

## Basic Policy 2011-2012

New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. is a nonpartisan 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 and treatment 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 the inclusion of family engagement provisions in federal and state legislation, policies, 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**

- a) Guarantee for all children and youth (PreK through post-secondary) an equal opportunity to develop to their fullest potential.
- b) Promote implementation of high standards for all levels of public education.
- c) Provide opportunities for academic, vocational, and technical education through the post-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 all school property 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 model 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 are 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, exclusive of federal or other sources of aid.

### **Health and Wellness**

- a) Support comprehensive health and wellness education.
- b) Promote the accessibility of comprehensive physical and mental health services 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) Promote improvement of 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) Seek and support the protection of children from the threats of negative influences.

### **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 high learning standards and foster student achievement.

### **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 family engagement best practices.

### **Early Childhood Education**

- a) Promote and support developmentally appropriate pre-school and kindergarten programs.
- b) Work to ensure that comprehensive public PreK and kindergarten receive 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.
- c) Ensure that PTA funds are used to advance the purposes and goals of PTA, not to fill gaps in school budgets.

### **Religious Expression in Public Schools**

- a) Ensure that the public school approach to religion is consistent with 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.