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PTA everychild. onevoice.


How Can Our VOICE be Heard: Grassroots Advocacy

Raise
 Our Voice
 to
 Redeem
 Opportunity




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Advocacy vs. Lobbying

Example


- **Advocacy:**
 Parents picket a store to stop the selling of adult-rated videos near a school.
- **Lobbying:** (next step)
 Parents urge the county legislature to adopt a local law prohibiting or restricting the sale of these items within a certain distance from a school.



PTA Advocacy Lobbying Day

PTAs

- May engage in legislative activity
- Are non-partisan
- May not devote more than an insubstantial (5% of gross income) part of their activities to lobbying
- May not campaign for or against candidates for office
- May not contribute to a PAC (political action)



Are you an Advocate?

Parents are advocates when they:

- Attend a PTA meeting
- Attend a parent-teacher conference
- Serve on a PTA or district advisory committee
- Organize a arts-in-education program
- Attend school board meetings
- Participate in school budget preparation meetings
- Disseminate information to their community about school board candidates and/or the proposed budget

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2011-2012

Advocacy Issues That Have Become Law

- Women's right to vote
- Immunization for German Measles
- Elimination of cigarette advertising on TV
- Seat belt installation on school buses
- Legislation identifying children with special needs
- Graduated licensing
- Head injury/concussion management

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2011-2012

Why Lobby?

- People have a right to change laws
- It works: Individuals can make a difference; people who work together can make a bigger difference
- Lobbying leads to concrete solutions
- Policy-makers need your expertise and insight, and PTA positions matter
- Lobbying advances your cause and builds trust and support for it
- Lobbying is a democratic tradition; elected leaders represent you

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2011-2012

Ways to Communicate with Decision Makers

- Visits
- Phone calls
- Letters, e-mail, petitions
- Fact Sheets
- Letters to the Editor, Op-Ed pieces
- News articles
- Coalitions
- Social Networking (Blogs, Twitter and Facebook)

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How to Communicate Effectively

- Identify the Issue
- Check State and National PTA Positions
- Do Your Research
- Develop Your Plan
- Evaluate the Outcome

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Identify the Issue

- Does it fit PTA mission and purposes?
- Do you know who will support you?
Membership?
Community?
- What resources are available?
- What do you want to happen?
- Is the issue winnable?

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Check State and National Positions

NYS PTA

- Basic Policy
- Where We Stand (resolutions, position papers)
- Legislative Directives
- www.nyspta.org

National PTA

- Legislative Program (directives, resolutions, position statements)
- Public Policy Agenda
- www.pta.org



Do Your Research

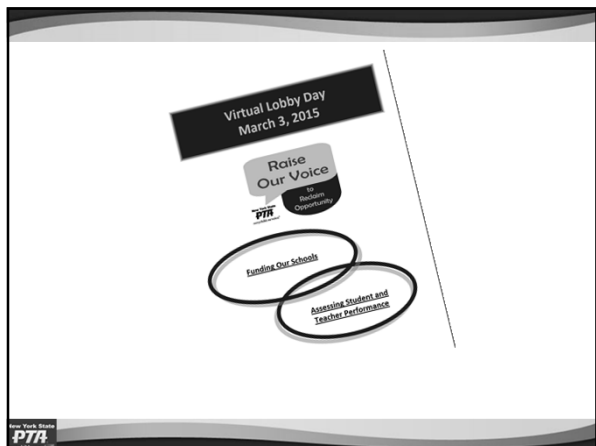
- Know as much as you can – you don't have to be expert, but be informed
- Use multiple resources
- Know both sides of the argument:
Who supports? Who opposes?
- What are the opposition's resources?
- Personalize the issue



Develop Your Plan

- Set goals
- Know who can help
- Identify targets/audiences
- Consider tactics
- Craft your message and delivery
- Use the media/spread the message





Virtual Lobby Day 2015: March 3

- March is PTA Advocacy Month
- Virtual Lobby Day is NYS PTA's response to the Governor's proposed 2015-16 Budget
- Unit/council/region mailings
- Legislation/Education Conference kick-off
- Lobby Day in Albany: March 2
- Followed by Virtual Lobby Day: March 3
- NYS PTA 2015 target issues:
 - Assessing Student and Teacher Performance
 - Funding Our Schools

