fall projects should be to review the proposed resolutions to be voted on at the upcoming 2015 NYS PTA Convention. The complete text of these resolutions will be found in this mailing. Remember that all PTA members have the right to take part in their local PTA's discussion and vote on resolutions, even if they will not be attending Convention.

Resolutions articulate official NYS PTA positions that were adopted by vote of the delegates to past annual conventions. You can find these adopted positions in two official NYS PTA documents: *Where We Stand*, which contains the complete text of each existing resolution; and *Basic Policy*, which provides a broader overview of general NYS PTA positions. PTA units and councils draw on these positions to shape their support of proposed legislation, policies or regulations and their advocacy in other areas affecting the welfare of children and youth.

There is one new resolution being submitted for this convention and 17 existing resolutions have been reviewed by the NYS PTA Resolutions Committee, amended if necessary, and classified into the categories of retentions, updates or rescissions. *Retentions* are adopted resolutions that are up for renewal without any revision; delegates may therefore reaffirm or reject them in their current form, but may not amend them. *Updates* are adopted resolutions which are being revised to maintain their accuracy or relevance. Delegates will vote to reaffirm or reject each update as well, but may also amend *the revised wording* of the update. Finally, *rescissions* are resolutions that can be retired because their resolves have been enacted. Once rescinded, a resolution becomes part of NYS PTA's historical record.

To facilitate your resolutions debate, a brief statement following the text of each resolution explains the action (retention, update, rescission) proposed by the Resolutions Committee. Be sure to allow sufficient time at a general meeting for members to discuss each resolution before they vote on it. I recommend using the enclosed Resolutions Checklist to keep a record of your members' votes; this will help your convention delegates when they represent your members and vote on their behalf.

It's best for a PTA to give a vote of confidence to its delegates in case some unforeseen issue arises during convention debate. This vote of confidence will allow the delegates to continue to represent their PTA while making appropriate decisions in light of new information. Even if for some reason your unit cannot send a delegate to convention, the membership should still review and vote on these resolutions. All members need to be familiar with resolutions because they are the foundation of all PTA advocacy.

Resolutions debate is one of the high points of annual convention. When you come together with other delegates to voice your views and act on your principles, you will feel the power of volunteers to make a difference for children and schools. On behalf of the Resolutions Committee, I invite you to Niagara Falls to join the action at Convention 2015.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.



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RETENTIONS

RETENTION #1

INVOLVING PARENTS AND TEACHERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF DISTRICT SPECIAL EDUCATION PLANS – 2008 (R-'01, R-'94)

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge the Commissioner of Education and the Board of Regents to amend Part 200.2 (c) of the Commissioner's Regulations to require that District Special Education Plans be a product of a committee including parents, teachers and others, the specific number of participants and selection process being designated by the regulations.

Resolved that the parents be selected by school-related parent organizations that represent the interests of parents of students with special needs.

Resolved that the District Special Education Plans be required to include a long term general direction of where each district plans to be in regard to the provision of special education services.

Resolved that the District Special Education Plans be required to include all program aspects of the provision of special education services.

Statement:

Currently district special education plans are not formulated by a committee. Advocacy on this issue is still needed.

RETENTION #2

GIFTED AND TALENTED IDENTIFICATION PROGRAMS – 2008 (R-'01, R-'94, R-'87)

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge the New York State Education Department to continue to enforce regulations as found in Part 117 of amendments to the Commissioner's regulations, requiring the identification of gifted and talented students and the notification of their parents.

Resolved that the New York State PTA seek and support legislation that would mandate instructional educational programs and funding for these programs for students identified as gifted and talented.

Resolved that the New York State PTA urge public schools to establish Committees for Gifted and Talented, consisting of school administrators, teachers of the gifted and talented, parents of gifted and talented students, and other appropriately trained school and community specialists, to assist in

identification of and determination of appropriate educational programs and services for these children.

Resolved that the New York State PTA urge the Board of Regents and the State Education Department to require undergraduate teacher training so that prospective teachers recognize and understand the unique characteristics and needs of gifted and talented children.

Resolved that in-service education in the instruction of gifted and talented children be urged for all teachers in the school districts in New York State and be enhanced by leadership, materials, and methods of instruction by the New York State Education Department.

