

Advocacy

"The necessity for securing adequate legislation was apparent from the start." While studying how best to raise their own children, the association's founders discovered that other children had serious unmet needs. They saw sickly children, insufficiently clad children, hungry children. And something had to be done about it. (Excerpted from *History of the California Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc.*, 1900-1944, M.H. Strong, Editor.)

Decisions that affect our children, youth, and families are made every day by local, state, and national policymakers. In a democratic society, every citizen has the right and the responsibility to participate in shaping those decisions. These advocacy tools have been developed to assist you in your efforts to influence policymakers at the local, state, and national levels.

As the oldest and largest advocacy organization in California, PTA is uniquely qualified to influence policymakers. By working collaboratively on issues, PTAs in California and throughout the nation can form a powerful force in securing adequate laws and public policy that are best for the care and protection of children and youth.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Local Advocacy

Local PTA Advocacy for Children and Youth	A5
Study the Issues.....	A5
State and Federal Issues	A5
Communicate with Your Elected Officials	A5
Public Appearances.....	A7
Organize a Rally.....	A8

Legislative Program

California State PTA Legislative Program	A8
PTA Legislation Team	A8
Legislation Program.....	A8
California State PTA Legislative Bill Positions	A9
Positions on State Initiatives and Propositions	A9
Legislation Platform	A9
California State PTA Legislative Policies and Procedures	A10

Election Campaigns

Role of the PTA	A13
Restrictions on Endorsement of Candidates	A13
Local Candidates Forum	A13
Candidate Questionnaires	A13
School Bonds and Other Ballot Measure Campaigns.....	A14
Legal Guidelines for Campaign Activity	A14
California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) Regulations	A14
California Education Code and Election Law	A14
Nonpartisan Policy	A14
IRS Reporting Requirements	A15

Resolutions

Resolutions Process	A21
Where We Stand: Resolutions	A25

Position Statements

Where We Stand: Position Statements **A27**

- Accountability Systems: Statewide, Federal, and Local
- Arts in Education
- Assessment and Testing (Statewide)
- Assistance to Families in Need
- Basic Education
- Before- and After-School Options for Children and Youth
- Behavioral Health and Social Emotional Development
- Building a Positive School Climate Through Restorative Justice Practices
- Cannabis Youth Safety and Education
- Character Education
- Charter Schools
- Child Abuse
- Child Care
- Child Victims/Witnesses Rights
- Chronic Illness Care in California Schools
- Commercialism in Schools
- Comprehensive Community Schools with Integrated Services (Community Schools)
- COVID-19
- Credentialed School Personnel
- Dangers of Energy/Caffeinated Drinks
- Democracy in Practice: Constitutional Principles, Human Rights and Civic Integrity
- Distance Learning
- Education of English Language Learners
- Education: Higher Education
- Education: Opposing Vouchers, Tuition Tax Credits and Deductions as Systems of Education Aid
- Education: Parental Choice In Public Schools
- Education: Support of Public Education
- Education: The Early Years, Ages 3 to 6
- Education: The Elementary Years, Ages 6 to 10
- Education: The Middle Years, Ages 10 to 14
- Education: The High School Years Ages 14 to 18
- Energy Conservation
- Environmental Health and Environmental Education
- Equity for All Children and Youth
- Evaluation of Teachers
- Fair Housing
- Family Engagement in Credentialing Programs
- Family Planning
- Family Responsibility and Accountability
- Family Services
- Firearms and Assault Weapons
- Freedom to Learn
- Funding of Mandated Programs: Effect on Public Education
- Gang Awareness
- Grief-Sensitive Schools: Building Healthy Coping Skills
- Health Care Access for Children, Youth, Pregnant Women, and Their Families
- Health Education
- Homeless Families and Children
- Inclusive Education: Universal Design Learning
- Inclusiveness and Diversity
- Instructional Materials
- Interpersonal Relations
- Juvenile Offenders in the Justice System
- Lead Poisoning
- Life Skills
- Lottery Revenue and Public School Funding
- Marijuana Providers Near Schools
- Mass Media and the Family

Media Literacy for Students and Families
Minor Consent for Health Care
Missing and Exploited Children
Nutrition and Physical Activity Education
Opioid Overdose Reversal
Parent/Caregiver Involvement: Building Bridges and Eliminating Barriers
Parenting Education and Skills Development
Positive Youth Development
Prevention and Intervention Programs
Prevention of Teen Pregnancy
Public Involvement in School Governance
Public School Employer-Employee Negotiations
Racism is a Public Health Crisis
Reduced Class Size in Grades TK-3
Rights and Services for Undocumented Children and Children of Undocumented Immigrants
Rights of Foster Children and Foster Families
Safe Drinking Water in Schools
Safe School Environments
School and Public/Community Library Services
School Attendance
School Based Decision Making
School-Based/Linked Health Centers
School Bus Safety
School Closure
School Desegregation/Integration
School-to-Career Technical Education
Social Emotional Learning: Essential to a Well-rounded Education
Special Education
State Tax Reform
Status Offenders
Student Participation in Public Demonstrations
Student Records
Sugary-Sweetened Beverages
Dating Violence Prevention
Television Programming
Toy Look-Alike Guns
Vaccinations
Voting
Year-Round Education
Youth Involvement
Zero to Three Years: A Critical Period in a Child's Development

Advancing Education Through Artificial Intelligence(AI).....	A92
Advocacy Topic Index.....	A93

FIGURES

A-1 Organizing a Letter Writing Campaign.....	A16
A-2 How to Organize a Local Rally.....	A17
A-3 Organizing a Local Candidates Forum	A18-20

Local Advocacy

Local PTA Advocacy for Children and Youth

Laws enacted by local, state and national bodies are primary sources of public policy. Securing adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth is one of the purposes of the organization. Therefore, PTA maintains an active legislation program.

PTAs can and must participate actively in the process through which public policy decisions are made. Any unit, council or district PTA may recommend action on legislation to the California State PTA Board of Managers.

Unit, council and district PTAs are responsible for taking action on local issues originating in school districts, cities, regions, or counties.

For details on the responsibilities of the legislation chairman see "Job Description for Legislation," Chapter.

advocate: To plead in favor of; defend; support or urge by argument; recommend publicly. One who pleads for or on behalf of another.

Study the Issues

Check to see if California State PTA already has taken a position regarding your concern or a closely related issue. The Legislation Platform, Resolutions and Position Statements of California State PTA provide the basis for advocacy on issues at all levels. For information on California State PTA positions, see

- Legislation Platform (preamble, general principles and legislation planks)
- Where We Stand: Resolutions
- Where We Stand: Position Statements

PTAs cannot advocate in the name of PTA without prior PTA authority.

If there is an adopted PTA position on an issue, that position can be used as authority to advocate in the name of PTA.

If there is no prior adopted PTA position on record, the next step is to conduct a study (How to Make a Study). Your council or district PTA can provide assistance.

Present the results of the study to your members. They may vote to accept the recommendations of the study and to forward them through channels (unit to council [if in council], council to district PTA) to California State PTA. Background information and recommendations will be reviewed at each level before a vote is taken to forward the study to the next level. The unit, council and district PTA should report to each other on any action taken.

When the study and recommendations reach the California State PTA Board of Managers, they will be referred to the commission or committee responsible for the subject matter. This commission or committee may

choose to prepare a position statement or resolution to present to the California State PTA Board of Managers for final action. Any action taken by California State PTA will be reported to the local unit, council or district PTA.

The California State PTA Board of Managers may also decide to return the study to the originator to take action on the study and recommendations. If this is the case, the local unit, council or district PTA may decide to prepare and submit a resolution on this issue for consideration by delegates to the annual convention in accordance with the procedure and timeline described in the Resolution Process (Resolution Process).

Statewide and Federal Issues

When considering advocacy on a statewide or federal issue at the local level, the first step is to determine if California State PTA or National PTA has considered the issue and whether or not either has a position. If not, research the issue and know the pros and cons. Identify the bill number, title and sponsor(s), or the number and name of the ballot measure. Remember to personalize the issue by preparing arguments on how the bill or ballot measure will affect your local community.

Know the different groups that support and oppose PTA's position on the issue. Be an information resource and have available the following:

- Fact sheets that include background on the issue;
- A summary of the legislative proposal;
- An analysis of the bill;
- Facts and statistics that support PTA's position; and
- Surveys or opinion polls of PTA members.

Some of this information may be available through the office of the legislator sponsoring the legislation. In the case of a statewide ballot measure on which California State PTA has taken a position, California State PTA will provide an analysis of the measure, including both pro and con arguments, and resources for further study. The California State PTA legislation team is available to consult with members on legislation and/or ballot measure issues.

Communicate with Your Elected Officials

Promote legislative advocacy among fellow PTA members by encouraging them to build relationships with state and federal representatives. Begin by identifying the State Senator, Assembly member and Member of Congress who represent your area. Find out more about legislators and their particular areas of interest by visiting their websites; individual websites can be accessed at www.senate.ca.gov or www.assembly.ca.gov, www.house.gov or www.senate.gov.

For local issues, identify the appropriate school board members, city council members, county supervisors and/or county school board representatives that you will need to reach. Contact information may be found in your local telephone directory or on the websites for each local government body.

Visit Your Legislators

Make an appointment to visit your state and federal legislative representatives at least once per year. Call their district offices to find out when they will be available; many state legislators spend Fridays in their district offices. Arrange for a group of PTA members to visit and share information about what is important to students and parents in your area; include students when they are available.

When visiting your elected representative, take the following steps:

- Schedule an appointment or, if the elected representative is unavailable, arrange a meeting with the aide handling the issue. When making the appointment, specify how much time will be needed.
- Draft an agenda and be sure to list the issue(s) the PTA wants to discuss. If PTA members are visiting as a group, assign each person a role. For example, one person can open the meeting, another person can be the recorder, someone else can focus the conversation back to the PTA agenda when necessary, and another person can leave literature.
- Arrive on time for the meeting. Have the group meet together immediately prior to the meeting and then go in together. Once in the meeting, immediately identify yourself and the PTA represented. During the introduction, state the issue(s) of concern. Keep the time frame in mind during the meeting.
- Be prepared to educate the legislator or aide about PTA's history and positions. Be open to questions. If you don't know the answer, politely explain that you will do some additional research and get back to them. Never give false information or assumptions. Personal credibility and the credibility of PTA are on the line.
- Ask how the legislator will vote on the issue. If the legislator is unable to make a commitment, tactfully state that you would like to know, and that you are willing to call at a later time to learn the decision. If the response is positive, respond, "We appreciate your support." If the response is negative, ask, "What are your specific objections?"
- Develop a positive relationship with elected representatives and their staff members. Communication should be a continuing exchange, not sporadic contact. A solid relationship with legislators and their staff members is an important step in building credibility and power for the PTA.

Write Letters

Letters alert elected representatives to PTA's views. A letter-writing campaign also educates PTA members about the issues and publicizes the association. Begin the campaign by identifying a coordinator, perhaps the legislation chairman or PTA president.

Determine the message. Have sample messages available to members, as well as fact sheets with the PTA position on the issue. When authorized to write on behalf of the PTA, use PTA letterhead. State the case succinctly and accurately, citing the following:

- Issue and background facts;

- PTA's position, and what PTA wants to happen (e.g., change in regulations, new legislation);
- Number of PTA members the writer represents; and
- Your involvement with the PTA and, when applicable, your PTA title (e.g., unit, council or district PTA president).
- Address the letter with proper titles; and
- Sign your full name and give your complete address, including telephone number.

Send copies of the letter to other contacts, such as key legislative committee and subcommittee members as well as the California State PTA director of legislation and, when writing about issues before Congress, to the National PTA Office of Governmental Relations.

It may also be helpful, in some cases, to send letters to the editors of local newspapers to communicate the PTA position on a particular issue to the broader community. The letter should be submitted on PTA letterhead and signed by the president or legislation chair of the unit, council or district PTA initiating the action.

Addresses of California's State and National Elected Officials

The Honorable (name)
Governor, State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable (name)
California State Senate
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable (name)
California State Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable (name)
United States Senator
Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable (name)
United States House of Representatives
House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

For more tips on organizing a letter-writing campaign, see Figure A-1.

Faxes

For messages that are time sensitive, faxes are a quick, effective method for making a PTA position known in writing. Most legislative offices have publicly listed fax numbers. Refer to Write Letters when composing the fax.

Electronic Mail (email)

Email is another way to communicate PTA positions on legislation. Some elected representatives may not accept email attachments. Check with their offices about their email preferences before encouraging your

members to email a particular representative. Refer to Write Letters when composing email.

Telephone

Phone calls are also an effective communication strategy, particularly when timing is critical. When an elected representative's support or vote is needed within the next 48 hours, a phone call to the legislator may be the best method of communication. Use the phone to communicate PTA views. Phone the elected representative's district or Capitol office and request to speak with the member or an aide. Be prepared to:

- State your name and identify your PTA.
- Identify the bill number or the issue.
- State that you are from the legislator's district, and explain the PTA position on the issue.
- Ask how the legislator expects to vote.
- Urge the legislator to vote for the PTA position.

Reaching Your Members

PTA members may receive the California State PTA Legislative Alerts by signing up to receive them at capta.org (click the Legislative Alerts! button).

E-mail distribution lists and telephone trees are effective ways to mobilize many people on a particular issue. When the state president and/or the director of legislation receive information on an important issue, they may pass it on to local legislation chairmen who, in turn, can reach other PTA members in their communities.

Through the use of email distribution lists and telephone trees, within a few hours of a legislative alert or call to action, literally hundreds of letters, postcards, phone calls, faxes or email messages can be on their way to appropriate legislators.

Letters or faxes are best when time permits, but often we must react fast enough for legislators to feel the impact of the PTA lobby within hours.

PTA e-mail distribution lists and telephone trees must only be used to share adopted PTA positions and must never be used in candidate elections.

Establishing an Email Distribution List or Telephone Tree

Email Distribution List – Collect e-mail addresses from members within your PTA who are willing to act. Use these addresses to create an email distribution list. One message can be sent to the entire list, and members can forward it on accordingly. Provide a method for subscribers to unsubscribe from future email alerts if they choose. The legislation chairman and the PTA president are responsible for email accuracy and content. Email legislative alerts or calls to action sent by National PTA or California State PTA can be forwarded without local approval. PTA presidents must approve locally generated legislative emails before distribution to local members.

Telephone Tree – Create a list of names and phone numbers of PTA members within your local area who are willing to take action.

Establish the calling sequence. Select "lead" callers. A lead caller should make no more than five calls.

Last caller in sequence should return a call to a "lead" caller.

If there is no answer after several tries, the caller should go on to next in sequence.

Do not count on answering machines to deliver messages in a timely manner.

Distribute a copy of the entire telephone tree to all involved. Duplicate and distribute legislation materials from California State PTA, the council (if in council) and district PTA.

Tips on Effective Communication Using Email Distribution Lists and Telephone Trees

Have a system to check the effectiveness of email distribution list or telephone tree communications. Is the list or tree functioning efficiently? Are there problems needing adjustment?

Send emails or make your calls to legislators before using your email distribution list or activating the telephone tree. Your personal experience in communicating the message will alert you to any problems with the way you are presenting the message.

Make a list of "talking points," messages you want your PTA members to communicate to their legislators. Include bill number, author, subject matter, location of bill in the legislative process and the PTA position.

It is important that the same message is delivered each time.

By using an email distribution list or activating a telephone tree, the PTA unit can dramatically increase the number of contacts with legislators. It is important they hear from PTA. Legislators need to be reminded about priority issues.

Update email distribution list addresses and telephone tree phone numbers frequently. Explore ways to expand your email list.

PTAs are encouraged to explore other media communication tools such as texting, social networking sites or blogging, considering PTA publication guidelines.

Follow-up

Following action on a bill, send the legislator your thanks via email, postal service or fax if the vote or action was favorable, or a polite expression of disappointment if the legislator voted against the PTA position. Appreciation can be expressed in other, more public ways as well, such as writing letters to the editor of the local paper. Keep the PTA name visible.

Public Appearances

Another method of bringing attention to issues of concern to your local unit, council or district PTA is to schedule public appearances of PTA representatives. Appropriate forums may include regular meetings of the local school board, chamber of commerce, or service clubs such as Rotary or Kiwanis. These venues provide an opportunity for an authorized representative

of the PTA unit, council or district to share the PTA position on particular issue(s) of concern with other community members.

Organize a Rally

To raise awareness and engage your members in a particular issue, you may wish to organize a local rally. Invite elected officials and other experts to speak, as well as the press. For more information on holding a rally, see Figure A-2.

California State PTA Legislative Program

California State PTA action on legislation is aimed primarily at the state government level and on ballot measures that appear on statewide election ballots. The California State PTA Board of Managers is responsible for action on state legislation and state ballot measures.

California State PTA also works with the National PTA in implementing the PTA advocacy program at the federal level.

PTA Legislation Team

The legislation team includes the director of legislation and legislative advocates, who specialize in specific issues regarding education, family engagement, budget, community concerns, and health, as these affect children and youth, as well as a federal advocate. All members of the legislation team are PTA volunteers who serve on the California State PTA Board of Managers.

The director of legislation manages the California State PTA legislation program and works on bills that do not fit into one of the subject matter categories. These include matters such as taxation and budgetary reform.

The advocates work directly with state legislators and their staffs; with members of allied organizations; and with other interested parties on bills selected for PTA advocacy.

Commissions are responsible for preparing background information and authority for bills in their subject matter area and for recommending appropriate action.

Advocates select bills that are sent to members of the legislation action committee for detailed study.

The legislation action committee meets several times each year during the legislative session to discuss the bills and subject matter commission recommendations and to determine positions to be taken on each of the selected bills. After the committee meets, a Legislation Action Report is prepared and distributed. Current status on legislation for which PTA has taken positions can be viewed in the Advocacy Chapter of the California State PTA website (Current Legislation).

Once a position has been adopted, the legislation team is responsible for all further actions on the legislation. This includes relaying information on PTA positions to legislators and communicating PTA action on legislation-

related matters to the constituent associations of California State PTA.

Legislation Program

The PTA membership, through the association's bylaws and the actions of delegates at California State PTA conventions, directs PTA actions on legislation. The California State PTA Board of Managers is responsible for conducting the affairs of the association. This includes all action on state legislation and state ballot measures. Specific activities include:

- Analyze legislation under consideration in the California Legislature and measures that will appear on statewide election ballots.
- Take PTA positions on specific bills and ballot measures as directed by the PTA legislation platform, policies, resolutions and position statements.
- Advocate for passage or defeat of selected measures.
- Work cooperatively with allied organizations or others concerned about children's issues when appropriate.
- Inform members about PTA positions on current legislation and on statewide ballot measures, and encourage local actions when needed.

PTA follows IRS and California Fair Political Practices Commission rules on advocacy.

Action on Legislation

Action on Legislation is an integral part of PTA work. California State PTA action on legislation and ballot measures is based on the legislation platform, California State PTA position statements, and California State PTA and National PTA resolutions. The National PTA and California State PTA, as advocates for children and youth, carry out an active, effective legislation program.

Authority for PTA Action on Legislation

The California State PTA legislation platform lays the specific framework for PTA action on legislation. The platform, adopted every two years (even-numbered years) by delegates at the California State PTA Convention, establishes authority and direction for deciding what measures PTA should select for action on legislation. It defines the fields of PTA interest and the scope of legislation appropriate for PTA action.

California State PTA legislation policies, adopted every two years (odd-numbered years) by California State PTA Convention delegates, guide how action on legislation may be taken by California State PTA and its unit, council and district PTAs. Procedures are adopted by the California State PTA Board of Managers.

The California State PTA legislation platform and policies direct that legislation and ballot measures selected for action by California State PTA must:

- affect the education, health, and well-being of California's children and youth;
- be of statewide significance; and

- fit within the Purposes of the PTA association and the framework of the legislation platform and be consistent with recorded PTA positions.

Sources of authority and direction for specific PTA positions on legislative bills and statewide ballot measures include:

- Resolutions adopted by California State PTA convention delegates;
- The legislation platform principles and planks;
- Position statements and resolutions adopted by the California State PTA Board of Managers;
- National PTA resolutions;
- National PTA Board of Directors position statements and legislative directives;
- Previous PTA action on the issues; and
- Purposes of the PTA.

California State PTA Legislative Bill Positions

For legislative bills that have significant impact on children and youth, and that fall within the framework of the legislation platform, priorities, and current PTA positions, California State PTA may adopt one of the following bill positions:

Support: Legislation considered to be of great importance and beneficial to the welfare of children and youth. Will work actively to seek passage of these bills.

Oppose: Legislation considered to be very harmful to the welfare of children and youth. Will work actively to seek defeat of these bills.

Oppose Unless Amended: Legislation that contains some provisions in conflict with established PTA positions. The California State PTA legislative advocate will work with the bill's author to amend the bill. If the bill is amended so that it no longer is objectionable, PTA will change its position.

Support if Amended: Legislation PTA would support, except that it contains a part (or parts) PTA would like changed. If the bill is amended to accommodate the PTA concern or recommendations, California State PTA will work to secure its passage.

Seek Amendments: Legislation that addresses an important PTA issue, but which would require amendments to receive full support or removal of opposition from the PTA. Legislative advocate(s) will work with the author and with allied organizations to secure appropriate changes.

Approve: Legislation that PTA could support but does not actively seek passage of because the bill is not currently a high priority for PTA action or does not need active support from California State PTA.

Watch: Legislation that could be important, but the bill is not complete or the author intends to work further on the bill through amendments. PTA chooses to monitor the progress of the bill. Future amendments to the bill could result in PTA taking an active position.

When a bill has been amended so that the content is changed significantly, the bill is re-examined to determine if the content is still appropriate for PTA action on legislation, and whether a change in position is warranted. If the content is no longer within the scope of PTA action on legislation, the PTA position is dropped.

Positions on State Initiatives and Propositions

Support: The initiative is considered to be of great importance and beneficial to the welfare of children and youth. Will work actively to seek passage of it.

Oppose: The initiative is considered to be very harmful to the welfare of children and youth and is in conflict with the Purposes of the PTA. Will work actively to seek defeat of the initiative.

Neutral: The initiative may be relevant to the welfare of children and youth, but after careful analysis, California State PTA has chosen to neither support nor oppose this particular initiative due to either lack of existing specific authority or conflicting authorities. Will not support or oppose passage of the initiative.

Legislation Platform

Presented to convention delegates for adoption in even-numbered years.

Adopted June 2020

Preamble

The California Congress of Parents, Teachers, and Students, Inc. legislation platform reflects the priorities that guide our efforts to secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children, youth and families.

General Principles

General Principles for Consideration of Proposed Legislation

1. Equity in every aspect of life for all children and youth, while recognizing that each child is unique with individual needs and talents.
2. High standards for those who work in all areas concerned with children and youth.
3. Effective governance systems and practices that are rooted in social justice to effectively serve the needs of children, youth and families.
4. Coordination and planning by all agencies with clear definition of responsibility at each level of government.
5. Establishment of and adherence to fiscal responsibility in government, with concern for fair taxation, but keeping priorities for the needs of all children and youth foremost.
6. Adherence to strict ethical practices in political campaigns and at all levels of government.

7. Strong and broadly based tax structures at state and local levels.
8. Budgets and financial support to provide needed public services for all children and youth with the continued constitutional guarantee of financial support for public schools as the first claim on all state revenues in the general fund.
9. Local control when it serves the best interest of all children and youth.
10. Equal justice for all.

Legislation Planks

California State PTA will support legislation:

1. To provide the most comprehensive and diversified education possible for all children, youth and adults: education that will achieve quality and excellence, encourage maximum individual development, and provide equitable educational opportunities for each student, with a particular focus on eliminating the achievement gap.
2. To advocate for a full and culturally responsive curriculum to meet the diverse needs of our student population.
3. To elevate the student voice to create an inclusive, positive, and supportive school climate.
4. To ensure access to affordable, reliable, and adequate broadband internet service for children, youth, and families.
5. To secure financing for public education that will be sufficient to provide optimum educational opportunities for all students, including state aid to school districts for building purposes as well as state funds to cover excess costs of all programs mandated by the Legislature.
6. To support all students with quality counseling and guidance services, school health services both mental and physical, and library services, provided by credentialed personnel.
7. To ensure pre-service and in-service teacher preparation programs, remuneration, supportive services and professional development designed to attract and retain qualified teaching professionals.
8. To provide guidelines for assessing competencies in the teaching profession, and to provide for due process in dismissal procedures.
9. To include parents/guardians in decisions that affect the education and well-being of their children, and to promote their involvement in their children's education and schools.
10. To give students the skills they need to become effective citizens.
11. To protect and improve the health of all families through the prevention, treatment and control of disease.
12. To extend and improve physical and mental health services and facilities, including rehabilitation.
13. To protect families from unsafe, impure or ineffective drugs, foods, medical devices and cosmetics.
14. To prevent, control or eliminate hazards to the health, safety and well-being of all children and youth.
15. To require state and local government to publicize and disseminate information regarding issues affecting the public's well-being in the language(s) of the community it serves.
16. To provide effective community services and facilities for all children, youth and adults, directed toward the well-being of the family.
17. To promote public policy that contributes to the stability of families and to the adequate physical, emotional and financial support of children and youth.
18. To provide services and facilities for the care, protection, and treatment of abused, dependent, neglected, or abandoned children and youth.
19. To secure specialized programs for the prevention of crimes committed by juveniles.
20. To provide adequate facilities and services for the treatment, education, and rehabilitation of juvenile offenders.
21. To promote public policies that protect and conserve natural resources and provide a quality environment for present and future generations.
22. To improve governance systems and practices in order to effectively serve the needs of children and youth.
23. To support the needs of vulnerable children in all aspects of their lives.

California State PTA Legislation Policies and Procedures

Adopted April 2023

Policies are presented to convention delegates for adoption in odd-numbered years.

Procedures are adopted by California State PTA Board of Managers.

Policies are italicized; procedures are not italicized.

A legislative measure includes:

- Bills (state and federal)
- Legislative ballot measures (constitutional amendments, bond measures and proposed changes in law placed on the ballot by the legislature)
- Statewide initiatives — proposed or qualified (citizens directly propose state laws, bond measures, and amendments to the California Constitution)
- Statewide referenda — proposed or qualified (citizens approve or reject state laws enacted by the Legislature)

POLICY 1

California State PTA is responsible for analyzing and taking action on state and federal legislative

measures, and proposed or qualified statewide ballot measures.

Until the California State PTA has taken a position on a legislative measure or specifically declines to take a position, support or opposition should not be expressed in the name of PTA.

A legislation action committee is authorized to act on behalf of the State Board of Managers when taking positions on legislative bills. Such action must conform to established PTA positions and must be reported immediately to the California State PTA Board of Managers. The Legislative Action Committee consists of the director of legislation, president, legislative advocates, president-elect, executive director, vice presidents and representatives from the subject matter commissions (education, health & community concerns, and family engagement), two district presidents (elected by the district presidents) and others as may be appointed by the president.

The Legislation Action Committee must complete a study based on PTA authorities before proposing a position on an initiative or a referendum to the Board of Managers.

In order to take a position on a legislative bill that places a measure on the ballot, a study must be prepared. The Legislation Action Committee's action serves to recommend a position on the bill and the subsequent ballot measure. The recommendation must be adopted by the Board of Directors and the Board of Managers. The Board of Directors and Board of Managers shall hold a meeting within fifteen days of receipt of the recommendation from the Legislation Action Committee. If bill amendments substantively change the content of the measure, the recommendation can be reconsidered utilizing the same process.

When there will be no meeting of the State Board of Managers between the date an initiative or referendum qualifies for the ballot and the date of the election, the Legislation Action Committee may recommend a position on the measure. The recommendation must be brought to the Board of Directors and the Board of Managers. The Board of Directors and Board of Managers shall hold a meeting within fifteen days of receipt of the recommendation from the Legislation Action Committee.

In order to maintain a strong united position, contacts to legislators in the name of PTA shall be made by PTA members authorized by the State Board of Managers, unit, council or district PTAs.

POLICY 2

Legislative measures selected for action by California State PTA must be of statewide significance. These measures must also fit within the Purposes of the PTA, the legislation platform adopted by the convention delegates, and other relevant PTA authorities.

PTA action on legislative measures is based on some or all of the following authorities:

- Legislation Platform;

- California State PTA resolutions;
- Position statements adopted by the Board of Managers;
- National PTA positions and resolutions;
- Previous PTA action on the same issue; and
- Information from authoritative and professional sources.

POLICY 3

Any position on legislative measures adopted by California State PTA remains in effect, unless, after subsequent review, new action is deemed warranted and is adopted according to California State PTA procedures.

When action on state or federal legislation is required between meetings of the legislation action committee, or when a bill has been amended to the extent that an existing position needs to be changed, such action may be taken by an interim committee. This committee consists of the president, president-elect, director of legislation, appropriate subject matter vice president and the advocate who will manage the bill.

When these situations occur, the advocate managing the bill shall contact the subject matter commission vice president. If the vice president concurs that an immediate decision is warranted, and the director of legislation agrees, an interim committee meeting shall be called.

Any such action(s) must be ratified at the next regular meeting of the Legislation Action Committee.

POLICY 4

All positions on legislative measures taken by California State PTA shall be posted on the association's website and shared with membership in a timely manner.

When positions are adopted on state legislative bills by the legislation action committee:

- The positions shall be made available via an electronic information alert to all subscribers, including the district PTA presidents and other members of the Board of Managers.
- Positions on legislative bills shall be maintained and displayed on the California State PTA website.

When positions are adopted on state ballot measures:

- The study committee report shall be posted on the website and distributed to unit, council and district PTAs for distribution to their members.

POLICY 5

A unit, council, or district PTA with an interest in a proposed or qualified statewide ballot measure, which pertains to the welfare of children and youth, must determine whether California State PTA is studying or has taken action, before considering any action locally. Action may be taken locally by following PTA's standard procedure for making a study.

The issue or ballot measure must fit within the Purposes of PTA and the California State PTA legislation platform, adhere to PTA policies, and affect the well-being of children and youth.

Before a unit, council or district PTA takes a position on a statewide ballot measure, a study committee shall prepare a report including information from all sides of the issue. Authorities to take a position described in Policy 2) must be documented in the study.

The unit, council or district PTA executive board must approve the study and then submit the report to the association for action. The results must be recorded in the minutes. Adopted positions on must be communicated to California State PTA.

When no action is planned and information only is being presented to membership, both sides of the issue must be provided.

POLICY 6

Any California State PTA action on legislative measures represents the official position of the organization and shall not be interpreted as representing the personal opinion or conviction of every individual PTA member.

POLICY 7

Unit, council and district PTAs are encouraged to promote adopted California State PTA positions on legislative measures and may be requested to actively support them. This does not require a local vote affirming the state position. While unit, council and district PTAs are not required to work actively for any position, they should not officially oppose a stand taken by California State PTA. Disagreement with a position on legislative measures should be communicated to California State PTA through regular channels, with a report of the extent of – and reasons for – the disagreement, including supporting PTA authorities.

Unit, council, district PTAs, or executive boards need not vote to affirm a California State PTA position in order to support the position.

When reporting a position of California State PTA, a unit, council or district PTA may also inform the membership of opposing views.

If a unit, council or district PTA desires to express disapproval of an adopted California State PTA Board position on legislation to the California State PTA Board of Managers, a study of both sides of the issue should be made by the disagreeing group, and results of the study (with supporting material) should be forwarded to the California State PTA Board of Managers.

If not speaking in their official capacity, a current or former PTA officer/board member must not use a PTA title, the name of the PTA or the trademark of PTA to take action in opposition to an official California State PTA position.

POLICY 8

Any unit, council or district PTA may request that California State PTA consider taking action on a legislative measure.

A request should be accompanied by background information and the reasons for the recommendation, including relevant PTA authorities.

A copy of the request should be forwarded to the PTA District.

POLICY 9

Any unit, council, or district PTA may wish to take action on a state legislative measure that affects only its local or regional area. The unit, council, or district PTA affected must inform California State PTA before taking a position.

The measure must have serious implications for children and youth within that local or regional area.

The measure must fit within the Purposes of PTA and be supported by PTA authority.

The local PTA must complete a study and take a vote at its association meeting in order to take a position on any measure.

Meeting notice must be given according with the bylaws. A copy of the study must be provided with the notification. After a position has been taken, the local PTA shall report that action to the California State PTA Director of Legislation.

Any advocacy of the local PTA's position is the responsibility of the local PTA and must be preceded or accompanied by a statement making it clear that the local PTA spokesman represents a PTA area, and is not speaking for California State PTA.

The local PTAs concerned must communicate their positions on legislation, their actions, and the results to their membership in a timely manner.

POLICY 10

Unit, council, and district PTAs may take action on local issues originating in school districts, cities, regions, or counties, if such action fits within both the Purposes of PTA and legislation platform, adopted by convention delegates, is supported by PTA authorities, adheres to PTA policies, and affects the well-being of children and youth.

The local PTA must complete a study and take a vote at its association meeting in order to take a position on any measure.

A unit should consult the council, a council should consult the district PTA for advice and coordination of efforts and the district PTA president should be informed of any projected study by a unit or council.

Meeting notice must be given according to the bylaws. If this is a legislative measure, a copy of the study must be provided with the notification. A vote of the association must be taken in order for the position to be adopted..

POLICY 11

Informational (non-advocacy) material on PTA positions related to legislative issues, including local or statewide ballot measures, may be sent home with students in compliance with local school district policies and procedures.*

*State law requires school districts to adopt policies regarding sending material home with students.

Before sending any materials home with students or using any school district resources, PTAs must check with their school district to ensure compliance with school district policies and procedures. Advocacy materials must never be distributed using school district resources such as websites, listservs, copy machines, email servers, and social media accounts.

Advocacy materials provide biased information about the issues and often tell the voter how to vote on a specific issue. This information must never be sent home with students, and PTAs must find alternative methods of distribution.

Only informational materials on legislative issues may be distributed via the students. Informational materials must provide "a fair and impartial presentation of relevant facts to aid the electorate in reaching an informed judgment regarding the bond issue or ballot measure." (See California Education Code, Section 7054 (b)(2).) Note that a statement of California State PTA's position on an issue is, in itself, informational.

If there is a question regarding whether legislative material constitutes advocacy or is informational, consult the district PTA president or the appropriate school district personnel.

The school district designated administrator must authorize in writing the distribution of all legislative material considered to be informational before it can be sent home with students or electronically posted on a school website.

It is a best practice for a PTA unit to maintain a file of all legislative materials distributed via students. The file should include a copy of every piece of legislation material with the appropriate written authorization for distribution..

Election Campaigns and the Role of the PTA

Any use of the California State PTA name for electoral activity requires prior authorization from California State PTA. No activity engaged in by any unit, council or district PTA should suggest or imply the support of the National PTA or California State PTA (Nonpartisan Policy, Running Your PTA Chapter; Policy 9, Advocacy Chapter).

PTAs may not directly or indirectly participate or intervene in political campaigns on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office since this activity can endanger the PTA's nonprofit status.

Restrictions on Endorsement of Candidates

PTAs, as tax-exempt associations, cannot support or oppose political parties or candidates, including those running for school boards and other nonpartisan offices. Participation in these types of activities will endanger the

association's nonprofit status with the IRS (Nonpartisan Policy, Running Your PTA Chapter).

A current or former PTA board member must not use his/her PTA title or the name of the PTA to endorse a candidate even if just for purposes of identification in any print, electronic, or website candidate literature, or interview or letter to the editor.

Judgment should be exercised by PTA leaders on whether privately endorsing a candidate (without using a PTA title) could negatively affect a future relationship with the elected official should a different winning candidate win.

For the purpose of this policy, all elections involving candidates are defined as partisan elections, even those for "nonpartisan" offices, such as school board or city council. Use of a PTA's name or the PTA trademark with participation in any partisan activity will endanger PTA's nonprofit status.

PTA members are not prohibited from running for public office themselves nor from listing PTA involvement as part of their biographical information and/or campaign literature

Individual candidates cannot be invited to address PTA meetings, even if they are PTA members, unless all other candidates are invited. This avoids the reality or appearance of bias or support of an individual candidate. There is no restriction on a member who is running for office from performing his or her regular PTA duties. He or she just needs to be mindful to keep PTA and campaign activities separate.

Local Candidates Forum

Since the decisions of elected officials significantly affect the well-being of children and youth, it is a PTA responsibility to disseminate as much factual, objective information as possible during election campaigns to help voters make informed choices. All voters should be encouraged to carefully evaluate each official candidate. Candidates forums provide one way to provide such information in a nonpartisan, impartial, educational environment.

PTA never supports nor opposes a candidate for public/political office, but does take positions on issues that affect children and youth.

For more information on holding a local candidates forum, see Figure A-3.

Candidate Questionnaires

In addition to, or in place of, a candidates forum, another means of educating voters about candidates, is to send them a list of questions about key issues. Questioning all candidates during an election campaign is in compliance with the National PTA nonpartisan policy (Nonpartisan Policy, Running Your PTA Chapter).

Your PTA may wish to develop a list of questions to send to all candidates, and publish their responses in their entirety in unit, council and district PTA newsletters, adhering to school district policies for distribution.

Do not edit any of the responses. One may, however, request that responses be limited to a certain number of words, to ensure all responses are of similar length.

Questionnaires must be sent by certified mail with return receipt requested to all candidates; these receipts should be retained for one year after the election. Specific due dates must be set and included with the questionnaires. Any candidates not responding by the due date will not be included and should be so noted in the published materials.

School Bonds and Other Ballot Measure Campaigns

PTAs may be asked to help secure the passage of a local school district facilities bond or local parcel tax election, or to participate in campaigns to pass or defeat other ballot measures. Unit, council and district PTAs may participate in these efforts when the board and/or membership has studied the issue and voted to support such a campaign.

PTAs can be most effective by:

- Participating on the school district committee to recommend to the board of education the feasibility of placing a facilities bond or parcel tax on the local ballot, and what provisions the measure should include.
- Taking an active role in planning and running the campaign.
- Providing speakers to inform the community.
- Developing and/or distributing available campaign material – but not by using student help, unless permitted by the school district (California State PTA Legislation Policies and Procedure No. 11).
- Making use of radio, TV, and print media, including newsletters, editorial board visits, letters to the editor, and other communication resources such as PTA email and Web pages.

Legal Guidelines for Campaign Activity

California State PTA and all of its constituent associations are classified as tax-exempt nonprofit associations under the federal Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3). State and federal laws place certain requirements and restrictions on lobbying and election-related activities and expenditures by such associations. A PTA that participates in influencing or attempting to influence specific legislation or voter action for the passage or defeat of any ballot measure must comply with both the federal IRS regulations and the California state laws and reporting requirements.

IRS Regulations: To retain its IRS tax-exempt status and continue to receive tax-deductible contributions, a PTA may not participate in any type of political campaign or other activity on behalf of or in opposition to a candidate for any public office. Nor may a PTA devote more than an insubstantial part of its volunteer activity and expenditures to influence the outcome of ballot measures and other legislation. In general, no

organization may qualify for section 501(c)(3) status if a substantial part of its activities is attempting to influence legislation (commonly known as **lobbying**). A 501(c)(3) organization may engage in some lobbying, but too much lobbying activity risks loss of tax-exempt status. The IRS considers a variety of factors, including the time devoted (by both compensated and volunteer workers) and the expenditures devoted by the organization to the activity, when determining whether the lobbying activity is substantial.

All PTAs with lobbying expenditures must report these on their Form 990 or 990 EZ tax returns. PTAs which engage in lobbying activities may not file an IRS 990N electronic postcard.

For more information on IRS lobbying activities and reporting requirements, go to www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/lobbying.

