

## Proposed Resolutions to be Presented at the 2010 NYS PTA Convention

### RETENTION #1

Sale of Alcoholic Beverages in Supermarkets – 2003 (U-'96, R-'89, U-'82);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. oppose any legislation permitting the sale of liquor and wine in supermarkets, convenience stores and drug stores.

Statement: The sale of alcoholic beverages to children and youth continues to be a concern to parents. The NYS PTA is concerned about the availability of purchases made via automatic scanners and the lack of trained personnel and/or vigilance in checking ID's in supermarkets and convenience stores where youth may have easier access to these alcoholic beverages. We need to advocate for the safety of our children and keep the aforementioned stores from selling wine and liquor.

### RETENTION #2

3020-A Hearings – 2003 (R-'96, R-'89, U-'82);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. support modification to Education Law 3020-a to expedite the resolution of charges while preserving the rights of the teacher or administrator.

Statement: Although the NYS Education Law has been revised and a schedule for the 3020-a process exists, problems involving the cost and timeliness of the hearings persist. The process should be further streamlined to ensure speedy justice for the accused and reduced costs to school districts.

### RETENTION #3

Compulsory Education – 2003 (R-'96, R-'89);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. support legislation that would amend the Education Law to change the compulsory education attendance age to seventeen.

Statement: Although other states have raised the compulsory age of education to 17 or 18, in New York State the compulsory age remains 16. Present dropout rates throughout the nation are alarmingly high, with approximately 30% of all public school students and almost 50% of African American, Hispanic, and Native American students failing to graduate with the rest of their class. Studies show a close relationship between high school attendance and graduation rates, and lengthening the time students must attend school enhances their likelihood of graduation.

### RETENTION #4

Establish a Legislative Task Force to Reform State Aid to Education Formulas – 2003;

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. encourage the NYS Legislature to establish a task force to study current and proposed school aid formulas and develop a funding solution that is adequate, equitable, predictable and understandable.

Statement: Economic crises have frustrated attempts to achieve fairness in state education funding, and the poorest districts continue to be among the least served. The effort to eliminate these disparities should be ongoing, and a legislative task force is an

appropriate vehicle to explore changes to the state aid formula and recommend needed reforms.

#### RETENTION #5

Food Inspection and Regulation – 2003 (R-'96, R-'89, U-'82);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. support the proper inspection and regulation of food by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and other agencies, such as the NYS Dept. of Health (DOH), to prevent mislabeling and to detect contamination.

Statement: We need to ensure that all food is properly inspected and that regulations are in place to protect the public from contaminated food, both domestic and imported. Due to lack of funding and personnel, required inspections are not being performed in many school districts. Furthermore, the law does not require inspection for some quite dangerous pathogens (see S.2792, the E. coli Eradication Act). This situation could seriously undermine efforts to protect the public.

#### RETENTION #6

School Lunch Programs – 2003 (R-'96, R-'89, U-'82);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. oppose any cuts in the National School Lunch Program.

Resolved that the New York State PTA urge Congress to reauthorize school lunch and breakfast programs and the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

Resolved that the New York State PTA urge school districts and schools that do not yet have them, where there is a demonstrated need, to initiate them and operate them in accordance with the federal guidelines even though they may no longer be required by law.

Statement: For many children school meals are the main source of food to meet daily nutritional requirements. Reauthorization of federal Child Nutrition Programs is currently under discussion in Congress. The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (S. 3307), for example, would allocate \$4.5 billion to attack both childhood hunger and childhood obesity through expanded access to child nutrition programs providing highly nutritious foods. We must be vigilant in advocating for continuation of all these child nutrition programs.

#### RETENTION #7

Protecting Youth in Cults – 2003 (R-'96; R-'89, U-'82);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge enforcement of all compulsory education, abuse, neglect, and health laws for those minor children being raised by “cults.”