Statement:

Instructional programs for gifted and talented students are not required and there is no funding stream currently in place. There are no formalized requirements for committees on gifted and talented programming which makes this still relevant.

RETENTION #3

GIFTED AND TALENTED COUNSELING – 2008 (R-'01, R-'94, R-'87)

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge the Board of Regents and the State Education Department to require guidance counselors to provide direct and on-going services to address the special needs of children who have been identified as gifted and talented.

Statement:

Children who are gifted and talented have unique issues due to their exceptional abilities. Added challenges may include: it is not “cool” to be smart in our society. These young people may have a tough time transitioning into adulthood as they are ‘talented’ in so many areas. It is difficult to narrow down what they truly are interested in and school-based counseling services are needed.

RETENTION #4

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION – 2008 (R-'01, R-'94, R-'87)

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge local Boards of Education to establish in-school suspension programs that provide for continuity of instruction.

Statement:

According to the New York State Education Department, effective in-school suspension programs have elements required to ensure success. Research shows that in-school suspension programs need to incorporate punitive, academic and therapeutic models. There must be a component to teach students socially appropriate behaviors and to provide the support and interventions to maintain long term results.

RETENTION #5

CERTIFICATION OF ATHLETIC TRAINERS – 2008 (R-'01, R-'94, U-'87)

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge the New York State Education Department to require each school district to have a NYS certified athletic trainer available during practices and home games of secondary school sports.

Statement:

The secondary school athlete is much more susceptible to injuries than an adult. Athletic Trainers in secondary schools are even more important than ever for accurate diagnosis. Additionally, they facilitate treatment of injuries and monitor recovery so that athletes are not returned to play prematurely.

RETENTION #6

SCHOOL PROTECTION OF STUDENT PRIVACY – 2008 (R-'01, R-'94, R-'87)

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge the New York State Education Department to investigate and report currently existing school policies regarding the body search of students.

Resolved that New York State PTA, units and councils encourage their local school districts to adopt student search policies expressly forbidding strip searches.

Statement:

Students do have some protection from unreasonable search and seizure of property under the 4th Amendment to the US Constitution. Under the law, schools may conduct search and seizure in cases where there is a reasonable suspicion of illegal behavior. Students and school employees would benefit from uniform standards generated at the New York State Education Department level. Generating such standards first requires gathering of facts regarding the rules that are in place in school districts.

RETENTION #7

STAFF DEVELOPMENT – 2008 (U-'01, R-'94, R-'87)

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge the New York State Education Department to continue to support staff development programs tailored to district needs.

Resolved that the New York State PTA urge the State legislature to provide consistent and appropriate funding for staff development programs.

Statement:

There are requirements for districts to provide professional development, but no statute-driven funding for such training.

RETENTION #8

FUNDING OF CHARTER SCHOOLS – 2008 (U-'01)

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge and support legislation to change the method of funding charter schools to eliminate the adverse impact on public school districts.

Resolved that the NYS Congress of Parents and Teachers support legislation that will hold charter schools to the same financial accountability as all public schools.

Statement:

This resolution remains relevant as charter school funding draws from the local public school district. Fiscal accountability to public school districts and the public remains inadequate.

RETENTION #9

GUN POSSESSION BY MINORS – 2008 (U-'01, R-'94, U-'87)

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge its units and councils to promote educational programs for increased awareness of current gun possession laws, including those precluding possession of air/spring guns by youth under age sixteen, and emphasizing the effects of misuse of guns.

Statement:

This is recommended for retention because the issue is still important and relevant.

RETENTION #10

REGENTS EXAMINATION SCHEDULES – 2008

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers Inc. strongly urges the New York State Education Department to maintain the current practice of administering Regents Examinations only during designated Regents Exam periods.

Statement:

The typical “practice” has been for Regents exams to be administered during the last week of school; however in more recent years there have been exams that have occurred outside of the typical timeframe and are isolated exams. When this occurs, instructional time and learning is disrupted. This is not considered “best practice.”