California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) Regulations

California law establishes procedures and requirements for filing reports on election campaign expenses. A PTA that participates in a campaign to pass or defeat any local school bond, parcel tax or local or statewide ballot measure must file a report with the State of California Fair Political Practice Commission.

For more information on reporting requirements, go to www.fppc.ca.gov.

California Education Code and Election Law

Ballot measures fall under special laws limiting the use of school facilities and resources for campaign purposes. PTAs may advocate for or against a measure on school property providing they receive a permit for use of the school facility and equal access is provided by the school district to groups with opposing viewpoints. Check with your local school district to ensure that you stay within the rules. This does not prohibit a PTA from holding a meeting off school property or using its own resources such as PTA email, website or copy machine.

Nonpartisan Policy

To retain its IRS tax-exempt status and continue to receive tax-deductible contributions, a PTA may not participate in any type of political campaign or other activity on behalf of or in opposition to a candidate for any public office. A current PTA officer/board member must not use his/her title, the name of the PTA or the trademark of PTA in support of or in opposition to a candidate for any public office.

Although federal election regulations do not prohibit the use of organizational affiliation for identification purposes, California State PTA sets a standard which is higher than law. Failure to comply may result in a violation of California State PTA policy.

For **additional information** on state legislation and ballot measures, contact the California State PTA Director of Legislation at legislation@capta.org or 916.440.1985 ext. 311.

IRS Reporting Requirements

A PTA operating as a 501(c)(3) may not devote more than an insubstantial part of its activities and budget to influence legislation. The “insubstantial part” is not clearly defined, but is often interpreted to be no more than 5 percent of an organization’s annual operating expenditures.

The IRS provides another option for PTAs that choose to be more active in legislative matters. PTAs may elect 501(h) status, while retaining their 501(c)(3) status, by filing IRS Form 5768, “Election/Revocation of Election by an Eligible 501(c)(3) Organization to Make Expenditures to Influence Legislation.” This single page form can be found at www.irs.gov. Prior to electing 501(h) status, PTAs are advised to see legal and taxation professional advice.

Under the 501(h) designation, the amount of allowable lobbying expenditures is more clearly defined. For an organization with annual expenditures of \$500,000 or less, the allowable expenditure on lobbying activities is 20 percent of its total annual expenditures. Under the 501(h) designation, a PTA need not report volunteer lobbying activity for the purposes of tax reporting.

All PTAs with lobbying expenditures must report these on their Form 990 or 990 EZ tax returns, whether they are a 501(c)(3) or have made the 501(h) election.

For additional information on state legislation and ballot measures, contact the California State PTA Director of

Organizing a Letter Writing Campaign

Legislators tell us that one of the most effective method of communicating our positions is through letters. Letters can be mailed or faxed. In a time crunch, phone calls are necessary and helpful, but letters from constituents make the most difference. Emails are less effective because it is difficult to verify that the sender is a constituent.

When organizing a letter campaign, keep in mind that volume beats originality. A hand-written original letter is great, but few people take the time to write one. However, providing a sample letter for people to download, sign and either mail themselves or take to a PTA box at school means that many more people are likely to participate.

Discuss the campaign with your school principal or superintendent, and get permission if you are using a school facility. This is a legal activity, but it is a courtesy to do so. Note: there are more restrictive rules if the letters pertain to a local school bond or parcel tax campaign.

Select a limited time span for the letter campaign; e.g., a week.

Communicate the campaign widely, through email lists, presentations at PTA meetings and your PTA newsletter. (Note: You cannot legally send home fliers for this activity via student backpacks. Check with your principal or school district about utilizing other school information resources.)

Explain to the letter signers that their signature, printed name and street address (make sure they are legible!) are required for their letters to make a difference, and that you will not record the information for other uses. Make sure to include blanks on the letters for signature, printed name and street address. Legislators disregard any letters not from their constituents, and they actually check names and addresses to ensure their legitimacy. Also, they normally will respond to the letter sender.

Letter campaign via email: This is usually the method that generates the most letters. Parents and staff who normally don't volunteer for other things will often surprise you by taking the time to download, print, sign and return letters on important issues.

It is better to link to letters on a website, rather than attach sample letters to an email, because many people are reluctant to open attachments. If you have a PTA website, upload the letters to the home page. If not, you can provide a link to the letters on the council, district or California State PTA website.

It is easiest to ask people to download, print, and sign the letters themselves and then provide a PTA box at their school office to return the letters. In the PTA box (label it "PTA letters"), include hanging folders labeled with each legislator's name, so that people self-file – this saves a lot of time.

If there is not an easy place for people to return letters (e.g., you are sending letters county-wide), ask individuals to mail the letters themselves to the Capitol. The letters must be mailed to each legislator in a separate envelope.

If you have multiple legislators in your area (you will have at least one Assembly member and one Senator), put a letter addressed to each on the website. Include a letter to the Governor as well.

Include in the instructions this link for people to determine who their legislators are if you have multiple legislators: <http://legmap01.lc.ca.gov/amapsearch/framepage.asp>. It is also helpful in case people wish to forward the email to their friends and relatives in other parts of the state.

Print-and-Sign Letter campaign. Another way to get letters is to pre-print them and bring them to PTA meetings or other events. Make the letters available, but don't pressure people to sign them.

Alternatives:

- Print postcards with the key message on one side, and a space for individual comment, name, address and signature on the back.
- Bring a variety of types of notecards or other stationery to the meeting, and ask people to take five minutes to write and address a letter. Include a fact sheet or message to legislators to help letter-writers stay on message.

Thank participants: Regardless of the method of the campaign, thank letter signers for their support.

Options for returning letters to legislators:

- Mail letters in a batch to each legislator in his or her Sacramento office. Make sure to include the legislator's room number with the address.
- Hand-carry the letters to each legislator's district office.
- Hand-carry the letters to each legislator in Sacramento.
- In the latter two options, make an appointment with the legislator or a staff person and present the letters with a plea for action.

Fig. A-1 Organizing a Letter Writing Campaign

How to Organize a Local Rally

Organizing a rally can be a highly effective advocacy tool. A rally can energize your members to work on advocacy activities. It can attract the press, so that community members can become informed about our issues and positions. A rally is also an opportunity to be heard by legislators.

Here are some ideas for organizing a rally (note that you can select all or just a few from the list).

1. Decide on the purpose of the rally. What is your message?
2. Decide on a date, time and location. (Note items 3 and 4 below). Choices include the following:
 - a. Lunchtime at an elementary school. Parents can bring their children to the rally from recess without affecting class time, and elementary-aged children holding signs make great photo opportunities for the media.
 - b. Saturday morning at a school or park. Parents can bring their children in a relaxed atmosphere.
 - c. After school at a school field or park.
3. Obtain approval for the rally by your PTA and record in the minutes (necessary for insurance).
4. Obtain any necessary permits from the school district or the city/town.
5. Invite speakers. Options include:
 - a. PTA president
 - b. Local legislators or their staff
 - c. School superintendent
 - d. School board members
 - e. Teachers
 - f. High school students
 - g. PTA legislative chairman (good for wrap-up)

Note: Ask each speaker to talk for no more than three to four minutes to keep speeches brief.

6. Select a moderator, someone who can keep the rally on track.
7. Arrange for a high school band, or a few of its members, to play.
8. Invite the press, including TV news stations, radio, newspapers.
9. Publicize the rally to parents and the community.
10. Make signs.
 - a. Download a PTA advocacy logo or make hand-painted signs.
 - b. Affix to paint sticks (request from a painting supplies store) with staples.
11. Hold a letter-writing campaign, by providing sample letters for participants to sign.
12. Sign up new members at the rally. Prepare for handling cash and bring membership cards.
13. Consider videotaping the event for PTA websites and other websites.
14. Let us know how it went by e-mail to legislation@capta.org and communications@capta.org.

Fig. A-2 How to Organize a Local Rally

Organizing a Local Candidates Forum

1. Form a committee. Participation on this committee falls within the Job Description for Legislative Advocacy Chair.
2. Determine whether PTA will sponsor the forum alone or with another nonpartisan organization, such as the League of Women Voters or a branch of the American Association of University Women.
3. Set the date, and obtain a facility that is centrally located, if possible. If it will accommodate the number of candidates, a school district board room is an excellent location, and the physical environment, including audience space is, in most cases, already set up.
4. Decide whether to videotape the forum. This can be done through a local cable TV station, a high school video production class, or by a volunteer. Video can be uploaded to an online videosharing site and the PTA website. Some local government TV channels are willing to work in partnership with the League of Women Voters and PTA to tape forums for replay. Note: The camera should focus only on the moderator and the candidates.
5. Draft invitations to candidates. Be sure to include:
 - a) Complete information on date, time, and place;
 - b) Guidelines and ground rules for the forum (e.g., there will be only written questions, amount of time allowed for candidates' responses; topics of questions; forum format (including time for opening and closing statements, candidate order for statements and answers, etc.); rules prohibiting campaign literature distribution in the forum room; if the forum will be videotaped for replay on cable TV or displayed on a website; etc.);
 - c) A request for any information needed from the candidate for promotion of the forum; e.g., biography and photo;
 - d) Name, address, telephone number and e-mail address of forum committee's contact person;
 - e) Due date for the candidate to respond.
6. Candidate schedules are often hectic. They may be contacted by many organizations with requests for information, personal appearances, and/or forums. Establishing a personal connection by calling all candidates or their campaigns to inform them about the forum, to extend an initial invitation, and to advise them to look for a more formal invitation in the mail can facilitate both the process of organizing the forum and communicating with the candidates.
7. Obtain home addresses and e-mail addresses of all official candidates from the Registrar of Voters, and send invitations by certified mail with a return receipt requested. The signed, returned receipts should be kept on file.
8. Determine physical arrangements:
 - a) Provide adequate accessible seating for attendees.
 - b) Seating for candidates should be in the form of a head table, preferably elevated so they are visible to the audience. Seating assignments should be done by lottery with each candidate drawing a seat number prior to the beginning of the forum. The table should also be draped and water provided for candidates and moderator.
 - c) The moderator is the forum facilitator and may either stand at a podium or be seated at the table with the candidates. If the former, the moderator should be provided with a chair. If the latter, the moderator must be seated in a location that allows for eye contact with all candidates and control over the forum process and decorum.
 - d) Provide an adequate sound system with microphones available to rotate among the candidates, with a separate microphone for the moderator.

- e) Provide tables for any refreshments and for any literature pertaining to the forum, such as agendas, programs, packets of candidates' biographies and questionnaire responses.
- f) Follow facility use permit regulations concerning distribution of campaign literature. Note: If a table is provided outside the forum room for candidate literature, the opportunity must be offered to all candidates. The materials should not be made available until the conclusion of the forum to avoid having them brought into the forum room. It is generally a good idea to place a limit on the amount of literature any individual candidate can place on the table to maintain the nonpartisan nature of the overall forum environment.
- g) Provide a table for question sorters toward the front of the room. Timers should be located in the middle of the front row and visible to all candidates.

9. Identify volunteer responsibilities:

- a) Volunteers from PTA and co-sponsoring organizations that organize and/or staff the forum should have no personal ties to any candidacy, and shall not have publicly expressed support or opposition to any of the candidates.
- b) The forum committee should arrange for the following: greeters for both candidates and attendees; hospitality; person to open the forum and lead the Pledge of Allegiance – may be the moderator or president of the sponsoring organization(s).
- c) Secure a neutral moderator. Consider requesting a representative of the League of Women Voters or a respected political editor from the local media. The moderator or his/her organization cannot have casually or formally endorsed any of the candidates.
- d) Question Sorters – Enlist one PTA representative with no personal ties to any candidate, and one representative from each of the co-sponsoring organizations.
- e) Timers – one to keep track of time, and one to hold up signs to signal candidates.
- f) Two or three volunteers to hand out blank index cards, pick up questions and deliver them to the sorters.

10. Publicity – articles for the newspaper, radio announcements, cable announcements, fliers for PTA newsletters, etc.

11. On the day of the forum:

- a) Attendees enter, ushers provide blank index cards on which attendees may write questions for the candidates. Each index card should be used for only one question.
- b) Begin with Pledge of Allegiance, welcome and a statement of the nonpartisan policies of the sponsoring groups.
- c) Moderator should go over the basic forum guidelines and procedures that were distributed to all candidates, so the audience will also understand them and know what to expect. The moderator must specify the length of time allowed for opening and closing statements, if they are included, and must also specify the amount of time each candidate will be given to respond to each question. If the forum is televised, this statement will inform the home audience as well. The moderator will also include the following information:
 - i. The order of questions will be rotated among the candidates in random order.
 - ii. Whether all questions will be in writing or if questions from attendees will be permitted.
 - iii. All questions will be screened for relevance, to avoid duplication, and to assure adherence to the guidelines and ground rules. Personal questions or attacks on any candidate will not be acknowledged.
 - iv. If a question is directed to a specific candidate, it must be issue-focused. The candidate will have a set amount of time to respond. All other candidates may have an opportunity to respond, if they so desire.

If a question is directed to all candidates, each candidate will have up to one minute to respond.

- d) Timers should hold up signs to signal speakers:
 - i. Green: start
 - ii. Yellow: 15 seconds left
 - iii. Red: stop
- e) The moderator should state that verbal interaction between the audience and the candidates during the forum will not be permitted. The forum is neutral territory for a sharing of philosophy, ideas and information, not campaigning.
- f) Begin forum. While candidates are giving their opening statements, screeners can begin sorting questions to be asked of the candidates. If questions have been received through outreach efforts prior to the forum, they should be included in the mix. After the opening statements, the moderator asks the candidates questions received from the question sorters. (Note: In the event attendance is small at the beginning of the forum, the moderator should have a few questions in hand that were collected prior to the forum. This is even more important when the forum is televised.)
- g) Moderator or other designee should close and thank cosponsors, the TV station and home audience, if applicable, and everyone in the forum audience for attending, reminding them of the election date and encouraging them to study the candidates and cast their votes.

Fig. A-3 Organizing a Local Candidates Forum

Resolutions

Resolution Process

Resolutions call attention to a problem and a need for action on a particular issue. They are a major source of authority to take positions on issues for the California State PTA and its units, councils and districts. If a problem or situation has statewide implications affecting children, youth and families, a convention resolution is one way to authorize PTA action. Resolutions are adopted by a majority vote of delegates at the annual meeting. PTA authorities include state and national PTA resolutions, position statements, and legislation platforms.

Resolutions are PTA authorities created and adopted by the membership. Position Statements are PTA authorities created and adopted by the Board of Managers. Resolutions must meet the following criteria:

- Be in accordance with PTA purposes and policies
- Be prepared according to criteria specified in the California State PTA Resolutions Procedure Book.
- Follow National PTA guidelines, if a resolution is to be forwarded to the National PTA

A resolution may be initiated by an individual PTA member, but must be submitted by a PTA unit, council, or district in good standing, an inter-district committee or the California State PTA Board of Managers.

The resolution is an original main motion written as one continuous sentence and must be submitted in writing. There are three parts to a resolution.

- Preamble. The preamble is statements of fact containing background information and reason(s) for the resolution. Each statement begins with the word Whereas.
- Request for Action. The request for action is a recommendation to the convention delegates on how to proceed with the issue set forth in the Whereas statement(s). Each request for action begins with the word Resolved. There may be more than one Resolved statement.
- Background. The Background Summary is a narrative highlighting the most important facts from the resource material. The resource material is discussed later in this document.

Four types of resolutions may be presented to the delegates for consideration at the annual meeting:

1. A new resolution on a new topic.
2. A new resolution that builds on the topic of an existing resolution. When a new resolution that builds on the topic of an existing resolution, but is not in conflict with that resolution, the previous resolution would remain in effect. When a new resolution replaces an existing resolution on the same subject, the delegates shall be informed that the new resolution would replace an existing resolution on the same subject. If the delegates vote to adopt the new resolution, the previous resolution is thereby deemed part of the historical

record and the Resolution Committee chair places it in the historical file.

3. Rescission of an existing resolution with a New Resolution. A new resolution that is in conflict with an existing resolution shall not be presented to the delegates at the annual meeting without a motion to rescind the existing resolution also being placed on the agenda. In order for the proposed new resolution to be presented, the delegates must first rescind the existing resolution by a two-thirds vote. If the motion to rescind fails, the new resolution may not be presented. If the motion to rescind is adopted but the new resolution is defeated, the annual meeting delegates shall be given the opportunity to readopt the previously rescinded resolution by majority vote.
4. Update to an existing resolution. An update from a BOM Commission or Committee to an existing resolution presents the proposed amendments to delegates for consideration at the annual meeting. The motion shall include a clear explanation of the proposed changes.

Criteria for Resolutions

Each resolution submitted to California State PTA for consideration and possible action by convention delegates shall meet the following criteria as detailed in the California State PTA Resolution Procedure Book:

1. Concern a field of interest of California State PTA;
2. Be in harmony with the Purposes and basic policies of the PTA (Know the PTA Chapter);
3. Concern a matter which is statewide in scope;
4. It must not duplicate an existing California State PTA or National PTA resolution.

Writing and Submitting Resolutions

For important information on writing and submitting a resolution, refer to the California State PTA Resolutions Procedure Book. This document may be obtained on the California State PTA website (capta.org), or upon request to the California State PTA at resolutions@capta.org.

Local Authorization To Begin

Details regarding authorization to begin a resolution can be found in the California State PTA Resolution Procedure Book.

A draft resolution should be submitted only by association vote of a PTA unit, council, or district in good standing; by a PTA inter-district committee with the approval of the majority of districts concerned; or by the California State PTA Board of Managers.

After an authorization vote, a work committee may be formed. Once a vote of support occurs the resolution maker notifies their PTA council or PTA district and the State Board of Managers Resolution Committee (by email: resolutions@capta.org) of their intent to submit a resolution plan and timeline.

If the work begins during one term and continues into the next, a vote from the new board or association must be obtained to continue developing the resolution.

Resolutions submitted by California State PTA commissions or committees must have the approval of the appropriate Board of Managers vice president or chairman.

Researching and Writing the Resolution

Details of researching and writing a resolution can be found in the California State PTA Resolution Procedure book.

Resolutions consist of three parts.

- - Preamble. The preamble is statements of fact containing background information and reason(s) for the resolution. Each statement begins with the word Whereas.
- - Request for Action. The request for action is a recommendation to the convention delegates on how to proceed with the issue set forth in the Whereas statement(s). Each request for action begins with the word Resolved. There may be more than one Resolved statement.
- - Background. The Background Summary is a narrative highlighting the most important facts from the resource material. The resource material is discussed later in this document.

Documents required for final submittal must include all of the following:

- Completed Convention Resolution Action Cover Sheet (2 pages - signed)
- Table of Contents
- Resolution (Whereas and Resolved statements and background summary)
- Bibliography
- Index
- Resources

Submission of a Draft Resolution - November 1

Details for submitting a resolution can be found in the California State PTA Resolution Procedure Book.

- Draft Resolutions coming from members in units, councils, or districts are due in draft form to the Resolutions Committee no later than November 1.
- Draft Resolutions coming from the Board of Managers Commission or Committees must be submitted and voted on at the November BOM, at the latest, and must be mentored before final submission to the Resolutions Committee on or before January 5.
- E-mail draft to info@capta.org and resolutions@capta.org, FAX to 1-916-440-1986, or, mail a hard copy to the California State PTA office: 2327 L Street, Sacramento, CA 95816.
- Documents required when DRAFT resolution is submitted:
 - Completed Convention Resolution Action Cover Sheet
 - Draft of the Resolution (includes: drafted Whereas and Resolved statements, and a draft of a Background Summary)

- partial List of Resources (suggest at least one per resolved Whereas)

Once an authorization vote has been made and the maker has notified the California State PTA Resolutions Chair (at r.esolutions@capta.org), a mentor from the California State PTA Resolutions Committee will be assigned.

Approval of the Final Resolution from the Originating Body

The executive board of the originating body (whether a unit, council or district PTA) shall review the FINAL resolution prior to its submittal to the Resolutions Committee. It shall, upon review, promptly take action to approve, disapprove, or choose no recommendations.

Similarly, the California State PTA Board of Directors shall review a resolution submitted by a Board of Managers Commission or Committee.

Final Resolution Submission - January 5th

Details regarding submission of a final resolution can be found in the California State PTA Resolution Procedure book. Submission of the Final Resolution must be completed by the January 5th, 5pm deadline.

There are two submission options for your final resolution documents:

- Digital only submission
- Hardcopy and flash drive submission Submitting a resolution is a valid PTA expense

California State PTA Resolutions Committee Review and Recommendation

The resolutions committee determines whether the resolutions submitted meet the criteria for placement, as outlined in the CA State PTA Resolutions Procedure Book. In its review of resolutions submitted, the resolutions committee may:

1. combine two or more related resolutions;
2. edit or adapt resolutions if necessary to make them appropriate for annual meeting action;
3. recommend referral to a BOM commission/committee for information or study; or
4. determine if referral to the National PTA is indicated.

If the committee finds that a resolution meets all other criteria but would be in conflict with an existing resolution, the originating body shall be notified. The notification shall include:

1. a copy of the existing resolution;
2. instruction that the originating body must present a motion at annual meeting to rescind the existing resolution before the new resolution could be presented; and
3. a due date for response.

The resolutions chairman shall prepare a report on and include a recommendation for each resolution submitted. A resolution may be recommended for:

1. presentation to the delegates at annual meeting;

2. referral to a BOM committee or commission for information or study;
3. referral to the National PTA; or
4. return to the originating body with an explanation of the reason(s) for non-consideration.

The resolutions report shall be presented at the February BOM meeting. The Board of Managers shall review the recommendations of the Resolutions Committee and for each resolution, take one of the following actions:

1. presentation to the delegates at annual meeting;
2. referral to a Board of Managers committee or commission for information or study;
3. referral to the National PTA; or
4. return to the originating body with an explanation of the reason(s) for non-consideration.

Upon action of the BOM, the resolutions report shall be presented to the annual meeting delegates. The resolutions chairman shall report the action taken by the BOM on each resolution to its originating body.

Placement on the annual meeting agenda does not constitute endorsement by California State PTA. The Board of Managers may endorse a resolution by following appropriate motion protocols.

Presentation of Resolutions at the Annual Meeting

If a proposed resolution is forwarded to convention delegates for consideration, California State PTA shall publish the text of each resolution in the Convention Chronicle, and the proposed resolutions shall be placed on the California State PTA website.

Presentation of Resolutions to Annual Meeting Delegates

Time will be allocated prior to or at the annual meeting for hearings on resolutions. Voting delegates are strongly encouraged to attend resolution hearings to ask questions or to prepare amendments.

The Resolutions Committee Chair, in accordance with convention rules and regulations shall present each resolution to convention delegates for consideration, debate and vote. Delegates who intend to amend a new proposed resolution must present notice of their intent as specified in the annual meeting rules and regulations. Debate follows meeting rules. Only the Resolved sections of resolutions can be amended by delegates. The Whereas and Background sections cannot be amended by delegates. The Resolution as a whole is the final vote of the delegates.

Resolutions which have not been through the approval process may not be introduced from the convention floor.

Preparation for Annual Meeting by All Units Councils and Districts

- Prior to the statewide annual meeting, units, councils and districts are encouraged to review, discuss and vote on the resolutions to guide delegate action at the

meeting. Delegates should be aware that a resolution could be changed at the statewide annual meeting.

• Resolution Endorsements

- Units, councils and districts may vote to endorse resolutions at an association meeting.
- For endorsements to be published in the Convention Chronicle, along with the Resolution, letters of support (endorsements) from units, councils, districts and the California State PTA Board of Managers must be submitted to the Resolutions chair (at resolutions@capta.org) by the end of the February/Winter Board of Managers
- Additional letters of support submitted before the first Resolution Hearing of the Annual Meeting will be announced during the hearings.

Representation at Annual Meeting by Resolution Makers and Originating Bodies

- The speaker/maker must be a voting delegate at the statewide annual meeting
- Only voting delegates may speak at the annual meeting
- Voting delegates are elected by their PTA
- The maker of the resolution, and an alternate speaker, need to attend and be prepared to speak to the resolution:
 - at all resolution hearings
 - at all general meetings
- The attendance at the annual meeting (convention) is a legitimate PTA expense.

Action Following Annual Meeting

Resolutions approved by the delegates at the annual meeting shall constitute a directive to the BOM.

Following the statewide annual meeting, the resolutions chairman shall process adopted resolutions as follows:

1. adopted resolutions shall be publicized in multiple formats, made accessible to members and placed in The Resolutions
2. resolutions shall be assigned to the appropriate commission(s) or committee(s) for further action. Resolutions are given priority consideration and committees/commissions shall provide a report on the implementation of each assigned
3. when a resolution directs California State PTA to request or urge the National PTA, PTA Congresses or other non-PTA entities to take action, the president shall promptly write a letter to the specified entity or entities requesting or urging the action;
4. when a resolution submitted to the annual meeting delegates is adopted, with a Resolved to forward to National PTA, the president or resolutions committee chairman will notify the originating body and the BOM regarding the disposition of the resolution by the National PTA; and
5. when a resolution is replaced at an annual meeting by a new updated version, the previous resolution shall be placed in the historical file of resolutions.

Resolutions not adopted, but referred by vote of the delegates back to the BOM shall be assigned to the

appropriate commission or committee for further study or other action as appropriate.

For additional information on the resolution process, contact the California State PTA Resolutions Chairman at resolutions@capta.org or 916.440.1985 ext. 324

Where We Stand: Resolutions

Each year delegates to the California State PTA convention take action on resolutions that have been submitted by unit, council, district PTAs or the California State PTA Board of Managers. Resolutions adopted by convention delegates serve as a basis for action in unit, council, district PTA and California State PTA.

Resolutions adopted since 1961 are available from the California State PTA office or through captapta.org. The starred (*) titles represent resolutions adopted by the California State PTA Board of Managers. (These were not voted upon by Convention delegates.)

Achievement: Eliminating the Gap (2009)
Adequate and Equitable State School Finance System (1987)
Aid to Victims and Survivors of Sexual Violence and Their Families (2023)
Air Pollution (1973)
Alcohol and Tobacco Use in Youth: Education, Prevention and Intervention (2002)
Alcohol Beverage Advertising that Targets Youth (1992)
Antibiotic Resistance Awareness (2001)
Arts Education (1998)
Attention Deficit Disorder in Children (1998)
Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Awareness in Schools (2011)
Background Checks of Ice Cream Truck Vendors (1986)
Ballot Propositions (initiatives) (1999)
Ban on Drug Paraphernalia (1981)
Ban on Military Assault-Type Weapons (1989)
Ban on the Manufacture and Sale of Saturday Night Specials/Junk Guns (1997)
Bicycle Safety Education and Training (1973)
Bicycle Safety Helmets (1991)
Breakfast in Every School (2003)
Breast Cancer Early Detection Awareness and Education (1988)
California K-12 Public School Funding Crisis (1998)
Child Trafficking in California (2010)
Citizenship Education (1989)*
Class Size Reduction (1996)
Climate Change is a Children's Issue (2015)
Closed Captioned TV (1978)
Comprehensive Waste Reduction in Schools (2007)
Computer Technology in Education (1983)
Computer Workstation Health (2010)
Control of Look-Alike Stimulants and Depressant Drugs (1982)
Creating Lifelong Readers (1998)
Credential Requirement: Parent/Family Involvement Component (1993)
Credentialed School Nurses (2005)
Desegregation and Neighborhood Schools (1979)
Developmentally-Appropriate Physical Education (1999)
Disaster Preparedness (1986)
Drug Advertising (1970)
Duplicate Emergency Forms at Athletic Events (1974)
Dyslexia: Addressing the Educational Implications in Public Schools (2016)
E-Cigarettes/Vaping, Flavored Tobacco Products and Youth Health (2020)
Early Care and Education for All of California's Children (2019)
Early Childhood Development and Education (2000)
Education: A 21st Century Vision (2005)
Education on Hazards of Involuntary Smoking (1987)
Education on Health Hazards in the Use of Anabolic Steroids (1989)
Educational Technology Funding (1995)
Educational Testing and Test Scores (1971)
Electro-Magnetic Fields (1994)
Emergency School Bus Evacuation (1973)
Equal Access to School Improvement Program Funds (1983)
Family Preservation: An Alternative to Out-of-Home Placement (1990)
Financial Literacy for Youth (1999)
Financing California's Public Schools (2007)
Firearm Safety and Awareness (1995)
Firearm Safety Devices (1999)
Fireworks: Hazards to Youth (1990)
First Aid and/or Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (C.P.R.) (1987)
Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis in Schools (2004)
Football Safety (1975)
Foster Families (1999)
Funding Sources for Adult Crossing Guards (1981)
Grade Retention (1991)
Hazardous Waste Management (1980)
Healthy Lifestyles for All Children (2004)
HIV/STD Prevention Education in Our Schools (2008)
Homeless Families with Children (1989)
Homework: Quality Over Quantity (2014)
Hot Weather Standards in the School Setting (1992)
Immunization Awareness and Educational Programs (1975)
Improving and Stabilizing Education Funding (2018)
Improving K-12 Mathematics Education (1998)
Inclusive Schools Build Stronger Communities (2013)
Increase Funding for Chronic Disease & Injury Prevention (2020)
Increased School Nurse-to-Student Ratios (2016)
Increasing Counselor-to-Student Ratio in Schools (2000)
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Underfunding (2007)
Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) in Schools (2007)
Internet Access for California Classrooms (2000)
Juvenile Justice Reform – A Priority (1983)
Learning Disabilities and Learning Disabilities in Gifted Children (2000)
LGBTQ+ Inclusiveness in Health Education California (2015)
Licensing and Registration of Handguns (2000)
Limiting Concurrent Sales of Gasoline and Alcohol and the Proliferation of Outlets (1985)
Literacy Education (1989)
Local School Parcel Tax Measure Threshold Reduction (2008)
Longitudinal Integrated Statewide Data System (2008)
Lowering the 2/3 Vote Requirement on School and Library Bonds (1999)
Lowering the Vote Requirement in the California State Budget Process (2009)
Measles (Rubeola) Vaccinations (1990)
Mental Health Services for Our Children and Youth (2020)
Mental Illness: Treatment and Support (1999)
Minimum Instruction Time (1983)
Mitigating Earthquake Hazards in Public Schools (1989)
Net Zero Emission Schools (2020)
Nonsuspension of Proposition 98 (1991)
Nutrition Education (1991)
Online Safeguards for Internet Use by Children and Youth (1997)
Opposition to Televised Commercials in California Classrooms (1990)*
Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness (1999)
Paintball Gun Control (1993)
Parent/Community Action for Effective Schools (1993)
Pedestrian Safety Education (1990)
Pesticides (1972)

Plant Based Food Options at School Meals (2022)
 Playground Equipment Safety Standards (1996)
 Playground Surface Safety (2002)
 Post Proposition 13 Funding of Public Education (1979)
 Primary Prevention of Substance Abuse (1979)
 Prohibiting the Promotion of Tobacco Products (1987)
 Property Tax Limitation (1978)
 Protection of Children from the Harmful Effects of Aircraft Emissions (1998)
 Public School Governance Authority (2007)
 Qualifications for Candidacy in California Elections (2013)
 Quality of Life Portrayed on Television (1979)
 Regulation of Liquor Licenses Near Schools (1997)
 Regulation of the Display and Sale to Minors of Drug-Use Information and Paraphernalia Including Cigarette Papers (1979)
 Safe Routes to School for All Children (2008)
 Safety Helmets for Scooter, Skateboard and Skate Users Under the Age of 18 (2001)
 Safety Problems Related to Freeway Construction Near Schools (1970)
 Sale of Tobacco Products to Minors (1988)
 Save Our Kids (1983)
 School Absenteeism/Dropouts (1986)
 School Buildings and Railroad Safety Requirements (1990)
 School Bus Safety (1993)
 School Construction Funding (1986)
 School Desegregation Through Housing Integration Incentives (1982)
 School Facilities and Public Planning (1991)
 School Facilities Crisis (1990)
 School Funding (1981)
 School Library Media Center Funding Crisis (1988)
 School Nutrition Programs: Improvement and Expansion (1991)
 School Support Program (1976)
 School Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Improvement (2001)
 School Transportation (1981)
 School Transportation: Equitable Funding (2004)
 School-to-Career for All Students (2001)
 Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education (2011)
 Scoliosis Screening (1980)
 Seat Belt and Child Restraint Usage (1983)
 Self-Esteem and Personal and Social Responsibility Awareness (1991)
 Smoking and Health (1964)

Social Host Accountability and Underage Drinking (2009)
 State Government Responsibility for a Rational Budget Process (1992)*
 State Tax Reform (1991)
 Strategies to Reduce School, Family and Community Violence (1995)
 Student Assessment, Achievement and Accountability (2000)
 Student Substance Abuse: Alternatives to Zero Tolerance (2003)
 Substance Use and Abuse During Pregnancy (1987)
 Suicide Prevention Education and Awareness (1983)
 Summer Learning Loss (2013)
 Summer School (1980)
 Sun Safety: Skin Cancer Prevention Measures at School (2005)
 Support and Funding for Voluntary Integration Programs (1980)
 Support for the Civic Mission of Schools (2006)
 Support for Quality Child Care (1986)
 Support of Public Education, PTA Priority (1980)
 Synthetic Marijuana - Education and Awareness (2015)
 Teacher Preparation for Elementary Education (1973)
 Teacher Quality: Recruitment, Retention and Resources (2001)
 Teaching Hard History: American Slavery in K-12 Education (2021)
 Teen Driving Safety (2009)
 Television Literacy and Program Accountability (1993)
 Television/Screen Time Awareness (2006)
 Temperature Control Standards in the School Setting (2019)
 Threatening Phone Calls to Schools (1990)
 Tobacco Advertising That Targets Minors (1993)
 Torture Toys (1972)
 Toxins (Persistent and Bioaccumulative) and Their Effects on Children (2002)
 Treatment Centers for the Sexually Abused (1978)
 Trees for Life (1989)
 Tuition Tax Credits (1982)*
 Use of Children as Subjects in Pornographic Materials (1977)
 Violence and Vandalism (1980)
 Violence in the Home (1977)
 Violence Prevention in Schools (1999)
 Weapons on Campus (1973)
 Youth Involvement (2004)

Where We Stand: Position Statements

From time to time the California State PTA Board of Managers conducts studies of issues of general concern in light of the Purposes of the PTA and issues that affect the health, education and well-being of children and youth.

A study may result in formulation and adoption of a statement that establishes, clarifies or interprets a PTA position or belief. Position statements provide a basis for action on legislation and other California State PTA action.

Upon adoption, position statements, resolutions and general board positions are positions of California State PTA and remain in effect until they are amended, rescinded or retired.

No new statement, board resolution or general board position can be introduced that is in conflict with an existing position unless the respective corresponding position is first rescinded. The California State PTA Board of Managers may not amend or rescind a resolution and no board position may be in conflict with a resolution.

Statements are reviewed every five years to revise, review and deem relevant or to retire from current use. Statements that include quotes excerpted from state or federal law are reviewed annually. The dates under the title of each statement represent the date first adopted and the date of the latest revision/reaffirmation.

Accountability Systems: Statewide, Federal and Local

Adopted August 2016 – Reviewed and Deemed Relevant April 2022 – Education Commission

California State PTA believes that the primary goal of any accountability system is improved learning for every student. An effective accountability system should incorporate multiple measures, promote continuous improvement, rely on shared responsibility and coordination among all participants and governing bodies, and provide transparency and clarity.

Multiple Measures

California State PTA believes an accountability system should contain multiple measures which give a more complete picture of a school's/school district's areas of strength, areas of weakness and areas of need. This should be more than a single number.

Such a system should include measurement of both performance and growth with established expectations for progress. Schools and school districts should be held directly accountable for:

- students' academic progress toward college and career readiness (including as measured by standardized test scores), as well as other student outcomes;
- conditions that support equal access, student engagement, family engagement, positive school climate, civic participation, quality teaching, and capacity building; and
- eliminating achievement and opportunity gaps as an explicit objective and specific strategies and resources for accomplishing that.

Continuous Improvement

California State PTA believes an accountability system must reinforce state and local commitments to continuous improvement; therefore, it should include:

- regular evaluation of progress using reliable data;
- interventions, strategies, and supports that lead toward improved teaching and increased learning and student success;

- capacity-building at all levels of the system; and
- procedures that lead to evaluation and improvement of the accountability system itself so that it grows more effective and meaningful over time.

Shared Responsibility

Accountability rests on the conviction that improving student learning is a responsibility shared by all participants in the education system, including individuals (e.g. students, parents and families, teachers) and organizations (e.g., schools, school districts, policy-making bodies), and also by the public and all levels of government; therefore, California State PTA believes that:

1. State and federal accountability systems should be aligned in their data requirements, intervention strategies, and other features in order to promote coordination, efficiency of effort, and clarity of purpose;
2. Local education agencies should be able to tailor their strategies to local needs and circumstances framed in the context of a set of state/national expectations that give local communities a broader societal context for determining their progress and success;
3. The State of California bears responsibility for creating the conditions that make it possible for schools and school districts to accomplish the goals of the accountability system. In fact, the California Constitution requires the legislature to "provide for a system of common schools by which a free school shall be kept up and supported in each district;"
4. The State of California has the responsibility to effectively oversee and manage data collection and reporting used in the accountability system to inform policy decisions and to improve on a continuous basis the conditions under which schools operate; and
5. The State of California has the responsibility to provide schools sufficient funding and resources to achieve the goals set in the accountability system.

Transparency and Clarity

California State PTA believes that an accountability system must provide both transparency and clarity; therefore, it should incorporate:

1. Clear, meaningful communication of local and statewide accountability elements to all stakeholders and the public;
2. A shared and commonly understood basis for measurement of all components of the accountability system;
3. Transparency related to opportunity and achievement gaps;
4. Transparency in results, progress measures and steps toward intervention; and
5. Communication about the accountability system in languages and terminology that are understandable to students, families, and the public.

California State PTA believes that, across every facet of an effective accountability system, state and local leaders must both affirm and support the critical roles that parents play in improving student learning. Parents are their child's first teachers, advocates for their child within the education system, supporters of their local schools, and concerned and highly-interested citizens who play a vital role in determining important school improvement strategies.

Arts in Education

Adopted March 1985 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
April 2022 – Education Commission

California State PTA PTA believes visual and performing arts should be a basic and integral part of a balanced curriculum for all students.

California State PTA PTA believes the visual and performing arts can:

- Enhance students' academic performance in all curricular areas;
- Teach a common core of knowledge that will encourage students to appreciate human history and cultures;
- Enable students to develop higher order thinking skills;
- Enable students to discover and to express their own creativity; and
- Help students to develop a life-long appreciation of the arts.

California State PTA believes a quality arts program should be:

- Structured, sequential, and standards based;
- Offered as an integral part of the regularly scheduled instructional program K-12;
- Taught by qualified teachers who have received appropriate training and in-service programs;
- Enhanced by specialists in the arts who lend their expertise to the arts program;
- Provided to students in facilities specially designed for arts programs;
- Supported by high quality materials and resources;

- An opportunity to explore careers in the arts; and
- A high school graduation requirement.

Assessment and Testing (Statewide)

Adopted April 2016 – Reviewed and Deemed Relevant
April 2022 – Education Commission

California State PTA believes assessment must be an integral part of the instructional process and is essential to teaching and learning but must not distract from time allotted for delivery of regular curriculum. The overall goal of any student assessment program should be to identify what students know and how well they can apply that knowledge. A statewide assessment program should measure individual student achievement over time and the effectiveness of instructional delivery and curriculum support.

California State PTA believes that the systemic analysis and use of assessment data to guide instruction is a key factor for the improvement of student outcomes, achievement in high-poverty schools and closing the achievement gap.

California State PTA further believes that assessment aligned with meaningful content standards can provide important information to students, families, and communities about how students are progressing in their learning and can be used to identify and address inequalities in access to learning opportunities.