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The Issue: Funding Our School

- **Voice** the need to:
 - Eliminate the remaining \$1 billion GEA
 - Accelerate phase-in \$4.7 billion in foundation aid
 - Adopt sensible adjustments to the property tax cap
- **Object** and reject:
 - Education Tax Credit proposals
 - Proposals to increase numbers of chart schools
- **Implement** and honor 2014 commitments to:
 - Expand Pre-Kindergarten
 - Fund the Regents agenda
- **Consider** and address supporting English Language Learners
- **Expedite** the reinstatement of current year growth aid

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The Issue: Assessing Student and Teacher Performance

- **Value** standardized assessments for their original purpose
- **Order the:**
 - Reduction of the “seat time”
 - Suspension of the links between performance and student test results
 - Appropriation of 48.4 million requested by the Education Department
- **Implement**
 - The use of NYS Teaching Standards and Performance Indicators
- **Create an environment that:**
 - Judges the performance of individual educators
 - Holds local administrators responsible
 - Rejects the Governor’s proposal
- **Employ** objective teacher performance assessment rubrics

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2015 Legislation Summary
NYS PTA Analysis of the 2015 Executive Budget Proposal

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2015 Legislation Summary
 NYS PTA Responses to Legislation

Analysis of the 2015 Executive Budget Proposal

1. State of the State and Governor's Message
 2. Education Budget Proposal
 3. Statewide Education Reform
 4. Statewide Education Reform
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 100. Statewide Education Reform

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Chart Your Plan

Identify the Issue	Do Your Research	Develop Your Plan	Evaluate Your Success
What does PTA say?	Find background on the issue	Set your goals	Outcomes
Membership support	Use your resources	Who can help	Unit strength
Community support	Who is ally/opposition?	Working with others	Unit growth
Available resources	What are their resources?	Who to contact	Impact
Is it winnable?	Personalize	What can you do	Improvements
		Crafting a message; Using the media	Learning
			Future

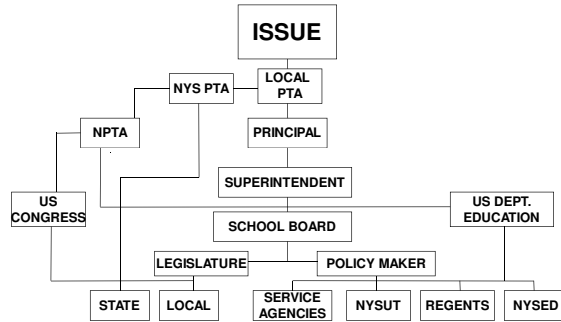
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What's Your Strategy?

Goals	Resources	Allies/Targets	Tactics
Short term	Members	PTA members	Public Testimony
Intermediate	Community groups	School staff Set your goals	One On One persuasion
Long Term	Money	Community Members	Telephone, Fax, Letter
	Time	Other Advocacy Groups or orgs who will support	Petitions
	Publicity	Law/Policy Maker	Voter Registration
		Advocates	"Get Out The Vote"
		Voters	Educate the public
		Community	Town Hall Meetings
			Using the media

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Targets: Who Can Get the Job Done?



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State to National PTA

- Relationship- policy, action
- Public Policy Office
- Federal Legislative Chair
- National Legislative Conference 3/10-3/12
 - Training (State Presidents, NCS, Federal Chairs)
 - Hill visits
- 2015 Public Policy Agenda

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Federal Public Policy Program

- **Elementary and Secondary Education**
Reauthorization of the ESEA-NCLB
- **Early Childhood Education**
Supports federal and state incentives for high-quality child care and preschool programs for children ages zero to five.
- **Special Education**
Reauthorization of IDEA, to ensure that all students graduate from high school, college and career ready. Work to fully protect rights of children with special needs.