UPDATES

UPDATE # 1

TREATMENT OF PERSONS IN NEED OF SUPERVISION (PINS) – 2008 (R-'01, R-'98, R-'91, R-'84)

- Resolved** that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge local communities to establish individual and family counseling services and crisis mediation centers - where conflicts may be worked out to maintain family stability- and programs for the *(remove diagnosis)* **identification** and treatment of **youth at risk for adjudication as Persons In Need of Supervision.**
- Resolved** that the New York State PTA seek to have services and resources delivered to **youth adjudicated as Persons In Need of Supervision** in such a way as to keep the family together whenever possible.
- Resolved** that the New York state PTA oppose the placement of **youth adjudicated as Persons In Need of Supervision** in large correctional institutions or in facilities far from their homes.

Statement:

This update reflects that PINS is not a diagnosis but a legal status determined by the juvenile justice system. Adjudication is defined as the legal court order.

UPDATE #2

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/SEXUAL HARASSMENT – 2008 (R-'01, R-'94)

- Resolved** that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. support implementation of family life curricula in every school.
- Resolved** that the New York State PTA support inclusion of Domestic **and/or Intimate Partner** Violence /Sexual Harassment education as part of a comprehensive health education curriculum including family life education.
- Resolved** that the New York State PTA urge local PTA units to bring these issues to the attention of PTA members and youth in their communities, and encourage parent participation in prevention and awareness of sexual harassment, *(remove: date abuse and date rape)* **and domestic and/or intimate partner violence.**

KEY: WORDS IN **BOLD AND UNDERLINED** = ADDITIONS
WORDS IN *ITALICS AND UNDERLINED* = REMOVALS

Resolved that the New York State PTA will focus on prevention of *(remove: date rape)* domestic **and/or intimate partner** violence through education and publications.

Resolved **that the New York State PTA urge school districts to adopt a formal policy on dating violence.**

Statement:

This resolution has been updated to reflect current terminology. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines the term "intimate partner violence" as "physical, sexual, or psychological harm by a current or former partner or spouse. This type of violence can occur among heterosexual or same-sex couples and does not require sexual intimacy." It includes dating violence.

New York State Education Department (NYSED) Family and Consumer Sciences Curriculum does not specifically address Intimate Partner Violence issues. It talks about "strengthening the well-being of individuals and families across the life span". The NYSED Health Education Learning Standard #2 includes dating violence yet does not include sexual harassment.

The NYS Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence recommends "a formal policy on dating violence can help schools to:

- Build victim safety and offender accountability into the school's response.
- Provide a consistent school response to dating abuse.
- Establish clear roles and responsibilities for school staff.
- Provide help to victims."

UPDATE #3

TO PROMOTE NON-VIOLENT CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN THE MEDIA – 2008 (R-'01, R-'94)

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) to review the incidence of violence in relation to the incidence of non-violent conflict resolution whenever a broadcaster seeks a license renewal.

Resolved that the New York State PTA urge the FCC to demand proof that the ratio of violence to non-violent conflict resolution presented by a *(remove: broadcaster)* **media outlet** be in the public interest.

Resolved that, in cases where the ratio given is not deemed to be in the public interest by the FCC, the New York State PTA urge the FCC to refuse renewal of that license.

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Statement:

This resolution has been updated to reflect all media, not just television. Also, the term broadcaster has been expanded to media outlet. Media outlets include radio, television, and the Internet.

UPDATE #4

PREJUDICE – 2008 (U-'01, U-'95, R-'88)

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. express its condemnation of all **hate crimes**, acts of desecration directed against houses of worship and cemeteries, and acts of violence, intimidation, and harassment of individuals because of their **actual or perceived**: *(remove: racial)* **race**, *(remove: ethnic)* **ethnicity**, or *(remove: religious characteristics)* **religion**, sexual orientation, gender, **gender identity**, age, *(remove: disabilities)* **disability, or other personal characteristics**.

Resolved that the New York State PTA support and encourage law enforcement agencies to continue to apprehend and, where applicable, prosecute individuals who are responsible for acts of racism, vandalism, discrimination and harassment.

Resolved that all local PTA units and councils in cooperation with schools and community agencies aid in developing more effective programs in human relations, or encourage their school districts to use already developed curricula available through the State Education Department or other agencies, thereby encouraging the respect for the rights of all humanity.