California State PTA affirms that assessment and testing should be used to support teaching and learning and that performance standards should reflect a curriculum that engages students and assists them in developing problem solving, critical thinking, and reasoning skills. Tests should not be limited to multiple choice or true/false questions but must provide multiple ways for students to demonstrate what they have learned. Student performance assessment must be linked to curricular goals that provide students with skills to be successful in the global economy.

Components of a sound assessment program should include:

- Formats that are culturally and racially bias-free and in a language that the student understands;
- Measurement of what has been taught;
- Multiple measures which are performance-based, reflecting the different kinds of knowledge and skills that a student is expected to acquire;
- Procedures and information that are clear and easy to understand;
- Guidance on how to use assessment results to enhance student learning Guidelines for appropriate use of data;
- Scores that are reliable and valid and provided to educators and parents; and
- Clear communication to parents/guardians and community of an accurate profile of student and school performance provided in a timely manner.

California State PTA also believes that at no time should a single test be considered the sole determinant of a student's academic or work future. An assessment

system built solely on tests and what can be easily measured has the potential of being misleading.

Assistance to Families in Need

Adopted February 1998 – Reviewed and deemed relevant November 2022 –
Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA believes that children are our most important natural resource, that the family is the basic unit of society responsible for the support and nurturing of children. Families come in many shapes and sizes. This includes but is not limited to children, parents, including legal and foster, grandparents, extended family, spouses, domestic partners, siblings, and close friends. Every effort must be made to ensure that public policies concur with the best interest of children and families. California State PTA further believes that society has a responsibility to establish policies that ensure effective community services and assistance programs when necessary for families in need. These programs should be structured and delivered in ways that contribute to the integrity and long-term stability of families and to ensure that children will have adequate support to meet their basic needs.

California State PTA supports government assistance programs intended to help families survive a temporary crisis and protect children from the extreme effects of poverty. California State PTA believes that government has the responsibility to plan and coordinate these programs for families in need, establishing a clear definition of responsibility at each level of government and adhering to governmental fiscal responsibility, but keeping foremost the priorities of children and youth.

California State PTA believes that to be effective in assisting families to become and remain self-sufficient, programs to help families in need of government assistance must include at least the following:

- Job training, job placement and job creation
 - Train and place recipients in job-related programs so they may become self-sufficient;
 - Promote opportunities for teenage parents to complete basic education programs;
 - Provide access to community and adult education, career technical schools and job training programs that meet the needs of the highly-skilled technological workplace;
 - Coordinate community employment resources for job development;
 - Require accountability by families in relation to work, training and education;
- Coordination of health and welfare programs and needed support services
 - Affordable, quality child care that provides flexible hours and guarantees payment to licensed providers until parents transition from assistance to work;
 - Reliable public or private transportation for access to services and employment;

- A health care system that provides equal access to quality, affordable, basic preventative health care and adequate support services within the field of mental health and guidance;
- Enforced collection and distribution of legally awarded child support payments;
- Provision for safe and affordable housing;
- Adequate nutritional services to prevent health and learning problems associated with malnutrition and hunger;
- A free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment and funding for non-educational requirements of all individuals with special needs;

- Eligibility requirements
 - Reasonable and flexible time limits that enable families to become self-supporting;
 - Statewide policies that encourage families to stay together when in the best interest of their children and that remove obstacles which eliminate two parent families from eligibility;
 - A system that provides a basic level of existence and does not penalize working families.

California State PTA believes that programs to assist families in need should include a safety net for individuals who do not meet established criteria for assistance to ensure that all children who reside in California have a right of access to a quality education, adequate food and shelter, and basic health services.

Basic Education

Adopted May 1979 – Reviewed and deemed relevant April 2022 – Education Commission

California State PTA recognizes that "basic education" is an issue of continuing interest and that it has different meanings for various individuals and groups. The PTA believes that all children and youth have the responsibility and should have the opportunity to develop their abilities to their fullest potential. It is fundamental to PTA philosophy that the responsibility of the parent as the first teacher of the child must be recognized, encouraged and continually emphasized. It is essential that schools acknowledge the role of parents and consistently involve them at all levels of their children's education.

PTA further believes it is essential that communities understand and agree upon the basic elements necessary for one to function as a contributing member in a free democratic society; and that these elements should interact and be relevant in a changing world. Schools need a balanced curriculum, clear standards for student achievement, qualified and competent teaching, and parents and community involvement.

When these are all present students should be able to:

- Develop and demonstrate competence in areas of reading, writing, oral communications, computation; in critical thinking skills and decision-making; and in the

- ability to apply these skills to all areas of knowledge and to the needs of day-to-day living;
- Develop and demonstrate an understanding in the areas of social studies, science, the arts, health, safety, foreign language, environmental needs, uses of technology, and the world of work;
- Develop an awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity;
- Develop an abiding sense of personal worth, sense of purpose and confidence in one's own abilities; and
- Develop the skills for being a responsible and caring citizen.

California State PTA recognizes the need in today's complex society for a support system for educating children and youth, a system in which schools play a major but not all-inclusive role. In order to provide a basic education for every young person, it is essential that parents, schools and communities cooperate in providing a total learning environment.

Before- and After-School Options for Children and Youth

Adopted March 2002 – Reviewed and deemed relevant December 2024 – Family Engagement Commission

California State PTA believes that high quality before- and after-school programs for all children and youth can provide engaging and enriching environments that improve academic achievement. Statistics show that such programs improve a number of student outcomes, including increased graduation rates and reduce the likelihood of arrest and incarceration.

California State PTA recognizes that a range of before- and after-school programs is needed to serve children and youth from pre-school through high school. Each program needs to be based on the particular needs of the young people in the community.

California State PTA believes the elements of a quality before- and after-school program include:

Program Design – With the development of academically focused programs that center on:

- An array of enrichment, cultural and recreational activities
- Activities that are developmentally and culturally appropriate for the children they serve
- Career development and life skills training for middle and high school students
- Opportunities for children and youth to develop positive relationships with peers and adults
- Health and wellness through nutritional snacks, exercise programs and prevention information
- Adequate funding to make programs and resources affordable and accessible

Facilities and Environment – With programs that:

- Preferably, are school-based with efforts to coordinate facilities and equipment between school and program sites
- Comply with relevant health and safety regulations
- Have safe indoor and outdoor space sufficient for a diversity of activities
- Rely on age appropriate equipment and materials for enhancing learning for participants
- Provide reasonable accommodations to make the program accessible to students with disabilities which may include providing a private location or specialized medical training for the handling of a student's personal needs

Partnerships – With key stakeholders, including parents, schools and community organizations, involved in:

- Collaboration that is responsible for planning, outreach and evaluation
- Coordination between the school site staff and program staff to enhance the academic components of the program by linking the school day and after-school curriculum
- Engagement by families in planning to ensure sustained youth participation and assure that the needs of each participant are met
- Participation by parent and community volunteers as an integral part of the program
- Active engagement of children and youth in community programs and community service

Staffing – With programs to include staff members who are:

- Able to create positive relationships and mentoring opportunities between staff and participants by having adequate staff to participant ratios
- Qualified with appropriate qualifications including the ability to provide tutoring and homework assistance in accordance with the educational component of the program
- Involved in staff development that is provided on an ongoing basis and is appropriate to program responsibilities
- Adequately compensated
- Evaluated on their job performance on a regular basis

Program Management – With the management and administration of programs that:

- Implement clear short- and long-term goals developed by the collaboration of key stakeholders
- Develop and implement relevant policies and procedures
- Maintain fiscal oversight and sustainability
- Are evaluated for effectiveness through continuous multiple measures and result in necessary program modifications

Behavioral Health and Social Emotional Development

Adopted January 1968 – Reviewed and deemed relevant February 2015 – Health Commission

California State PTA believes greater awareness is needed in understanding issues related to behavioral health and social emotional development. California State PTA further believes such concerns and other external and internal barriers to learning and teaching must include collaboration within the school-community. Collaboration is essential in planning and implementing a full range of interventions to promote behavioral health and social emotional development and provide a systemic approach to prevention, early intervention, and treatment of manifesting problems.

California State PTA supports efforts to:

- Promote and encourage support for the rights, dignity, and individuality of all human beings;
- Ensure children and youth have access to and receive timely mental health diagnosis;
- Provide information and education to understand and sustain children, youth, and family behavioral health and social emotional development, and to counter stigma related to problems;
- Unite school and community resources to develop and implement a comprehensive and cohesive range of interventions promoting behavioral health and social emotional development and providing a systemic approach to prevention, early intervention, and treatment of manifesting problems;
- Support research to enhance development and implementation of a comprehensive and cohesive range of interventions, promoting behavioral health and social emotional development and providing a systemic approach to prevention, early intervention, and treatment of those manifesting problems.
- Ensure interventions address external and internal factors contributing to behavioral health and social emotional development concerns;
- Address problems equitably and ensure necessary interventions are provided and implemented in the least disruptive and least restrictive manner feasible, with a commitment to inclusionary practices;
- Ensure protection of children, youth, and family rights related to decision making and access to information about intervention options and likely outcomes; and
- Support legislation that fully integrates school improvement policy and practice concerns related to (a) promoting behavioral health and social emotional development and (b) addressing behavioral health and social emotional development and other external and internal barriers to learning and teaching.

By supporting such efforts, PTA can help assure that schools and communities work together in a comprehensive and cohesive manner to improve the well being of children and youth, and their families, and enhance equity of opportunity for all children and youth to succeed at school and in life.

Building a Positive School Climate Through Restorative Justice Practices

Adopted August 2022

California State PTA believes students are more inclined to demonstrate positive behavior when their school climates and relationships inspire feelings of trust, safety, and belonging.

California State PTA supports restorative justice practices as a powerful approach to equitable student discipline rather than punitive-based methods that have been historically used in school settings.

Restorative justice is a broad term that encompasses a growing social movement to institutionalize non-punitive, relationship-centered approaches for avoiding and addressing harm, responding to violations of legal and human rights, and collaboratively solving problems. In a school setting, restorative justice is a theory of justice that focuses on mediation and agreement rather than punishment.

The negative outcomes associated with punitive school environments are especially harmful for students of color and students with disabilities. A substantial body of research shows that suspensions and expulsions are strongly linked to a wide range of negative outcomes for students, including missed instructional time, low achievement on standardized exams and involvement in the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Students who have been suspended are three times more likely to drop out of high school by 10th grade than students who have never been suspended.

Unlike zero-tolerance approaches, which seek to hold students accountable through punitive discipline—often in the form of classroom or school removals—restorative approaches achieve accountability through the development of caring, supportive relationships and through strategies that allow students to reflect on their behavior and make amends when needed to preserve the health of the community.

Restorative justice practices provide families, students and communities a way to ensure accountability while at the same time breaking the cycle of retribution and violence.

Restorative justice practices should seek to work with students to come to a solution by focusing on repairing harm through inclusive practices that engage all educational partners.

California State PTA believes restorative justice practices empower students, strengthen campus communities, prevent bullying and reduce student conflicts. Students learn how to interact and manage their relationships with adults and peers. They become better equipped to understand how their actions impact others and how to monitor future behavior. Restorative practices encourage positive outcomes for students and the school community.

Restorative justice practices implemented with fidelity should include the following key principles:

- Voluntary participation.

- Respect for all involved.
- Inclusion of the people impacted.
- A focus on the harms, needs and causes that have arisen.
- Consensus-based decision making focused on how to repair the harm and prevent future harm.
- Opportunity for dialogue that aligns with the above principles.
- Expanding the capacity of the community to create a just and fair response.

Because each school creates its own unique culture, California State PTA believes the implementation and practice of restorative justice should be tailored to the needs of each school and with the knowledge and support of each school community. Schools should intentionally anchor practices in shared core values. This provides a common language for students, parents and teachers to understand what is expected from all members of the school community.

Additionally, school discipline, classroom management and social and emotional learning cannot be separated. As schools look at new initiatives to address these fundamental aspects of teaching and learning the overlap of restorative justice practices, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), trauma-informed teaching and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) all work together to build safer more effective schools. The practices complement each other and work together to meet the goals of providing clear, consistent routines and expectations that lead to better functioning classroom and school communities.

The successful implementation of restorative justice practices requires the involvement and commitment of the entire school-community including families. Introducing restorative practices to the students' families in an inclusive, collaborative and culturally sensitive manner is critical for success. When families are seen as a key educational partner group and then invited to participate early on in the process, implementation and ongoing sustainability of the restorative practices approach is much more likely to succeed.

Cannabis Youth Safety and Education

Adopted 2023 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA believes in the importance of addressing factors that may be detrimental to the health, safety and well-being of all children and youth.

California State PTA believes that children and youth must be given every opportunity to reach their full potential. Concerned individuals, agencies, and organizations must join together to address the needs of all children and youth. Together, families, schools, and communities can effectively strengthen and enhance the maturation of our children, resulting in emotionally secure, healthy, and socially responsible adults.

With the passage of the Compassionate Use Act of 1996 and the Adult Use of Marijuana Act in 2016, cannabis is now legal to grow, sell and distribute through a regulated business, and to possess and use in California. Without a doctor's recommendation, it is illegal for anyone under 21 to smoke, consume, buy or possess cannabis in any form. Those under the age of 21 can use medicinal cannabis with a doctor's recommendation. Parental or guardian consent is required in addition to a doctor's recommendation in order for those people under the age of 18.

According to the Centers for Disease Control(CDC):

- In 2019, 37% of US high school students reported lifetime use of marijuana and 22% reported use in the past 30 days.
- In 2018 and 2019, middle and high school students reported large increases in vaping during the past year.
- Past-year vaping of marijuana remained steady in 2020, with 8% of eighth graders, 19% of 10th graders, and 22% of 12th graders reporting past-year vaping.

Recent studies such as Werts M, Urata J, Watkins SL, Chaffee BW. *Flavored Cannabis Product Use Among Adolescents in California*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.5888/pcd18.210026> have shown that a substantial proportion of adolescent cannabis users are choosing flavored cannabis products, including both combustible and aerosolized products. This finding illuminates a potential health concern. It has been found that, in the case of tobacco, adolescents associate flavored products with less perceived harm and have greater interest in experimentation with flavored tobacco compared with unflavored tobacco products. As the commercial cannabis industry offers an expanding array of products promoted as flavored, potential restrictions on flavored cannabis will prove an important component of limiting youth appeal.

According to the CDC: cannabis can have a significant adverse impact on youth:

- All forms of smoking and vaping, whether tobacco or marijuana, are harmful to the lungs.
- Edibles may have higher concentrations of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). If a child or youth eats too much, too fast, they are at higher risk for poisoning.
- Using cannabis regularly in the teen years may lead to physical changes in the brain.
- Cannabis may impact a child's educational and professional goals and how successful they are in life.
- Marijuana use has been linked to a range of mental health problems, such as depression and social anxiety. People who use marijuana are more likely to develop temporary psychosis (not knowing what is real, hallucinations, and paranoia) and long-lasting mental disorders, including schizophrenia (a type of mental illness where people might see or hear things that aren't there). The association between marijuana and schizophrenia is stronger in people who start using marijuana at an earlier age and use marijuana more frequently.
- Driving while impaired by any substance, including marijuana, is dangerous and illegal. Marijuana negatively

affects several skills required for safe driving, such as reaction time, coordination, and concentration.

- Approximately 3 in 10 people who use marijuana have issues with addiction or marijuana use disorder. Some signs and symptoms of marijuana use disorder include trying but failing to quit using marijuana or giving up important activities with friends and family in favor of using marijuana. People who start using marijuana during youth or adolescence, and who use marijuana more frequently, are at greater risk of developing marijuana use disorder.

California State PTA supports state and federal legislation and restrictions that protect children from the harmful effects of cannabis in its many forms. We support legislation that:

- Promotes public education regarding the risks posed to youth due to the use of cannabis
- Addresses the adverse physical and mental health impacts of use on youth
- Requires the collection of data regarding the use of cannabis products
- Addresses the secure storage of cannabis products in homes
- Requires age appropriate labeling and packaging of cannabis that clearly outlines all ingredients, concentrations of any psychoactive cannabinoids, and legal restrictions on use by those under 21 years of age
- Prevents the marketing in all forms, including all forms of social media, of cannabis products to youth
- Restricts the production of flavored cannabis products
- Restricts storefronts within 1000 feet of child-oriented/child sensitive facilities, such as but not limited to schools (public, private, home based), youth centers, parks, churches, libraries, and day care facilities.

¹ The word “cannabis” refers to all products derived from plants in the Cannabaceae family. The cannabis plant contains about 540 chemical substances. (US Dept. of Health and Human Services)

¹ The word “marijuana” refers to parts of or products from the cannabis plant that contain substantial amounts of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). THC is the substance that’s primarily responsible for the effects of marijuana on a person’s mental state. Some cannabis plants contain very little THC. Under U.S. law, these plants are considered “industrial hemp” rather than marijuana. (USDHSS)

Character Education

Adopted 1968 – Reviewed by BOM February 2025

California State PTA believes the responsibility for character education is shared by the home, place of worship, school, and community. Character education is education that nurtures and promotes the ethical, intellectual, social and emotional development of individuals. It is a continuous learning process that enables students to become moral, caring, critical and responsible individuals.

Effective character education programs require the entire community’s participation. Such programs should be integrated throughout the entire school curriculum and culture through curriculum development, consensus building, community engagement, technology and professional development.

Character education helps students achieve academic, career and social/emotional development goals to become positive contributors to society. Comprehensive character education addresses many tough issues in education while supporting a positive school climate. Character education includes and complements a broad range of educational approaches such as whole child education, service learning, social-emotional learning, and civic education. All share a commitment to helping young people become responsible, caring, and contributing citizens.

A character education curriculum should incorporate the concepts of responsibility, respect, integrity, compassion, understanding, honesty, justice, empathy, perseverance and courage, including:

- Responsibility for one’s own actions
- Respect for one’s own worth and dignity;
- Respect for parents, teachers and those in authority;
- Development of self-discipline, self-responsibility and civility to others;
- Respect for home, school and community members;
- Respect and understanding of differences in socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, language ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, and physical abilities for all individuals;
- Consideration of the rights of the group as well as of the individual;
- Development of integrity, understanding, honesty, loyalty, trustworthiness, fairness and compassion;
- Development of perseverance and courage;
- Ability to think independently, critically, objectively, and creatively.

Schools that embrace character education become places people want to be because they bring out the best in everyone.

California State PTA believes that, to be effective in schools, character education must involve everyone—school staff, parents, students, and community members—and be part of every school day. All adults should serve as role models. Character education should be integrated into the curriculum as well as school culture. When this happens and school communities unite around developing character, students develop into respectful and caring global citizens.

Charter Schools

Adopted March 2003 – Reviewed and deemed relevant May 2021 – Education Commission

California State PTA believes charter schools have a valid place in our public school system, because they can provide K-12 students and parents with expanded choices in educational opportunities and may serve as laboratories for programs that can be replicated in other public schools. Public charter schools are most successful when proposed, developed and evaluated in the communities they serve. PTA recognizes that sufficient resources, including facilities, must be provided to charter school students, and to the chartering entity responsible for oversight of charter school performance.

PTA further believes that charter schools must not be operated by for-profit organizations, nor be affiliated with a nonpublic, religious, or home-based school.

PTA believes a charter school must:

- Be located within the same jurisdiction as its chartering district or county office of education.
- Provide a healthy and safe learning environment for all children.
- Not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, gender, ability or disability, sexual orientation, language or socio-economic status, or immigration status.
- Be publicly funded in a manner that is equitable to and does not reduce resources, on a per pupil basis, for other public schools in the chartering entity.
- Be held fiscally and academically accountable to the parents and community by the local chartering entity.
- Be subject to the same conflict of interest laws that bind other public school.
- Be located in facilities that meet state school building code standards and be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Provide a curriculum that is aligned to the California state academic content standards and offers at least the number of instructional minutes as required by the California State Education Code, and require students to meet the state's minimum requirements for graduation.
- Follow all state and federal assessment and reporting requirements and be held to or exceed the same standards of academic accountability as all other public schools.
- Belong to a Special Education Local Planning Area (SELPA) for special education funding purposes and provide special needs students with all services as set forth in their Individual Education Plan (IEP) and 504 accommodations.
- Hire teachers and administrators who meet the same credentialing requirements as those in other California public schools.
- Encourage effective teacher preparation and ongoing professional development.
- Involve parents in meaningful decision-making.
- Maintain current student records, make student records available for inspection by parents and the chartering entity, ensure records follow a student who

withdraws or is expelled from a charter school, and notify the chartering entity when a student leaves the charter school for any reason.

Child Abuse

Adopted March 1989 – Reviewed May 2016 – Revised November 2020 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA believes children are the future and must be protected from harm. PTA further believes all children are entitled to live and grow in an atmosphere of love and respect, and no child should be subjected to physical, psychological, verbal or sexual abuse. PTA, as the state's largest child advocacy organization, must assume a leadership role to achieve these goals.

According to Healthy Children.org, approximately 3 million cases of child abuse and neglect involving almost 5.5 million children are reported each year. Most child abuse occurs within the family. Risk factors include parental depression or other mental health issues, a parental history of childhood abuse, and domestic violence. Child neglect and other forms of abuse are also more common in families living in poverty and among parents who are teenagers or who abuse drugs or alcohol. More children are abused by a caregiver or someone they know than abused outside of the home by a stranger.

Child neglect can include physical neglect (failing to provide food, clothing, shelter, or other physical necessities), emotional neglect (failing to provide love, comfort, or affection), or medical neglect (failing to provide needed medical care). Psychological or emotional abuse results from all of the above, but also can be associated with verbal abuse, which can harm a child's self-worth or emotional well-being.

A child who has been abused needs special support and treatment as early as possible.

Changes in a child that parents and caregivers should be aware of include:

- Fearful behavior (nightmares, depression, unusual fears)
- Abdominal pain, bed-wetting (especially if the child has already been toilet trained)
- Attempts to run away
- Extreme sexual behavior that seems inappropriate for the child's age
- Sudden change in self-confidence
- Headaches or stomachaches with no medical cause
- Abnormal fears, increased nightmares
- School failure
- Extremely passive or aggressive behavior
- Desperately affectionate behavior or social withdrawal
- Big appetite and stealing food

California State PTA advocates:

- Public education about the unmet needs of and public responsibility to children and families;
- Public education about the prevalence, causes, methods of intervention and prevention of child abuse;
- Public education about programs and assistance available to victims and their families;
- Parenting skills workshops and classes for parents and teenagers;
- Public education for children on the identification of abuse and the survival skills they need to learn to be safe;
- Thorough implementation of state laws requiring school districts to provide training for school personnel (including classroom aides, yard duty personnel and custodians) in the identification, prevention, treatment and reporting of child abuse;
- School, law enforcement, courts and social service agencies working cooperatively and acting promptly in handling cases of suspected child abuse;
- Creating adequate laws to protect children from cyber bullying, intended online stalking and using any type of communication device to physically or mentally abuse another child or cause harm;
- Team-building workshops so active members in the community can get acquainted with each other;
- Adequate funding for treatment centers and temporary shelters;
- Adequate funding and staffing for child welfare services programs; and
- Anonymous telephone tip established and advertised for safe public reporting.

Child Care

Adopted March 1989 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
 February 2023 – Community Concerns and Family Engagement Commissions – Revised August 2018

California State PTA believes that provision of quality child care is a shared responsibility of parents/guardians, providers, appropriate governmental agencies, business and industry, and the community at large. California State PTA also recognizes the need for a wide variety of programs and services to address the diverse child care needs of families throughout the state and the differing needs of children of various ages.

Studies have found that high quality child care programs have certain characteristics in common. These characteristics can help parents make better child care choices for their children because they indicate a much greater likelihood of high quality care. Quality indicators measure the conditions that generally foster a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment for children.

California State PTA believes that the minimum indicators of program quality include:

- A safe, secure, healthy, developmentally appropriate, and stimulating environment (home-, school-, or center-based) that enhances the physical, social-

- emotional, linguistic, cultural, creative and cognitive development of all enrolled children;
- A current, valid state child care provider license;
- Facilities appropriate to the type of care and ages of children, including adequate indoor and outdoor space as defined in state licensing requirements;
- Low child to teacher ratios and small group sizes fostering positive teacher/child interactions;
- Staff who are adequately trained in early childhood education and child development, and who receive on-going training;
- A policy that forbids the use of corporal punishment;
- A written description of programs and services that includes an explanation of developmental appropriateness of activities and materials made available to parents/guardians and concerned agencies;
- An open door policy for parents/guardians and opportunities for family engagement in all aspects of the program, including policy, administration and curriculum.

California State PTA supports:

- Uniform licensing standards for child care centers;
- Background and criminal checks on all personnel, volunteers, and any other adults who may reside in the facility;
- Strengthening of the state's facility inspection program;
- Child care homes to have liability insurance or a bond covering injury to clients and guests;
- Crisis and natural disaster preparedness checklist given to all parents/guardians and posted at centers;
- Personnel of child day care facilities (day care centers, family day care homes and out of school youth centers) to have current certification in preventive health practices including pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and pediatric first aid;
- High standards for preparation and continuing education of child care teachers and providers, with the state taking a leadership role in providing educational programs for teachers and providers;
- Adequate salaries for child care providers in order to attract and maintain quality personnel;
- Tax incentives for employers to provide on-site or off-site child care and/or related options for employees, including flex time, job sharing and/or use of benefit packages;
- State and federal tax deduction credits for child care costs;
- Increased public and private funding for program improvements and expansions;
- Increased cooperation between government, community, agencies and business in providing for child care services that meet the unique needs of each community;

- Public policy at state and local levels that includes incentives for, and removes obstacles to, employer involvement in addressing the child care needs of working parents/guardians;
- State support of high-quality child care, including a wide variety of program types and services;
- School- or community-based child care resource, referral and provider centers that:
 - Serve as referral agencies for child care services within the community;
 - Are resources to support and monitor providers; and
 - Ensure quality care for preschool and school-aged children including children with special needs;
- Monitoring of recreational programs to ensure quality, safety, and adequate supervision of children

Child Victims/Witnesses Rights

Adopted May 1986 – Reviewed and deemed relevant November 2022 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA believes it is important to reduce trauma in all phases of a child's life including trauma caused by actions pursued through the court system. PTA believes it is important to protect the rights of child victims/witnesses at all times including, but not limited to, investigations and courtroom testimony. PTA believes it is important for child victims/witnesses to receive supportive assistance from trained personnel throughout the course of any criminal proceeding.

California State PTA believes that efforts should be made to advocate for and address the needs of child witnesses/victims by:

- Training law enforcement, legal and judicial personnel in appropriate and age-/ability-specific procedures for interacting with a child victim/witness in a respectful, compassionate and caring manner;
- Ensuring a child's right to have access to assignment of a trained child advocate to protect his/her interests;
- Permitting support attendants for the child throughout the court proceedings;
- Providing appropriate treatment services and a list of available resources/referrals;
- Guaranteeing child victims/witnesses the rights of privacy and confidentiality;
- Questioning a child in a manner appropriate to his/her chronological and/or mental age;
- Minimizing the number of interviews and investigations;
- Trying multi-jurisdictional cases in only one jurisdiction;
- Allowing Out of Court Statements, videotaped statements and/or depositions to be admitted as evidence;

- Allowing closed-circuit testimony, thereby ensuring that a child is protected from direct confrontation with the accused;
- Permitting special methods of questioning of the child witness (requiring attorneys to remain seated during questioning, allowing the judge to question the witness, limiting the time allowed for testimony); and
- Altering the courtroom setting to make it easier for the child to testify.

Chronic Illness Care in California Schools

Adopted January 2010 – Reviewed and deemed relevant February 2015 – Revised in August 2020 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 25% of children aged 2 to 8 years have a chronic health condition such as asthma, obesity, other physical conditions, and behavior/learning problems. The healthcare needs of children with chronic illness can be complex and continuous and includes both daily management and addressing potential emergencies.

California State PTA understands there are difficult challenges that families face every day to ensure that a child with chronic illness and other healthcare needs receives appropriate care at school.

Many children are coming to school with a broad spectrum of chronic illness and healthcare needs, and the numbers of those children continue to rise. Federal laws mandate that all children are entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Parents of children with disabilities from ages three through twenty-one have specific educational rights under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These rights are called procedural safeguards. Individuals serving as surrogate parents and students aged eighteen receiving special education services, are also entitled to these procedural safeguards. IDEA, federal, and state laws determine who will provide and how such services will be provided, including – but not limited to – both the assistance with, and the administration of, medications.

California State PTA believes that parents and school personnel should be trained and educated on the complexities of disease management for any student suffering from chronic illness. Students spend a large portion of their day at school and it is vital that school staff who come into contact with these students have a thorough understanding of their illness in order to ensure appropriate care.

California State PTA supports solutions that enable all children with chronic illness and other healthcare needs to be safe in California schools. All children deserve the safest and most appropriate care, including, but not limited to, administration of medications, from licensed personnel, working within their scope of practice, who can assess and appropriately provide necessary medical services and care according to state law.

Commercialism in Schools

Adopted May 2015 – Communications Commission

Students in schools are a captive audience. When engaging in commercial activities in public schools, California State PTA believes in limiting students' exposure to advertising.

California State PTA recognizes that severe spending cuts to education have caused schools and school districts to seek additional sources of revenue. However, data shows that profits from advertising typically do not generate any more than 0.02% of districts' total operating budgets.

PTA respects the rights of schools to engage in appropriate fundraising activities to help fund programs and services that benefit children and youth. According to a 2013 Common Sense Media research brief, there are so many new techniques of marketing to children that, "it is difficult for researchers to distinguish the marketing messages and quantify children's exposure to them."

Schools are intended to be a safe place, free from harmful influences for children. According to Common Sense Media, "There are many reasons to be concerned about advertising's impact on young people: it often promotes products with health implications, such as fast food, soda, and candy; there are public-policy implications on issues such as privacy and fairness; some parents and advocates are concerned about the over-commercialization of childhood; children can be exposed to advertising for adult-oriented products such as alcohol, tobacco, and violent media."

Given the fact that the extent to which the effects of commercialism are a factor in the healthy development of children, California State PTA encourages schools and school districts to use caution and to act responsibly and in the best interests of students when allowing advertising in the schools as a way to generate funds.

- truancy programs
- multiple pathways to graduation and alternatives to high school completion.
- parent programs such as English as a second language, parenting, adult literacy, computer literacy, and financial literacy
- job training and career counseling for adults and youth
- programs that support the needs of our most vulnerable populations

California State PTA believes that providing these services at the community school site will strengthen the community, increase family engagement, make the most effective use of services, and result in improved educational outcomes for children.

**"Community Schools" as referenced in this position statement are comprehensive community schools with integrated services and should be distinguished from community day schools as described in Education Code 486660-48926.

COVID-19

Adopted April 2022 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA is committed to making sure that families and the public have scientifically accurate information about the virus and how to control its spread. PTA has responded to the state's disruption and ongoing recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic by providing resources and information to our members across the state. PTA's priority during this crisis is the health and safety of all students, educators, staff and families.

California State PTA supports the use of vaccines to protect the health and safety of children, families, caregivers, and guardians. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, immunizations are a safe, effective way to protect children from disease, including some cancers, as well as hospitalization, disability, and death. Numerous diseases such as polio, smallpox, measles, and Ebola have been eliminated or controlled through immunizations.

California State PTA believes any vaccinations and COVID-19 treatments must be authorized for use by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as safe for children and families. Vaccines not only protect those inoculated, but also those who cannot be vaccinated. Vaccines save millions of lives each year.

California State PTA believes that testing, wearing of masks, physical distancing, vaccinations, and access to medical services are all important components in controlling the virus. Equitable and adequate access to these resources for all children and families is crucial.

Misinformation hinders the fight against COVID-19, and California State PTA is committed to providing our members with up-to-date science-based information. PTA believes good public health messaging to our communities in a language which they can understand and in a multitude of culturally sensitive formats is key to reaching all families.

The pandemic shut down of schools has shown that most of our students learn best in a school environment. Vaccinations

Comprehensive Community Schools with Integrated Services (Community Schools)

Adopted February 2016 – Reviewed and Deemed Relevant April 2022 – Education Commission

California State PTA recognizes that many factors affect a student's ability to learn. California State PTA further believes that a school operating according to the community school concept with emphasis on the whole child affords an excellent learning environment for children.

Community schools are defined as schools that partner with non-profits and government agencies to provide services at the school site for health, safety, behavior and social services for children, parents and community members. California State PTA believes that community schools should be run by a knowledgeable coordinator and include a shared decision making process.

Types of services include:

- medical and dental care
- mental health care
- social/emotional support services
- enrichment activities and tutoring

are an important tool in ensuring that schools can remain open for in-person instruction while protecting the health and safety of our students, staff and family members. Not every child is able to attend school in person, and California State PTA is committed to advocating that equivalent quality learning opportunities are available for all students.

School districts must be provided adequate funding to cover testing, masks, cleaning supplies and other materials necessary to protect students and staff. Protecting staff and students also includes their social and emotional wellbeing. California State PTA believes that schools and communities need to provide adequate mental health supports to school staff and students to meet their needs.

Credentialed School Personnel

Adopted March 1984 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
May 2021 – Education Commission

California State PTA believes all students shall have access to well prepared, effective, and highly qualified teachers, administrators and certificated staff in the public schools of California. PTA supports high standards for all credentialed school personnel working with students beginning with quality comprehensive preparation programs for both teachers and administrators. PTA believes that in order to attract and retain qualified people to teaching, high standards must be accompanied by competitive salaries, support services and ongoing professional development.

PTA believes there must be:

- Increased capacities of universities to prepare sufficient numbers of certificated teachers for public schools;
- Careful screening of candidates for all credential programs at institutions of higher education to ensure that candidates demonstrate a strong potential for teaching;
- Emphasis on quality training programs for each level of credentialing;
- Training in strategies for working with parent/guardians and the community to encourage their full participation in the educational process as an integral part of all teacher/administrator certification programs;
- An emphasis on recruiting candidates with a willingness to work with the diverse constituencies, challenges and needs of California's public schools;
- Teachers and administrators who reflect California's diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds;
- Pre-intern and intern programs for prospective teacher credential candidates that provide guidance, counseling and support services by assigned mentors;
- Alternative methods of certification that ensure quality of instruction by requiring applicants to meet initial competency requirements and to complete an equivalent course of teacher preparation within a specified time period;
- Background checks in the hiring and assignment processes for all credentialed school personnel;
- Work assignments based on the subject of a teacher's credential, determined by such processes that are

compatible with preserving the integrity of the instructional program;

- Appropriate support for beginning teachers and administrators;
- A requirement that all credentialed school personnel meet standards for ethical behavior and demonstrate respect for students and others;
- An understanding that employment is contingent upon meeting clearly established performance standards and fulfillment of continued professional growth requirements;
- Ongoing constructive and systematic evaluation programs for all credentialed school personnel;
- Appropriate staff development for all credentialed school personnel that will answer the professional needs of the individual and the individual school site;
- Certification programs and ongoing staff development that enables teachers and administrators to work effectively with all parents/guardians and with service providers to meet the needs of our diverse student population;
- More options available to paraprofessionals and subject matter experts who are actively seeking proper certification;
- A longer instructional school year and instructional school day to provide increased time for both staff development and for student-teacher contact/instructional time; and
- Practical experience/application required during the undergraduate courses.

Dangers of Energy/Caffeinated Drinks

Adopted January 2009 – Reviewed and deemed relevant May 2016 – Revised and retitled March 2019 –
Health & Community Concerns Commission

Caffeine drinks are everywhere, promising to keep a person energized, revved, and alert. California State PTA encourages PTAs to:

- Educate parents about the caffeine content of various caffeine and energy drinks.
- Understand the short-and-long-term effects of caffeine on the health and well-being of children and youth.
- Encourage parents to limit their children's intake of caffeine.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, sports drinks and energy drinks are significantly different products, and the terms should not be used interchangeably.

- Sports drinks are flavored beverages that often contain carbohydrates, minerals, electrolytes (eg, sodium, potassium, calcium, magnesium), and sometimes vitamins or other nutrients.

- Energy drinks typically contain stimulants, such as caffeine and guarana, with varying amounts of carbohydrate, protein, amino acids, vitamins, sodium, and other minerals. The main psychoactive ingredient in energy drinks is caffeine, typically containing from three to five times the amount contained in cola, with the highest concentrations found in energy 'shots'. Energy drinks are not suitable for rehydration.

The American Academy of Pediatrics maintains a position that stimulant-containing energy drinks have no place in the diets of children and adolescents. Furthermore, frequent or excessive intake of caloric sports drinks can substantially increase the risk for overweight or obesity in children and adolescents.

The stimulant effect of caffeine increases the heart rate. In higher doses, caffeine can cause more significant effects on the heart by changing the speed and regularity of the heartbeat.

Other caffeine related health concerns include:

- Dental erosion
- High blood pressure
- Gastrointestinal disorder
- Shakes, tremors and chills
- Nausea and vomiting
- Agitation
- Disruption in the classroom
- Dehydration
- Dizziness

Energy drink labels often state that they are not recommended for children, but sales of the drinks are not restricted by age as are products that contain tobacco and alcohol. California State PTA believes it is important for parents to monitor and understand the effects of energy drinks and coffee beverages on children and youth.

California State PTA encourages legislation that requires caffeine content be included on the labels of all energy and caffeinated beverages purchased in cans and bottles and posted in establishments that sell caffeinated drinks.

<https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/127/6/1182>
<https://www.healthychildren.org>

Democracy in Practice: Constitutional Principles, Human Rights and Civic Integrity

Adopted August 2025

California State PTA believes that an effective and equitable public education system is vital to a thriving democracy and also depends on the proper functioning of that democracy. Together, public education and democracy have shaped our country into a place where children, youth, and families can thrive.

California State PTA Toolkit – August 2025

To preserve and protect our democracy, elected officials, government agencies, and the public must understand, honor, and uphold the established principles embedded in the U.S. Constitution. Those principles include the balance of power, legal protections of human rights, voting rights, and adherence to truth and integrity.

The same principles have guided PTAs' actions since 1897. They continue to underscore our patriotic commitment to the people and institutions of this country and to guide our advocacy decisions.

Balance of power

California State PTA believes in the principles of government that guided the creation of the United States. To retain its legitimacy, our governance system must include checks and balances between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. Citizens must maintain and exercise the right to vote for those who govern them. The officials they elect should be directly responsible and accountable to their constituents. Elected officials, state agencies, and local governing boards should actively seek citizen input in the decision-making process.

Legal protections of human rights

"Every Child, One Voice" captures the essence of PTA and our work at the local, state, and national levels.

We organize events, support families, work to strengthen schools, advocate for legislation, and speak out against injustice because every child matters. Regardless of their background, their abilities, or their identity, all children and youth deserve to have their needs met and their rights protected.

California State PTA believes that today we need to speak out to explicitly protect the fundamental rights guaranteed in the United States Constitution that we have previously collectively taken for granted. Those constitutional rights, which extend to both young people and adults, and both citizens and immigrants, include:

- freedom of speech and peaceful assembly,
- freedom to petition the government,
- freedom of worship,
- due process when accused of a crime,
- the right to a fair trial (including legal counsel if accused of a crime),
- freedom from unreasonable search and seizure,
- the right to be free from cruel and unusual punishment, and
- the right to equal protection under the law

Advocacy

In addition, the California Constitution guarantees a free public education and has strict provisions against the use of public money to support religious schools. It also provides that no religious doctrine can be taught in public schools.

Voting rights and election integrity

California State PTA unequivocally supports voting rights. We believe that the right to vote is a foundation of American democracy and our representative form of government. Our votes play a critical role in determining how our elected officials decide the public policy issues we care about. The right to vote, to cast an informed vote, and have that vote counted is fundamental to the work we do as PTA. It must be protected for all citizens.