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Federal Public Policy Program

- **Education Funding**
Replacing sequester cuts with a balanced and fair approach, protecting vital education investments, secure dedicated funding for family engagement in education, safeguard funding streams
- **Child Health and Nutrition**
Continued Implementation of Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, strengthening local wellness policies and improving nutritional standards
- **Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention**
Advocate for policies that prevent children and youth from entering the juvenile justice system and protect those currently in the system. Extend protections to children under 18 years of age.
- **School Safety**
Safe routes to school; bullying; protection from gun violence

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2015 Federal Public Policy

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—the Obama-ESEA—NCLB remains a top priority for National PTA. PTA will advocate for specific improvements to the law that promote capacity building for the implementation of systemic and sustainable family engagement practices that increase student achievement and accelerate needed reforms. PTA is fighting for other improvements to ESEA-NCLB, including access to well-rounded curricula, equity protections for disadvantaged populations and accountability to parents and the community.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

To be competitive in a global economy, the education of our nation's children must begin long before they enter kindergarten. National PTA supports federal and state incentives for high-quality child care and preschool programs for children ages zero to five. These programs should be affordable and accessible, coordinated at all levels, and characterized by high standards for teaching, training, health and safety. Additionally, PTA strongly encourages the inclusion of a family engagement component into all early childhood education programs.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Through the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), National PTA will continue to advocate to ensure that all students graduate from high school college and career ready, will see that family engagement remains a fundamental principle of IDEA and will work to ensure that the rights of children with special needs and their parents are fully protected under the law.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Federal investment in quality education is critical to our nation's long-term success. PTA supports replacing the sequester cuts with a balanced and fair approach, protecting vital education investments in all federal education efforts, securing dedicated funding for family engagement in education, increasing funding for IDEA, increasing investments in quality early learning programs, and safeguarding funding streams for disadvantaged populations.

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2015 Federal Public Policy

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

PTA continues to advocate for policies that prevent children and youth from entering the juvenile justice system and protect those currently in the system. PTA supports a reauthorization of the JEDPA that keeps youth who commit non-violent offenses out of secure juvenile corrections facilities and that extends the law's core protections to all children under 18 years of age.


CHILD NUTRITION

PTA supports continued implementation of the Healthy and Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, including healthy guidelines for all foods sold in schools, strengthening local wellness policies and improving nutrition standards for meals served as part of the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Additionally, PTA will advocate for improvements to child nutrition and school meal programs in the upcoming reauthorization of the Act.

SCHOOL SAFETY


School safety is a crucial component of effective learning. National PTA believes that the safety of children and faculty in all school settings is a fundamental right and has made it the priority for our programmatic and advocacy work. In 2015, National PTA will work to support federal programming and policies related to bullying prevention, the protection of children from gun violence, and student data privacy.

This document is a brief summary of the National PTA's 2015 Public Policy Agenda. To review all of National PTA's federal policy recommendations, please see our 2015 Public Policy Agenda, available at PTA.org.




State Grassroots Advocacy Propels National Issues

- **PTA Takes Action Network** www.pta.org/takesaction
 - Take Action Alerts
 - Federal Policy Updates (monthly)
- **National Advocacy Awards**
 - (2) Outstanding Advocacy Awards
 - Shirley Igo Advocate of the Year
- **Resources**
 - Policy Issues Cards
 - Federal Policy Update (monthly newsletter)
 - Online Advocacy Training Toolkits



Meeting With A Decision Maker

- **State Your Concern**
- **Educate the Decision Maker**
- **Specify the Action You Want Taken**
- **Get a Commitment**
- **Provide Handouts and/or fact sheets to support your position**
- **Maintain Contact**



Evaluate Your Success

- Did you accomplish what you set out to do?
Why/why not?
- What impact did the effort have on your PTA?
- What did you learn?
- What would you do differently?
- What does this mean for the future?

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Effective Grassroots Advocacy

Requires:

- Building credibility over time
- Solid planning
- Carefully devised activities
- Collaboration
- Personalization of issues
- Meeting decision makers where they are
- Seizing windows of opportunity to influence
- Periodic assessment of initiatives

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Grassroots Advocacy

- *Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.*

- Margaret Mead

- *If you think you're too small to have an impact, try going to sleep with a mosquito.*

- Anonymous

Thank you for joining us!

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