Statement:

According to the US Department of Justice, hate crimes are acts of violence that manifest evidence of prejudice based on perceived or actual race, gender, gender identity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or ethnicity. Gender identity is a new category added by the US Department of Justice. Violent hate crime victimization has maintained a steady rate since well before this resolution was last retained. The revisions are noted to make it clear that this resolution is about hate crimes.

UPDATE #5

MULTICULTURAL IN-SERVICE – 2008 (U-'01, U-'94, R-'87)

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. support **updates to** the Commissioner's Regulations *(remove: that)* **in line with New York State Teaching Standards (Element I.5, Element II.5, Element IV.1 and Element VI.3) to** require all candidates for professional certification to *(remove: take courses)* **receive culturally responsive**

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training that would prepare them to serve the needs of a diverse student body.

Resolved that PTA units and councils encourage their local school district to provide **culturally responsive** in-service instruction to teachers, administrators, and other school related personnel that would prepare them to serve the needs of students and families from diverse ethnicities and cultures.

Statement:

Culturally responsive teaching encourages teachers to use their students' identities and backgrounds as valuable sources to inform instruction and conveys to students that they are respected and genuinely expected to succeed. New York State Teaching Standards adopted in 2011 reference knowledge of students, which includes their cultural background.

UPDATE #6

SCOOTER, SKATEBOARD AND IN-LINE SKATING PROTECTIVE GEAR – 2008 (U-'01, R-'95, U-'90)

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. encourage each unit and council to promote educational programs concerning the need for skateboard and in-line skating protective gear (which includes a helmet, elbow pads, knee pads, and wrist guards).

(remove:

Resolved that the New York State PTA urge the Board of Regents to update safety education requirements to include the importance of scooter, skateboard and in-line skating protective gear.)

Resolved that the New York State PTA encourage each unit and council to urge physicians, manufacturers and sales personnel to educate and encourage parents, guardians and children in the use of scooter, skateboard and in-line skating protective gear.

Resolved that the New York State PTA encourage its units and councils to advocate for regulations within their communities to control the use of scooter, skateboard and in-line skates on public streets and in areas of busy pedestrian activity and to advocate for specially designed skateboard and in-line skating areas to serve as an alternative to using the street.

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(remove:

Resolved that the New York State PTA support measures that would require that all scooter, skateboard and in-line skating helmets and other protective gear be subject to performance standards to be developed by an appropriate agency.)

Statement:

Following the rules of the road and wearing protective gear reduces injury. The second resolve is being removed because updating safety education requirements is not a role of the Board of Regents and, because legislation now exists, the last resolved is no longer needed.

UPDATE #7

SECURING A NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ENDORSED DIPLOMA FOR ALL STUDENTS – 2008

Resolved that New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge the New York State Education Department (NYSED) to continue to offer a variety of options of diplomas that meet the unique needs of all students and that will ensure opportunities for these students graduate and earn or receive a valid diploma recognized by higher education and the work place; and therefore be it

Resolved that the New York State PTA continue to urge the NYSED to offer an additional standards-based diploma for (remove: all) students who cannot successfully fulfill Regents requirements.

(remove:

Resolved that, in addition, the New York State PTA and its constituent units urge the New York State Education Department to continue to offer the Regents Competency Tests (RCT) for a local diploma for all students if unable to successfully complete the Regents Exams.)

Statement:

This retention is being updated to reflect changes in New York State Education Department policy. NYS PTA believes every student needs to be offered every opportunity to successfully complete high school and earn a diploma.

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NEW RESOLUTION

NEW RESOLUTION #1

BIO-SOLIDS IN NEW YORK STATE

Whereas bio-solids are the solid portion of treated domestic sewage, including human waste, and are currently being used as fertilizer in New York State, and

Whereas the health issues caused by human bio-solids when injected or spread as a fertilizer in any local community's soil are potentially catastrophic. Possible side effects from human bio-solids, when inhaled through dust from fields or from coming into direct contact with the product include pulmonary edema, pneumonitis, and even death. Soil samples from land injected or spread with human bio-solids have tested positive for viruses and diseases including, but not limited to: Polio, Hepatitis-A, Rotavirus. Exposure of youth to these toxins is especially concerning and has been proven to increase the occurrence of rare diseases and related illnesses, and