Further, research shows that public schools are instrumental in teaching about civic participation, including the all-important role that voting and elections play in upholding the constitutional order. California State PTA is committed to making civic learning a high priority. We work to strengthen the emphasis on the principles and practices of democracy, including effective implementation of civic education standards and increased collaboration between schools and communities to promote the rights and obligations of responsible citizenship.

An adherence to truth and integrity

California State PTA must help students, families, teachers, and community members develop the knowledge to act as effective, responsible citizens amid growing challenges.

Working with our national organization, California State PTA believes informed democratic participants must learn to distinguish between misinformation, disinformation, and unbiased, verified information. These critical thinking skills are essential for navigating today's digital media landscape. We must prioritize helping all students become responsible, ethical digital citizens who can navigate technology with integrity.

California State PTA believes today's families—both young people and adults—must develop skills to discern truth and demand integrity from elected leaders. Our democracy, quality of life, and children's futures depend on it.

Distance Learning

Adopted May 2021 – Education Commission

California State PTA believes that all students should have access to an equitable learning environment that promotes student success. In today's world, there is an increasing likelihood that many students will experience distance learning for a variety of reasons. Distance learning is defined as

an alternative to face-to-face instruction -- whether out of necessity or by choice. Distance learning should meet standards for instructional quality and student learning that is comparable to classroom based instruction.

California State PTA believes that every local school and school district needs to have a current plan to provide distance learning in place that can be rolled out rapidly. The plan should be reviewed annually with stakeholder input.

California State PTA believes that a high quality distance learning program should:

- Provide all children and youth an equitable learning environment that fosters opportunities to develop their abilities to their fullest potential;
- Ensure that students feel respected and know that the learning community cares about their individual needs and expects them to succeed;
- Provide and sustain a safe and healthy learning environment for distance learning students that includes regular, ongoing assessments of students' social-emotional, mental, and physical health, supported by additional resources and counselors as needed;
- Incorporate social-emotional learning;
- Ensure that every student has an equal chance for success by evaluating and addressing the unique challenges and barriers faced by individual students or by populations of students;
- Provide the additional support needed to ensure that every child receives an equitable education whether in person or in distance learning; and
- Identify students facing additional learning challenges due to distance learning. Recognize that distance learning students may require additional high-quality interventions such as individual tutoring, face-to-face instruction, social and emotional supports, extended school days and/or extended school years, and other supports as needed.

California State PTA believes that it is the responsibility of local education leaders to adjust operations, allocate resources, and actively engage families to ensure the quality and effectiveness of distance learning programs through such actions as:

- Committing to provide educational support that works to close the achievement and opportunity gap for all students;
- Investing in increased resources to support distance learning including access to devices, distance learning platforms and reliable, consistent and free internet connectivity and training to utilize this technology;
- Meeting instructional quality and student learning standards, and provide curriculum and resources

that are comparable to traditional classrooms;

- Supporting a student's awareness of racism, classism, discrimination and other issues in the world. Teaching students how to openly address these situations by ensuring that curriculum, teaching, and learning includes contributions from individuals of protected classes and reflects the story of all student populations.
- Providing minimum amounts of interactive, live online instructional time based on developmentally appropriate pedagogy.
- Ensuring active student engagement on a daily basis.
- Encouraging and tracking student attendance on a daily basis.
- Maintaining rigor and quality and ensuring proficient performance levels as assessed by accurate measurements;
- Providing appropriate and ongoing professional development for teachers and staff;
- Welcoming and encouraging families and community members to share ideas, talents and resources for supporting distance learning;
- Providing families with resources to support their students in distance learning including but not limited to: tutorials on different education platforms, strategies to support and motivate students, and resources to support students with different learning needs; and
- Including distance learning students in on-campus participation in athletics, on-campus student events and programs or other activities outside of the instructional day.

Education of English Language Learners[†]

Adopted November 1985 – Revised May 2021 –
Education Commission

California State PTA believes English language learners must be provided an education that will allow them the opportunity to acquire the skills necessary to realize their full potential.

California State PTA further believes:

- The primary purpose of any language acquisition program for limited- and non-English speaking students should be to make a successful transition into English so they may progress well in the regular education program;
- The accurate assessment of each student's English and native language and academic skills is necessary to ensure placement in the program that best meets the educational needs of that student;
- English Language Learners should be served by appropriately credentialed staff;
- Appropriate staff development opportunities, including a multicultural component, should be provided locally to assist teachers who instruct limited- and non-English speaking students;
- Local school districts must develop policies for and methods of achieving the above goals, and allocate adequate resources to assure that students can achieve proficiency, and advocate for additional state and federal funds if those resources are inadequate;
- Local school districts should evaluate their language acquisition programs and reclassification procedures and rates regularly. The findings should be reported to parents and the community;
- Parents have the right and the responsibility to participate in all decisions regarding the placement of their children in any program and must have recourse to an appeals process; and
- Adequate, objective and language-appropriate information should be available to parents so they can make informed decisions and be effective partners in their children's education.

[†] See related position statements: Funding of Mandated Programs: Effect on Public Education

Education: Higher Education

Adopted April 2005 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
April 2015 – Education Commission

California State PTA believes that California's system of public higher education, including community colleges, the California State University, and the University of California, plays a critical role in the economic and cultural vitality of our state and nation. Investment in students' postsecondary education enriches the lives of all Californians, and provides skilled workers to meet the needs of California's global economy.

PTA strongly believes that every student who meets the established eligibility requirements must be allowed access to the appropriate level of California's system of higher education; financial hardship should not prohibit eligible students from attending institutions of higher education and efforts should be made to provide financial assistance to students.

PTA supports increasing the number and amount of state and federal grants for students facing financial hardships, simplifying the application process for all forms of financial aid, improving the access to information on postsecondary financial aid, and expanding access to in-state tuition levels for California residents.

PTA further believes that schools and colleges should work together to facilitate articulation from secondary to higher education.

California State PTA recognizes that California's institutions of higher education are vital to preparing qualified educators for California's public schools. Californians must ensure that public schools of education have the resources to produce the teachers and administrators needed to staff pre-K through grade 12 public schools, and to prepare experts in the field of teaching and learning.

California State PTA supports adequate funding for California's system of higher education to ensure that eligible students have access to a higher education and that California provides the qualified educators needed for our public schools.

Education: Opposing Vouchers, Tuition Tax Credits and Deductions as Systems of Education Aid

Adopted November 1991 – Reviewed and deemed relevant May 2021 – Education Commission

California State PTA opposes any education voucher proposal that would divert public funds to private schools. California State PTA also opposes tuition tax credits and deductions for elementary and secondary school tuition and other education-related expenses. These funding methods would have a detrimental effect on our public school system.

California State PTA recognizes that changes must be made within the public schools to provide an equitable and excellent educational opportunity for every child. However, vouchers, tax credits, deductions and other diversions of public funds do not provide the means for bringing about improvements in our public schools.

California State PTA supports our system of public education as the major vehicle for preparing children for the future perpetuating the basic values of a democratic system of government. This system must be strengthened, must continue to be accountable to the public and must be supported by adequate public funds.

Education: Parental Choice in Public Schools

Adopted January 1989 – Reviewed and deemed relevant May 2021 – Education Commission

California State PTA believes it is important for parents, educators, and community members to acknowledge that no one educational program is best for all students. Schools and parents together must address the different ways students learn and how the public school system can provide the best education for all students. PTA supports public education, and has historically opposed and continues to oppose any tuition tax credit system or voucher that would allow public funds to flow to private/parochial schools.

PTA supports parental choice within the public school system. Parental choice may be defined as giving parents the right to select their children's schools from among a range of possible options. California State PTA believes options can be created within the public school system. PTAs should work with their local school districts in seeking creative ways of providing alternative programs. PTA believes that parental choice should be based on the educational needs of individual students with consideration for the child care needs of families.

Any system of "choice" supported by California State PTA must meet the following criteria:

- Availability of adequate and objective information, in a variety of languages as needed, about all public schools so that parents can make informed decisions about their children's schooling;
- Student admission is based on a fair, equitable and timely process at all schools;
- Equal access to educational opportunities including standards based curriculum and instruction, and high expectations for student achievement;
- Racial/ethnic/socioeconomic diversity of receiving or sending schools/school districts must be considered and maintained; and

- Parents have opportunities for meaningful involvement in their children's schools.

PTA encourages parents to work with their school districts to develop enriching educational opportunities and instructional programs for all students.

Education: Support of Public Education

Adopted October 1991 – Revised April 2015 – Reviewed and deemed relevant November 2020 – Education Commission

PTA supports and encourages excellence in public education and has since its founding in 1897. California State PTA believes that public education provides a common experience for building and maintaining a commitment to the basic values of a democratic system of government. A strong public education system is vital to California's well-being in a global society.

California State PTA believes that three key components to excellence in our public system of education are parental and community involvement, competent and caring educators, and adequate funding.

California State PTA supports strong family engagement programs in all public schools. Research shows the more involved parents and community members become in working with and supporting their schools, the higher the quality of education and the greater the opportunity for student success.

California State PTA believes that educational opportunities for students are dependent on the quality of instructional programs and personnel. California State PTA supports professional excellence of teachers and administrators in their preparation, recruitment, professional development and retention.

California State PTA recognized that excellence in education will cost money. All levels of government, local, state and federal, must share in providing adequate funding for our schools.

In order to strengthen our public schools and provide every student with an equitable and excellent education, California State PTA believes that parents, students, and educators have rights and responsibilities that must be preserved and exercised. These groups must work together to ensure that:

- The community sustains a viable public school system;
- Parents have the opportunity for involvement in their children's school;
- Appropriate transportation is provided for students to ensure equity;
- Specialized schools provide for a fair selection process;
- Adequate, objective and language-appropriate information must be made available to parents so they can make informed decisions and be effective partners in their children's education.

Strengthening the public schools requires that all Californians work together and provide support for our public school system. The priority of California must be children and public education.

Education: The Early Years, Ages 3 to 6

Adopted March 1988 – Revised April 2022 – Education Commission

California State PTA recognizes the significant positive or negative impact early education experiences have on a child's self-esteem, social competence and readiness to achieve academically. It is at this time in their lives that children acquire their knowledge about the physical and social worlds in which they live.

California State PTA believes that all children ages three to six should have the opportunity to experience early childhood education that is developmentally appropriate. There are certain components that are essential to any early education program if children are to become successful learners.

These components include, but are not limited to:

- An age-appropriate curriculum that provides physical, intellectual, social and emotional experiences for the individual child;
- Teachers with specialized early childhood training and commitment who understand how young children learn and know how to provide the appropriate curriculum;
- A flexible educational setting where each child's growth and maturity determines his or her pace for advancement; and
- A strong family engagement component designed to
 - Enable parents to enhance the child's development at home by providing parents with the knowledge needed to be their child's first teachers, emphasizing the importance of the first five years on children's long-term education success;
 - Help parents understand the age-appropriate well-rounded environment and the functions of the varied activities provided at school; and
 - Empower parents as advocates for implementation of an age-appropriate well-rounded educational program for all students.
- Public schools prepared to meet all students' needs as they enter by collaborating with preschool programs and parent/guardians in developing transition plans.

California State PTA recognizes on-going fiscal constraints on public education. Therefore, PTA supports the concept that creative solutions can be found to finance education for ages three to six through a combined use of public and private funds.

Education: The Elementary Years, Ages 6 to 10

Adopted April 1990 – Reviewed and deemed relevant February 2023 – Education Commission

California State PTA recognizes that children in the primary and elementary grades have an abundance of physical and intellectual energy, and that their physical and emotional growth, intellectual gains and shifting interests vary widely and develop unevenly. With few exceptions, every child is able to learn when his/her individual capability is recognized and his/her developing self-concept is carefully nurtured.

California State PTA believes that the elementary school must provide the environment, resources and structure that will enable each child to be a successful learner and to develop a positive self-image. Schools must effectively align standards; curriculum, assessment and accountability to ensure all students meet or exceed grade-level English language arts and mathematics State Standards. Components of a productive learning environment include, but are not limited to:

- A challenging and integrated curriculum that allows children to be engaged actively in the learning process;
- Academic activities that lead to understanding of course content while encouraging proficiency in basic skills and development of critical thinking skills;
- A comprehensive arts education curriculum;
- Flexible teaching strategies and flexible groupings that include children with varying achievement and ability levels, as appropriate, to ensure that each student achieves his/her maximum potential;
- Intervention strategies including counseling, and appropriate resources to provide needed assistance for students identified as not meeting grade-level English language arts and mathematics State Standards;
- Activities that teach students to become responsible members of the community;
- Strategies and resources to help every student develop a positive self-image and to combat the causes of at-risk behaviors; decrease the likelihood of dropping out; and
- Family engagement that emphasizes
 - Communication and collaboration with school staff in order to develop mutual understanding;
 - An understanding of the "parent as partner" role in areas such as homework, school progress, testing programs, academic and career planning; and
 - Empowering parents to be advocates for their own children's educational needs.

Education: The Middle Years, Ages 10 to 14

Adopted January 1989 – Reviewed by BOM February 2025

California State PTA recognizes that young adolescents have special needs. Early adolescence is a time of rapid physical, emotional, social, and intellectual changes.

These years serve as a transition, the vital link between childhood and older adolescence.

California State PTA believes that schools for the middle grades must:

- Address the personal developmental needs of adolescent students in order to open the way for academic achievement and to provide a successful transition from elementary to middle grades to high school
- Have a commitment to and a sincere concern for its students;
- Create a student centered environment where staff encourages each individual student to feel a sense of connectedness to the school;
- Provide students access to high quality, standards-based core curriculum;
- Provide a nurturing environment with ready access to counseling;
- Create and sustain a safe and healthy school environment; and
- Create opportunities for families to support the learning process at home and at school.

PTA further believes there are certain components that are essential to middle grade educational programs including, but not limited to:

- A configuration that groups grades 6, 7, and 8 or the creation of a “school-within-a-school” for those grades;
- A daily schedule that allows for blocks of instructional time to accommodate interdisciplinary team teaching and the integration of core curriculum subjects in groupings with instruction that meets the academic needs of all students;
- A credentialed staff (teachers, counselors and administrators) which
 - Is committed to working with middle grade students;
 - Is qualified to teach young adolescents and who has been specially prepared for assignments to the middle grades;
 - Implements instructional programs that enhance the intellectual and emotional development of all students.
- A variety of staff development options to enable teachers to learn teaching strategies that have proven effective with students of this age group;
- A comprehensive and flexible guidance/counseling plan to help students, with involvement of their parents, develop career and educational goals that is developed with students and their parents;
- A student advisement program, in addition to program counseling services, that provides students a one-on-one relationship with a caring adult throughout the middle grade years to assure continuity in providing advice on academic, personal and peer-relationship matters; and
- A strong parent education/involvement program designed to

- Help parents understand the physical, social, and intellectual needs of young adolescent students, and how the school may assist in meeting these needs;
- Assist parents to understand the importance of the development of an educational plan that ensures academic growth and a successful transition from school-to-work;
- Give parents meaningful roles in school governance;
- Communicate with families about the school program and students’ progress; and

PTA further believes that all education stakeholders are accountable for ensuring every child has the opportunity to reach his or her full potential.

Education: The High School Years, Ages 14 to 18

Adopted April 1991 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
April 2022 – Education Commission

California State PTA believes the future of our country depends upon how well we educate our students. We must ensure that all students, English and non-English speaking, have equal access to academically rigorous instructional programs that foster the ability to think critically and solve problems. Students should leave high school with a body of knowledge that opens the door to continued education, the world of work and lifelong learning. We must prevent students from dropping out of school. High schools must offer the most comprehensive and diversified education possible.

California State PTA believes family engagement should not end when the student enters high school. It is vital that parents must continue to take an active role in helping their child succeed.

Therefore, California State PTA supports a strong family engagement component with school practices that are designed to:

- Welcome and empower parents, to work collaboratively with students, teachers and administrators to make decisions and to share in setting the goals and direction of the school, thus promoting improved curriculum, better teaching and high student achievement;
- Assist parents, teachers and administrators in communicating and becoming aware of one another’s roles regarding student achievement; and
- Provide multiple opportunities for parents and students to access the resources on graduation requirements, college entrance requirements and career opportunities.

The capability to build a student’s sense of belonging is a fundamental step in shaping a high school. A sense of belonging can help to instill values and improve learning. Certain components are essential to effective high school education programs.

These include but are not limited to:

- A belief by teachers, administrators and counselors that every student has the ability to learn and will be encouraged to achieve his or her highest potential;
- Student access to high quality standard based core curriculum, advanced level courses and the arts;
- A high quality, diverse instructional program whose delivery allows students to make connections between classroom learning and its application to real life situations;
- Teachers who use relevant innovative instructional strategies that engage students in active learning that prepares them with the knowledge and life skills they need to be productive, contributing adults;
- Counseling and guidance assistance to help students make informed decisions that meet their individual needs;
- A setting that allows for alternatives to the traditional school;
- Effective high school suspension and dropout prevention and intervention programs to provide:
 - Collaboration with community agencies;
 - Community service and effective co-curricular activities;
 - School-business partnerships and internships;
 - Classes in life skills to prepare students for parenthood, for decision-making, and recognizing the consequences of choices;
- Diversity and inclusion awareness integrated into the curriculum;
- Opportunities for all students to have access throughout the curriculum to the study of technology, its applications, and the use of technology as a tool;
- Opportunities for career technical education to serve the needs of all students†;
- School opportunities for students to participate in community service;
- Quality co-curricular and extra curricular activities and programs, such as but not limited to athletics, visual, performing arts or leadership training.

†See related position statement: School-to-Career Technical Education.

Energy Conservation

Adopted May 1981 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
 January 2011 – Revised November 2020 – Health &
 Community Concerns Commission

Energy conservation includes all efforts made to reduce the consumption of energy. Energy can be conserved by using energy more efficiently and by reducing unnecessary use. Safety and reducing the use of carbon-based energy sources are major goals related to energy conservation.

Energy conservation and reducing the use of carbon-based energy can result in improved environmental quality and lower energy. Energy can be conserved by reducing waste and improving efficiency through

technological upgrades and improved operation and maintenance of existing processes.

California State PTA recognizes that present conditions necessitate the development of alternative sources, conservation, and the setting of priorities for uses of energy. Decisions regarding the type and location of alternative energy sources have environmental, social, political, and economic consequences in communities. In the search for and development of energy alternatives, environmental factors must be balanced with energy needs to ensure present and future generations their right to live in a safe and healthy community.

California State PTA believes:

- Alternative sources of energy should be encouraged. PTAs at all levels should promote public awareness programs to keep their members and the community informed about current technological advances and proposed sites for energy generating facilities;
- The PTA should work with other community groups in developing the awareness, knowledge and skills necessary to participate intelligently in the solution of short- and long-term energy problems;
- Each school should be urged to set an example of energy awareness, conservation and management;
- The PTA should encourage participation in communitywide public awareness education regarding the benefits of recycling; and
- Schools should be encouraged to implement the Education Code provisions concerning environmental instruction designed to teach students to value and conserve natural resources.

The California State PTA encourages parents to take measures that reduce short and long-term energy use and that improve the environment.

- Turn on lights only when needed and off when not needed.
- Replace incandescent and compact fluorescent light bulbs with light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs. LED bulbs use significantly less energy and last much longer.
- Turn off electrical appliances that are not being used.
- Use your dishwasher and washer/dryer efficiently. Wash only full loads. Let dishes air dry. Avoid washing during peak hours (noon to 6 p.m. weekdays). Hang your laundry on the line to dry.
- Keep your refrigerator efficient. Vacuum the dust off the refrigerator coils (found in the back or underneath the unit) every 3 months - it uses less energy when clean. Turn on the energy saver switch, if you have one. Check the gaskets around the door and make sure it shuts tight.
- Don't overfill your freezer. Overfilling your freezer doesn't allow the cold air to efficiently circulate to keep the food cold, making your freezer work ever harder, which consumes more energy.
- Monitor your home's temperature. During winter, keep your thermostat no higher than 68° F during the day and 55° F at night. Reduce the

heating/cooling when you are not home. During summer, set the thermostat no lower than 75°F. Move shades and curtains to help heat or cool the house. Keep the windows and doors closed when the heat/cool is on. Seal window and door leaks with caulk and weather-stripping. Keep your water heater cozy. Wrap your water heater in an insulating blanket to improve efficiency. Turn its thermostat down to 120°F (140°F if you have a dishwasher without a booster heater). This saves energy and helps prevent hot water burns. Turn the setting to 'VACATION' when away for an extended time.

Environmental Health and Environmental Education

Adopted March 2007 – Revised May 2021 – Education and Health & Community Concerns Commissions

California State PTA believes all children and youth have the right to live and attend school in a healthy environment free from avoidable environmental hazards.

California State PTA seeks to educate its members to recognize the importance of a healthy environment and the potential dangers that environmental contamination poses for children's developing minds and bodies. PTA supports the implementation of a comprehensive K-12 environmental education curriculum for all students.

Children are at an increased risk of cancer, neurobehavioral impairment, organ damage, weakening of the immune system, and other health problems as a result of exposure to both active and inert ingredients in chemical agents and pesticides. California State PTA believes that chemical agents and pesticides are by nature poisons, and exposure even at low levels may cause serious adverse health effects. Children, because of their higher metabolism, their developing organs and life-systems, and their play behavior patterns, are particularly vulnerable to the health impact of chemical agents and pesticides. Toxic substances can enter the body and travel in the bloodstream to internal organs. Effects that are produced this way are called systemic. The internal organs most commonly affected are the liver, kidneys, heart, nervous system (including the brain) and reproductive system.

To protect the environment and human health, PTA urges its members to become knowledgeable about the environmental conditions in their schools and communities and about current efforts to protect or improve the local environment, both indoors and out.

PTAs are urged to work with their local school health councils and school wellness programs to develop and implement tools that will help them assess and address unhealthy environmental conditions in schools and communities. Such conditions may include indoor air quality, high lead levels in water, exposures to chemical agents and pesticides stored near juvenile facilities or adrift in agricultural communities, and proximity to waste incinerators.

California State PTA supports the use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM). This program does not prohibit all use of pesticides, but rather seeks to:

- Minimize exposure to chemical agents and pesticides;
- Emphasize non-chemical pest control methods;
- Address the causes of pest infestation;
- Require that a common-sense, environmentally sensitive approach to pest prevention be implemented; and
- Implement a basic four-step process of inspection, monitoring and recording, determining and documenting treatment, and evaluating results.

IPM is an ecosystem-based strategy that focuses on long-term prevention of pests or their damage through a combination of techniques such as biological control, habitat manipulation, modification of cultural practices, and use of resistant varieties. Pesticides are used only after monitoring indicates they are needed according to established guidelines, and treatments are made with the goal of removing only the target organism. Pest control materials are selected and applied in a manner that minimizes risks to human health, beneficial and non-target organisms, and the environment.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed a resource guide for school administrators related to chemical management. The sources of dangerous chemicals in schools are not always obvious. The resource guide applies to any school that purchases, uses, stores, or disposes of chemicals or products containing dangerous materials. Some of the most common dangerous chemical products in schools include:

- Laboratory chemicals (e.g., acids, bases, solvents, metals, salts)
- Industrial arts or "shop" classes (e.g., inks, degreasers)
- Art supplies (e.g., paints, photographic chemicals)
- Pesticides, fertilizers, and de-icers
- Maintenance supplies and equipment (e.g., drain cleaners, floor stripping products, paints, oils, boiler cleaners, fuels, mercury switches and gauges)
- Health care equipment (e.g., mercury thermometers).

California State PTA recognizes that protecting the environment and human health is a complex, interconnected and perpetual endeavor. PTA encourages schools, families, and communities to support environmental decision-making processes that are open to all and that are based on stewardship of the environment and concern for the people who live in it, especially the most vulnerable, our children.

California State PTA urges its unit, council and district PTAs to advocate for safer environments in and around schools by:

- Supporting efforts at the federal, state, and local levels to eliminate the environmental health hazards caused by pesticide use;
- Encouraging governmental bodies to regulate the use of pesticides in order to maximize state and local control;
- Encouraging long-term solutions for the control of pests that will significantly lower children's exposure to

- harmful chemicals by using the least toxic combination of pest control strategies; and
- Supporting “right-to-know” legislation and regulations in order for parents and the community to be more aware of the environmental health hazards associated with the use of pesticides.

https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-01/documents/chemical_management_resource_guide_school_administrators_508.pdf

Equity for All Children and Youth

Adopted 1983 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
 April 2015 – Revised May 2020 – Legislation Action Committee

California State PTA believes in equity in every aspect of life for all children and youth, while recognizing that each child is unique with individual needs and talents.

- Evidence of culturally responsive instruction to meet the needs of all students to help eliminate the achievement gap.
- Affirmation of teacher collaboration through professional learning communities, articulation between grade levels, and participating in ongoing staff development.
- Teacher self-assessment based on state, district and county office standards.
- Multiple types of observations by the designated administrator, including but not limited to: formal and informal classroom visits, one-on-one discussion with the teacher, classroom materials and course of study review, and parent and student feedback.
- Evidence that there is consistent collaboration with staff, parents/guardians, students and administrators.

California State PTA believes that the evaluation of teachers must occur in a planned, regular, and ongoing manner that promotes teacher competency and effectiveness, and student academic growth.

Evaluation of Teachers

Adopted March 2011 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
 August 2022 – Education Commission

California State PTA believes that every student deserves highly qualified and effective teachers, so that all students can learn and develop critical skills that prepare them to be college- and workforce-ready. California State PTA believes that the evaluation of teachers should measure both student learning and teacher effectiveness.

California State PTA believes that meaningful teacher evaluation should be transparent and provide all teachers with clear expectations and regular feedback that helps them grow as professionals.

Any teacher evaluation system should establish clear criteria and measures that must be included in all teacher evaluation systems, should allow individual school districts the flexibility to devise a system that meets the needs of their pupils, teachers, administrators and parents.

The evaluation process should consist of multiple measures available to the public to determine teacher effectiveness through student academic performance, and identify areas in need of professional development and teacher support.

Multiple measures should include, but are not limited to:

- Formative and summative assessment of student performance, district and state tests, classroom work, class room participation, student grades, and student projects and portfolios.
- Evidence of high expectations, high student performance and engagement.
- Evidence that teachers are engaging parents and guardians in the student’s education.
- Affirmation that there is differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all learners.

Fair Housing

Adopted May 1981 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
 November 2020 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA believes:

- All families need to have access to safe and affordable housing;
- There is necessity for enactment and enforcement of laws to end discrimination in the marketing, sale and/or rental of housing;
- Encouragement should be given to the formation of broadly based community action groups to promote citizen understanding of housing issues and involvement in advocating programs that will meet the housing needs in their communities; and
- Encouragement should be given to the development of rental and individually owned homes for low- and moderate-income families and that such housing should not be isolated within local communities.

PTAs should encourage city councils, county boards of supervisors, and city and county housing authorities to

- Adopt and implement balanced community policies that stipulate a mix of housing types as well as provisions for the development of housing for low- and moderate-income families;
- Develop and implement programs utilizing all available funding sources to provide rental and individually owned single- and multi-family housing for low- and moderate-income families.

Family Engagement in Credentialing Programs

Adopted February 2012 – Reviewed and deemed relevant February 2022 – Family Engagement Commission

California State PTA recognizes there is a direct correlation between family engagement and student achievement. Research and studies over the past 20 years have definitively shown that when administrators and teachers engage parents in the educational process, significant growth occurs in student learning.

California State PTA therefore believes that partnerships between parents, professional educators, and community will significantly impact closing the achievement gap; reducing retention rates; decreasing dropout and truancy rates; increasing graduation rates; and improving the health of students and their families. For all students to achieve their potential, regardless of their cultural background, socioeconomic status, or learning challenges, requires a partnership between families, communities, and professional educators.

California was the first state to enact legislation (AB 1264 Martinez, Chapter 767, Statutes of 1993) calling for prospective teachers and certified educators to "serve as partners and guardians in the education of children." To formally prepare teachers and administrators to increase family engagement in education, the PTA believes that credentialing programs for educators must include family engagement components.

California State PTA therefore supports the following steps necessary to change administrator and teacher credentialing requirements:

- Reviewing California Education Code 11500-11506 on parent involvement.
- Changing California laws and policies to require teacher and administrative credentialing programs to have family engagement components.
- Convening a task force of parents, school board members, teachers, K-12 school administrators, administrators from educator preparation programs at institutions of higher education, representatives from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, and other experts to pursue legislation that includes accountability and funding for both family engagement courses in programs for new teachers and administrators, as well as professional development in family engagement for administrators and teachers who are already credentialed.
- Working collaboratively with institutions of higher education to identify and integrate research-based standards and strategies for family engagement into teacher and administrator preparation courses, text books, and student teaching experiences.
- Ensuring that family engagement standards include strategies that effectively engage families from diverse backgrounds and school communities.
- Ensuring that classes on family engagement become a requirement for obtaining both the California teaching and administrative credentials.
- Increasing the number of both pre-service and in-service educational opportunities for teachers and administrators to learn how to effectively engage

parents of all backgrounds as partners in the education of their children.

- Implementing both accountability measures and incentives for implementing strategies to increase levels of family engagement at all public schools including charter schools and schools receiving Title 1 funding.
- Introducing federal legislation that supports family engagement training for all prospective teachers and administrators, as well as professional development in family engagement for all current teachers and administrators in all states.

Family Planning

Adopted January 1966 – Revised April 2017 – Reviewed and Deemed Relevant February 2022 – Family Engagement Commission

California State PTA believes there should be equal access to family planning guidance and services regardless of the economic or geographic circumstances of any family or individual. PTA further believes persons seeking family planning should be able to receive those services compatible with their beliefs and needs.

According to the United Nations, access to safe, voluntary family planning is a human right and is central to gender equality, women's empowerment and poverty reduction. Family planning services are defined as "educational, comprehensive medical or social activities that enable individuals, including minors, to determine freely the number and spacing of their children and to select the means by which this may be achieved".

Therefore, PTA supports equal access to family planning guidance and services because of its importance to the health and welfare of parents and children and for the economic security of the family.

Family Responsibility and Accountability

Adopted March 1989 – Reviewed and deemed relevant April 2022 – Family Engagement Commission

California State PTA believes all children and youth are entitled to equitable privileges, equal justice, and equitable opportunities. In order for children to develop into mature, productive adult citizens, PTA believes they need:

- Stability in their family settings;
- Physical and social-emotional support conducive to healthy growth and development;
- Financial support to meet basic needs and, to the extent possible within the family's means, to enrich the child's development.

California State PTA believes the family is the basic unit in our society responsible for the support and nurturing of children. PTA further believes that both parents/guardians, whether living together or apart, have joint responsibility to support and educate their children, and to promote optimal development of each child. This means:

- Support of children until age 18;
- Support of children (until age 24) who are unmarried or otherwise unemancipated and who are students in good standing, attending high school or an accredited institution for higher learning or vocational training.

PTA supports programs that hold parents/guardians accountable for meeting these responsibilities.

Family Services

Adopted May 1966 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
November 2022 – Health & Community Concerns
Commission

California State PTA believes that children should not be deprived or penalized because of the family situation in which they live.

California State PTA supports:

- Coordination of health, welfare and educational services to meet family needs;
- Programs that provide education and training to enhance parenting skills to meet the needs of individual families;
- Services that enable children with special needs to take advantage of all educational opportunities;
- Services for children whose parents or caregivers are incapacitated or temporarily absent from the home, who have been separated from their families or caregivers;
- Programs and services for individuals and families who are touched by the juvenile justice and foster care systems; and
- Full funding for mandated programs.

California State PTA believes every child has the right to be provided the opportunity to become a self-respecting, contributing member of society.

Firearms and Assault Weapons

Adopted July 1990 – Revised August 2023 – Health and
Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA has a long history and proud tradition of supporting legislation and programs for the safety and protection of children, youth, and families. School safety is a critical priority for all parents, educators, students and community members. We must make every attempt to reduce violence, especially incidents that involve firearms.

California State PTA recognizes the importance of a safe learning environment in attaining the highest level of students learning and achievement. California State PTA believes the most effective day-to-day school climate to be gun-free, but defers to local collaborative decision-making to allow for the presence of law enforcement deployed in community-oriented policing.

California State PTA supports state and federal legislation and restrictions that protect children and youth from gun violence and would:

- Require a firearm licensure procedure that includes a minimum 3-day waiting period and background check to screen out illegal firearm purchasers such as convicted felons and drug-related offenders;
- Require a firearm licensing procedure that includes proof of passing a state-certified course in appropriate firearms use and safe handling practice;
- Restrict internet gun sales, including kits that can be used to make/modify guns;
- Enforce federal and state minimum age requirements for gun purchases;
- Require safety devices, including childproof trigger locks, on all firearms offered for sale, delivery or transfer;
- Prohibit sale and possession of assault weapons for non-military/non-law enforcement use and require a registration process for those persons who now legally own such firearms;
- Prohibit for non-military/non-law enforcement purposes, the manufacture, importation, possession, sale or resale of accessories and ammunition designed for assault weapons;
- Ban the manufacture, sale or possession of “junk guns”/Saturday night specials;
- Ban armor-piercing ammunition;
- Control the illegal possession of firearms and other lethal weapons on school campuses;
- Support state and federal funding initiatives for the research of the causes and effects of gun violence.

California State PTA believes we must enact legislation that will reduce gun violence and help protect children and youth. California State PTA further supports:

- Education programs that stress the importance of firearm safety and awareness, including the risks of unsecured firearms in the home, and the use and availability of firearm safety devices, including trigger locks;
- Education programs to inform parents and community members about the harm and injury gun violence inflicts on children and youth;
- Public awareness campaigns regarding the importance of legislation for the safety and protection of the public, especially children and youth.

Freedom to Learn

Adopted January 1966 – Reviewed and deemed
relevant April 2022 – Education Commission

In a free society, public schools, universities, colleges and libraries exist, in part, for the development and exchange of ideas. California State PTA believes these institutions can accomplish this objective only by assuming their responsibility to provide opportunities for each individual to rid himself of the bonds of ignorance and the restrictions of prejudice, without intimidation.

California State PTA believes:

- Schools and colleges should offer a wide range of learning experiences appropriate to the student's intellectual, physical and emotional maturity;
- Libraries, technology and all other types of instructional resources should be adequate in quality and quantity to provide for scholarly research;
- An educational environment should stimulate full investigation of all aspects of a subject with freedom of inquiry and freedom of discussion;
- Full opportunity should be provided for each individual to determine his own opinions.

PTA is concerned that the development of positive attitudes and deep understanding be based on factual information and fundamental concepts. Education should be free from the kinds of emotional pressures which tend to restrict freedom of reason and choice.

Funding of Mandated Programs: Effect on Public Education[†]

Adopted March 1983 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
May 2021 – Education Commission

California State PTA believes it is essential to appropriate adequate resources to fully fund all mandated programs and services. Since school districts are legally obligated to implement all mandates, enactment of such laws without sufficient funds for total implementation imposes severe fiscal constraints on the overall educational program of the district.

[†]See related position statements: Education of English Language Learners; and Special Education.

Gang Awareness

Adopted May 1989 – Revised May 2016 – Reviewed and deemed relevant with editorial changes November 2020 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA recognizes the harmful impact of gangs on our children and youth. Gang participation is increasing at an alarming rate in California. Gangs include young people from all socio-economic levels and membership crosses gender lines.

Throughout California, gang members recruit, threaten, harass, coerce intimidate and manipulate children into joining gangs. Gangs usually lead children to adopt negative behavioral changes. Children and youth who join gangs often become involved in criminal activities.

Early intervention and education is the first and most important step in awareness of gangs and gang activities. Students, parents and educators armed with such basic knowledge are better able to prevent children from joining gangs.

PTA advocates:

- Creating meaningful jobs for youth and places or activities that offer a positive sense of belonging;
- Educating students, parents and educators about gangs; reasons why youth join, recognition of gang characteristics

and symbols in their community, current trends and how to steer their children away from gangs;

- Adopting and implementing school district policies designed to protect children, youth, and staff from gangs;
- Developing community partnerships to mobilize local actions and resources to create positive alternatives to gang involvement; and
- Partnering with local law enforcement agencies to obtain current information.

Grief Sensitive Schools: Building Healthy Coping Skills

Adopted May 2021 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA understands that everyone copes with death and grief differently. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), grief is a normal response to loss. California State PTA understands that people experiencing grief can be influenced by developmental level, cultural traditions, religious beliefs, mental health, disabilities, family, personal characteristics, and previous experiences.

According to Dr. David Schonfeld, Director of National Center For School Crisis And Bereavement Children's Hospital Los Angeles, common grief reactions include:

- Fears and anxiety; school avoidance
- Sleep problems; change in appetite
- Difficulties with concentration and academic performance
- Sadness and depression
- Anger and irritability; distrust and suspiciousness
- Alcohol and other substance use
- Physical symptoms
- Grief
- Guilt

The CDC maintains that children may have a particularly hard time understanding and coping with the loss of a loved one. California State PTA believes that parents cannot protect children from loss and the pain it may cause, but parents can play a major role in helping children feel secure and cope in the healthiest way possible. It is important for parents or caregivers to engage with their children over their grief to promote healthy coping and acceptance. Parents may also need to obtain mental health services for the adolescent and family to deal with grief.

Ways Parents Can Help a Grieving Child:

- Take care of you. Grieving children do better when they have a healthy adult providing support and understanding to them.
- Be honest with your child. Discuss the tragic event with your child in a simple, direct and age-appropriate manner. Be honest and share clear, accurate information about what happened. Children need to hear the truth from someone they love.
- Listen. Let your child share their story about what happened. Let them ask you questions and answer

their questions as best as you can. Do not be afraid to say, "I don't know."

- Acknowledge your child's grief. Recognize that your child is grieving. Be careful not to impose your grief on your child. Allow them to grieve in their own way. It is normal for children to move in and out of grief reactions.
- Share. Tell your child stories about your own life -- times you were afraid, sad or angry. Tell them how you dealt with these situations and what you learned
- Be creative. Give your child a creative outlet to express their feelings. This can be done through drawing, writing, doing crafts, listening to music, or playing games.
- Maintain clear expectations. Keep rules and boundaries consistent. Children will often use their pain as an excuse for inappropriate behavior. While you should always acknowledge the grief your child is experiencing, you should also teach them to be accountable for their choices, no matter how they feel.
- Reassure your child. Remind your child that they are loved and that you are there for them. Children often fear that you or other people in their life might die. Let your child know the plan if such an event occurs.
- Create rituals and new family traditions. Rituals can give your family tangible ways to acknowledge your grief and honor the memory of those who have died. Lighting candles, recognizing special occasions, sharing stories about those who have died or volunteering with a local charity as a family are some of the ways you can incorporate new traditions or rituals.
- Be patient. Grief changes us in many ways. Be patient as you and your child experience your grief. Be patient with your child with repetition. A child often has to come back to the same details and questions.

According to the National Association of School Psychologists, school-based support and increased understanding are essential when a student experiences the death of a loved one. While each student will be affected differently depending on their developmental level, cultural beliefs, personal characteristics, family situation, and previous experiences, there are some strategies that can be helpful in supporting bereaved students.

California State PTA believes that schools have a unique and essential role to play in supporting grieving students. According to the Coalition to Support Grieving Students, many educators feel under-prepared to help. A study conducted by the American Federation of Teachers revealed that only 7% of classroom teachers have received any amount of bereavement training and 92% of them said childhood grief was a serious problem that deserved more attention from schools.