Resolved that the New York State PTA support legislation that will enable the courts, upon sufficient evidence that radical changes in behavior have coincided with an individual's close association with a certain group, to grant parents conservatorship for a reasonable period of time over their child.

Statement: Over the years the New York State Legislature has revisited concerns regarding youth participation in cults. However, there currently is no legislation that

addresses temporary guardianship or conservatorship for parents. Nevertheless, cults continue to be a threat to children and families.

#### RETENTION #8

Federal Communication Commission (FCC) - Education Regarding Radio Broadcasting – 2003 (R-'96);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. encourage the radio broadcast industry to comply with the letter and spirit of the FCC “safe harbor” provisions for children.

Resolved that the New York State PTA encourage the radio broadcast industry, and particularly those stations that appeal to children, to broadcast language and material that is suitable for children.

Resolved that the New York State PTA urge units and councils to educate parents about the need to monitor their children's radio listening and about the FCC “safe harbor” provisions and procedures for filing complaints.

Statement: Advocating for responsible radio programming is a continued responsibility of advocates for children and youth. There is still a great need for parents to monitor what their children listen to on the radio as well as to know how to file complaints about violations of FCC regulations on appropriate content for young listeners.

#### RETENTION #9

Change in the Vehicle Traffic Law Pertaining to Stopped School Buses – 2003 (R-'96);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. support programs to raise the awareness of dangerous traffic situations at school bus stops.

Resolved that the New York State PTA seek and support legislation to prevent a vehicle from making turns toward a school bus while it is discharging or receiving passengers - to change the law to read “any” where it now reads “either” in section 1174(a) Vehicles and Traffic Law.

Resolved that the New York State PTA seek and support legislation to prohibit the establishment of bus stops at intersections or within 100 feet of intersections unless the Board of Education adopts a resolution indicating that an intersection location is unavoidable.

Statement: State law prohibits vehicles from passing a school bus that has stopped to receive or discharge passengers and has flashing red lights. However, this law does not prohibit a vehicle from making a right- or left-hand turn from a position in front of or behind the bus in this situation. Furthermore, it is common for school bus stops to be established at or close to intersections, despite obvious dangers to child passengers. This resolution seeks to address both safety issues and should therefore be retained.

#### RETENTION #10

Mandated Fire Drills – 2003 (U-'96, R-'89);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge the SED to consider amending the requirement of mandated fire drills so that at least one drill occurs annually during non-classroom situations, and before/ after school instructions for all building occupants.

Statement: New York State PTA continues to support the scheduling of school fire drills to cover a variety of possible conditions and time frames. Although current law does not mandate fire drills outside of normal school hours, these drills are essential practice for safe evacuation in the event of an emergency.

## UPDATES

### KEY:

WORDS IN **BOLD and UNDERLINED** = ADDITIONS

WORDS IN *ITALICS AND UNDERLINED* = (REMOVAL)

### UPDATE #1

Comprehensive K-12 Drug, Alcohol and Substance Abuse Resistance Education – 2002  
(Referred to Committee 2009);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge SED and the Legislature to mandate and fund comprehensive K-12 drug, alcohol and other substance abuse **prevention** (*remove: resistance*) education.

Resolved that the New York State PTA urge school districts to form substance abuse education coalitions, to develop and oversee **prevention** (*remove: resistance*) programs in their schools. These coalitions should be encouraged to include all interested parties such as law enforcement, media, community, parents, teachers, administrators, students and health care professionals.

Resolved that all substance abuse **prevention** (*remove: resistance*) programs be evaluated regularly to measure effectiveness. Programs shall be modified based on evaluation and trends in student attitudes and behaviors.

Statement: This resolution was referred to committee in 2009 because of concerns that the term “resistance” had become outdated and thus confused the resolution’s focus on substance abuse *prevention* education. The wording has therefore been amended to correct this problem. As noted in the 2009 “Detoxification of Minors” resolution, substance abuse remains a very serious concern in communities throughout the state, and the need for comprehensive substance abuse education and effective substance abuse prevention programs is as great as ever.

