

Basic Policy

New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. is a non-partisan organization and is concerned with the education, the care and the protection of children and youth. Positions will conform to policies adopted by National PTA and New York State PTA and will provide the basis for PTA advocacy efforts. This policy includes resolutions as summarized in *Where We Stand* and other documents.

Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs

- a) Encourage prevention, education, treatment, and rehabilitation efforts regarding substance abuse.
- b) Support measures to reduce and eliminate tobacco use among children and youth.

Citizenship & Equality of Opportunity

- a) Encourage respect for all members of the community and their property.
- b) Encourage fair housing policies with regard to children and their families.
- c) Encourage appropriate care, treatment, and opportunity for all children and their families.
- d) Guarantee that all children and youth with special needs receive equal access to educational programs, services and opportunities.

Cooperative Role of Parents/Families and Educational Professionals

- a) Encourage parents and families to be informed of and involved in the decision-making process.
- b) Ensure the accountability of public schools by maximizing citizen involvement.
- c) Encourage cooperation among school districts through regional approaches toward resolving mutual concerns.
- d) Support parent/families involvement in policies in federal and state legislation, regulations and official proclamations/executive orders

Cultural Arts

- a) Promote arts education programs as part of the core curriculum.
- b) Encourage integration of the arts in school curricula.
- c) Promote public awareness of the life-long value of the arts.

Education Emphasis

- a) Guarantee for all children and youth (Pre-K through post-secondary) an equal opportunity to develop to their fullest potential.
- b) Promote implementation of higher standards for all levels of public education.
- c) Provide opportunities for academic, vocational, and technical education through and beyond the secondary level.
- d) Ensure identification, notification, and education of all special education students, including gifted and talented.
- e) Promote the importance of the requirement of full access to education for homeless/migrant children and youth and emancipated youth.

Environment

- a) Insist that every school be environmentally safe and provide a healthy learning environment.
- b) Insist that all members of the school community have a "right to know" about environmental health issues and hazards in their school environment.
- c) Encourage schools to serve as role models for environmentally responsible behavior.
- d) Promote awareness of the impact of potentially hazardous substances.

Financial Support for Public Education

- a) Ensure that federal, state, and local funds designated for elementary and secondary education is used only for public schools. Oppose direct or indirect aid for non-public schools, for example tuition tax credits, vouchers, supplemental services, etc.
- b) Support adequate and equitable funding for public education pre-school through post secondary, which is budgeted and distributed to ensure long-term stability for the orderly operation of schools.
- c) Support and encourage that state aid be provided at a minimum of 50% of total educational costs, precluding Federal or other sources of aid.

Health and Nutrition

- a) Support comprehensive health and wellness education.
- b) Strengthen comprehensive health services, physical and mental, in school and community.
- c) Promote and collaborate on wellness initiatives within the school and community.
- d) Promote building healthy lifestyles through daily physical activity and nutrition.
- e) Encourage proper labeling of consumer goods.
- f) Promote quality age-appropriate nutrition programs and standards based on scientific evidence.

Juvenile Protection

- a) Improve juvenile justice and court facilities, educational conditions, personnel, and procedures that deal with delinquent, neglected, and abused children and youth.
- b) Support services and programs that provide assistance to families in stress/crisis situations.
- c) Seek and support the provision of safe care and educational opportunities for children in all environments.
- d) Safeguard children from threats of negative influence.

Libraries, Media, and Technology

- a) Encourage the establishment of school district policies formulated with educators, parents, families, and other community members for the selection and/or review of multimedia materials.
- b) Encourage establishment of guidelines and procedures to develop policies to deal with challenges to educational materials.
- c) Encourage broadcasters to air appropriate programming for children and youth.
- d) Encourage understanding and awareness of media literacy.
- e) Encourage awareness and understanding of what is available/accessible to children and youth through the use of technology.
- f) Support and encourage funding for libraries, media, and technology to facilitate the implementation of higher learning standards.

Parent and Family Life

- a) Promote parent and family education programs.
- b) Provide parents and families with the necessary knowledge and skills to act as advocates for children.
- c) Promote parent and family involvement policies.

Pre School and Early Childhood Education

- a) Promote and support developmentally appropriate pre-school and kindergarten programs.
- b) Work to ensure that comprehensive public Universal Pre-K and kindergarten receives sustained equitable support.

PTA Organizational Decisions

- a) Promote broadened involvement through increased membership in PTA.
- b) Encourage and support the efforts of units and councils to actively seek participation that reflects the diversity of the community.

Religious Expression in Public Schools

- a) Ensure that public school approach to religion in the curriculum is academic as stated in the first amendment of the U.S. Constitution addressing the separation of church and state.

Safety

- a) Ensure the safety of children in the school environment.
- b) Ensure safe modes of transportation.
- c) Encourage safe conditions in the home and community.
- d) Secure appropriate measures to prevent the incidence of missing and abused children.
- e) Promote awareness and elimination of hazards and risks, in both real and virtual worlds, to children and youth.