According to the Coalition to Support Grieving Students, students often have difficulty concentrating or learning while they are grieving. For grieving students, just being at school can be a challenge. The school can work with grieving students to adapt their course demands—postponing a test, allowing a student to complete a paper instead of taking a final, providing alternative activities that better match the student's current state of mind.

California State PTA supports the Grief Sensitive School Initiative which is defined as an accredited K-12 public or private institution that commits to help provide a supportive environment for students who have experienced the death of a loved one. Schools implementing the Initiative provide specific professional learning opportunities, share information with the school community about Grieving Students.org, increase awareness of the issue of grief at school, and review relevant school policies and procedures.

Schools can be the best setting to provide services to students and staff after a loss that affects the school community:

- Schools provide a familiar environment
- Large numbers of students can be served
- Many children will benefit from supportive services that can be readily provided in a school setting
- Students coping after the loss can be monitored over time and referrals for clinical services can be facilitated as needed
- Parents may be more willing to accept services provided in school settings, where the stigma associated with mental health services may be decreased

According to the School Crisis Center schools should listen, acknowledge feelings, and be nonjudgmental to students experiencing grief. School personnel should express feelings in an open, calm, and appropriate way that encourages students to share their feelings and grief. Some fairly simple interventions can help students navigate their experience more successfully and better manage school, friends, family and their own emotions. Taking the time to listen and acknowledge feelings in a nonjudgmental way, encouraging students to share their feelings and grief, and avoiding making assumptions and imposing their own beliefs on students creates a safe school environment for students to express themselves and cope more effectively.

To assist schools in helping students cope with grief, the California Department of Education has provided some helpful resources that are applicable for coping. For more information, contact your school district's coordinator for crisis response or your county office of education. Counseling and student support specialists (school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and school nurses) and local mental health specialists can assist in working with individual students and staff.

- <https://www.schoolcrisiscenter.org/>
- <https://www.schoolcrisiscenter.org/projects/coalition-to-support-grieving-students/>
- <https://childmind.org/guide/helping-children-cope-grief/>
- <https://childrengrieve.org/resources/10-ways-to-help-a-grieving-child>
- <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/mental-health-resources/addressing-grief/addressing-grief-tips-for-teachers-and-administrators>
- <https://chilliwackhospice.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/7-A-Helping-the-Grieving-Student.pdf>
- <https://grievingstudents.org/gssi/>

<https://www.aft.org/press-release/training-gap-limits-educators-ability-help-grieving-students>
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/cp/tragedy.asp>
<https://www.cdc.gov>
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Health Care Access for Children, Youth, Pregnant Women, and Their Families

Adopted March 1992 – Reviewed and deemed relevant November 2022 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA understands the importance of good health to a child's quality of life and believes that:

- A child's health and well-being begin prior to birth;
- Appropriate, timely health care is necessary for each child to have the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential, both physically and mentally; and
- Children, youth, pregnant women and their families are entitled to appropriate, confidential, and timely health care.

California State PTA recognizes that:

- A child's ability to learn is directly related to their state of health and that inadequate health care can be a barrier to education;
- Basic preventive health care can prevent permanent disability or lengthy remediation, and is a cost-effective use of health care dollars; and
- Current statistics indicate that many children and families in the United States have no health insurance, either public or private.

California State PTA supports efforts to provide equal access to quality, affordable basic preventive health care for all children, youth, pregnant women, and their families.

Health Education

Adopted January 1968 – Reviewed and deemed relevant February 2015 – Revised in August 2020 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA is concerned for the health and well-being of all children and youth. California State PTA believes that comprehensive health education is essential for each child to develop to his fullest potential.

California State PTA believes that comprehensive health education includes physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being. California State PTA recognizes that many students are sexually active and that this may result in pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection leading to AIDS and Human Papilloma Virus (HPV).

California State PTA also believes that the home, the school, and the community each bear some responsibility for the health of all children and youth. This shared responsibility should provide:

- Comprehensive health education for all children and youth;
- School curriculum and instruction related to good health and prevention of disease;
- Children and youth with the ability to make intelligent decisions that will develop and maintain good health habits;
- An awareness of individual, family, and community health needs; and
- Statewide health standards, accountability and testing.

Schools contribute to the achievement of public health goals in conjunction with their educational commitments. California State PTA believes that a strong, comprehensive program of health education taught by qualified personnel should be an integral part of the core school curriculum. Through coordinated school health programs that include access to health services, health education, and the involvement of parent and community coalitions, the health and well-being of all students can be promoted and protected.

California State PTA supports the right of a parent to be notified about any course of study regarding sex education and to review the curriculum materials to be used. PTA further supports the right of a parent/guardian to request in writing that his/her student be excused from such a course of study.

Numerous national health organizations have adopted policies in support of school condom availability as a component of comprehensive sexuality education. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that the proper and consistent use of latex or polyurethane condoms can greatly reduce a person's risk of acquiring or transmitting sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS and HPV.

While the California State PTA has no specific position on school districts making condoms available to students, if a school district elects to do so, PTA urges that the condoms should be made available only under the following specific conditions:

- That strategies for preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS and HPV should be taught, including abstinence from sexual relations and intravenous drug use.
- That the local school board has an existing condom availability policy.
- That a licensed health professional provide condoms only upon request.
- That verbal and written instructions be given in the proper use of condoms including information about spermicide(s) approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as well as information on condom failure at the time they are given to students.
- That any parent or guardian who objects to his or her student receiving a condom may so inform the school in writing. (The law requires school districts to notify parents when a condom availability policy is established.

PTAs should not assume the responsibility for making condoms available either with financial support or volunteer assistance due to the potential risk of liability.

Homeless Families and Children

Adopted July 1988 – Revised August 2020 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

Homelessness is a devastating experience for families. Thousands of families a year will experience homelessness. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, 41% of the homeless population is comprised of families.

Homelessness disrupts virtually every aspect of family life, damaging the physical and emotional health of family members, interfering with children's education and development, and frequently resulting in the separation of family members.

California State PTA believes:

- All children should have access to safe and affordable housing;
- All homeless children should have the same access to a free, appropriate public education and early childhood education opportunities as provided to other children and youth with barriers to enrollment caused by their homeless situation removed to every extent possible;
- Homeless children should not be prohibited from enrolling in their nearest school due to a lack of address and schools should facilitate enrollment as quickly as possible;
- All school personnel should help identify and refer eligible school-age students to the local school district liaison to help them with access to resources and assistance available from the school district, as guaranteed by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001;
- School personnel should take special care in the identification and aid provided to homeless children and youth so that the stigma of being homeless has as little impact as possible;
- Homeless youth with multiple high school placements should be afforded accommodations as necessary to be able to earn a high school diploma that falls short of local district course requirements but takes into account the courses taken by the student, and meets or exceeds state graduation requirements.

PTA urges all government agencies, non-profit organizations and citizen groups to cooperate in the development and implementation of programs that:

- Provide temporary shelters for homeless families and their children, working to keep the family intact;
- Give assistance to homeless families in securing low-cost, safe housing in their community;
- Offer education and retraining programs to help parents and guardians develop the skills to secure employment that will enable the family to be self-sufficient;
- Facilitate or provide access to mental and physical health services, counseling and other available social services to help the family thrive.

Inclusive Education: Universal Design Learning

Adopted November 2022 – Education Commission

California State PTA believes all students should have an equal opportunity to learn and succeed. As every student learns differently, schools must create flexible, barrier-free learning environments if all students are to become successful, lifelong learners.

California State PTA supports Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as a framework that enables equitable access and participation in education for all students, including those with disabilities, by offering flexibility and eliminating unnecessary hurdles in the learning process. UDL benefits all students by using a variety of flexible teaching methods to remove barriers to learning and adjust for individual needs. Giving everyone options can reduce the potential stigma for those who receive formal accommodations for a disability. UDL is driven not only by the findings from neuroscience and educational research but by a vision for equity.

Families should be a part of the process by informing them about UDL and how they can play an active role in the design and implementation in the classroom. Additionally, families can encourage school districts to adopt an approach to teaching and learning that values diversity and promotes improved learning outcomes for all students such as UDL as it provides a framework for designing and implementing curriculum that works for all children.

The three main principles of UDL are:

- Engagement - Looking for ways to motivate students.
- Representation - Providing information in more than one format.
- Action and Expression - Giving learners more than one way to interact with the material.

California State PTA supports UDL guidelines as a set of concrete suggestions that educators can apply in the classroom that all learners can access and participate in meaningful, challenging learning opportunities.

California State PTA further believes that classroom environments and learning should:

- Offer multiple ways to engage students by letting them make choices and reducing
- Help students stay focused and motivated by stressing the value and importance of goals and objectives.
- Provide options for self-regulation by teaching personal coping skills and strategies, and helping students develop self-assessment and reflection

- Make information accessible by allowing students to adjust how it is presented and offering alternatives for hearing and seeing
- Simplify language and symbols by explaining difficult words, grammar, and supporting understanding of text and mathematical
- Help students understand content by providing background information, pointing out important patterns, and guiding how they process and visualize information.
- Provide options for physical actions by allowing various methods for responding and giving access to helpful tools and
- Encourage expression and communication by offering multiple media options for creating and sharing
- Support planning and organization by helping students set goals and manage information and resources

Inclusiveness and Diversity[†]

Adopted April 1991 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
November 2017 – Membership Commission

The National Congress of Mothers, irrespective of creed, color or condition, stands for all parenthood, childhood, homehood.

Alice McLellan Birney, 1898, Cofounder of National PTA

Those words, true in 1898, are even truer today. PTAs everywhere must understand and embrace the uniqueness of all individuals, appreciating that each contributes a diversity of views, experiences, cultural heritage/traditions, skills/abilities, values and preferences. When PTAs respect differences yet acknowledge shared commonalities uniting their communities, and then develop meaningful priorities based upon their knowledge, they genuinely represent their communities. When PTAs represent their communities, they gain strength and effectiveness through increased volunteer and resource support.

Conversely, PTAs must recognize that prejudice exists based upon socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, language ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, and physical abilities. Such discrimination is hurtful, unfair, hostile and unwelcoming. When PTAs tolerate these acts, they repel members, lack representative leadership, and fail to serve all. Prejudice diminishes a PTA's ability to advocate effectively for all children, youth and families.

Therefore, California State PTA believes that PTAs at every level must:

- Openly assess beliefs and practices to assure inclusiveness and guard against discrimination;
- Make every effort to create a PTA board and membership that is inclusive and reflective of its community;

- Encourage that all PTA activities at the school be planned by a committee which is representative of the population;
- Foster programs and practices that eliminate bias, prejudice and misunderstanding within their communities;
- Become acquainted with the leaders of the many diverse groups in the community and collaborate with them to increase parent, family and community involvement;
- Educate its leaders and members to the needs, cultural beliefs, traditions and family structures of the population they serve; and
- Propose change wherever discriminatory practices are perceived.

California State PTA values and appreciates diversity, which enriches and strengthens the structure of our society within our state and nation.

[†]This position statement should be used in its entirety with no portion quoted out of context.

Instructional Materials

Adopted May 1972 – Reviewed by BOM February 2025

California State PTA believes instructional materials are fundamental to the educational program provided for California's youth. All students must have access to high-quality, standards-based "instructional materials" that complement curriculum implementation. The California Education Code Section 60010(h) defines instructional materials as "all materials that are designed for use by pupils and their teachers as a learning resource and help students acquire facts, skills, or opinions or develop cognitive processes. Instructional materials may be printed or nonprinted, and may include textbooks, technology-based materials, other educational materials, and tests." This includes Web-based and electronic textbooks.

California State PTA believes

- Students must be provided with a broad selection of instructional materials in each subject area that are based on local school district curriculum and student needs;
- All materials provided should be in usable condition, in sufficient quantities, available at the beginning of each course of study, and at no cost to students or teachers;
- The governing body of the local school district is legally responsible for the selection of instructional materials;
- Local school districts must have adequate annual resources to meet the costs of textbooks and other instructional materials for California students;
- Local boards of education should adopt policies that encourage the participation of parents/guardians, teachers and members of the community on committees formed for the review and selection of instructional materials;

- Local boards of education should establish a policy to address challenges to instructional materials including the establishment of a broad-based diverse community advisory committee to review challenged materials; and
- State Board of Education approval or adoption of K-8 instructional materials must follow a schedule that allows local school districts adequate time to make choices of adopted or approved materials, have reviews by the public, and have timely distribution of materials to schools.

Interpersonal Relations[†]

Adopted November 1968 – Reviewed and deemed relevant August 2023

California State PTA believes that good interpersonal relations are an important force in solving and preventing problems in communities. A high value must be placed on positive, interpersonal communication in which each person is treated with respect and appreciation, regardless of individual differences.

Interpersonal behaviors should reflect and support respect, courtesy/civility, appreciation, empathy, trust, inclusion and consultation without regard to differences in race, gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, national origin, language, religion, age, physical and academic ability, sexual orientation, or immigration status.

The United States is a product of immigration and the cultural pluralism of its people. It consists of a multitude of diverse ethnic, racial and religious groups that share in common American citizenship, a democratic way of life, and values that stress the worth and dignity of the individual.

California State PTA welcomes diversity. Diversity provides an opportunity for teaching, developing and promoting multicultural competencies and understanding. Racial, ethnic, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, religious, and other individual or group differences should not be regarded as hindrances to success. Instead they should be treated as positive opportunities for improving the quality of life.

The home and school are two of the strongest influences in shaping attitudes of children. All schools must be deeply involved with positive human relations in the education of the child, however, this is not the job of the school alone. All interacting forces in the community must work together, so that each member of society has equal access to opportunities to develop to their full potential.

Interpersonal relations impact the future of family and community well-being. Success of individuals, families, and communities depends on the type of interpersonal relations that are developed. It is essential for PTA at every level to commit efforts toward building communities that support positive interpersonal relations in the healthy development of all children.

[†]See related position statement: Character Education.

Juvenile Offenders in the Justice System

Adopted March 1987 – Reviewed and deemed relevant November 2022 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA supports a juvenile justice system which emphasizes rehabilitation of juveniles and holds offenders accountable and responsible for their actions. Juvenile court jurisdiction over youth up to age 18 should be retained in any efforts to reform the juvenile justice system.

Juvenile court judges should retain and exercise their discretionary power to refer to adult court those youthful offenders charged with violent crimes as defined in California State Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 707 (covers the fitness of juveniles to be referred to adult court).

The juvenile justice system should provide for:

- Legal protections and safeguards for all juveniles alleged to have committed an offense, ensuring that the rights of crime victims and all interested parties are recognized and enforced;
- Equal treatment of all juveniles without regard to ethnicity or economic status;
- Anonymity of all juveniles alleged to have committed an offense and who remain under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court;
- Confidentiality of court proceedings and records with the stipulation that appropriate juvenile justice officials be required to disclose to law enforcement agencies and school districts the name of any juvenile 14 years or older who is convicted of a serious or violent crime;
- A program of rehabilitation which includes education, career training, employability and counseling with a component on victim/offender reconciliation;
- Involvement of victims in all aspects of the judicial and correctional system, including appearance at hearings, notification, allocation (right to speak) and restitution;
- A restitution system for victims;
- Alternatives to placement in correctional facilities;
- Community-based education and treatment programs to ensure successful re-entry into the community;
- Confinement of juveniles committing offenses as described in section 602 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code when
 - Necessary to protect the offender or the person or property of another;
 - Necessary to ensure that the offender does not flee the jurisdiction of the court; or
 - The offender violates a specific condition of home release or parole; and
- Separation of status offenders (juveniles described in section 601 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code), and juvenile offenders (juveniles described in section 602 of the California Welfare and Institutions

Code) from adult inmates when confinement is necessary.

Lead Poisoning

Adopted May 1993 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
February 2015 – Revised August 2020 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), childhood lead poisoning is 100% preventable. The key is to keep children from coming into contact with lead. Learn how to prevent children's exposure to lead. Exposure to lead can seriously harm a child's health, including damage to the brain and nervous system, slowed growth and development, learning and behavior problems, and hearing and speech problems. No safe blood lead level in children has been identified.

California State PTA believes that early screening, identification, treatment, and prevention efforts are essential to protect all children from lead poisoning. Children between the ages of six months and six years should be screened using a blood lead test.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, childhood lead poisoning is a major, preventable pediatric health problem today, and it is entirely preventable.

California State PTA recognizes:

- Lead poisoning is a pervasive illness affecting all segments of society;
- Children exposed to lead can have impaired intellectual development;
- The highest risk age for lead poisoning is between one and six years;
- Most children with lead poisoning do not look or act sick;
- The effects of lead in the blood stream are subtle and are often mistaken for some other health or learning problems; and
- Expectant mothers exposed to lead can miscarry or they may have babies with low birthweight and retarded growth and development.

The major sources of lead exposure in children are:

- Peeling or chipping paint and deteriorating lead paint particles in household dust,
- Lead contaminated soil,
- Some home-remedy[†] medicines,
- Contact with skin or clothing of parents in lead-related occupations or hobbies,
- Lead content in some imported food cans, cookware, and tableware, and
- Tap water, usually from older plumbing with lead-containing connectors.

There are many ways parents can reduce children's exposure to lead before they are harmed. Lead hazards in a child's environment must be identified and controlled

or removed safely. Lead is invisible to the naked eye and has no smell.

California State PTA urges parents and others responsible for the health and safety of children to:

- Educate themselves about measures they can employ to prevent lead poisoning
 - See that children have a well-balanced diet which includes iron and calcium;
 - Wash children's hands often; especially after contact with anything suspected of containing lead; and
 - Keep areas around suspected lead contamination clean.
- Encourage schools and school districts to comply with the recommendations identified in the California Department of Public Health report, "Lead Hazards in California Public Elementary Schools and Child Care Facilities," including
 - Compliance with state and federal mandates;
 - Evaluation of the lead content of school drinking water at the outlet;
 - Fencing off or covering bare soils adjacent to painted exterior walls of buildings constructed prior to 1940;
 - Prioritization of deferred maintenance activities to classrooms that house the most vulnerable children;
 - Utilization of the expertise of Department of Public Health certified lead-related construction personnel; and
 - Adoption of and support for the voluntary Lead-safe Schools Protection Act.

† e.g., Azarcon, Greta, Pay-loo-ah, Alkohl or Kohl.

Life Skills

Adopted April 2023 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA is committed to ensuring that all students have access to comprehensive life skills education. In our complex world, students need to master a broad set of life skills in order to function successfully as adults. Essential life skills include but are not limited to financial literacy, media literacy, civic literacy, home management, and executive functioning.

Civic Literacy prepares students to transition into adulthood, giving them the knowledge they need to make informed decisions in a democracy. This includes understanding the roles and responsibilities of government institutions, the rights and responsibilities of citizens, and the importance of civic engagement. California State PTA believes that civic literacy education should be integrated into the K-12 curriculum to ensure that all students have a foundational understanding of our democratic system and are prepared to participate actively in civic life. This includes teaching students how to register for voting, engage in respectful and informed discourse, how to advocate for their rights and beliefs, and how to participate in local and national decision-making processes.

The California State PTA further supports integration of Home Management education in the school system as students need skills which will allow them to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Skills such as food safety, basic cooking, cleaning, home maintenance, personal safety, transportation, employment skills, medical care, and mindful consumerism will allow students to step into adulthood, prepared to be self-sufficient and capable adults.

California State PTA supports the inclusion of Executive Functioning education in K-12 schools. According to psychologists, executive function describes a set of cognitive processes and mental skills that help an individual plan, monitor, and successfully execute their goals. The “executive functions,” as they’re known, include attentional control, working memory, inhibition, and problem-solving, many of which are thought to originate in the brain’s prefrontal cortex. Modern students are exposed to an increasing amount of information and stressors and should be taught strategies for managing stress and anxiety, and for developing resilience and perseverance. California State PTA supports curricula that teaches time management, organization planning, prioritization and perseverance as key components of executive functioning education.

Financial Literacy education is a critical component of a well-rounded education and is essential for students to be able to navigate the complex financial world they will encounter as adults. In 1999 California State PTA delegates voted to adopt the resolution “Financial Literacy for Youth” in order to define this authority. Building on those principals, we believe a basic understanding of financial best practices is a key component in breaking the cycle of generational poverty. The California State PTA believes that financial literacy education should be taught in a way that is age-appropriate, relevant and engaging. It should be taught using a variety of methods and should be inclusive of all students, regardless of their background or socioeconomic status.

Studies have shown that financial literacy education can lead to improved academic performance and increased engagement in the classroom. For students who do not have access to financial mentorship at home, schools can be an essential source of guidance through high school and beyond. Recognizing the potential of financial literacy as a mode of upwards mobility, the California PTA supports legislation that champions financial literacy topics including, but not limited to money management, living expenses, credit and borrowing, financial planning, taxes, and financing student loans.

In today's digital age, Media Literacy is an essential life skill.. Students must be able to critically analyze and evaluate information presented through various forms of media, including social media, advertisements, news sources, and entertainment. As stated in its 2023 Position Statement, California State PTA supports the integration of media literacy education into the K-12 curriculum to ensure that students develop the necessary skills to navigate and interpret media in an informed and responsible manner. This includes teaching students how to identify bias, misinformation, and propaganda, and how to evaluate the credibility and reliability of sources.

The California State PTA firmly believes that comprehensive life skills education is crucial to the success of our students. We support legislation and advocacy that seeks to integrate financial literacy, media literacy, civil literacy, home management, and executive functioning education into the K-12 curriculum. This will lead to:

- Better decision making
- Ability to problem solve
- Improved communication
- Greater self-awareness
- Increased coping abilities
- Stronger relationships
- Higher self-esteem
- Healthier lifestyle choices

This will serve to provide students with the tools needed to navigate the complex world they will encounter as adults

Lottery Revenue and Public School Funding

Adopted January 2009 – Reviewed by BOM February 2025

California State PTA neither supports nor opposes the use of gambling or gaming to raise funds for the state's public schools. PTA does recognize that promoters of gaming programs capitalize on the market advantages of linking their gaming enterprises with public education. PTA also recognizes that revenue from the California State Lottery, enacted by a voter-approved initiative in 1984, reinforces a misconception among a significant portion of the voting public that education is “fully-funded” or “taken care of” by the State Lottery, although the Lottery has never contributed more than two percent of California's statewide funding for education. Further, PTA acknowledges that public schools have come to rely on revenue generated by the State Lottery, but believes lottery funds allocated to public schools must be used to supplement, never to supplant, the state's financial obligation to education. Lottery funds should never be used for ongoing expenditures and should always be treated as an annual infusion of one-time only funds.

PTA believes any effort to reform or modify the State Lottery should be guided by the principle of protecting education funding and holding it harmless. Any effort to modify the Lottery as part of a State Budget reform should be rational, transparent, and guided by the principle of fiscal responsibility.

PTA opposes efforts to:

- Mandate the purpose for which lottery funds may be spent, other than those purposes contained in the original voter-approved ballot measure, or approved by the State Legislature in conformity with provisions of the ballot measure;

- Divert lottery revenues to any purpose other than public education without identifying another source of revenue for schools to replace lost lottery funds;
- Change the formula for determining the percentage of lottery revenues allocated to school districts if the change would mean a lower percentage of revenues allocated to public schools; or
- Change the method of allocating lottery revenues other than directly from the State Controller's Office to local school districts.

Finally, California State PTA believes that funding public education is an important and noble goal, and a shared public responsibility best accomplished by non-regressive tax policies that include concepts that would provide sufficient revenues to fund quality education programs.

Marijuana Providers Near Schools

Adopted October 2010 –
Reviewed and deemed relevant November 2014 –
Revised in August 2020 – Health & Community
Concerns Commission

California State PTA believes in the importance of preventing and eliminating factors that may be detrimental to the health, safety and well-being of all children and youth.

California State PTA believes that children and youth must be given every opportunity to reach their full potential. Concerned individuals, agencies, and organizations must join together to address the needs of all children and youth. Together, families, schools, and communities can effectively strengthen and enhance the maturation of our children, resulting in emotionally secure, healthy, and socially responsible adults.

The Compassionate Use Act of 1996 (Health & Safety Code 11362.5) states that seriously ill Californians have the right to obtain and use marijuana for medical purposes where such use is deemed appropriate and has been recommended by a physician who has determined that the person's health would benefit from the use of marijuana in the treatment of cancer, anorexia, AIDS, chronic pain, spasticity, glaucoma, arthritis, migraine, or any other illness for which marijuana provides relief.

In 2016 California voters passed Proposition 64, the Adult Use of Marijuana Act (AUMA). Under Proposition 64, adults 21 years of age or older can legally grow, possess, and use cannabis for non-medicinal purposes, with certain restrictions. In 2017, California's laws regulating cannabis were substantially revised by comprehensive new legislation known as the Medicinal and Adult Use Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act (MAUCRSA). As of January 1, 2018, AUMA also made it legal to sell and distribute cannabis through a regulated business.

With the passage of the above legislation, medical marijuana dispensaries are flourishing throughout California. While these dispensaries are intended to serve the seriously ill, there is a growing concern that minors may also be able to purchase marijuana from the

dispensaries. In addition, advertising fliers are often distributed in the general area of the dispensaries, encouraging the use of marijuana. Locating medical marijuana dispensaries "next to a school not only advertises substance abuse, but also glamorizes it." With the passage of this legislation, no medicinal cannabis cooperative, collective, dispensary, operator, establishment, or provider who possesses, cultivates, or distributes medicinal cannabis pursuant to this article shall be located within a 600-foot radius of a school. The legislation does not prohibit a city, county, or city and county from adopting ordinances or policies that further restrict the location or establishment of a medicinal cannabis cooperative, collective, dispensary, operator, establishment, or provider.

Parents should know:

- It is illegal for anyone under 21 to smoke, consume, buy or possess cannabis (marijuana, weed, pot).
- If under 21 and caught in possession of cannabis, a child will be required to complete drug education or counseling and complete community service (unless the child has a current qualifying physician's recommendation or a valid county-issued medical marijuana identification card).
- Cannabis can affect a child's health:
 - Like cigarettes, smoking cannabis is harmful to the lungs.
 - Edibles may have higher concentrations of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). If a child eats too much, too fast, they are at higher risk for poisoning.
 - Using cannabis regularly in the teen years may lead to physical changes in the brain.
- Cannabis may impact a child's educational and professional goals and how successful they are in life.

Because their health and future are important, check out <https://cannabis.ca.gov/laws-regulations/> and learn more about how cannabis use impacts your body and brain.

Mass Media and the Family

Adopted May 1974 – Revised October 2012 – Revised May 2018 – Health and Communications Commission

California State PTA recognizes that mass media exerts a powerful influence on American families and on the education of children and youth.

California State PTA accepts the definition of mass media as a diversified collection of media technologies that reach a large audience via mass communication. The technologies through which this communication takes place include a variety of outlets:

- Broadcast media transmit information electronically, via such media as film, radio, recorded music, or television;
- Digital media comprises both internet and mobile mass communication, including such services as email, social media sites, websites, and Internet-based radio and television, as well as other outlets

with a presence on the web by such means as linking to or running TV ads online, or distributing Quick Response (QR) Codes in outdoor or print media to direct mobile users to a website;

- Outdoor media transmit information via such media as augmented reality (AR) advertising, billboards, blimps, flying billboards, or placards placed on kiosks, buses, buildings, shops, sports stadiums, subway cars, or trains;
- Print media transmit information via physical objects, such as books, comics, magazines, newspapers, or pamphlets; and
- Event organizing and public speaking can also be considered forms of mass media.

California State PTA recognizes that there are scientific studies, both in progress and completed, that examine the health risks associated with the use of mobile devices, computers, tablets, watches, and other devices. These studies include behavioral (social-emotional and addictive) and physiological (radiation) risks related to the amount of use by various age groups. While consensus is not complete on the risk levels at different ages, avoiding/minimizing these health risks at pre-adult ages is a prudent response endorsed by California State PTA. Recommended responses include:

- Daily time limits on the use of screen-based technologies;
- Storage of cellular, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, and other devices at a distance from the users;
- Use of Earphones and stand-alone speakers; and
- Time and frequency limits on the use of addictive media.

California State PTA urges parents to understand the potential dangers of social media and to discuss the issues with their children. PTA encourages parents to:

- Guide their children in the choice of media products when selecting material for viewing, listening, reading, or entertainment;
- Teach their children how to evaluate what they see, read and hear;
- Teach their children that many people on social media are not who they say they are and that they should not interact with strangers online;
- Be aware there are federal, state and local laws prohibiting the sale and distribution of obscene and/or pornographic materials to minors, and to inform the proper authorities when it appears these laws are being violated;
- Be knowledgeable about the availability of, and have the skills to use, tools to restrict access to media they find inappropriate for their children;
- Monitor their children's usage of social media, gaming sites, and access to inappropriate material on the internet;
- Discuss the dangers of revealing personal information on social media;

- Teach their children the risks of posting photographs online. Among other risks, the data contained in photos can be used to locate the exact geographic location of where the photo was taken;
- Stay involved in order to help guide tweens and teens to remain safe and mentally healthy;
- Teach their children the permanence of social media postings. Whatever is put out on the internet is there forever and can have consequences later in life;
- Write a list of rules about social media usage and discuss them with their children. Include questions such as: Is the posting going to hurt someone's feelings; Does it feel threatening in any way; and
- Have a conversation with their children about bullying, emphasizing the 'rule' of not joining friends who are gossiping about or teasing others online.

PTA respects the rights of adults to choose their own entertainment and educational fare. However, since young minds are easily influenced, PTA believes that producers of mass media have a responsibility to consider how media messages, images and experiences affect children and youth.

PTA encourages producers of mass media, cable providers, internet media providers, social media sites, and developers and advocates for technology tools to recognize their responsibility to provide parents with tools to control their children's exposure to inappropriate material.

California State PTA believes parents, producers, and providers of mass media share a responsibility to provide positive experiences that enrich the lives of children and youth. PTA further believes that media literacy relating to mass media, should be included in K-12 curriculum and in PTA parent education programs.

Media Literacy for Students and Families

Adopted February 2023 – Communications Commission

Media Literacy refers to the abilities to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate various media messages in a variety of forms. Those abilities encompass a broad set of skills and dispositions that are important for young people and for adults. According to research by Common Sense Education, media literacy requires that people be "learning how to assess the credibility of online sources, understanding how and why media is produced, and reflecting on their responsibilities as thoughtful media creators and consumers."

California State PTA believes that both adults and students need to learn how to better manage the flood of media messages the internet delivers to us all – every hour of every day. At the same time, we believe it is particularly important for young people to have the tools they need to function well in that environment. Educators and families all have a part to play in this effort.

Experts increasingly agree that schools need to directly teach young people about how to be literate and responsible consumers of information in this new media world.

Universities, non-partisan research organizations, and a variety of nonprofit groups have developed materials that can

guide such teaching. The California Department of Education is required by law to provide school districts with information about these resources.

Unfortunately, research indicates that, at the local level, the approach to media literacy education is fragmented at best and completely missing at worst. For example, state law does not require media literacy to be incorporated into the curriculum, either as a discrete subject or as a set of skills to be taught in multiple subject areas.

California State PTA believes the State of California can and should do more to encourage and support media literacy through the following actions:

- State policy should be strengthened to better support the infusion of media literacy skills into state curriculum frameworks.
- The California Department of Education should increase its attention to and the visibility of the instructional resources it has reviewed.
- Professional learning standards for teacher preparation and training programs should include media literacy.
- State education leaders should gather information regarding local school districts' incorporation of media literacy education into their curricula and what obstacles may stand in the way of them doing so.

Local PTA units, councils, and districts should learn more about school district policies regarding media literacy education. That includes joining with families, community members, and educators to agree on clear definitions of media literacy and its relationship to issues such as safe use of digital media more generally. PTA organizations can also be instrumental by doing the following:

- Encourage school districts to provide centralized, proactive support for the teaching of media literacy across all grade levels and subject areas; provide educators with access to professional development that informs such instruction; and provide parents/guardians with educational opportunities related to their own and their children's media literacy.
- Raise the visibility of free, research-based resources schools and families can use to strengthen media literacy skills of both students and adults.
- Use association resources to provide training and information that helps all adults become familiar with media literacy concepts and skills.

California State PTA believes that today's families – including both young people and adults – must develop media literacy skills. Ultimately, our democracy and our quality of life depend on it.

Minor Consent for Health Care

Adopted January 2011 – Revised February 2021 –
Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA believes that providing for the physical and mental well-being of the family unit is important to quality of life. California State PTA further believes that everyone is entitled to appropriate, confidential, and timely health care and has the right to make decisions regarding treatment based on medical advice and in accordance with personal beliefs.

According to California's minor consent laws adolescents aged 12 and over are allowed to consent to certain services without parent or guardian involvement. These services include:

- Treatment or prevention of pregnancy, including family planning and contraception
- Abortion
- Treatment for drug and alcohol related problems
- HIV/AIDS testing and treatment
- Diagnosis or treatment of certain infectious, contagious, or communicable diseases, including sexually transmitted diseases
- Mental health treatment and counseling
- Rape treatment
- Sexual assault treatment

The National Center for Youth Law's Teen Health Rights Initiative was established to provide resources and information to health care providers about California laws pertaining to minor consent, confidentiality, child abuse reporting, and other adolescent health concerns.

California State PTA believes that it is usually in the best interest of children and their families for parents to be involved in the health care decisions of their adolescent children. The California PTA also believes, however, that under certain circumstances, adolescents must be allowed to consent for their own health care in order to protect public health and/or the health and welfare of the minor. California State PTA supports exceptions provided by state statutes that allow minors to consent for their own care.

Missing and Exploited Children

Adopted March 1986 – Revised February 2021 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

According to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, every year, millions of men, women, and children are trafficked in countries around the world, including the United States. It is estimated that human trafficking is a \$32 billion per year industry, second only to drug trafficking as the most profitable form of transnational crime.

Human trafficking is a hidden crime, as victims rarely come forward to seek help because of language barriers, fear of the traffickers, and/or fear of law enforcement. Traffickers use force, fraud, or coercion to lure their victims and force them into labor or commercial sexual exploitation. They look for people who are vulnerable for a variety of reasons, including

economic hardship, natural disasters, or political instability. The trauma can be so great that many may not identify themselves as victims or ask for help, even in highly public settings.

According to National PTA, at least 200,000 children across the United States are estimated to be victims of domestic trafficking.

As an advocate for children, California State PTA believes PTA, has the responsibility to work with schools as well as social and government agencies to support:

- The ongoing operation of a state clearinghouse to serve as a missing children information center that would tie into the National Crime Information Center;
- The maintenance of the California Violent Crime Information Center to assist in the identification and the apprehension of persons responsible for the disappearance and exploitation of children, plus an automated computer system for response to reports of missing children;
- Local law enforcement agencies to make immediate assessment of steps needed to locate minors and, within 24 hours, file report(s) with clearinghouses and other agencies as may be appropriate;
- The establishment of a statewide computer system to provide multi-jurisdictional coordination;
- Programs to assist runaway and homeless youth and their families, including programs to temporarily provide safe shelters while families and/or appropriate agencies are contacted;
- Legislation that would provide stringent punishment for murderers of children and for perpetrators of serious and repeated physical, mental and sexual abuse crimes against children;
- Adequate funding for missing children programs and national missing and exploited children centers/clearinghouses;
- Legislation to require that the school records of missing children who had been attending school are appropriately marked in case another school requests that child's cumulative folder;
- The establishment of uniform school district policies statewide that would require appropriate school personnel to immediately contact law enforcement when they believe a child to be missing and report any suspected missing child in attendance at school to law enforcement as is required in cases of suspected child abuse;
- Encouraging elementary schools to offer age-appropriate child abduction prevention curriculum to children and to their parents;
- The display of posters or pictures of currently missing children in an area accessible to school personnel only within each school;
- Ensuring the reintegration of long-term missing children who have been located back into the school system; and
- Legislation to secure the safety of the school facility.

Signs of human trafficking can be recognized by the following red flags:

Common Work and Living Conditions:

- Is not free to leave or come and go as he/she wishes
- Is in the commercial sex industry and has a pimp / manager
- Is unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips
- Works excessively long and/or unusual hours
- Is not allowed breaks or suffers under unusual restrictions at work
- Owes a large debt and is unable to pay it off
- Was recruited through false promises concerning the nature and conditions of his/her work
- Faces high security measures at work and/or living locations (e.g. opaque windows, boarded up windows, bars on windows, barbed wire, security cameras, etc.)

Poor Mental Health or Abnormal Behavior:

- Is fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous/paranoid
- Exhibits unusually fearful or anxious behavior after bringing up law enforcement
- Avoids eye contact

Poor Physical Health:

- Lacks medical care and/or is denied medical services by employer
- Appears malnourished or shows signs of repeated exposure to harmful chemicals
- Shows signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement, or torture

Lack of Control:

- Has few or no personal possessions
- Is not in control of his/her own money, no financial records, or bank account
- Is not in control of his/her own identification documents (ID or passport)
- Is not allowed or able to speak for themselves (a third party may insist on being present and/or translating)

California State PTA urges immediate reporting of potential child trafficking situations:

- If a child is in urgent need of assistance, contact law enforcement or child protective services to report abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child.
- The Childhelp® National Child Abuse Hotline professional crisis counselors can connect a caller with a local number to report abuse. Contact Childhelp at 1.800.4.A.CHILD. (1.800.422.4453).
- The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® (NCMEC) aims to prevent child abduction and sexual exploitation; help find missing children; and assist victims of child abduction and sexual exploitation, their families, and the professionals who serve them. Contact NCMEC at 1.800.THE.LOST (1.800.843.5678) or report incidents at <http://www.missingkids.org/gethelpnow/cybertipline>
- The National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) operates a hotline 24 hours a day, every day. The NHTRC will help callers identify and coordinate with local organizations that protect and serve victims of trafficking. Contact the NHTRC at 1.888.373.7888.

Nutrition and Physical Activity Education

Adopted February 2019 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA believes that good nutrition – an adequate, well balanced diet combined with regular physical activity – is a cornerstone of good health. Poor, or inadequate nutrition can lead to impaired immunity, increased susceptibility to disease, delayed and restricted physical growth, and restricted mental and social development.

California State PTA believes a quality physical activity program that operates cooperatively within the school's comprehensive health program is essential to the well-being of the youth of California. Nutrition and regular physical activity are critical components of a full school curriculum. It is important that children be taught the relationship between good nutrition and good personal health so that they learn to choose foods and physical activities that foster a lifetime of healthful habits.

Research confirms the connection between good health, learning, and school attendance. Healthy children are:

- more successful in school,
- miss fewer days of school,
- are more attentive and well-behaved, and
- are more likely to graduate from high school and become successes in career and college.

California State PTA believes it is important to promote healthy lifestyles and positive changes in the diet and physical activity of our students. It is equally important that parents and children have access to the most up-to-date, science-based nutrition information available.

California State PTA supports actions by state and local governments and local educational agencies that provide for high-quality nutrition and physical activity programs for all children in schools.

PTA believes that:

- Every school should have a certified teacher, trained and educated in physical activity and nutrition education;
- The goal of physical activity and nutrition education should be to promote lifelong health and fitness habits in all students; and
- All students must be treated equally in an integrated physical education class, as required by state law.

California State PTA believes that students, staff, parents, and the community can benefit from an understanding of the importance of good nutrition and physical activity education by encouraging and supporting:

- Teacher training on comprehensive nutrition and physical activity education;
- The development of nutrition standards, aligned with federal, state, and local laws and guidelines, that address all aspects of food and beverages available on campus to all students.
- A comprehensive nutrition and physical activity curriculum component that provides students with

the knowledge to make healthy choices throughout their lives;

- Programs that provide nutrition and physical activity education for parents and the community;
- Continued updating and dissemination of the recommended daily nutritional guidelines of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA); and
- School districts to make maximum use of state and federal funds available for food service programs so that all children may have access to nutritious meals.