### UPDATE #2

Alternative High Schools for At-Risk Students – 2003 (R-’96, R-’89);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. support the educational concept of alternative high **school programs and settings** (*remove: schools*) for (*remove: at-risk*) students **at risk**.

Resolved that New York State PTA seek adequate fiscal resources from the **State** (*remove: Governor and the Legislature*) to support (*remove: programs for*) alternative **high school programs and settings** (*remove: high schools*) for (*remove: at-risk*) students **at risk** that include the provision of counseling services, and further that the funding be unrestricted in nature so that school districts have the flexibility to support programs designed to meet the particular needs of their (*remove: at-risk*) students **at risk**.

Statement: This resolution is being updated to allow for alternative high school programs and settings that are not necessarily in separate high school buildings. Many districts offer alternative programs at a “school within a school” or in other settings that

are not high schools, such as libraries and community centers. These programs serve the resolution's purpose of meeting the individual needs of students. If this resolution is updated, the title will be updated to "Alternative High School Programs and Settings for Students at Risk."

### UPDATE #3

Use of Polystyrene Products – 2003 (R-'96, R-'89);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. seek and support legislation that would ban the use of polystyrene products at all state and public school facilities.

Resolved that the New York State PTA urge the state to encourage local municipalities to issue their own ban on polystyrene products.

Resolved that the New York State PTA **and** *(remove: recommend to all)* its **constituent** units **work to eliminate** *(remove: voluntary elimination of)* polystyrene products at all PTA-sponsored events.

Statement: Polystyrene is a known hazardous substance which is a suspected carcinogen and neurotoxin. Styrofoam is a notorious pollutant that is practically impossible to recycle or reuse. It takes up a considerable amount of space in a landfill and takes a very long time to decompose. Although there is heightened awareness of the dangers and excess waste associated with polystyrene, there is not yet comprehensive legislation to ban the use it. New York State PTA is committed to providing safe and healthy environments in schools, homes and communities.

### UPDATE #4

Integrated Pest Management – 2003 (R-'96, R-'89);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge the use of pesticides only as last resort and the promotion of alternative pest control methods in order to protect children's health, safety, and environment.

*(remove: Resolved that New York State PTA urge the SED and the State Legislature to establish specific guidelines to protect school children from unneeded exposure.)*

Statement: Pesticide application has been linked to cancer, endocrine disruption, learning disabilities, asthma, and other health problems. The Legislature and the State Education Department have responded to the need for clear guidelines to reduce school children's exposure to pesticides, thus eliminating the need for the second resolve. Despite the recent passage of the Child Safe Playing Field Act (Section 409-k), which bans the use of pesticides on school playing fields and playgrounds and promotes the use of alternative pest control methods, pesticides may still be used in municipal parks and playgrounds and other parts of a child's environment.

### UPDATE #5

Hazards From Land, Water, Air and Noise Pollution – 2003 (U-'96, R-'89, U-'82);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. support *(remove: such)* federal and state programs **such** as the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, the "Super Fund," and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

Resolved that the New York State PTA encourage members to participate in community education programs on environmental issues concerning air, water, land, *(remove: and)* noise **and light** pollution.

Statement: This resolution has been updated to include light pollution which is now recognized as an environmental hazard. We need to continue to advocate for the preservation of our environment. All citizens of this state, particularly children and youth, deserve clean, unpolluted water and air, and a safe environment protected from unwanted noise and light.

#### UPDATE #6

Preventive Health Programs – 2003 (U-'96, R-'89, U-'82);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. strongly support **age-appropriate** preventive health programs such as: prenatal (*remove: care*) and well-child care, **newborn screenings**, (*remove: including age-appropriate*) immunizations, nutritional screenings, dental care, **vision and** hearing screenings, (*remove: amblyopia screening for preschoolers,)* scoliosis and blood pressure screenings, lead poisoning and tuberculin skin tests, and voluntary screening for genetic diseases.