Whereas high levels of contaminants are found on land where human bio-solids have been applied. After each application of human bio-solids, farmers and their livestock are not allowed access to these fields for thirty days and any root vegetables cannot be planted in the soil for a minimum of three years. Where land is tested and determined to be contaminated, properties can no longer be used for crops that provide nutrition to humans and animals. In addition to the viruses detailed above, contaminants include metal toxins such as copper, nickel, mercury, molybdenum, and cadmium that in high concentrations, can lead to unusable land. Once contaminated, the value of the land is destroyed and can bankrupt local farmers. Significant concerns arise when human bio-solids enter the water table, streams and waterways, and

Whereas local zoning ordinances and laws set the precedent for creating significant restrictions or moratoriums on the spread or injection of bio-solids. Towns impose laws for homes that have both well water and septic systems, detailing how far apart the two systems must be. Towns have ordinances detailing where waste treatment plants are located, restricting them to certain areas due to the risk of exposure to communities and youth; therefore be it

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. seek and support legislation banning human bio-solids from being used in public areas that are near schools, playgrounds, or other areas frequented by youth until such time that independent studies on the environmental impact can be performed and bio-solids are determined to be safe.

Resolved that the New York State PTA urge Congress, the New York State Legislature, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to regulate and control how human bio-solids are to be used.

Statement:

The use of human bio-solids or sludge products as a fertilizer can create health and environmental risks to humans, due to contaminated land and water. According to the Cornell Cooperative Extension, "NYS regulations prohibit the use of sludge products made in NYS on crops for human consumption, such as in the home vegetable garden. Use of sludge products presents a special risk to children, who might unknowingly eat particles of soil. The exposure of children to lead, cadmium and other potential metal contaminants in soil enriched with sludge is the chief concern." Until there are conclusive studies that demonstrate no risks to youth and the community at large, the use of human bio-solids or sludge products should be discontinued.

Submitted by: Niagara Region PTA
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PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS 2015 CHECKLIST

<u>RETENTIONS</u>	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
1. INVOLVING PARENTS AND TEACHERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF DISTRICT SPECIAL EDUCATION PLANS – 2008 (R-'01, R-'94)	_____	_____
2. GIFTED AND TALENTED IDENTIFICATION PROGRAMS – 2008 (R-'01, R-'94, R-'87)	_____	_____
3. GIFTED AND TALENTED COUNSELING – 2008 (R-'01, R-'94, R-'87)	_____	_____
4. IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION – 2008 (R-'01, R-'94, R-'87)	_____	_____
5. CERTIFICATION OF ATHLETIC TRAINERS – 2008 (R-'01, R-'94, U-'87)	_____	_____
6. PROTECTION OF STUDENT PRIVACY – 2008 (R-'01, R-'94, R-'87)	_____	_____
7. STAFF DEVELOPMENT – 2008 (U-'01, R-'94, R-'87)	_____	_____
8. FUNDING OF CHARTER SCHOOLS – 2008 (U-'01)	_____	_____
9. GUN POSSESSION BY MINORS – 2008 (U-'01, R-'94, U-'87)	_____	_____
10. REGENTS EXAMINATION SCHEDULES – 2008	_____	_____

<u>UPDATES</u>	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
1. TREATMENT OF PERSONS IN NEED OF SUPERVISION (PINS) – 2008 (R - '01, R-'98, R-'91, R-'84)	_____	_____
2. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/SEXUAL HARASSMENT – 2008 (R-'01, R-'94)	_____	_____
3. TO PROMOTE NON-VIOLENT CONFLICT RESOLUTION ON TELEVISION – 2008 (R-'01, R-'94)	_____	_____
4. PREJUDICE – 2008 (U-'01, U-'95, R-'88)	_____	_____
5. MULTICULTURAL IN-SERVICE – 2008 (U-'01, U-'94, R-'87)	_____	_____
6. SCOOTER, SKATEBOARD AND IN-LINE SKATING PROTECTIVE GEAR – 2008 (U-'01, R-'95, U-'90)	_____	_____
7. SECURING A NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ENDORSED DIPLOMA FOR ALL STUDENTS – 2008	_____	_____

<u>NEW RESOLUTION</u>	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
1. BIO-SOLIDS IN NEW YORK STATE	_____	_____