Opioid Overdose Reversal

Adopted February 2023 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA supports efforts for the prevention of drug and opioid use and the need to involve effective ways to address the use and abuse of opioids in addition to treatment when an overdose does occur.

The number of drug overdose deaths increased by nearly 30% from 2019 to 2020 and has quintupled since 1999. Nearly 75% of the 91,799 drug overdose deaths in 2020 involved an opioid. From 2019 to 2020, there were significant changes in opioid-involved death rates:

- Opioid-involved death rates increased by 38%.
- Prescription opioid-involved death rates increased by 17%.
- Heroin-involved death rates decreased by 7%.
- Synthetic opioid-involved death rates (excluding methadone) increased by 56%
- Overdose deaths linked to synthetic opioids like fentanyl tripled among teenagers and went up five times among Black teens from 2020 to 2022, according to provisional data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Using opioid overdose reversal drugs such as Naloxone (Narcan) to treat an overdose is highly successful in saving lives. Opioid overdose reversal drugs are life-saving medications that can reverse an overdose from opioids—including heroin, fentanyl, and prescription opioid medications—when given in time.

Youth exposure to opioids can range from but is not limited to prescribed use, social pressure, experimentation, self-medication, and accidental ingestion.

California State PTA believes that we must expand access to and use of opioid overdose reversal drugs as a critical life-saving tool. California State PTA supports advocacy and legislation that supports:

- Education about the widespread access to opioids, prevention and intervention
- Education on direct or indirect exposure to opioids requires training and access opioid overdose reversal drugs
- Pharmacies maintaining an adequate supply of opioid overdose reversal drugs

- Timely access to opioid overdose reversal drugs at all school facilities
- Distribution and education through local community outreach
- Training for the administration of the drug by administrators, teachers, staff and volunteers at school sites
- Creation of early intervention programs and improved access to treatment for opioid use disorders.

Parent/Caregiver Involvement: Building Bridges and Eliminating Barriers

*Adopted April 2011 – Reviewed by Board of
Managers February 2025*

California State PTA believes that a successful future for all children can be ensured only by families, schools, local and state agencies working in partnership with one another. It is in the best interests of children and their educational success that families, organizations and government entities seek ways to reduce or eliminate barriers to parent involvement.

School practices that promote involvement through outreach, programs/operations, engagement, community building, and support services have a statistically significant and direct influence on student success. PTA can help schools build bridges that eliminate barriers to effective parent and community involvement.

There are also circumstantial barriers to effective involvement. Circumstantial barriers refer to conditions and situations that distress the family, which may temporarily or chronically inhibit or impede their ability to perform their engagement roles and responsibilities in the learning, development, and well-being of their children, thereby reducing benefits children might otherwise receive.

Barriers to involvement in the area of basic functioning may include, but are not limited to:

- Childcare issues
- Illiteracy/language skills
- Time demands/stress (i.e., work schedules, appointments, etc., e.g., single parent families, etc.)
- Crisis (i.e., death, job loss, divorce/separation, accident, homelessness,
- Lack of financial resources (poverty) (e.g., inability to pay for services, supplies, clothing, alarm clock, etc.)
- Lack of transportation/mobility
- Transient in station (i.e., migrant worker, military, etc.)

Barriers to involvement in the area of health (e.g., health and development issues of the child or any immediate family member, diagnosed or undiagnosed, chronic or otherwise) include, but are not limited to:

- Illness
- Disability/special needs

- Lack of proper nutrition
- Lack of hygiene
- Lack of access to regular preventative healthcare
- Developmental issues
- Depression
- Psychological issues/mental illness

Barriers to involvement in the area of community concerns include, but are not limited to:

- Lack of community safety (i.e., traffic concerns, predators, gangs, etc., e.g., dangerous to walk to or from school)
- Litigation/lack of access to legal services
- Substance abuse/addiction
- Violence in the home
- Child abuse and neglect (child endangerment)
- Incarceration/court ordered restrictions
- Children in dependency or family court system

Since 1897, the PTA has been the voice of those families who felt disenfranchised. PTA must continue to be the voice for these families and reach out and understand the barriers that get in the way of families becoming involved. The National Standards for Family-School Partnership Implementation Guide provides the framework of how families, schools and communities should work together to support student success.

California State PTA believes that parents are a child's first teachers and family engagement is essential throughout a child's educational experience. Research has shown that greater parental involvement in children's education results in higher levels of student achievement. The State of California has a parent involvement policy that states "Schools that undertake and support strong comprehensive parent involvement efforts are more likely to produce students who perform better than identical schools that do not involve parents."

Parenting Education and Skills Development

*Adopted May 1987 – Revised November 2013 –
Reviewed and deemed relevant May 2020 – Family
Engagement Commission*

Research shows that parenting – the process of rearing a child – requires skills and an appreciation of child development from infancy to adulthood. Understanding how to support the social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth of children positively impacts their lives and promotes student success.

When families, schools and communities work together to develop, support and offer parent education programs and skills development for parents and caregivers, children can thrive.

California State PTA believes:

- Parenting is a challenging task for which there is often little preparation
- Comprehensive and accessible parenting education programs equip parents with more information, strategies and tools to support a child's growth and development
- Training for adults should be offered through parent education programs and other resources in the community
- Parenting lessons should be a component of life-skills courses in middle and high school

Parenting education should include information, skills development and training on:

- Physical, intellectual, social and emotional aspects of child development and how to support a child's growth from birth through adolescence to adulthood
- How to recognize, diagnose and treat special needs, including physical and learning disabilities, and how to collaboratively support special needs children
- Life skills including goal setting, decision-making and choices, responsibility, assertiveness and cooperation
- Roles and responsibilities for a well-functioning family
- Strategies for effective communication within the family as well as with teachers and others involved in a child's development
- Parents' rights and responsibilities in their role as advocates for children in schools and in the community
- The California educational system, family-school partnerships and the benefits of family engagement to support student success

PTA has a responsibility to:

- Develop, support and offer parenting education programs and other parenting resources and tools to its members and the community at large
- Help educators understand and appreciate the value of parenting education
- Encourage schools to provide parenting skills education for students
- Promote family engagement and develop parent leaders to promote student success
- Support teacher training programs in parenting skills education
- Collaborate with other state and local parenting programs to make parenting resources readily available and accessible to the maximum number of families

Schools have a responsibility to:

- Implement research-based best practices in the area of family engagement
- Share information with parents on important topics such as programs, classroom practices, parental rights and responsibilities, mandated state testing, and school rules

- Engage parents as partners in the learning process through regular communication about their students' performance, academic growth, assignments, expectations, and any areas of concern
- Provide workshops and programs that help parents build parenting skills and participate as advocates in the learning process

Positive Youth Development

Adopted March 1974 – Revised February 2018 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA believes that every child should have the opportunity to become a self-respecting, contributing member of society.

While traditionally systems have focused on a reactive emphasis to delinquent behavior; more recent approaches have focused on

- Decreasing risk factors that may increase the likelihood of problem behavior; and
- Increasing protective factors such as personal characteristics and environmental conditions that decrease the likelihood of problem behavior.

California State PTA believes that communities should invest in programs that utilize effective "positive youth development" models that have locally-based strategies and expand opportunities for youth to participate in structured activities with adult supervision outside school hours. Positive youth development is defined as "an intentional, pro-social approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people's strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths."

Positive youth development exists in dynamic environments that build upon the strengths of and recognizes risk behaviors in adolescents. These environments include systems of support, such as peer or social networks, school, family, and community.

California State PTA believes that early intervention prevents the onset of delinquent behavior and supports the development of a youth's assets and resilience.

When connecting youth to positive experiences, programs should include the following principles:

- Be proactive in promoting protective factors in young people.
- Complement efforts to prevent risky behaviors and attitudes in youth and support efforts that work to address negative behaviors.
- Acknowledge and further develop or strengthen youth assets.
- Enable youth to thrive and flourish and prepare them for a healthy, happy, and safe adulthood.
- Involve, value, and encourage youth to participate in the design, delivery, and evaluation of the services.

Programs are most effective when adults and youth work in partnership.

- Instill leadership qualities and active participation in youth.
- Encourage civic involvement and civic engagement so that youth contribute to their school and broader communities through service.
- Involve and engage every element of the community – schools, homes, community members, and others.

California State PTA agrees with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention that the following types of school and community programs be employed:

- Classroom and behavior management programs that address the highest priority problem areas, at appropriate developmental stages, and identify strengths (risk factors and protective factors) to which children in a particular community are exposed;
- Social competence promotion curricula that offer comprehensive interventions across many systems, including health and education, and deal simultaneously with many aspects of juveniles' lives;
- Conflict resolution and violence prevention curricula that build on juveniles' strengths and create opportunities for physical, social, mental and emotional development that fosters the expansion of positive self-esteem;
- Comprehensive community interventions that utilize available programs through coordinated cooperative endeavors with law enforcement and social service agencies.

California State PTA believes that through a responsive network of community-based services the obstacles faced by our most vulnerable children and their families can be overcome, their needs can be met, and they can flourish as responsible, contributing members of society.

¹www.youth.gov/youth-topics

Prevention and Intervention Programs

Adopted January 1995 – Revised February 2014 –
Revised May 2020 – Health and Community Concerns
and Family Engagement Commissions

California State PTA believes in the importance of preventing and eliminating factors that may be detrimental to the health, safety and well-being of all children, families and youth.

PTA believes that prevention efforts must involve the home, the school, and the community seeking effective ways to address the use and abuse of drugs, alcohol, and nicotine-containing products. The issues should be faced through improving family communication skills, knowledge of primary prevention education programs in the school, and developing community programs.

PTA believes every child has the right to develop to his fullest potential and is firmly committed to helping ensure that development through proactive methods. To fulfill this commitment, PTA initiates and supports legislation aimed at education, abuse prevention and control

related to issues of drug, alcohol and nicotine-containing product use.

Recognizing that any circumstance that interferes with a child's potential to become a healthy, educated, productive citizen places that child at risk, California State PTA believes prevention and intervention programs are vital.

California State PTA further believes that collaboration must occur between the school, health, social services, and other community agencies to design and provide intervention and prevention/support programs for youth. Early intervention is needed to end the escalating patterns of alienation, which often lead to anti-social and criminal behavior. Prevention and intervention programs must include the areas of physical health, mental health and be designed to enable children and youth to become productive citizens in their communities.

Such programs may include strategies that will:

- Enhance self-esteem and self-confidence;
- Emphasize disease prevention, immunization, visual screening, auditory testing and dental care;
- Educate youth on proper nutrition, appropriate prenatal care, and the dangers of using alcohol, drug, and nicotine-containing products;
- Provide counseling, and where appropriate, mentoring;
- Strengthen and expand alternative education programs;
- Provide life skills education including parenting and vocational training; and
- Provide positive age appropriate recreational, social, and cultural activities in the community before and after school hours and on weekends.

Prevention of Teen Pregnancy

Adopted January 1998 – Reviewed and deemed relevant November 2022 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA believes parents/guardians should take primary responsibility for teaching life skills that contribute to adolescent well-being: goal setting, decision-making, responsibility, assertiveness and recognizing the consequences of choices. Today, the health of young people is critically linked to the health-related behaviors they choose to adopt. School health programs can play a crucial role in promoting healthy behaviors while enhancing academic performance.

California State PTA supports Coordinated School Health Programs that address the needs of young people in a systematic, integrated way. Coordinated School Health Programs include abstinence and pregnancy/disease prevention, education related to information about social, emotional and physical development, family life education and communication, critical thinking, and decision-making skills.

Studies show that parenthood during adolescence usually results in interrupted education, inadequate job skills, limited employment opportunities, and inadequate

parenting skills. Further research has proven that adolescents who receive an appropriate and adequate family life education become sexually active at later ages than those who are deprived of this curriculum.

California State PTA urges its units, councils and districts to work for developmentally appropriate family life education within the context of a comprehensive health education curriculum which shall include but is not limited to:

- Components on sexual abstinence, pregnancy prevention and personal responsibility;
- The risks and consequences associated with sexual activity; and
- The increased health and emotional risks of adolescent pregnancy for mothers, fathers and babies.

Public Involvement in School Governance

Adopted January 2003 – Reviewed and deemed relevant April 2015 – Revised May 2020– Legislation Team

California State PTA believes in democratic principles of government and that, as part of the established democratic process, any governance system must include checks and balances between the executive, legislative and judicial systems. Citizens must maintain and exercise the right to vote for those who govern them. The officials they elect should be directly responsible and accountable to their constituents. Elected officials, state agencies, and local governing boards should be encouraged to actively seek citizen input in the decision-making process. The California State PTA believes these principles of governance are essential to a well-functioning and effective public education system so vital to a thriving democracy.

The California State Constitution, Article IX, sets forth the framework for California's public education system, including the election of a state superintendent of public instruction. Clear definition of responsibilities for each part of the school governance system is necessary for this structure to function smoothly.

California State PTA believes that the roles and responsibilities of each component in the state's education governance structure must be clearly defined, compatible, and not overlapping or contradictory.

- The elected Governor is responsible for proposing the State Budget, including education, which then is considered by the legislature.
- The elected Superintendent must have authority for the fiscal and programmatic implementation of the education program.
- The State Board of Education is appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the state Senate.

California State PTA believes the role of the Board of Education should be to advise the Superintendent of Public Instruction and to serve as a conduit for public input to education matters at the state level. PTA also believes the members of the State Board of Education

must reflect the demographics of the State and include representation of stakeholders, including parents.

California State PTA believes that input from members of the public is essential in education policy making at all levels of governance—state, county, and local school district.

California State PTA believes in local control of educational decisions when it is in the best interests of students to make these decisions locally. Local school districts should have the flexibility to meet the needs of their student populations. Local governing boards should focus on policies and planning and should allow superintendents full authority to manage the schools in their districts.

California State PTA further believes that County Offices of Education, as established in the California State Constitution, have an important role in providing services and oversight for local school districts, and in some instances direct control of local schools. The roles and responsibilities of members of County Boards of Education, whether elected or appointed, must also be clearly defined as programmatic and fiscal implementation, or advisory.

Appointed members of the State Board of Education must be qualified by either experience or training for their roles and be required to participate in ongoing professional development.

California State PTA strongly believes it is the responsibility of parents and community members to provide necessary input for effective decision-making at the local and state levels. The public is responsible for electing local school board members, for monitoring actions of the State Board of Education, and for holding both elected and appointed officials accountable for the decisions they make while fulfilling their established roles and responsibilities.

Public School Employer-Employee Negotiations

Adopted March 1974 – Reviewed and deemed relevant May 2021 – Education Commission

California State PTA recognizes that public school employer-employee collective bargaining is mandated by law and that negotiations greatly influence education. As mandated by law, the bargaining parties are required to make public their positions. These details must be provided to the public at the beginning of the process. PTA has the responsibility to become knowledgeable and to inform the public about the proposed contract and any proposed changes through the negotiations. As PTA is an organization whose membership is composed of parents, teachers, students, school district employees, school board members and concerned community members, PTA must remain neutral in a dispute arising from school employer-employee negotiations.

California State PTA believes:

- All school employees are entitled to the benefits of fair employment practices including due process, optimum working conditions and adequate salaries and benefits;

- Locally-elected school boards, as representatives of the people, have legal responsibility for decision-making;
- Local school boards and school employee organizations should be accountable to the public for the terms of the contract and the fiscal impact on the instructional program; and
- Full disclosure of the final contract should be made available to the public and fiscal impact of the contract should be discussed at a public hearing before the final vote of the school board.

California State PTA supports:

- The adoption of policies by local school boards that provide full opportunity for the public to express its views on the issues to be negotiated; and
- The right of school employees, through their organizations, to meet and negotiate in good faith with public school employers to reach written agreement on those matters within the scope of bargaining[†] according to state law. (Included in scope is the requirement that the local district peer assistance review process will be negotiated in the contract according to AB 2X, Statutes of 1999.)

The PTA has a responsibility to:

- Study and become informed early in the process about the proposed contracts and the fiscal implications and to analyze the effect on the students and the programs in the district;
- Inform all parties if any issue being negotiated either is consistent with or differs with adopted California State PTA position statements;
- Encourage all parties to work cooperatively to develop procedures to ensure that classrooms and students are not used for propaganda purposes;
- Remain neutral in the event of a dispute^{††};
- Continue with normal PTA activities in the event of a dispute; and
- Inform parents and community members about proposed contracts and encourage other school-based and community organizations to study proposed contracts.

(The above statement is a policy of the PTA as an organization, and is in no way intended as an infringement on the activities of its members acting as individuals.)

[†] Scope of bargaining - The law defines "scope," as a broad range of issues and subjects that either party may or may not introduce for negotiation. Scope is a crucial, dynamic, and frequently litigated area.

^{††} Dispute - a verbal controversy, a controversy, a debate, or quarrel on any issue under discussion.

Collective Bargaining

The following "walks" PTA leadership through the collective bargaining process and further provides a step-by-step guide for appropriate PTA activities.

A Checklist for Parents on the Role of Collective Bargaining in Public Education

What role can your PTA/PTSA assume when your local school board and teachers begin to negotiate a contract?

The most important thing your unit, council or district PTA can do is advocate for all children. The members can do this by:

- Studying the contract proposals and analyzing the effect on the students in the district.
- Asking the local school board and the local bargaining units: "What effect will this proposed contract have on all children?"
- Working with all education stakeholders to secure adequate school funding.

The PTA does not advocate the inclusion or exclusion of certain items in the proposed contract. However, PTA members should be knowledgeable and aware of the effects of the proposed contract provisions on students.

Some questions PTA members should ask include

- Are the implications of the provisions upon the budget/financial resources of the school district understood by all negotiators and the community?
- If a contract dispute should arise, would an arbitrator's interpretation of a provision have an adverse effect on the best interests of students?
- How will this proposed contract affect other school district employees?
- If the language of a provision is unclear, what is its history? Ask questions from both sides.

PTA unit/council/district PTAs should be aware of the progress of the negotiations, should publicize proposed changes as they are announced, and should give input appropriately to ensure all contract provisions place the interests of the students first.

A check list of items all parents should keep in mind when studying the contract proposals:

Guidelines for Class Size

Does the contract allow

- adequate student/teacher ratio for individual instruction?
- adjustments to meet unanticipated needs?
- flexibility for needed curriculum adjustments or needed education innovations?

Maintenance of Standards

Does the contract allow

- new programs and changes in scheduling and curriculum offerings to occur during the contract period?

Workday and Workload

Does the contract make provisions for

- assistance to students before and after classroom hours?

- staff development and orientation opportunities?
- staff attendance at evening meetings and student activities?
- lesson preparation time for appropriate personnel?
- flexibility to allow for creative and innovative strategies in the classroom?
- a definition of professional duties?

Conference Time

Does the contract permit and encourage

- reasonable periods of time for teachers and administrators to confer with parents and students at hours convenient for working parents?
- reasonable periods of time for meetings among school staff to promote collegiality and better understanding of students' needs?

Extracurricular Activities

Does the contract provide

- stipends or incentives for supervision of students participating in extracurricular activities such as sport, drama, music, school newspapers, etc.?

Release Time for Teachers

Does the contract provide

- unpaid leave for teachers who wish to improve their teaching skills?
- adequate classroom supervision by certificated personnel when the regularly scheduled teacher is absent from the classroom?

Guidelines for PTAs Regarding Public School Employer-Employee Negotiations

California State PTA strongly urges all unit, council and district PTAs to closely monitor their respective school boards' compliance with the Public Notice section of the Employer-Employee Relations Act. Unless a PTA does so, it will jeopardize its ability to make meaningful, timely comments about the initial and subsequent proposals under negotiation.

Contract Study Committee

PTA has a responsibility to become knowledgeable and to inform the public about proposed contracts. To fulfill this responsibility, the following steps should be taken:

1. Form a PTA study committee including representation from all PTA units within the school district. School district employees should not serve on this study committee because they have the opportunity to express their views through their respective bargaining units.

Please Note: Where a council or district PTA relates directly to a school district, the said council or district PTA should appoint the study committee. Where a group of units or councils relates to a school district, the units or councils should appoint members to serve on a study committee.

2. The PTA criterion for any study, including collective bargaining issues, must be, "WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON ALL CHILDREN?"
3. Encourage other school-based and community organizations to make their own studies of the proposed contract(s).
4. Study the current contract, the school district budget, initial contract proposals and subsequent proposals from the school board and employees' organization.
 - a. Adequate lead time is essential for any group beginning to study collective bargaining proposals since several key documents should be reviewed first. The committee must react to contract issues from a position of knowledge about the current fiscal condition of the school district, and how the current agreement affects the education of students.
 - b. Documents to be studied:

(1) **THE BUDGET** — A thorough briefing on the current year's budget is essential to understand a school district's financial condition and how funds are being allocated. This information should be presented by school district financial staff members in a clearly understandable format. (See Resource List, EdSource.)

(2) **THE CURRENT CONTRACT** — Almost all school districts have an existing contract with each employee bargaining unit. While it may seem to be a complex task, it is important that time be allowed for the committee to become familiar with and knowledgeable about the current contract language. Particular attention should be paid to the interests of parents and students in the current contract.

(3) **INITIAL CONTRACT PROPOSALS** — When each bargaining unit's new contract is to be negotiated, the initial proposals should be obtained from the employee group and the school district. Representatives from management and the employee groups should be invited to give their interpretations of the proposals. The language should be clear in its intent and the committee should ask, "WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON ALL CHILDREN?"

The school board must allow time for the community to study and then comment on the board's initial proposals before adopting them as the board's negotiating position. The PTA should find out what the school board's time frame is for this process.

(4) **SUBSEQUENT PROPOSALS** — The study committee should continue to monitor the negotiating process for the introduction of new subjects arising after the presentation of initial proposals. These subsequent proposals must be made public within 24 hours after their introduction.

5. If any questions or concerns arise from the study of the initial or subsequent proposals, those questions or concerns should be communicated to the group that originated those proposals.

6. Report results of the study with any recommended action(s) to the PTA membership. Recommendations might include comments to be made to the school board and/or comments to be made to the bargaining unit. Such comments must be made within the framework of California State PTA policies and positions.
7. Follow the reporting and communicating procedures through the negotiations process.
8. Study information published by your local media.

Employer-Employee Relations Act
Article 8. Public Notice

3547. Public meetings; public records

- (a) All initial proposals of exclusive representatives and of public school employers, which relate to matters within the scope of representation, shall be presented at a public meeting of the public school employer and thereafter shall be public records.
- (b) Meeting and negotiating shall not take place on any proposal until a reasonable time has elapsed after the submission of the proposal to enable the public to become informed and the public has the opportunity to express itself regarding the proposal at a meeting of the public school employer.
- (c) After the public has had the opportunity to express itself, the public school employer shall, at a meeting which is open to the public, adopt its initial proposal.
- (d) New subjects of meeting and negotiating arising after the presentation of initial proposals shall be made public within 24 hours. If a vote is taken on such subject by the public school employer, the vote thereon by each member shall also be made public within 24 hours.
- (e) The board may adopt regulations for the purpose of implementing this section, which are consistent with the intent of the section; namely that the public be informed of the issues that are being negotiated upon and have full opportunity to express their views on the issues to the public school employer, and to know of the positions of their elected representatives.

California Government Code (as of January 1990)

established for this purpose by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

California Government Code Section 3547.5

One of the recommendations from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to school boards for implementation of this law is that the board:

Make available to the public a copy of the proposed agreement prior to the day of the public meeting; the number of days the agreement should be made available to the public is determined locally.

California State PTA strongly recommends that unit, council and district PTAs request their respective school boards to adopt a policy that includes a minimum of ten days as the "number of days the agreement should be made available to the public...." The policy also should require the board to set time aside for public comment before entering into the written agreement.

California State PTA urges unit, council and district PTAs to study the proposed agreement and make appropriate comments. Such comments must be made within the framework of California State PTA policies and positions.

The Collective Bargaining Agreement

Current law requires the following:

Before a public school employer enters into a written agreement with an exclusive representative covering matters within the scope of representation, the major provisions of the agreement, including, but not limited to, the costs that would be incurred by the public school employer under the agreement for the current and subsequent fiscal years, shall be disclosed at a public meeting of the public school employer in a format

Sample Letter to the School Board, Superintendent and Bargaining Unit President

ORGANIZATION TITLE AND ADDRESS
(May be home address of PTA president)

Date

TO: _____, President,
Board of Trustees
_____ School District
_____ President, _____ Association
FROM: _____ PTA (Council or District PTA) President
SUBJECT: Negotiation

The _____ PTA has carefully reviewed the California State PTA's Toolkit information on negotiations. _____ PTA will follow these guidelines. Accordingly, we shall remain neutral during negotiations. We recognize that at times negotiations can be very difficult and time consuming for the school district and the employee association. We know you can appreciate the awkward situation labor negotiations can create for PTA president and PTA executive board members. To ensure compliance with the California State PTA policy of neutrality, PTA members will not attend separate meetings with either school district or employee association representatives. It would be appropriate for PTA to invite the school district superintendent or representative, a representative of the district employee association to discuss negotiations at a PTA board association meeting, but both sides must be represented at that time. PTA will not distribute information provided by either side, but may choose to distribute information PTA has prepared. The _____ PTA will continue its regularly scheduled meeting on the school or district sites, and its regular schedule of volunteer programs.

If you have any questions, I'd be happy to discuss our position of neutrality or any of the above-mentioned matters with you.

Sincerely,

PTA President (Council or District PTA)

Public Involvement in Collective Bargaining Process

When local school boards and employee groups meet at the negotiating table, the decisions made are of great importance to the quality of education provided for students. Parents and concerned community members have realized that negotiations by school employee groups such as those representing teachers, school office personnel, aides, custodians and cafeteria personnel greatly influence events in the classroom and have an impact on the overall cost of education.

It is essential that public input into this process be based on knowledge of the operations of the local school district. It is only in this way the public can become a valid part of the process and present viewpoints pertinent to the current contract or proposals, while consistently advocating positions that support a high standard of education for students in the classroom.

California State PTA has prepared this paper to assist its membership to better understand the dynamic role collective bargaining plays in education.

I. What Is Collective Bargaining?*

Collective bargaining is a labor relations process developed in the private sector which recognizes the historical conflict between management interests such as profits and the interests of workers such as salaries and working conditions. In the collective bargaining process, the representatives of labor and management present each other with demands—proposals—and proceed to compromise their divergent viewpoints—negotiate—until a written settlement—contract—is reached. Traditionally, private sector negotiations are conducted in private meetings of the two parties and often lead to an adversarial relationship.

II. Why Is There Collective Bargaining In Public Education?

The momentum for collective bargaining in public education increased during the late 1960s as teachers and other school employees felt they could not achieve desired economic benefits and acceptable working conditions as long as school boards, represented by superintendents, retained unilateral decision-making authority on these issues. More than 40 states now have collective bargaining laws.

III. What Is The Education Employment Relations Act?

The EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS ACT (EERA) provides that negotiations "shall" occur between school boards and their employee groups and negotiations "shall" be limited in scope to matters relating to wages, hours of employment, and other terms and conditions of employment. The process for establishing collective bargaining was initially spelled out in Senate Bill 160, the Educational Employment Relations Act of 1976 authored by Senator Al Rodda.

*Refer to Contents of a Typical Teachers Contract and GLOSSARY on collective bargaining terminology, Advocacy Chapter.

There are also subjects upon which the employer is only required to consult with the employee organization, e.g., definition of educational objectives, determination of course content and curriculum, and selection of textbooks. The school board may expand these topics as it wishes although none of the items for consultation has to be included in the contract.

In reality, however, the exact definition of scope is unclear and is one of the most controversial areas in negotiations. A regulatory body established by EERA—the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB)—is constantly called upon to settle disputes dealing with scope as well as carry out the many other duties with which the PERB has been charged.

IV. How Does Collective Bargaining Affect Education?

The negotiated contract becomes the instrument for school district governance on each provision that has been negotiated into the signed contract. Therefore, the contract has potential implications for everything which occurs in the classrooms of that school district since issues dealing with class size, hours of

employment, teacher transfer policies, procedures for employee evaluation as well as wages and fringe benefits all have an impact on the quality of education.

V. Why Should The Public Be Involved?

The community has a high stake in its public education system and, therefore, should be equally concerned about the negotiations which result in the final contract. While negotiations are usually conducted in private meetings between representatives of the school district and the employee group, the public must study the issues, evaluate their impact on the educational system, and know how the collective bargaining process works and how the public can fit into the process.

If a representative system of government such as ours—one in which school boards are elected to represent the public viewpoint—is to work, people must have the ability to:

1. Elect their representatives;
2. Influence those they elect;
3. Hold those officials accountable.

VI. How is the Public Provided For in EERA?

When EERA was passed, it included a very important section which provides for public access to the collective bargaining process. Called the "sunshine" clause, it mandates that all initial proposals of any contract negotiations between the employee group and the school district shall be presented at a public meeting of the board of education and that a "reasonable" time shall elapse to allow for public input before negotiations start. Since PERB has mandated all boards of education adopt a public notice policy, PTA members should become knowledgeable about their school district public notice policy and ensure that it specifies:

1. How the district will make the public aware of the issues;
2. When the public can speak to each set of proposals;
3. How the public may speak to the issues.

VII. How Does the Public Speak to the Issues?

According to EERA, any person or representative group may comment on the issues to be negotiated or on the contract itself at any meeting of the board of education. The PTA does not advocate the inclusion or exclusion of certain clauses in the contract. PTA members should ask, however, that each clause be analyzed to determine "WHAT EFFECT THIS WILL HAVE ON ALL CHILDREN."

When feasible, PTA involvement in the collective bargaining process should be through a Public Notice Sunshine Committee. This approach will allow the PTA organization to maintain its neutral position regarding any dispute(s) that may arise, and will preclude offending any one segment of PTA membership.

Contents of a Typical Teachers Contract (EdSource, March 1999)

Compensation: cost-of-living adjustment, salary schedule, pay for specific duties (department chair, coach), minimum teacher salaries; expenses, travel reimbursement, tuition reimbursement; mentor teacher selection process

Benefits: health and welfare premiums, specific plans offered, retiree benefits

Hours: length of work day, school year, student year, calendar (holidays, vacations), minimum days, preparation periods, lunch

Leaves: bereavement, pregnancy, child rearing, religious, sick leave, disability, sabbatical, personal need/necessity, jury duty, military, industrial accident/illness, catastrophic illness

Retirement: early retirement, benefits

Nondiscrimination Job Assignment: assignment, promotion, transfer, reassignment

Class size and case loads: pupils per teacher, students per counselor, number of teaching periods, instructional aides

Safety Conditions

Evaluation: procedures and remediation

Grievance: procedures, appeal process, mediation, arbitration

Discipline: procedures and criteria

Layoff and Reemployment

Organizational Security: payroll deduction of union dues ("agency fee"), maintenance of membership, fair share fees, union rights

Work Stoppage: "no-strikes" clause

Contract: duration, reopeners

Savings Clause: contract in effect if portion invalidated by court, Legislature

Management Rights

Consultation: topics, procedures

Glossary

* AGENCY SHOP – A requirement, usually contained in a negotiated agreement, that all employees in a bargaining entity pay a fee, (often called a "fair share" or "service" fee) covering the cost of representation to the employee organization which is the exclusive representative of the entity.

* AGREEMENT – A written negotiated contract between the employer and the recognized exclusive representative of employees in a bargaining entity that sets out conditions of employment (wages, hours, fringe benefits, etc.) for a stated period of time. Often contains a procedure for settling grievances over interpretation or application of the agreement and may include terms governing the parties' relationship. Under EERA, an

agreement, which may be for a period of no more than three years, becomes binding when accepted by both parties. PERB has no authority to enforce agreements.

* **ARBITRATION** – A method of resolving disputes between an employer and employee organization by submitting the dispute to a neutral third party (or tripartite panel) whose decision may be binding or merely advisory.

* **CERTIFICATED EMPLOYEE** – A school employee who is qualified by a certificate or credential to perform a particular educational service, such as classroom teacher, counselor and psychologist, as defined in Education Code.

*** **CFIER** – The California Foundation for Improvement of Employer-Employee Relations. The organization is committed to “building and maintaining effective labor-management relationships of partnerships.” Its activities include training programs in negotiations and problem-solving, neutral facilitation services, skill-building workshops and conferences, consultation, research and development, and long-term support service.

* **CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEE** – A school employee in a position not requiring a certificate or credential, such as teachers’ aides or clerical, custodial or food service employees.

* **EDUCATIONAL EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS ACT (EERA)** – The process for establishing collective bargaining. Enacted in 1975 as Senate Bill 160 (Rodda), Chapter 961, Laws of 1975 and subsequent amendments.

* **FACT-FINDING** – The method of impasse resolution, usually advisory, that involves investigation of a bargaining dispute by a neutral third party, or tripartite panel that reports the results to the parties, usually with recommendations for settling the dispute. Under EERA, the parties may request that their dispute be submitted to fact-finding (under specified procedures) if a mediator is unable to settle the controversy within 15 days and the mediator declares that fact-finding is appropriate.

* **GOOD FAITH BARGAINING** – Broadly defined as the duty of the parties to meet and negotiate at reasonable times with willingness to reach agreement on matters within the scope of representation; however, neither party is required to make a concession or agree to any proposal.

** **GRIEVANCE** – A means of settling disputes which arise from the interpretation or application of the existing contract. When disagreements cannot be settled at one of the lower levels of the grievance procedure the exclusive bargaining agent may take the disagreement to arbitration. Arbitration can be binding or advisory depending on the wording of the contract.

** **IMPASSE** – A deadlock or stalemate in bargaining declared by one or both parties. Declaration of impasse usually begins the implementation of impasse procedures (mediation or fact finding), and once these procedures have been exhausted can allow for unilateral action by the employer.

** **INITIAL PROPOSAL** – A written offer for consideration made by the exclusive representative or the school district as part of the bargaining process for the next agreement. The EERA lists those items which are within

the scope of representation and are the subject of mandatory bargaining.

*** **INTEREST-BASED BARGAINING** – A more cooperative method for reaching agreement about the critical aspects of employer-employee relationships. Negotiations are based on mutual interests rather than on individual positions.

* **MEDIATION** – Also called conciliation. Efforts of a neutral third party to help resolve a dispute (usually involving contract negotiations) between an employer and employee organization. The mediator normally has no power to impose a settlement. Under EERA, mediation is the first step in the impasse resolution procedure.

* **NEGOTIATIONS** – The process of the employer and the exclusive representative meeting together and bargaining in a good faith effort to reach agreement on matters within the scope of representation and executing, if requested by either party, an agreement incorporating matters agreed on.

* **PERB** – The Public Employment Relations Board is charged with administering and enforcing EERA. Among its many functions are investigating and deciding “unfair practice” charges or other claims that the act has been violated, establishing or approving bargaining entities, conducting representation elections, and seeking court enforcement of its orders and decisions as it deems necessary.

** **PUBLIC NOTICE** – The public notice section of EERA is intended to give the public an opportunity to present its views. Initial bargaining proposals of both the exclusive representative and the district must be presented at a public meeting of the school board and are public records. Negotiations will be delayed a reasonable time for the public to comment.

Unless the parties agree otherwise, laws requiring open meetings do not apply to meetings and discussions between parties; with mediators, arbitrators, or fact-finding panels; and executive sessions of the school board on negotiations.

If both parties agree, any phrase of negotiations may be conducted publicly, or observers may be invited. Typically, the school board and union announce their opening positions and then talk privately. Although any meeting of three or more school board members must be open to the public, EERA specifically permits private meetings between the school board and its negotiator.

* **SCOPE OF BARGAINING** – The law defines “scope,” as a broad range of issues and subjects that either party may or may not introduce for negotiation. Scope is a crucial, dynamic, and frequently litigated area.

* **SICKOUT** – A job action involving a number of employees failing to report to work on the same day and claiming to be sick.

** **SLOWDOWN** – A job action involving a number of employees working at less than normal efficiency.

* **STRIKE** – A work stoppage. Employees acting together in refusing to work in order to gain a bargaining concession or to persuade the employer to take certain action. Usually occurs when negotiations on a new agreement reach impasse and lasts until settlement on a

new agreement is reached, but may be called for a shorter period as a pressure tactic or to protest employer actions. Usually conducted under leadership of the employee organization, following a vote among members. A "wildcat" strike is a walkout by employees without authorization of the organization. A "rolling" or "yo-yo" strike involves several intermittent walkouts of short duration interspersed among days when employees report to work.

* SUNSHINE LAW – A requirement that bargaining proposals or other aspects of public employee bargaining be made public. Under EERA, initial proposals as well as new topics that arise during negotiations must be made available to the public.

* Pocket Guide to the Educational Employment Relations Act, California Public Employee Relations, September 1997

** California Teachers Association Collective Bargaining Handbook

*** Collective Bargaining, 1999, EdSource, 520 San Antonio Road, Suite 200, Mountain View, CA 94040-1217; 650.917.9481; www.edsource.org

Resources

California State PTA Vice President for Education – 916.440.1985 ext. 305

Selected Readings on California School Finance, EdSource, 520 San Antonio Road, Suite 200, Mountain View, CA 94040-1217; 650.917.9481; www.edsource.org

Pocket Guide To The Employer-Employee Relations Act (Fifth Edition, September 1997), California Public Employee Relations Program, Institute of Industrial Relations, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720-5555; 510.643.7092

County Office of Education (Office of Employee Relations)

Public Employment Relations Board (PERB); 916.322.3198

PTA Activities in Relation to Employer-Employee Disputes

Public school employer-employee negotiations and/or disputes and disputes between bargaining units are very much a part of the reality of operating public schools. THE PTA MUST REMAIN NEUTRAL* and MUST refrain from taking sides in all disputes. It is a PTA responsibility to provide opportunities for public understanding of disputed issues through sponsoring public meetings where all sides may present their views.

PTA speaks as an advocate for children and youth. It is a PTA responsibility to urge school board members, school district employees and negotiators on all sides to make the welfare of the students the first and ultimate consideration in all negotiations. PTAs must do this within the framework of California State PTA policies.

(These two paragraphs must be used together at all times, neither may be used without the other.)

**"Not taking part with or assisting either of two or more contending parties." Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition, Unabridged.

1. PTA Leaders' Responsibilities When a Dispute Arises:

- a. The PTA council/district PTA leadership must consult with the California State PTA leadership (through the California State PTA office, 916.440.1985).
- b. The council/district PTA leadership must meet with the leadership of all affected unit PTAs to instruct them in observance of PTA's neutrality policy.
- c. The council/district PTA leadership must meet with the school district administration and bargaining unit(s) leadership to explain PTA neutrality.
- d. The unit PTA leadership must meet with the school site administration and school site bargaining leadership to explain PTA neutrality.
- e. The unit PTA leadership must communicate PTA's position of neutrality to the membership.

2. PTAs MUST Remain Neutral:

- a. PTAs must not recruit substitute teachers or staff the classrooms. Classroom instruction is the responsibility of the school district. (See item 4.b.)
- b. PTAs must not recruit substitute classified employees or staff those positions.
- c. PTAs may be on school grounds in general activity areas if there are concerns about the safety of the students.
- d. PTAs must not distribute literature from either side, but may choose to distribute information PTA has prepared.
- e. PTAs must not show partiality toward the administration, the non-striking or striking personnel in any way (e.g., verbally, by serving refreshments, by walking the picket line, etc.).

3. Remaining Neutral Includes Continuing Normal PTA Activities:

- a. Regular PTA volunteer programs, e.g., volunteers in the media center, library playground, office, lunchroom, classrooms, etc. A list of those who volunteer regularly must be given to the school site administrator and school site bargaining unit(s) leadership.
- b. When PTAs regularly meet in the school facility, such meetings may continue. However, the PTA should make certain that its school facility use permit has not been temporarily suspended by the school district.
- c. Scheduled PTA-sponsored programs and projects may continue.
- d. If a PTA is licensed by the State of California as a child care provider, this activity may be continued. Contracts with parents obligate the PTA to continue providing the child care program. A licensed child

care program usually includes a contract with the school district for use of the facility. If this is the case, the district is obligated to ensure safe use of the facility.