Statement: This resolution is being updated to include newborn screenings. A Senate bill (S.6656) has been introduced to strengthen New York State's newborn screening program by adding several diseases to the screening. Early detection and treatment are critical for babies with diseases that can be debilitating and deadly if undiagnosed. Since the screening program was introduced in 1965, over 40 disorders have been added to the screening test. The resolution has also been revised for more concise and consistent language.

#### UPDATE #7

Disciplinary Proceeding for Employees Convicted of a Felony – 2003 (R-'96, R-'89);

*(remove: Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. seek and support legislation and regulations to provide for automatic discharge from employment, without a hearing, of school district employees who have been convicted of a felony.)*

Resolved that the New York State PTA (*remove: further*) urge school districts to do (*remove: a*) thorough background checks **of school employees** before employment (*remove: on all school employees*) and **to request verification that background checks are performed on** employees of companies under contract with the school district who may come in direct contact with the school district's children.

Statement: New York State law currently allows for immediate dismissal of school employees convicted of certain crimes, but not all felonies. Nevertheless, the first resolve has been removed because the category of "felony" is very broad and encompasses many offenses too minor to justify automatic dismissal of an employee without a hearing. Background checks of all employees are essential to student safety, and this resolve remains timely as it is possible for a school district to employ a person conditionally (for 45 days) while a background check is still in progress.

#### UPDATE #8

Child Care Services – 2003 (R-'96, R-'89, R-'82);

- Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. encourage units and councils to have programs addressing the need for child care, including school age child care, in their communities and to share guidelines on quality child care with parents.
- Resolved that New York State PTA urge the state to address the need to encourage home child care providers to register and to provide training programs for all child care providers **in order to reduce turnover and improve quality of care** (*remove: increase the length of service of (child care) workers*).
- Resolved that the New York State PTA encourage the state legislature to address the different needs of families for accessible child care by providing incentives for more infant slots, increased salaries for child care workers, and further incentives for business and other organizations to start quality programs.
- Statement: New York State PTA continues to advocate for quality child care. This resolution has been updated to highlight the importance of registration and continued training for child care providers. We strongly support the availability of safe, affordable, and accessible child care.

#### UPDATE #9

Monitors on School Buses – 2003 (R-'96, R-'89, U-'82);

- Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. encourage its local units to sponsor campaigns within their school districts to have money allocated in school budgets to pay the expenses incurred for hiring and training monitors.
- Resolved that the New York State PTA continue to encourage the **State Legislature** (*remove: SED*) to consider bus monitors an integral part of transporting children to and from school and, therefore, an “aidable” transportation cost.
- Statement: This resolution has been updated to reflect the fact that funding of transportation is the purview of the State Legislature. While the New York State Education Department does not mandate school bus monitors, they play an important role in protecting children. Without monitors the supervision of children becomes the sole responsibility of the bus driver. School districts would be more inclined to hire monitors if this was an aidable transportation expense.

### **RESCISSIONS (to be retired)**

#### RESCISSION #1

Concerns Regarding Local/District High School Diplomas – 2003 (U-'96);

- Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge the NYS Board of Regents, the Commissioner of Education and the State Education Department not only to maintain the Individual Education Plan (IEP) diploma, but also to consider offering an alternative diploma based on the NYS learning standards, and a Career and Technological diploma.
- Statement: This resolution is being rescinded because its intent was included in the 2008 resolution “Securing a New York State Education Department Endorsed Diploma

for All Students,” which seeks a variety of diploma options to meet the needs of all students.

RESCISSION #2

Change the Uniform Time Act to Extend Daylight Savings Time – 2003 (R-'96);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. seek and support legislation to change the daylight savings time to include October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Statement: This resolution is being rescinded because the Uniform Time Act was amended to extend daylight savings time beyond October 31<sup>st</sup> effective 2007.