

2011-2012 LEGISLATIVE DIRECTIVES

New York State PTA, with 335,000 members, advocates for all children and youth from birth through post-secondary education. Legislative Directives, adopted by the NYS PTA Board of Directors at the annual pre-convention meeting, list priorities for advocacy efforts for the current school year. Legislative Directives may be amended by the NYS PTA Board of Directors as social conditions and government policies necessitate additional response and action.

NYS PTA's 2011-2012 Legislative Directives are:

Support for Public Education:

- Support education finance reform to provide equitable funding for the education of all children in New York State;
- Support the provision of equal educational opportunities for all children including homeless children, foster children, emancipated youth and those who are incarcerated;
- Oppose imposition on public school districts of restrictions that disregard uncontrollable school cost drivers, create greater educational inequities, and limit local determination of educational opportunity;
- Support legislation that would change the method of funding charter schools to eliminate any adverse impact on existing school districts and ensure charter school accountability;
- Oppose the diversion of public funds from public schools for vouchers and tuition tax credits, and by state or other agencies or authorities to fund certain state interests;
- Support fiscal independence for all school districts;
- Support adequate funding for Pre-K and full day kindergarten;
- Support adequate funding for school districts to provide continuing professional development for educators;
- Support adequate and equitable funding for maintenance and modernization of school facilities;
- Support full funding for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and all other federal laws affecting the education of children and youth in New York State;
- Support initiatives to ensure the provision of highly qualified teachers in all classrooms..

Safe and Nurturing Environments:

- Support healthy children and youth initiatives, including those addressing mental and physical health needs and substance abuse issues;
- Support initiatives that foster a supportive school climate;
- Support policies and initiatives that engage home, school and community in violence prevention planning and measures;
- Support efforts to maintain optimal class size for instruction at all levels;
- Support quality, affordable, accessible school-based before-school and after-school programs;
- Support initiatives to require the use of seat belts on all school buses;
- Advocate for improved child nutrition, including prevention of obesity and eating disorders, and healthful levels of physical activity;
- Support legislation, policies and regulations that protect children and youth when using the Internet, wireless devices, and other forms of electronic communications.

Parent and Family Engagement:

- Support parent and family engagement consistent with National PTA Standards in all local, state and federal education policies;
- Support representation of New York State PTA as one of the parent voices on statewide interagency parent and family cabinets/councils;
- Support the development of effective parent and family engagement plans in every school using a reportable accountability system.