4. PTA Leaders' Obligations:

- a. There is no intent by the PTA to infringe on the rights of its members to act as individuals. However, if an individual is perceived as a PTA leader, he/she is obligated to consider the effect of his/her actions on the PTA organization.
- b. If a PTA leader believes that conscience requires a statement or action favoring one side or the other, a public disclaimer* must be written and sent to the school site administration, school district superintendent, president of the school board, school district employee organization and PTA organization leadership of council and district PTA.
- c. If a PTA leader is a school district employee and plans to work during a dispute, a public disclaimer* must be signed.

*A public disclaimer should include the following information:

Although I serve as _____ (position) _____ at the _____ PTA, any statement I may make or action I may take regarding the current employer-employee dispute is an individual statement or action and has no connection whatsoever with _____ PTA, whose position is one of strict neutrality.

Signature

Date

- d. If a PTA president is also a school district employee with membership in the organization negotiating with the school district, and a dispute arises, the president must delegate the responsibilities of the presidency to the first vice president during these negotiations.

5. In the Event of an Unexpected Walkout* the PTA:

- a. May provide volunteers, if necessary, on the day of an unexpected walkout to care for students in general activity areas on the school grounds until their parents make arrangements to get them home. This activity must not include classroom instruction.
- b. Must not staff classrooms. Staffing of classrooms by noncredentialed personnel is not only inconsistent with PTA efforts to have a qualified teacher in every classroom, it is illegal and the school district can forfeit its ADA (average daily attendance) funding from the state. (Authority: California State Education Code.)

*Job action without prior notification to the employer and with/without the approval of the employee organization (e.g., wildcat strike).

It Should Be Noted

- The school administration is legally responsible for staffing the school. The PTA, as an organization, cannot and must not assume this responsibility.
- When in doubt regarding any activity, consult with California State PTA leaders – office telephone 916.440.1985.

6. Dealing With the Media:

- a. PTA leaders should expect to be contacted by the media. Any personal opinion is an inappropriate subject for discussion by a PTA spokesperson.
- b. Consult California State PTA (through the California State PTA office) if advice is needed about how to effectively communicate PTA's position of neutrality.
- c. If caught unprepared, do not attempt to speak "off the cuff" to the caller. State that this is not a convenient time to talk and you will return the call.
- d. PTA leaders must not attack other organizations or representatives of other organizations (i.e., employee groups or school board members).

After a Strike

PTA has an opportunity and an obligation to help restore the school environment to one that provides a positive educational experience for all students.

PTA members must consider what is in the "best interests of all students" and be a vital part of the healing process between employees, employers and parents.

Any planned PTA activity for school district employees MUST have the cooperation and support of the school staff and the approval of the principal and the district superintendent.

For advice on handling individual situations, contact the California State PTA vice president for education and/or vice president for leadership services through the California State PTA office.

Racism is a Public Health Crisis

Adopted April 2023 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

It is the mission of the California State PTA to positively impact the lives of all children and families. That mission means that diversity, equity and inclusion are the work of every PTA leader and member.

As an organization, California State PTA is thus compelled to confront and address the lasting generational effects of systemic and structural racism. It is at the root of many of our systems and institutions that have never been equitable for all. Historically, structural racism has impacted services and care across all institutions within our society. Structural racism is embedded into our educational, health care, political and our health department systems and has minoritized specific groups, including Black/African-Americans, Indigenous, Latine, Asian American, Pacific Islander, and other people of color. It has, in effect, put these groups of people into a

subordinate status in our society that is contradictory to our organization's mission.

Racial Discrimination Persists in California

Racism, including unconscious and conscious bias, causes racial discrimination that persists across the many institutions that should equitably serve all children and families in California. These include:

- Civic activities such as criminal justice and voting rights.
- Services that affect socioeconomic status, such as housing, education, transportation and employment.
- Health-related systems such as public safety, environmental exposure, and access to food, mental health support, and health services generally.

Anti-Black racism dehumanizes and marginalizes Black/African-American people and also affects other communities of color by privileging those with lighter skin. Racism also intersects with other forms of prejudice and oppression to increase adverse outcomes, including discrimination based on immigration status, gender and sexual orientation, and mental and physical abilities.

The Health Impacts of Racism are Well Documented

As of September 2021, over 200 cities and counties, as well as at least 5 states, have declared racism a public health crisis. In addition, several US government agencies have made similar declarations, including:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
- American Public Health Association (APHA)

As of April 2023, the state of California has yet to join this list, though it is widely documented that, throughout California, Black/African Americans and other racial groups disproportionately experience chronic disease, shorter life expectancy, maternal and infant mortality, and other health inequities.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), California Black infants are nearly three times more likely to die during their first year of life and nearly 50 percent more likely to be born prematurely than non-hispanic white infants. National data further show that Black birthing people are over three times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than white birthing people*.

Moreover, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) have suffered from disproportionately high rates of COVID-19 infection and death. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated racial and social inequities by disproportionately impacting the Latinx community in particular as well as other communities of color.

Harms Extend into Other Aspects of Children's Lives

San Diego County serves as an excellent example of these disparities. A California Department of Health analysis reveals that Black/African-American children in San Diego County are three times more likely to be suspended from school compared to their white peers. According to the California Dashboard in the state of California, 7.9% of African

American students get suspended in public schools. This is at a five percent higher rate than their white counterparts.

A 2021 Policy Brief from the Public Policy Institute of California notes that Black Californians are three times more likely to be seriously injured, shot, or killed by police (comprising 18% of these incidents) relative to their share of the population (6%). Latinos are also overrepresented among police encounters that result in serious injuries or fatalities.

According to a report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey, Black/African-American transgender people live in extreme poverty, with 34 percent reporting a household income of less than \$10,000 per year. More than twice the rate for transgender people of all races (15 percent), four times the general Black population rate (9 percent), and eight times the general U.S. population rate (4 percent).

PTA Champions the Needs of All Children and Families

Founded in 1897, the National Congress of Mothers, which later became the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, or National PTA, first met as a call to action regarding those who had even fewer rights and representation at the time than women, that was children. Merging in 1970 with the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers (NCCPT) to function in states that legally mandated segregation, PTA has continued in its 125 plus years to be a champion for ALL children and families.

There is ample data to support California State PTA's belief that we must remedy historic health, social, economic, and criminal justice disparities that are still present in our state. California State PTA supports advocacy and legislation that would:

- Work to end racism; challenging historical and contemporary power structures
- Address issues of racism and actively and authentically engaging with communities of color within our state
- Share and shift power and agency to intersectional strata of BIPOC/SES class+, particularly as part of "authentic engagement"
- Assure the teaching of accurate history in schools
- Build health equity efforts
- Support the affirmation and inclusion of marginalized populations and practices
- Support policies to increase delivery of high-quality, culturally competent health care services to areas with disproportionately high rates of chronic diseases and;
- Support efforts to gather and distribute data necessary to inform decisions and actions to reduce mortality and morbidity resulting from structural racism.

* The term includes those who identify as non-binary or transgender because not all who give birth identify as 'women' or 'girls'. This terminology is in no way meant to erase or dehumanize women.

+ Black, Indigenous, People of Color/ Socioeconomic Status

Reduced Class Size in Grades TK-3

Adopted July 1996 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
February 2023 – Education Commission

California State PTA recognizes the importance of successful academic and personal development of children in the primary grades. California State PTA has consistently and strongly supported reducing the number of students in each California classroom, especially in kindergarten through 3rd grade. California State PTA believes that - whenever possible - TK-3 class sizes of 20 or less improve the overall development and education of students.

A substantial body of evidence* shows the value of maintaining small class sizes:

- Smaller class size, particularly in the early grades, is one of the few educational strategies shown to increase learning and narrow the achievement gap;
- Smaller class size effects seem to be largest when
 - introduced in the earliest grades, and
 - for students from less advantaged communities or family backgrounds;
- Smaller classes have been found to have a positive impact on school climate, student social-emotional growth, safety and suspension rates, parent engagement, and teacher attrition; and
- Teachers with smaller class sizes experience better working conditions and have a better chance to succeed.

California State PTA further believes that the benefits of reducing class sizes are optimized when schools also provide:

- A separate physical area to accommodate each group of children and the assigned certificated teacher;
- Flexibility in class structure that may include combination classes (K-1, 1-2, etc.) yet always considering the academic and developmental needs of each student when making placements;
- Assignment of properly credentialed teachers who are well trained in teaching techniques required to teach the early childhood/primary grade levels and on best practices for small group instruction; and
- A firm funding commitment to make reduced class size an ongoing priority.

State law in California currently sets a maximum class size of 30 in the early grades but also provides a financial incentive, within the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), to encourage local district to set a maximum class size of 24. California State PTA fully supports LCFF and local flexibility but urges all parties to stay committed to reducing class size.

Keeping class sizes in grades K-3 to 20 or fewer must be a continuing goal of the state even as each district decides what is possible within the constraints of: (1) financing available, (2) the need to meet all essential goals of the school district operations, and (3) the relative priority of class size, salaries, and instructional hours. All concerned parties, including parents, teachers and district officials, should work together whenever possible to identify and obtain funding for purposes of reducing class sizes.

California State PTA recognizes the financial obligation that reducing class size places on school districts and on taxpayers of the state of California. California State PTA strongly believes the people of California understand the importance of investing in children and public education, and therefore will be supportive of this use of education funds.

*The Center for Public Education reviewed 19 class size reduction studies.

<http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/research/class-size-and-student-achievement-research-review>

Rights and Services for Undocumented Children and Children of Undocumented Immigrants

Adopted January 1994 – Revised February 2018 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA recognizes that the United States has a long history of immigrants coming to this country in search of a better life for themselves and their families and that the resulting blend of cultures enriches our nation.

California State PTA believes that all children who reside in California, regardless of their immigration status or that of their parents', have the right of access to a quality public education, adequate food and shelter, and basic health services. California State PTA also believes the congressional and executive branches of the United States Government must bear full responsibility for federal immigration policies and the resulting fiscal impact on the states.

California State PTA further believes that it is in the interest of all Californians to ensure that all children, regardless of their immigration status or that of their parents', have the opportunity to reach their full potential and become productive members of society. Access to a free public education is the most effective method of securing this opportunity, and should not be denied to any child. In fact, the Supreme Court of the United States concluded in *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) that undocumented school-aged children are entitled to have access to a high quality and free public K-12 education.

California State PTA believes that undocumented school age children must not be constructively denied a free education through coercion, illegal data collection, profiling or interference via threats of deportation. To allow such would be a foreclosure upon their future contributions to our society.

Public school are institutions of learning and are not collection points, therefore public school should not be placed in the position of determining the legal status of immigrant children nor be required to enforce immigration laws. Furthermore, school district should not voluntarily report undocumented students to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or other immigration authorities because such actions may constitute a denial of access to education under *Plyer*. The Immigration and

Naturalization Service is the federal agency with jurisdiction over federal immigration policy and should bear full responsibility for enforcing that policy.

Schools should be defined in statute as “sensitive locations” and Immigration and ICE officers and agents are to refrain from enforcement actions against students in schools including preschools, primary schools, secondary schools, colleges and universities, and other institutions of learning, such as vocational and trade schools.

California State PTA supports the confidentiality of school records, including records that pertain to the immigration status of children. Unrestrained access to school records to determine such status can pose a threat of unintended consequences due to any materials in a student’s file that may be inaccurate. California State PTA supports the maintenance of official school records, electronic otherwise, to the extent required by the state and school district for educational purposes only.

California State PTA supports federal child nutrition programs, including school meals, that offer all children, regardless of immigration status, an important benefit that fights hunger and enhances children’s physical, academic, and emotional growth.

California State PTA believes that federal, state, and local entities have a responsibility to contribute to the well-being of children by offering health care and other social services needed in their areas. Denying these services to children, regardless of their citizenship status, can endanger communities and create serious health and social concerns.

Rights of Foster Children and Foster Families

Adopted May 2013 – Community Concerns Commission
– Revised August 2018

California State PTA believes stability is integral to a child’s quality of life and that the state has the primary responsibility for the well-being of children in foster care.

Every foster child has the rights belonging to all children. Because society has temporarily or permanently separated them from their parents and other family members, society is responsible for providing special safeguards, resources, and care to all foster children.

California’s foster children are often bounced from placement to placement, and from school to school. This lack of stability often causes education-related problems, including a loss of school credits, interrupted academic progress, and delayed high school graduation.

California sets minimum high school graduation requirements for students. However, many school districts set graduation requirements beyond those required by the state. A foster child relocated during high school can be faced with additional graduation requirements at the new school district and not have enough time to complete the additional courses and graduate on time. California State PTA believes that foster youth with multiple high school placements should be afforded accommodations as necessary to be able to

earn a high school diploma that falls short of local district course requirements but takes into account the courses taken by the student, and meets or exceeds state graduation requirements.

California State PTA supports the foster child Bill of Rights as listed in Welfare and Institutions Code (Section 16001.9). California State PTA believes that the foster child has the right:

- To live in a safe, healthy, and comfortable home where they are treated with respect;
- To be free from physical, sexual, emotional, or other abuse, or corporal punishment;
- Not to be subject to police custody or arrest for ‘normal’ domestic disturbances;
- To receive adequate and healthy food, adequate clothing, and, for children in group homes, an adequate allowance;
- To receive timely, high quality medical, dental, vision, and mental health services;
- To be free of forced use of medication or chemical substances, unless authorized by a licensed physician;
- To freely contact family members, unless prohibited by court order;
- To freely contact social workers, attorneys, foster youth advocates and supporters, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), and probation officers;
- To visit and contact brothers and sisters, unless prohibited by court order;
- To contact the Community Care Licensing Division of the State Department of Social Services or the State Foster Care Ombudsman regarding violations of rights, to speak to representatives of these offices confidentially, and to be free from threats or punishment for requesting this access or making complaints;
- To make and receive confidential telephone calls and send and receive unopened mail, unless prohibited by court order;
- To attend religious services and activities of their choice;
- To maintain an emancipation bank account and manage personal income, consistent with the child’s age and developmental level, unless prohibited by the case plan;
- Not to be locked in any room, building, or facility premises, unless placed in a community treatment facility;
- To attend school and participate in extracurricular, cultural, and personal enrichment activities, consistent with the child’s age and developmental level;
- To work and develop job skills at an age-appropriate level that is consistent with state law;
- To have social contacts with people outside of the foster care system, such as teachers, church members, mentors, and friends;
- To attend Independent Living Program classes and activities beginning when they meet age requirements;
- To attend their own court hearings and speak to the judge;
- To have storage space for personal possessions;

- To review their own case plan when they reach 12 years of age and to receive information about their out-of-home placement and case plan, including being consulted on changes to the plan;
- To be free from unreasonable searches of their persons or belongings;
- To the confidentiality of all of their juvenile court records consistent with existing law;
- To have fair and equal access to all available services, placement, care, treatment, and benefits, and not to be subjected to discrimination or harassment on the basis of actual or perceived race, ethnic group identification, ancestry, national origin, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental or physical disability, or HIV status; and
- Beginning at 16 years of age, to have access to existing information regarding the educational options available, including, but not limited to, the coursework necessary for vocational and postsecondary educational programs, and information regarding financial aid for postsecondary education.

The California State PTA believes that foster families have the right:

- To be treated with dignity, respect, trust, and consideration as a primary provider of foster care and as a member of the professional team caring for foster children;
- To be provided a current explanation and understanding of the role of the Child Welfare department and the approved role of the members of the child's birth family in the child's foster care with updates as the case plan evolves;
- To continue their own family values and routines; that every effort will be made by the Child Welfare department to work with the family to place a child who can participate in and benefit from established family customs and routines;
- To be provided training and support by the Child Welfare department for the purpose of improving skills in providing daily care and meeting the special needs of the child in foster care;
- To be provided training by the Child Welfare department for obtaining support and information concerning a full understanding of the rights and responsibilities of the foster parent(s);
- To review, prior to placement, written information concerning the child and to have a voice in determining if such child would be a proper placement for the prospective foster family. For emergency placements where time does not allow prior review of such information, the Child Welfare department shall provide information as it becomes available;
- To obtain all biographical and medical information on a child prior to or at the time of placement;
- To refuse placement of a child in the foster home or request the removal of the child from the foster home without reprisal;
- To obtain timely financial reimbursement;
- To help plan visitation with a child's parents and siblings;

- To receive notice of Child Welfare department plans or court proceedings affecting a child's placement;
- To have priority consideration when a foster child becomes available for adoption, and;
- To be provided a fair and timely investigation of foster home complaints and an ability to appeal decisions of the placement board.

Safe Drinking Water in Schools

Adopted October 2018 – Reviewed and deemed relevant August 2023

The California State PTA believes that access to clean water is critical to students' health and ability to learn. Studies show that adequate hydration improves cognition, increases attention spans, and can even improve students' test scores. It allows body organs and systems to perform at their best. Plain water works to rinse the mouth and, when it is fluoridated, to strengthen dental enamel.

Most drinking water in California meets requirements for health and safety. Sources of drinking water are subject to contamination and require appropriate treatment to remove disease-causing contaminants. Contamination of drinking water supplies can occur in the source water as well as in the distribution system after water treatment has already occurred. There are many sources of water contamination, including naturally occurring chemicals and minerals (for example, arsenic, radon, uranium), local land use practices (fertilizers, pesticides, concentrated livestock operations), manufacturing processes, and sewer overflows or wastewater releases.

The presence of contaminants in water can lead to adverse health effects including gastrointestinal illness, reproductive problems, and neurological disorders. Infants, young children, pregnant women, the elderly, and people whose immune systems are compromised may be especially susceptible to illness from some contaminants.

One contaminant, lead, rarely occurs naturally in California's drinking water sources, but it may become present when water passes through older plumbing fixtures or solder containing lead.

- Water can be contaminated in the water mains, service lines, and building plumbing, wherever it is exposed to lead.
- Water that sits "stagnant" in plumbing that contains lead will hold the lead in suspension.
- If pipes or fittings containing lead are corroded they can yield tiny particles of lead into water.
- Utilities treat water to minimize corrosion of the water mains and pipes but this is not always effective.
- Regulations have progressively lowered the amount of allowable lead in plumbing parts. However, in older schools, the lead in plumbing parts is often still present.

Lead is a toxin that is harmful to health and well-being. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that lead exposure can affect nearly every

system in the body. It is important to reduce all exposures to lead, including in drinking and cooking water. The effects of lead exposure cannot be corrected.

- Even low levels of lead in blood have been shown to affect cognitive abilities, the ability to pay attention, and academic achievement.
- At high levels, it can harm reproductive and other organ health.
- When children have elevated blood lead levels, the source is most frequently lead in dust, soil, or old paint.

California regulates drinking water by setting Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) for a list of known water contaminants. It also identifies Public Health Goals that identify concentration levels that pose no significant health risks if consumed for a lifetime. The MCLs and reporting requirements are established for local water providers throughout the state.

Every California public school is required to provide quality tap water access to its students. To achieve this goal, the California State PTA believes that school drinking water needs to be tested on an ongoing basis for contaminants that are harmful to the health and well-being of students. We believe that the State of California has a responsibility to set maximum allowable contaminant levels at concentrations equal to the Public Health Goals.

School Districts need to be provided both financial resources and know-how to assess and improve school water quality. California State PTA supports state and local government efforts and funding initiatives to ensure the availability of safe drinking water throughout communities and school campuses.

Safe School Environments

Adopted March 1991 – Revised May 2021 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

A school's biggest challenge is becoming a physically, socially, emotionally, and academically safe place for students. California State PTA believes that every child is entitled to a safe and peaceful school environment that is orderly and empowering.

According to Committee for Children (cfchildren.org), social-emotional learning (SEL) is the process of developing the self-awareness, self-control, and interpersonal skills that are vital for school, work, and life success. People with strong social-emotional skills are better able to cope with everyday challenges and benefit academically, professionally, and socially. From effective problem-solving to self-discipline, from impulse control to emotion management and more, SEL provides a foundation for positive, long-term effects on kids, adults, and communities.

Trauma-Sensitive Schools that understand the educational impacts of trauma can become safe, supportive environments where students make the positive connections with adults and peers they might otherwise push away, calm their emotions so they can focus and behave appropriately, and feel confident enough to advance their learning. The core attributes of a trauma sensitive school include the following:

- A shared understanding among all staff

- The school supports all children to feel safe physically, socially, emotionally, and academically
- The school addresses students' needs in holistic ways
- The school explicitly connects students to the school community and provides multiple opportunities to practice newly developing skills.
- The school embraces teamwork and staff share responsibility for all students.
- Leadership and staff anticipate and adapt to the ever-changing needs of students.
- A crisis response plan in place to deal with unforeseen emergencies.

California State PTA believes that the qualities inherent that play a major role in the creation of a safe school environment are:

- Education takes place in a positive physical setting
- Students, teachers, administrators, and other school personnel bring their strengths and experiences to the school campus
- Students feel respected and know that the learning community cares about their individual needs and expects them to succeed;
- Parents and community members are welcomed and encouraged to share ideas, talents and resources for improving the school;
- High standards exist and are communicated on a regular basis;
- Students and staff know that learning and achievement are encouraged and highly valued and that positive social behaviors are expected;
- There is continued involvement and cooperation of parents, students, teachers, security staff, classified staff and law enforcement representatives in designing and revising of the school's discipline, disaster, safe school and crisis plans;
- Prevention is stressed, and the staff and students are prepared for emergencies and other unforeseen situations; Programs are in place to prevent negative behaviors such as gang activity, drug, tobacco and alcohol abuse, bullying and other socially abusive behavior;
- There are regular security checks;
- There are ongoing training opportunities that allow students and staff to increase their ability to deal with conflict, anger and other threats to safety.

School and Public/Community Library Services

Adopted May 1972 – Reviewed and deemed relevant August 2022 – Education Commission

California State PTA recognizes the significant contribution to educational enrichment that is provided by both school library/media centers and public/community libraries. Both serve as centers for teaching many types of research skills as well as recreational purposes for children and adults.

School Library/Media Centers

School library/media centers implement and enhance the core curriculum and instructional program adopted by the school and, at the same time, provide for student enrichment and enjoyment. PTAs should work with schools/school districts to ensure that funding school library/media centers is given the priority necessary to maintain the level of services essential to each student's educational experience.

California State PTA believes that every school library/media center should:

- Be staffed by qualified credentialed personnel who
 - Select appropriate materials and provide activities that support the instructional program;
 - Assist students and staff to become effective users of ideas and information; and
 - Work closely with staff, students and the parent community;
- Meet the needs of all students by teaching the research skills necessary to obtain specific information; and
- Maintain and update print and non-print collections and/or have access to existing information through the use of various technologies.

California State PTA believes that school library/media centers are important to student learning. When budget cuts cause the elimination of full-time credentialed librarian positions, PTAs are encouraged to make every effort to work with their school districts to seek alternative solutions to keep library/media centers open for students' use.

Public/Community Libraries

California State PTA acknowledges the important role of public/community libraries. Public/community libraries supplement school library/media centers by providing broader services for students and by providing expanded opportunities for all children and adults to develop skills for life-long learning. PTAs should work to encourage every community to provide the necessary public and private funds for a total library service that will meet the needs of its population.

California State PTA believes that to provide the highest quality services for all, community libraries should:

- Identify and make available a broad array of services which will meet the needs of the community and keep the community informed about available services;
- Maintain and update print and non-print collections that meet community needs;
- Provide access to information through the use of various technologies;
- Identify and meet special needs within the community by providing qualified staff and selected resources that address these needs;
- Provide programs to eliminate adult illiteracy; and
- Ensure equal access to all services of the library such as special programs for young readers and services for the physically disabled.[†]

[†] PTA is sensitive to the serious handicap to the person and family when an individual is unable to read. PTA actively supports school, public/community and library-based programs to eliminate adult illiteracy.

School Attendance

Adopted March 2010 – Reviewed and deemed relevant November 2014 – Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA recognizes that there are many factors that affect student achievement, including school attendance and absences. Research has shown that chronic absenteeism, encompassing both excused and unexcused absences, correlates highly with lower student achievement and dropout.

California's long-term student data system does not include attendance data. Although schools track student attendance to receive average daily attendance funding from the state, there is not data at the state level to allow analysis of individual student school attendance.

California monitors unexcused absences (truancy) and addresses these problems through the School Attendance Review Board process at the local level. California State PTA represents parents on the State School Attendance Review Board, which is the body that adopts model standards for school attendance review boards, recognizes local boards that operate model programs, and makes recommendations to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction on issues affecting school attendance and truancy.

Current laws already mandate the following provisions:

- School attendance compulsory at age 6;
- Schools are required to take roll every day and every period for older students; and
- California school districts monitor truancy and takes action via school attendance review boards and school attendance review teams (SARB and SART)

California State PTA will support legislative and executive efforts that would do the following to address chronic absence and improve school attendance:

- A) Establish reducing chronic absence a policy priority that is broadly communicated.
- B) Support the development of early warning systems that help school districts to identify and intervene, at the earliest age possible, when young children are at risk of academic failure, based upon data on chronic absence, academic achievement and classroom behavior.
- C) Ensure absenteeism/attendance (total number of days absent and total days enrolled over the course of the academic year) is added as a field to state and local longitudinal student databases.
- D) For districts that enter attendance by individual student, create incentives for districts to provide the data by offering resources (technical assistance and modest grants) to help districts:
 - 1) Analyze their own attendance data to identify schools and populations where chronic absence is a problem.

- 2) Assist underperforming schools to longitudinally examine levels of chronic absence for the school, as whole, for each grade, subgroup and student, and develop strategies for how they can address the issue in their school improvement plans.
- 3) Identify common district wide barriers to school attendance and develop strategies for addressing chronic absence in the schools with the highest levels of chronic absence through school policies, student support services, school-community partnerships or other interventions as needed.
- E) Provide professional development to teachers, school administrators, and school boards to familiarize them with early warning signs of drop-out including chronic absence, grades, behavior, as well as best practices for intervening at the individual, classroom, school and community level.
- F) Build on SARB process to identify chronically absent, not just truant students, and to examine district-wide chronic absence trends, challenges, and potential solutions.
- G) Encourage all schools to establish attendance teams charged with reviewing data regularly and taking action and identify community resources to support attendance, as needed.

School Based Decision Making

Adopted March 2003 – Reviewed by BOM February 2025

California State PTA supports the concept of school based management in the decision-making process. While the legal responsibility for school governance rests with local Boards of Education, PTA believes that the decentralization of decision making to school sites where service delivery occurs results in greater responsiveness to student and societal needs and improves the quality of educational opportunity.

PTA believes school based management decision making should give constituents – parents, teachers, administrators, students and other community members – meaningful control over what happens in schools in order to enhance school performance and the quality of education provided to all students.

PTA believes that there is a vast potential to close the achievement gap by improving learning, instruction, school governance, operations, and outcomes when representative stakeholder groups receive meaningful training, and resources that enables them to participate in educational decision making.

Schools implementing effective school based management should:

- Have an active vision focused on teaching and learning that is coordinated with district and state standards for student performance.
- Develop knowledge and skills in an ongoing process oriented toward building school-wide capacity for improvement, creating a professional learning community and developing a shared knowledge base.

- Understand that with decision making comes accountability for the results of those decisions.
- Enlist and empower meaningful participation by all stakeholders in the decision-making process and share leadership responsibilities among all school employees.
- Have multiple mechanisms for collecting information related to school priorities and for communicating school-related information to all constituents and members of the school community.
- Use various incentives and acknowledge individual and group progress toward school goals, and
- Cultivate outside resources through involvement in the community and professional networks.

PTA recognizes that school based management decision making must be given time to succeed. School and district leaders must be supportive of the School Based Management process, ensure that communication channels are kept open and provide all stakeholders with a clear understanding of their roles, responsibilities and accountability.

School-Based/Linked Health Centers

Adopted April 1987 – Reviewed and deemed relevant May 2014 – Health Commission

California State PTA supports the concept of school-based/linked health centers, believing all children and youth are entitled to physical and mental health care. PTA believes that the right of the individual to have access to health care is vital to sound health practices. PTA recognizes that adolescents, as a group, are the most under served population in terms of health care. School-based/linked health centers give young people access they might not otherwise have to health care. Such health centers should reflect a commitment to address those health problems that limit a student's ability to learn.

PTA believes local community support is the key to the success of any center. Parent and student involvement should be a major part of the planning for any school-based/linked health center. PTA further believes that any policy regarding school-based/linked health centers should be developed and monitored by an advisory board, including broad-based parent and student involvement.

School Bus Safety

Adopted March 1986 – Reviewed and deemed relevant November 2022 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA recognizes that school buses are a safe mode of transportation for students. PTA believes, however, that there is a need for continuing efforts by school districts, the legislature, and other government agencies to study, evaluate, and enact legislation to

improve safety in the construction and operation of school buses so that they may be safe for all children.

California State PTA believes efforts to improve school bus safety should include:

- Replacement of Type I† school buses built before 7/1/2004 with buses that meet Federal Safety School Bus Regulations;
- Compliance with existing state and federal school bus regulations in the operation of all Type I† and Type II†† school buses;
- Inclusion of a three (3) point restraint per student on buses manufactured before 7/1/2004;
- Periodic monitoring of passenger and school bus driver seat belt usage;
- Continued school bus safety education programs for drivers and passengers including correct restraint usage and periodic school bus evacuation drills; and
- Continued study of additional methods of improving school bus safety measures for students riding in pre-2002 school buses, until such time as these buses may be eliminated from school districts' fleets.

California State PTA recognizes that, in view of mandatory automobile seat belt/restraint laws, there is a growing public concern regarding the absence of seat belts on school buses.

California State PTA encourages further research into all safety-related aspects of school bus construction, including the feasibility of additional safety equipment, especially on pre-2002 vehicles.

† Type I – large school bus weighing more than 10,000 pounds GVWR (gross vehicle weight rating). Buses manufactured after 7/1/2004 are required to have driver seat belt to meet federal safety standards and a combination of pelvic and upper torso restraint harness for passengers.

†† Type II – school bus designed to carry less than 16 passengers plus driver and weighing less than 10,000 pounds GVWR. Driver seat belt and passenger restraining belts required to meet federal safety standards.

School Closure

Adopted March 1980 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
February 2023 – Education Commission

California State PTA believes that while school closure is sometimes a necessity to decrease school district problems due to declining enrollment and financial constraints, and is often viewed negatively, it can be an opportunity to improve the quality of education. The real acceptance and success of school closure depends upon demonstrated need, positive attitudes and total involvement of the community. In considering school closure, PTA supports:

- Early and ongoing involvement of all those affected – parents, students, teachers, administrators, staff, board of education, and community;
- Appointment of a broadly representative committee that is charged with making a study that includes alternatives and making recommendations within a specific time period;
- Making all committee meetings open to the public;

- Use of a clear and defined plan of action;
- The concept of a districtwide facilities master plan;
- Formation of goals and objectives that meet Education Code requirements and student needs, and give highest priority to maintenance or improvement of a quality program for every student;
- Wide use of informational meetings and media coverage;
- Specific efforts to overcome negative attitudes and resistance to change;
- Decisions based on elements that include: location of students; amount of disruption; enrollment projections and housing trends; cultural, socio-economic and ethnic balance; safety; transportation; and facilities—size, quality, type, community use, and operating and closing costs;
- Acceptance of the legal authority of the school board to make the final decision;
- Inclusion in the school board's report of its final decision, the rationale for the assignment of students and personnel, and a plan for community involvement to facilitate a smooth transition;
- A plan assuring community involvement in recommending priorities to the school board for future re-use, redevelopment or disposition of closed sites; and
- Acceptance of the ongoing need for long-range planning.

Through involvement in the community, unit, council and district PTAs can play an important role in achieving understanding of issues in school closure and in building public acceptance for action taken. PTA can provide leadership by attending meetings of school boards, talking with school administrators and parents about the needs of students, and being available to serve on committees.

School Desegregation/Integration

Adopted March 1978 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
May 2020 – Education Commission

California State PTA is committed to integrated public schools offering quality education† for all children and youth, and believes:

- Equal educational opportunities should be provided for all students;
- School districts have the responsibility for providing an integrated education for all students;
- Multicultural understanding should be an integral part of the education of all students;
- A desegregated/integrated school must provide opportunity for the development of attitudes and behavior based on the value of the individual;
- A desegregated/integrated school must encourage all students to be fully involved in school activities and to develop to their fullest potential;

- Teachers and other staff members should be trained to understand the needs of all children and youth, as well as the cultural, racial, ethnic, and economic diversity found in California's society;
- The entire school staff must work consistently to create a school climate of respect for the differences as well as the similarities of all students;
- Support and direction for the development, implementation and evaluation of desegregation/integration programs require the combined efforts of parents, students, the school system, and the entire community;
- PTA must serve as a unifying force for integration by involving the parents of all students in its activities†† and encouraging parent participation in school-sponsored activities; special efforts should be made to include parents residing outside the immediate school community.

† See related position statement: Basic Education .

†† Refer to Outreach, Diversity and Inclusion.

School-To-Career Technical Education

Adopted March 1985 – Revised May 2021 – Education Commission

California State PTA believes in equal access to education that prepares students to meet the needs of a highly skilled, high technology workplace. A broad-based School-to-Career Technical Education program prepares all students for lifelong learning and successful transition to career and advanced education.

California State PTA believes students need academically rigorous instructional programs that will enable them to think critically, to formulate and solve problems, and to work collaboratively. Students need opportunities to apply their academic and technical skills to the world of work. School to career instruction should be integrated into the curriculum in the elementary grades to provide an awareness of the wide variety of careers available. Opportunities for career exploration should expand in the middle grades. In high school, students should have the opportunity to participate in a rigorous instructional program that forms a strong foundation for lifelong learning and advanced education, in addition to preparation for career success.

California State PTA further believes that School-to-Career Technical Education programs should be available to all students to enable them to fulfill their potential and to make informed career decisions. Therefore, such programs should:

- Be broad-based in structure, integrating academic and career coursework for lifelong learning;
- Promote mastery of both academic and career performance standards;
- Create a kindergarten-to-career sequence;
- Link industry needs with education;
- Provide teachers opportunities through professional development to collaborate with each other to develop

- powerful School-to-Career Technical Education teaching and learning skills;
- Offer career counseling and guidance in making informed educational and occupational choices to meet individual student needs;
- Establish a strong link to community colleges, technical schools and four-year colleges/universities via articulation agreements;
- Have equipment, facilities and supplies that are state-of-the-art;
- Meet health and safety standards;
- Integrate information on workplace health/safety and child labor laws into all work related programs;
- Establish strong partnerships with business and industry;
- Include measurement of a broad range of education goals related to student achievement and program effectiveness; and
- Include parents, educators, community and business in the development and implementation of the program.

Social Emotional Learning: Essential to a Well-rounded Education

Adopted September 2018 – Education Commission – Reviewed by BOM February 2025

California State PTA believes that social and emotional learning is an essential part of a well-rounded, quality education.

Consistent with the work of the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), California State PTA defines social and emotional learning (SEL) as the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to:

- understand and manage emotions,
- set and achieve positive goals,
- feel and show empathy for others,
- establish and maintain positive relationships, and
- make responsible decisions.

California State PTA believes that social and emotional learning needs to be well integrated into what children experience in schools and classrooms and doing so increases student well-being and academic achievement. Evidence shows that those positive life outcomes persist over time in all socioeconomic and racial groups.

California State PTA supports California's Social and Emotional Learning Guiding Principles as adopted by the California Department of Education in 2018. Social and emotional learning is best and most effective when the educational community adopts whole child development as the goal of education, commits to equity, intentionally

builds capacity in both students and adults, meaningfully partners with families and community, and adopts a “learn and improve” approach.

Adopt Whole Child Development as the Goal of Education

California State PTA believes schools, families and communities need to support a systematic approach to social emotional learning as follows.

- All education and youth development systems and programs should embed and promote SEL in their policies, practices, curricula, staffing, budgets, strategic plans and vision statements.
- Systems change is most effective when leadership teams include educators, students, family, and community members of varied gender, racial, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Students and adults should have opportunities to practice, demonstrate, and reinforce social and emotional skills within the context of supportive relationships.
- Schools need to align their discipline policies with the promotion of students’ social and emotional growth, as opposed to punishment and exclusion.
- Because SEL and school climate are interrelated and reciprocal, building positive school climate and culture is supported through strong social and emotional skills.

Commit to Equity

California State PTA believes that schools should build on the existing strengths of student, educators, families, and communities. An assets-based education is personalized, culturally relevant and responsive, and intentionally addresses racism and bias. Appropriate practices include:

- Providing SEL-building opportunities to all students, not limited by race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, language, socioeconomic status, documentation status, and/or zip code.
- Recruiting and developing an educator workforce that is representative of, and can connect to, the student community.
- Engaging diverse student and parent voices in decision making and improvement efforts.
- Providing educational experiences that counteract the institutional and structural biases and related traumas that often drive inequitable outcomes for students.

Build Capacity

California State PTA believes that every student and adult in the school community must feel they belong, have value, and have a network of caring peers to rely on. To that end, schools need to intentionally focus on relationship-centered learning environments.

To cultivate core social and emotional competencies in students and adults, school communities need to create and promote common definitions of those competencies and agree on ways to measure progress in developing them.

California State PTA believes it is particularly important that all who interact with children and youth, whether in school, at

home or in the community, have resources and time to work on their own social emotional development and personal growth strategies. For educators in particular, this should include addressing bias in both pre-service training and ongoing professional development.

Partner with Families and Community

California State PTA believes maximizing the resources of the entire school community advances SEL and student well being. In particular, meaningful family engagement provides opportunities for parents and caregivers to contribute and participate in their child’s learning, building mutually beneficial relationships between home and school.

Establishing expanded learning programs across settings such as early learning and care, after school, and summer can increase shared responsibility for positive student outcomes, as can partnerships with community-based organizations and local stakeholders.

Learn and Improve

California State PTA believes in using data to continuously inform improvement of instructional and school practices and using evidence to guide decision making related to students’ social and emotional learning opportunities.

The integration of SEL to promote equity and address the needs of the whole child, and of educators, is already supported in many current California policies, including the Local Control and Accountability Plan.

California State PTA, and its districts, councils and units, should help make sure that SEL and school climate are meaningfully included in the development of LCAP goals and in family and community stakeholder engagement processes. Continuously refining SEL goals and practices to meet the unique needs of each community will be integral to the achievement of social and emotional competencies.

Special Education[†]

Adopted March 1983 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
May 2021 – Education Commission

California State PTA believes:

- All individuals with exceptional needs should receive a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment; this placement will include appropriate services ensuring access to the core curriculum, based on individual needs;
- Individualized Education Programs (IEP) should be developed on the basis of the needs of the individual student. The accurate assessment of each student’s English, native language, and academic skills is necessary to ensure placement in the program that best meets the educational needs of the students;
 - The goal of the IEP should be to provide each student with the academic, vocational and living skills necessary to be a productive and independent adult;
 - The IEP team should determine the appropriate program placement, necessary related services, and which curriculum options to offer;
 - The general education teacher should be part of the IEP team;

- The school district or the county office of education should provide transportation necessary to meet individual needs as determined in the IEP;
- Parents have the right, obligation and responsibility to be fully involved prior to and throughout the entire process;
 - Parent permission must be secured before testing and for assessment evaluations or placement changes in the student's program;
 - Parents must be notified in writing of and given every opportunity to attend all IEP meetings and reviews, and must receive a copy of the complete IEP;
- All teachers and school site personnel should be trained and sensitive to the special needs of exceptional students;
- Funding for non-educational needs of special education students should come from sources other than educational dollars. California State PTA further believes it is essential for the Legislature to appropriate adequate resources to fully fund all mandated special programs and services (Advocacy Chapter).

† See related position statements: Funding of Mandated Programs: Effect on Public Education. Also see summaries of related National PTA Position Statements: Education of Children With Disabilities-1994; Education for Handicapped Students-1991; Children with Special Needs-1989; Physical Education and Sports Programs for Children with Developmental Disabilities-1990. These are found under the Citizenship and Equality of Opportunity Section III Legislative/Advocacy of the Quick-Reference Guide from National PTA.

†† Transition is defined as the acquisition of skills necessary to develop the most independent and productive lifestyle an individual may be capable of achieving.

State Tax Reform

Adopted January 1970 – Reviewed and deemed relevant April 2015 – Revised May 2020– Legislation Committee

California State PTA recognizes that to make wise decisions on state tax matters all citizens need to understand the overall tax structure, and how state revenues are generated and expended.

California State PTA believes that the total tax structure should be strong and broadly based; that generation of revenues and distribution of the tax burden should be fair and equitable; and that providing adequately for the needs of children and youth should be a funding priority.

California State PTA believes that tax policies should include concepts that:

- Establish and adhere to fiscal responsibility and accountability in government, including
 - Efficient methods of collection, administration and disbursement of tax revenues;
 - Periodic formal reviews of expenditures and revenues; and
 - Maximum local control of expenditures for local services when that serves the best interests of children and youth;

- Provide annually sufficient revenues to fund necessary and desired governmental services, including, but not limited to
 - Allocations from the State General Fund for the public schools in amounts required to provide quality education programs;
 - Allocations in addition to public education sufficient to meet basic health and safety needs of children, youth and families, and
 - Full funding of mandated services;
- Establish and maintain revenue sources, including new or increased taxes that are carefully planned and developed to ensure fairness and meet the needs of children and families.

California State PTA further believes that local control and responsibility for generating and expending funds for local services should be encouraged, and promoted through the democratic process based on a majority vote of the public on all issues.

Status Offenders

Adopted March 1987 – Revised February 2021 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

A status offender is any person under the age of 18 years who persistently or habitually refuses to obey the reasonable and proper orders or directions of a parent or guardian, is beyond the control of a parent or guardian, or who is under the age of 18 years when violating any city/county ordinance or state statute establishing a curfew based solely on age. Status offenders are governed by section 601 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code.

California State PTA recognizes the need for community-based programs to help address the problems of status offenders. Such programs should include:

- Family involvement in the problem-solving process;
- Family mediation in crisis situations;
- Counseling, training, work experience, education, and family engagement;
- Cooperation and coordination with law enforcement agencies, social service agencies, and educational institutions;
- Out-of-home placement when in the best interest of the youth and/or the family;
- The provision of safe shelters for temporary placement while families and/or appropriate agencies are contacted.

California State PTA strongly supports the use of School Attendance Review Boards and other social agencies in dealing with problems of habitual truancy and persistent or habitual refusal to obey the reasonable and proper orders or directions of school authorities.

California State PTA will support limited secure detention of status offenders only under the following circumstances:

- Custody shall be separate and apart from alleged or adjudicated delinquents and adult inmates;
- Custody shall be for the purpose of
 - Determining whether there are any outstanding warrants;
 - Locating parent(s)/guardian(s) and arranging for return to home or to jurisdiction of residence;
 - Prevention of child endangerment.

California State PTA will support court-ordered secure detention of status offenders only under the following circumstances:

- Custody shall be separate and apart from alleged or adjudicated delinquents and adult inmates;
- Custody shall be determined by the court and for the least amount of time necessary to resolve the crisis;
- Custody shall be for the purpose of enforcing a court order and providing services that would not be available in the absence of limited secure detention.

Student Participation in Public Demonstrations

Adopted July 2006 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
February 2021 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA recognizes that organized demonstrations can increase public awareness of important issues and generate public will to bring about change. Student participation in public demonstrations provides real-life connections to classroom civics lessons and allows students to express their beliefs in a positive and meaningful way. Teachers and administrators can enhance student learning by exploring issues through classroom discussion and after-school forums.

California State PTA believes a school's environment must provide a positive learning environment and physical safety for all students. While California State PTA supports the rights of students to express their beliefs on campus through organized demonstrations, care must be taken to insure that the orderly operation of the school is not disrupted and the physical safety of students is not threatened. Leaving during school hours to attend an off-campus demonstration places the student outside the safety zone of the school and unnecessarily jeopardizes that school's education funding.

PTA believes parents and teachers are instrumental in helping students develop the skills for being responsible and caring citizens, and they should encourage students to find additional advocacy opportunities, including but not limited to:

- Participating in peaceful demonstrations when school is not in session;
- Visiting with legislative representatives;

- Drafting petitions, getting them signed by students, parents and teachers, and delivering them to policymakers;
- Writing articles for school papers;
- Lobbying at school board meetings and asking community, youth advocates and experts to join them;
- Organizing letter-writing campaigns;
- Organizing press conferences and/or writing letters to the editor.

Student Records

Adopted November 1976 – Reviewed and deemed relevant August 2022 – Education Commission

Current federal and state law provides privacy protections for student records and further affords students, parents and guardians the right to obtain access to those records and exercise some control over the release and disclosure of information contained in those records.

California State PTA believes it is important for local school communities to become knowledgeable about student record laws and their proper application to ensure proper protection of student records. PTAs are encouraged to work to expand their knowledge and understanding about the laws that govern student records.

California State PTA encourages school districts to annually carry out the provisions of Education Code Section 49063, which requires:

- Notification to students, parents and guardians of their rights regarding access and control over records;
- Notification to students, parents and guardians of the types of records maintained by the school district; and
- Notification to students, parents and guardians of the position of the school official responsible for student records.

California State PTA believes the timely transfer and receipt of student records is vital to the proper placement of transferring students; therefore, it is important that schools, both public and private, make every effort to immediately transfer student records upon request.

California State PTA believes that school personnel must provide the utmost care toward the protection of students and student records by exercising the following safeguards:

- Ensure the confidentiality of all personal student data that is collected and provide for proper record maintenance which includes the destruction of records when their usefulness ceases; and
- Require proper identification for any person requesting access to student records.

California State PTA encourages all public and private agencies that collect personal data on students to use the same standard of care in protecting student records as required by public schools.

Sugary-Sweetened Beverages

Adopted November 2018 – Health and Community Concerns Commission

Sugary-sweetened beverages are the single largest source of added sugar in the American diet. Sugary drinks, which include sodas, sports drinks, soft drinks, and fruit punches have become a part of a regular diet for millions of people.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) more than sixty percent of teenagers are drinking at least one sugary drink daily. Drinking two or more sugary drinks per day results in being four times more susceptible to having high levels of triglycerides. Many people drink more than three of these drinks a day which may lead to very unhealthy results.

Drinking large amounts of sugary beverages can lead to serious health problems.

- Sugary beverages are significantly associated with weight gain and obesity.
- A child's risk of becoming obese increases by 60% with each additional sugary beverage consumed daily.
- Sugary beverages increase the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and gout.
- For children, drinking sugary beverages almost doubles the risk of dental cavities.
- Just one 20-ounce bottle of a sugary beverage per day can result in gaining 25 extra pounds per year.
- The health costs of obesity in the United States are over \$100 billion annually.

Studies from the American Public Health Association provide clear and consistent evidence that people do not compensate for the added calories they consume in soft drinks by reducing their intake of other foods. Beverage companies spend a lot of money making their products into household names.

- Youth consumption of carbonated beverages increases by almost 10% with every 100 additional television ads viewed.
- The beverage industry disproportionately targets its marketing of sugary drinks at youth, low-income people, and people of color.
- African-American children and teens saw more than twice as many television ads for sugar drinks than did their white peers.
- Hispanic Americans are 20% more likely to be obese than white Americans and 50 percent more likely to die from diabetes.

The California State PTA encourages parents to:

- Ask restaurants to take soda off of kids' menus, making water or milk the default drink.
- Support sugary drink warning labels.

The California State PTA supports legislation to reduce the use of sugary drinks. Reasonable soda taxes have been proven effective in dramatically reducing consumption of sugary drinks, leading to improving public health especially among children.

The California State PTA urges parents to advocate that cities, states, and Congress legislate to reduce consumption of sugar sweetened beverages.

Dating Violence Prevention

Adopted January 2013 – Revised November 2022 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA believes in the importance of preventing and eliminating factors that may be detrimental to the health, safety and well-being of all children, youth and families.

Dating violence affects millions of young people in the U.S. each year. Data from Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2019 indicate that:

- Nearly 1 in 11 female and approximately 1 in 15 male high school students report having experienced physical dating violence in the last year.
- About 1 in 9 female and 1 in 36 male high school students report having experienced sexual dating violence in the last year.
- 26% of women and 15% of men who were victims of contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime first experienced these or other forms of violence by that partner before age 18.
- The burden of dating violence is not shared equally across all groups—sexual minority groups are disproportionately affected by all forms of violence, and some racial/ethnic minority groups are disproportionately affected by many types of violence.
- Compared with other students, negative attitudes toward LGBTQIA+ persons may put these youth at increased risk for experiences with violence. According to data from the 2015 national Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), of surveyed LGB students, 23% of LGB students who had dated or went out with someone during the 12 months before the survey had experienced sexual dating violence in the prior year.

Violence in an adolescent relationship sets the stage for problems in future relationships, including intimate partner violence and sexual violence perpetration and/or victimization throughout life. Unhealthy, abusive, or violent relationships can have severe consequences and short-and long-term negative effects on a developing youth. For example, according to the Centers for Disease Control, youth who are victims of dating violence are more likely to:

- Experience symptoms of depression and anxiety
- Engage in unhealthy behaviors, like using tobacco, drugs, and alcohol
- Exhibit antisocial behaviors, like lying, theft, bullying or hitting
- Think about suicide

Dating violence includes four types of behavior:

- Physical violence is when a person hurts or tries to hurt a partner by hitting, kicking, or using another type of physical force.
- Sexual violence is forcing or attempting to force a partner to take part in a sex act, sexual touching, or a non-physical sexual event (e.g., sexting) when the partner does not or cannot consent.
- Psychological aggression is the use of verbal and non-verbal communication with the intent to harm another person mentally or emotionally and/or exert control over another person.
- Stalking is a pattern of repeated, unwanted attention and contact by a partner that causes fear or concern for one's own safety or the safety of someone close to the victim.

To protect children and youth from dating violence California State PTA supports state legislation that:

- Authorizes school districts to provide education programs and policies that promote healthy relationships and prevent dating violence to pupils through age-appropriate curricular, extracurricular, and school climate-improvement activities;
- Authorizes school districts to work in partnership with parents, caregivers, and youth, domestic violence, sexual assault, or other appropriate community-based organizations, as deemed appropriate by the school district, to provide these education programs;
- Authorizes school districts that choose to provide education programs that promote healthy relationships and prevent dating violence to use research-based materials that are appropriate for pupils of all races, genders, sexual orientations, gender identities, and ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and for pupils with disabilities;
- Authorizes training for all school staff, including any security guards or police personnel that work at the school, on dating abuse and sexual assault, as well as how to handle reports of dating abuse by students, enforcement of the school's dating abuse policy, and enforcement of civil or criminal orders of protection;
- Requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to provide information about model education programs that are designed to promote healthy relationships and prevent dating violence on the State Department of Education's Internet Website, as specified.

Television Programming

Adopted November 1978 – Reviewed and deemed relevant March 2009 – Communications Commission

California State PTA PTA fully supports the First Amendment and is opposed to and will continue to oppose government censorship of the media and will oppose any attempt at censorship by any organization or group.

California State PTA believes, however, that the First Amendment was not designed to protect the economic interests of broadcasters and/or advertisers. Because federal communication law requires television and radio broadcasters to broadcast in the "public interest,

convenience and necessity," and because the Children's Television Act of 1990, Public Law 101-437 requires stations to air shows that "serve the educational and informational needs of children" and puts a limit on the number of minutes of ads per hour in children's programs, it is the responsibility of station owners/management to provide programming meeting that criteria.

Although cable operators and cable programmers (networks) are generally less regulated, California State PTA supports similar standards for the cable industry to voluntarily provide responsible programming for children.

Parents should communicate their concerns about programming to broadcasters, networks and advertisers, and encourage them to provide educational and responsible programming for children and youth.

Toy Look-Alike Guns

Adopted March 1989 – Reviewed and deemed relevant August 2023

California State PTA believes that the safety and welfare of our children depend upon securing laws that protect them, whenever possible, from death, serious accidents and injury.

California State PTA is concerned that toy guns have been manufactured to look like machine guns, semi-automatics and revolvers, and alarmed that deaths have occurred when toy guns were mistaken for real guns and when real guns are mistaken for toy guns.

Federal regulation requires toy guns to be transparent or have a predominant color chosen from an approved list, have a blaze orange band at the muzzle or have an orange plug in the muzzle end of the barrel. State and local imitation firearm statutes generally define Imitation weapon to mean: "Any device or object made of plastic, wood, metal or any other material which substantially duplicates or can reasonably be perceived to be an actual firearm, air rifle, pellet gun, or "B-B" gun, excluding non-firing replicas of an antique firearm, the original of which was designed, manufactured and produced prior to eighteen hundred ninety-eight."

California State PTA supports:

- The current ban on the manufacture and sale of look-alike toy guns and urges its members to continue to be aware of legislation that might repeal or dilute this ban.

California State PTA urges:

- Its unit, council and district PTAs to participate in public education about this ban and its importance to the safety of our children; and
- Its unit, council and district PTAs to monitor their local toy stores to determine if they are in compliance with this ban.

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2014-title15-vol1/xml/CFR-2014-title15-vol1-part272.xml>

Vaccinations

Adopted May 2015 – Revised November 2021 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

California State PTA believes in the importance of preventing and eliminating factors that may be detrimental to the health, safety and well-being of all children, youth and families.

California State PTA believes prevention programs are vital and recognizes that any circumstance that interferes with a child's potential to become a healthy, educated, productive, citizen places that child at risk. California State PTA believes that vaccinations are proven deterrents to diseases that in previous generations have impacted large numbers of children annually.

One of the objectives of PTA is to "secure adequate laws for the care and protection of our children and youth" and vaccinations are one way that happens.

PTA has supported vaccinations since their inception over 100 years ago. Vaccinations have had an enormous impact on improving the health of children in the United States. Vaccines have been so effective that most parents in our country today have never seen firsthand the devastating consequences that vaccine-preventable diseases have on a family or community.

California State PTA actively advocates for the protection of our children and families through vaccinations and supports legislation that furthers that protection. PTA believes it's important that we continue to protect our children with vaccines because outbreaks of harmful diseases can and do occasionally occur. Vaccination does more than protect the individual, it protects entire communities, including those individuals who are unable to be vaccinated.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, vaccinations throughout childhood are essential to help provide immunity before children are exposed to potentially life-threatening diseases. Vaccines are tested to ensure that they are safe and effective for children to receive at the recommended ages.

Although infants do receive a lot of shots, they are given at the time babies are most at risk of illness and serious complications from disease. The diseases that immunizations prevent are very serious and can cause liver damage, heart disease, or hearing loss, all of which can last a lifetime, or even death. Vaccines are well studied to make sure that it is safe to give them all at once. Today, most children in the United States lead much healthier lives and parents live with much less anxiety and worry over infections during childhood. Immunizations are one of the success stories of modern medicine.

California State PTA believes that all children, with the exception of those who are medically vulnerable, must receive the prescribed vaccinations in the age-appropriate timeline, in order to protect themselves, their families, their communities, and medically vulnerable children.

Voting

Adopted by the Board of Managers August 2020 – Revised by Board of Managers February 2025

PTA was founded in 1897 to advocate for children and families. At the 1937 convention of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, newly elected national President, Frances S. Pettengill, declared that "as citizens in a democracy, our chief function is to prepare the oncoming generation to live successfully in a democracy."

California State PTA believes an important part of that preparation is fostering voting habits early in life and cultivating a habit of lifelong voting. Research supports this approach and has long shown that lifelong voting habits are formed in childhood and adolescence through parent/adult modeling and Civic Education.

California State PTA also believes that our constitutional right to vote is the foundation of American democracy and our representative form of government. Public policy issues that we care about are determined by our elected officials and our votes. Therefore, the right to vote, cast an informed vote and have that vote counted, whether it be for candidates or ballot measures, are fundamental to the work we do as PTA and should be protected.

California State PTA supports:

- Efforts, including legislation, to expand safe, secure, equitable and accessible options for all eligible Californians to have the opportunity to register and vote.
- Efforts to prevent disenfranchisement of citizens eligible to register and vote, including, but not limited to, communities of color, LGBTQ+ community, youth, language minorities, people with disabilities, people with low income, infrequent voters, and those who are unhoused, housing insecure or geographically mobile.
- Efforts to prevent the manipulation of voting boundaries or an electoral constituency so as to favor one party or class, such as partisan gerrymandering. We believe voters should choose their elected representatives; elected representatives or their designees should not choose their voters.
- Efforts, including legislation and working in partnership with community organizations, to teach students the importance of voting in our democracy and to encourage participation in student voter registration drives.
- Providing voters with timely options for casting their vote, and those options must include both Vote-by-Mail ballots, with multiple secure methods of return, and in-person voting.
- Allocating resources to educate voters and the public about any changes to voting procedures, including voter registration, and supporting every effort to ensure that equity is central during implementation of those changes.
- Providing voters with relevant, accurate and easy-to-understand information about elections, their ballot, election issues, candidates and any ballot measures to enable them to cast informed votes.

- Prioritizing the health and safety of both voters and poll workers and ensuring adequate staff capacity at in-person voting locations; and
- Continuing the practice of early voting and expanding voter assistance programs and resources, including phone and online hotline assistance, in-person and online language and disability accessibility, and assistance for traditionally underrepresented voters.

Year-Round Education

Adopted March 1986 – Reviewed and deemed relevant
August 2022 – Education Commission

California State PTA recognizes that year-round education can provide an opportunity to improve the quality of education and maximizes the utilization of existing school facilities. The acceptance and success of year-round education is enhanced by involving the parents/guardians, students, teachers, and community in a study of year-round education prior to implementation. PTA leaders should attend school board meetings, discuss students' needs with administrators, students and parents/guardians, and be available to serve on year-round education study committees.

In considering year-round education PTA supports:

- Early involvement of parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, staff, students, school board members, community and youth-serving agencies;
- Adoption of goals and objectives that meet student needs and California Education Code requirements and give the highest priority to providing a quality program for every student;
- Decisions on factors that include the health and welfare of students; facilities use; teacher availability; voluntary versus mandatory desegregation plans; enrollment and housing trends; cultural, socioeconomic, and ethnic balance; and the commitment of the community to coordinate youth services;
- Specific efforts of the study committee to identify and meet actual community needs and, if a decision for year-round education has been made, to overcome the natural resistance to change;
- Assignment of students within a family to similar or like tracks whenever feasible;
- The legal authority of the school board to make the final decision;
- Continued community involvement following transition to year-round education to ensure a positive climate for quality education;
- Cooperation of community agencies and organizations that serve children in adapting and providing programs that meet the needs of the students;
- Opportunities for students to participate in special classes, extracurricular and co-curricular activities in a multi-track system;
- Communication that will keep parents/guardians, teachers, and students informed throughout the year; and

- Providing assistance to the principal and support staff who encounter additional responsibilities in the year-round schedule.

Youth Involvement

Adopted March 2005 – Revised October 2010 – Student Involvement Committee

California State PTA values the involvement of youth in accomplishing common goals and supporting California State PTA's mission. California State PTA encourages youth to become advocates, community leaders and responsible adults. Further, it acknowledges the insights, perspective and voice youth provides.

California State PTA welcomes student participation on its Board of Managers and includes students on its commissions and committees. California State PTA believes that student contributions build stronger and healthier communities.

California State PTA encourages PTAs to support efforts to develop youth participation by

- Soliciting input from youth about budgetary and policy proposals that affect them;
- Linking youth involvement opportunities to existing local governmental, school, and state programs that promote voluntary civic and community service;
- Encouraging legislative bodies at all levels of government to include local youth in their policymaking efforts;
- Encouraging schools and community programs to provide meaningful opportunities for youth to participate in planning and implementation;
- Instilling in youth a sense of civic responsibility, citizenship, and leadership through active participation.

The contributions of youth in working with adults will enhance programs that serve youth and will strengthen communities.

Zero to Three Years: A Critical Period in a Child's Development

Adopted February 2017 – Reviewed and deemed relevant November 2022 – Health & Community Concerns Commission

The first three years of life are a period of incredible growth in all areas of a baby's development. Research shows that, to ensure a good start in life, all infants and toddlers need good health, strong families, and positive early learning experiences. Programs and services that address these areas are critical. California State PTA supports healthy child development and the practices that enhance it.

California State PTA believes that parents/guardians are the experts on their children, and there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to raising children. As young children are just beginning to develop self-control, challenging behavior is common and expected in the years from birth

to three. California State PTA believes families should learn how the earliest relationships can promote healthy brain development, how young children build social and emotional skills, and ways to support language and literacy development.

All children are unique. Celebrating, nurturing, and supporting developmental milestones from birth to three years is one of the joys of parenting. Parents should learn how to nurture a baby's social, emotional, intellectual, language, and motor development from birth.

The parent/guardian-child relationship is the foundation of healthy development. A child's development depends on both the traits he was born with (nature), and what he experiences (nurture). All areas of development, social, emotional, intellectual, language, and motor, are linked. Each depends on, and influences, the others. What children experience, including how their parents respond to them, shapes their development as they adapt to the world.

- Children need to develop self-control in order to follow rules, understand limits, and cope with strong feelings. Developing self-control begins at birth and continues throughout childhood.
- Children need positive parenting, taking an approach that is sensitive to children's individual needs and addressing the typical challenges that arise in early childhood with empathy and respect.
- California State PTA believes that a range of early intervention services offers very young children the opportunity to develop skills and abilities that will ready them for school and life. California State PTA encourages parents and families to take advantage of resources to help them maximize the health and wellness habits of their child.
- Children need access to early screening and intervention services that address challenges to their healthy development.
- Children need access to high-quality, affordable early health care including mental health, early education and family support services. Programs and services that address these areas are critical. To be effective, programs must be organized within cohesive systems that coordinate and align a broad array of services. To support the healthy development of all children, states and communities must provide comprehensive, coordinated, well-funded systems of high-quality, prenatal-to-age-3 services that foster success in school and life.

Advancing Education through Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The California State PTA is committed to providing a safe and nurturing educational environment for all children, free from bias. As Artificial Intelligence (AI) becomes increasingly prevalent in education, it presents both transformative opportunities and significant challenges. California State PTA believes it is imperative to leverage AI's capabilities to enhance learning outcomes, personalize education, and prepare students for future careers while also ensuring ethical and equitable practices. Families should be a part of the process by informing them about UDL and how they can play an active role in the design and implementation in the classroom. Additionally, families can encourage school districts to adopt an approach to teaching and learning that values diversity and promotes improved learning outcomes for all students such as UDL as it provides a framework for designing and implementing curriculum that works for all children.

AI in Education: Opportunities and Applications

AI is revolutionizing many fields, including education. Some applications of AI in educational settings include:

- **Essay Writing Assistance:** Open AI tools like ChatGPT can help students draft and refine essays.
- **Grammar and Language Correction:** AI-powered tools improve writing and communication skills.
- **Speech Recognition:** AI-powered tools assist multilingual students by translating and understanding spoken language.
- **Personalized Learning:** AI adapts educational content to meet individual student needs and learning styles.

Challenges and Ethical Considerations

Despite its potential, AI poses several challenges that need to be addressed for successful usage:

- **Data Privacy and Security:** Ensuring student data is protected against unauthorized access and misuse.
- **Cheating and Academic Integrity:** Balancing the use of AI tools with maintaining academic honesty.
- **Algorithmic Bias:** Addressing and mitigating biases in AI algorithms and flawed training datasets that can lead to unfair or discriminatory outcomes.

To address these issues, California State PTA supports national, state, and local policies that call for:

- **Transparent AI Algorithms:** Ensuring AI systems are fair, unbiased, reliable and regularly evaluated
- **Data Privacy Protections:** Implementing strong measures to safeguard student
- **Ethical Guidelines:** Developing clear policies to guide the responsible use of AI in educational contexts.

Guidelines for Educators

Educators should apply professional judgement when integrating AI into lesson planning and assessments.

Key considerations include:

- **Alignment with Educational Values:** AI tools should support high-quality education and adhere to ethical standards.
- **Bias Minimization:** AI applications must be designed to promote fairness and avoid
- **Usability:** AI tools should not add undue burden or complexity for students and

Education and Professional Development

To maximize the benefits of AI, it is crucial to:

- **Promote AI Literacy:** Provide educators with the knowledge and skills to effectively use AI technologies in their instruction.
- **Prepare Students for the Future:** Equip students with AI-related skills for success in a technology-driven society.
- **Engage and Educate Families:** Provide families with information about AI and gather their feedback in order to support their roles in student learning and school system decision making.

Collaboration and Innovation

Advancing AI in education requires collaboration among educators, policymakers, and technology developers. It also requires vigilance to respond to the rapid evolution of this technology, monitor its impact on students and schools, and assure the continuous improvement of policies and practices. By sharing best practices, establishing standards, and addressing common challenges, we can collectively enhance educational outcomes and ensure responsible AI integration.

Conclusion

A well tested and ethical integration of AI in education holds the potential to transform teaching and learning. By embracing AI responsibly, we can create inclusive and equitable educational opportunities that prepare all students for success in an ever-evolving world.

Advocacy Topic Index

The Advocacy Topic Index is intended to provide quick access to relevant PTA positions in a particular subject area, and may not be all-inclusive. When reviewing the resolutions, and position statements listed for a particular topic, please refer also to the General Principles and Legislation Planks in the California State PTA Legislation Platform and to California State PTA Legislation Policies and Procedures for an overall understanding of PTA's legislative direction. Resolutions (R) are published in the *Resolutions Book* and posted on the California State PTA website at capta.org.

R= Resolution
R*= Board of Managers Resolution
PS=Position Statement

C=Communications
E=Education
F=Family Engagement
HCC=Health & Community Concerns

L=Legislation Action Committee
M=Membership Services
S=Student Involvement

Title.....Commission

ACCOUNTABILITY (SEE EDUCATION)

Achievement: Eliminating the Gap (2009) R.....E/F
Assessment and Testing (2009) PSE
Student Assessment, Achievement and Accountability (2000) R.....E

AIDS/HIV (SEE SEXUALLY-TRANSMITTED DISEASES)

Condom Availability Through the Schools (2012) G.....HCC
HIV/STD Prevention Education in Our Schools (2008) R.....HCC

ALCOHOL (SEE SUBSTANCE ABUSE)

ANTIBIOTICS (SEE HEALTH)

ARTS

Arts Education (1998) R.....E
Arts in Education (2010) PSE

ASSESSMENT

Educational Testing and Test Scores (1971) R.....E
Assessment (Statewide) (2009) PSE
Longitudinal Integrated Statewide Data System (2008) R.....E
Student Assessment, Achievement and Accountability (2000) R.....E

ATTENDANCE

Absentees and Dropouts, Programs.....E
Attention Deficit Disorder in Children (1998) R.....HCC
Grade Retention (1991) RE
Juvenile Offenders in the Justice System (2012) PSHCC
Positive Youth Development (2012) PS.....HCC
Prevention and Intervention Programs (2010) PS.....HCC/F
Safe School Environments (2011) PSHCC
School Absenteeism/Dropouts (1986) R.....HCC
Status Offenders (2011) PSHCC
Student Participation in Public Demonstrations (2011) PS.....HCC
Student Records (2011) PS.....E
Violence Prevention in Schools (1999) R.....HCC
Youth Involvement (2010) PS.....S

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Background Checks of Ice Cream Truck Vendors (1986) RHCC
Background Checks of Mobile Food Vendors (2012) G.....HCC
Credentialed School Personnel (2010) PSE

BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS (SEE CHILD CARE)

BICYCLE SAFETY (SEE SAFETY)

CATEGORICAL PROGRAMS (SEE SPECIAL NEEDS)

CHARTER SCHOOLS

Charter Schools (2010) PS.....E

CHILD ABUSE (SEE VIOLENCE AND VANDALISM)

Aid to Victims and Survivors of Sexual Violence and Their Families (2023) RHCC
Child Abuse (2011) PS.....HCC
Child Abuse Prevention, Programs.....HCC
Child Trafficking in California (2010) RHCC
Child Victims/Witnesses Rights (2012) PSHCC
Family Preservation: An Alternative to Out-of-Home Placement (1990) RHCC
Mental Illness: Treatment and Support (1999) RHCC
Missing and Exploited Children, Programs.....HCC
Save Our Kids (1983) RF
Treatment Centers for the Sexually Abused (1978) R.....HCC
Use of Children as Subjects in Pornographic Materials (1977) R.....HCC/C
Violence in the Home (1977) R.....HCC/F

CHILD CARE

Assistance to Families in Need (2012) PS.....HCC
Before- and After-School Options for Children and Youth (2008) PS.....F
Child Care (2012) PSF
Child Victims/Witnesses Rights (2012) PSHCC
Early Care and Education for All of California's Children (2019) R.....E
Early Childhood Development and Education (2000) R.....E/F
Education: The Early Years, Ages 3 to 6 (2010) PSE
Support for Quality Child Care (1986) R.....F

CHOICE IN EDUCATION (SEE CHARTER SCHOOLS, EDUCATION)

CLASS SIZE REDUCTION

Class Size Reduction (1996) R.....E
Reduced Class Size in Grades K-3 (2013) PSE

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Public School Employer-Employee Negotiations (2010) PSE
Teacher Quality: Recruitment, Retention and Resources (2001) R.....E

COMPUTERS (SEE EDUCATION, MASS MEDIA, TECHNOLOGY)

COUNSELING (SEE CHILD ABUSE, EDUCATION, HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH, VIOLENCE AND VANDALISM)

Child Victims/Witnesses Rights (2012) PSHCC
Child Trafficking in California (2010) RHCC
Increasing Counselor-to-Student Ratio in Schools (2000) R.....E

CREDENTIALED AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL, EDUCATION

Credential Requirement: Parent/Family Involvement Component (1993) RF
Credentialed School Nurses (2005) RE/HCC
Credentialed School Personnel (2010) PSE
Family Engagement in Credentialing Programs (2012) PSF
Early Childhood Development and Education (2000) R.....E/F
Education: Support of Public Education (2010) PSE
Evaluation of Teachers (2011) PSE
Improving K-12 Mathematics Education (1998) R.....E
Increased School Nurse-to-Student Ratios (1997) RHCC

Increasing Counselor-to-Student Ratio in Schools (2000) R.....	E
Teacher Preparation for Elementary Education (1973) R.....	E
Teacher Quality: Recruitment, Retention and Resources (2001) R.....	E

CURRICULUM AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Arts Education (1998) R.....	E
Arts in Education (2010) PS	E
Before- and After-School Options for Children and Youth (2008) PS.....	F
Breast Cancer Early Detection Awareness and Education (1988) R.....	HCC
Character Education (2013) PS.....	E
Citizenship Education (1989) R*	E
Creating Lifelong Readers (1998) R	E
Early Childhood Development and Education (2000) R.....	E/F
Financial Literacy for Youth (1999) R.....	F
Freedom to Learn (2010) PS.....	E
HIV/STD Prevention Education in Our Schools (2008) R.....	HCC
Improving K-12 Mathematics Education (1998) R.....	E
Literacy Education (1989) R.....	E/F
Nutrition Education (1991) R	HCC/F
Nutrition and Physical Activity Education (2019) PS	HCC
Opposition to Televised Commercials in California Classrooms (1990) R*	E/C
Pedestrian Safety Education (1990) R.....	HCC/E
School-to-Career for All Students (2001) R	E
School-to-Career Technical Education (2004) PS	E
Self-Esteem and Personal and Social Responsibility Awareness (1991) R.....	F
Summer Learning Loss Resolution (2013) R	E
Summer School (1980) R.....	E
Support for the Civic Mission of Schools (2006) R.....	E
Teaching Hard History: American Slavery in K-12 Education (2021) R.....	E
Teen Driving Safety (2009) R.....	HCC

DELINQUENCY PREVENTION (SEE ATTENDANCE, MENTAL HEALTH, SPECIAL NEEDS, VIOLENCE AND VANDALISM)

Assistance to Families in Need (2012) PS.....	HCC
Before- and After-School Options for Children and Youth (2008) PS.....	F
Character Education (2013) PS.....	E
Child Trafficking in California (2010) R	HCC
Positive Youth Development (2012) PS.....	HCC
Family Preservation: An Alternative to Out-of-Home Placement (1990) R	HCC
Family Services (2022) PS	HCC
Gang Awareness (2011) PS.....	HCC
Juvenile Justice Reform – A Priority (1983) R	HCC
Juvenile Offenders in the Justice System (2012) PS	HCC
Prevention and Intervention Programs (2010) PS.....	HCC/F
Prevention of Teen Pregnancy (2012) PS	HCC
Mental Illness: Treatment and Support (1999) R	HCC
School Absenteeism/Dropouts (1986) R.....	HCC
Status Offenders (2011) PS	HCC
Student Participation in Public Demonstrations (2011) PS.....	HCC
Violence Prevention in Schools (1999) R.....	HCC

DESEGREGATION AND INTEGRATION

Desegregation and Neighborhood Schools (1979) R.....	E
Equity for All Children and Youth (2009) PS	L
Fair Housing (2011) PS.....	HCC
Funding of Mandated Programs: Effect on Public Education (2010) PS	E
Inclusiveness and Diversity (2008) PS	M
Interpersonal Relations (2012) PS.....	HCC
School Desegregation/Integration (2009) PS.....	E
School Desegregation Through Housing Integration Incentives (1982) R.....	E

Support and Funding for Voluntary Integration Programs (1980) R.....E

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Disaster Preparedness (1986) R.....	HCC
Disaster Preparedness/Crisis Response, Job Description.....	HCC
Mitigating Earthquake Hazards in Public Schools (1989) R.....	HCC/E
Safe School Environments (2011) PS	HCC
School Bus Safety (2006) PS	HCC
School Emergency First Aid Plan (1973) R.....	HCC

DISCIPLINE (SEE DELINQUENCY PREVENTION, VIOLENCE AND VANDALISM)

Character Education (2013) PS.....	E
Positive Youth Development (2012) PS.....	HCC
Safe School Environments (2011) PS	HCC
Status Offenders (2011) PS	HCC
Student Participation in Public Demonstrations (2011) PS.....	HCC
Violence Prevention in Schools (1999) R.....	HCC

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (SEE CHILD ABUSE, HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH, VIOLENCE AND VANDALISM)

Aid to Victims and Survivors of Sexual Violence and Their Families (2023) R	HCC
Child Abuse (2011) PS.....	HCC
Child Abuse Prevention, Programs.....	HCC
Child Trafficking in California (2010) R	HCC
Child Victims/Witnesses Rights (2012) PS	HCC
Family Responsibility and Accountability (2012) PS	F
Family Services (2022) PS	HCC
Mental Illness: Treatment and Support (1999) R	HCC
Treatment Centers for the Sexually Abused (1978) R.....	HCC
Use of Children as Subjects in Pornographic Materials (1977) R.....	HCC/C
Violence in the Home (1977) R.....	HCC/F

DRIVER EDUCATION

Teen Driving Safety (2009) R.....	HCC
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DRUG ABUSE (SEE SUBSTANCE ABUSE)

DRUGS (SEE SUBSTANCE ABUSE)

EDUCATION

Achievement: Eliminating the Gap (2009) R	E/F
Arts Education (1998) R	E
Arts in Education (2010) PS	E
Assessment (Statewide) (2009) PS	E
Basic Education (2010) PS	E
Character Education (2019) PS.....	E
Charter Schools (2010) PS.....	E
Citizenship Education (1989) R*	E
Class Size Reduction (1996) R.....	E
Comprehensive Waste Reduction in Schools (2007) R	HCC/E
Computer Technology in Education (1983) R	E
Computer Workstation Health (2010) R	HCC
Creating Lifelong Readers (1998) R	E
Credentialed School Personnel (2010) PS	E
Developmentally-Appropriate Physical Education (1999) R	HCC
Distance Learning (2021) PS	E
Early Care and Education for All of California's Children (2019) R	E
Early Childhood Development and Education (2000) R	E/F
Education Chairman, Job Description.....	E
Education, Programs.....	E

Education of English Language Learners (2010) PS	E
Education: A 21st Century Vision (2005) R.....	E
Education: Higher Education (2010) PS	E
Education: Parental Choice in Public Schools (2010) PS.....	E
Education: Support of Public Education (2010) PS.....	E
Education: The Early Years, Ages 3 to 6 (2010) PS	E
Education: The Elementary Years, Ages 6 to 10 (2013) PS.....	E
Education: The High School Years, Ages 14 to 18 (2009) PS	E
Education: The Middle Years, Ages 10 to 14 (2009) PS	E
Educational Testing and Test Scores (1971) R.....	E
Education Technology Funding (1995) R.....	E
Evaluation of Teachers (2011) PS.....	E
Funding of Mandated Programs: Effect on Public Education (2010) PS	E
Financial Literacy for Youth (1999) R.....	F
Financing California's Public Schools (2007) R.....	E/L
Freedom to Learn (2010) PS.....	E
Grade Retention (1991) R.....	E
HIV/STD Prevention Education in Our Schools (2008) R.....	HCC
Improving K-12 Mathematics Education (1998) R.....	E
Inclusive Schools Build Stronger Communities (2013) R.....	E
Increasing Counselor-to-Student Ratio in Schools (2000) R	E
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Underfunding (2007) R.....	E/L
Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) in Schools (2007) R.....	HCC
Instructional Materials (2009) PS.....	E
Learning Disabilities and Learning Disabilities in Gifted Children (2000) R	E
Library and Media Facilities in Schools, Programs	C
Literacy Education (1989) R.....	E/F
Minimum Instruction Time (1983) R.....	E
Prevention and Intervention Programs (2010) PS.....	HCC/F
Public School Governance Authority (2007) R.....	E/L
Reduced Class Size in Grades K-3 (2013) PS	E
Safe School Environments (2011) PS	HCC
School and Public/Community Library Services (2022) PS.....	E
School Based Decision Making (2009) PS	E
School Closure (2013) PS.....	E
School-to-Career for All Students (2001) R	E
School-to-Career Technical Education (2004) PS	E
Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education (2011) R	E
Special Education (2010) PS.....	E
Student Assessment, Achievement and Accountability (2000) R	E
Student Participation in Public Demonstrations (2011) PS.....	HCC
Student Records (2011) PS.....	E
Summer School (1980) R.....	E
Support for the Civic Mission of Schools (2006) R.....	E
Support of Public Education, PTA Priority (1980) R.....	E
Teacher Preparation for Elementary Education (1973) R.....	E
Teacher Quality: Recruitment, Retention and Resources (2001) R.....	E
Year-Round Education (2011) PS	E

EMERGENCY

Disaster Preparedness/Crisis Response, Job Description.....	HCC
Duplicate Emergency Forms at Athletic Events (1974) R.....	E
Emergency School Bus Evacuation (1973) R.....	HCC/E
First Aid and/or Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (C.P.R.) (1987) R.....	HCC
Safe School Environments (2011) PS	HCC
Safety/Disaster Preparedness, Programs.....	HCC
School Bus Safety (2006) PS.....	HCC
School Emergency First Aid Plan (1973) R.....	HCC

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Air Pollution (1973) R	HCC
Comprehensive Waste Reduction in Schools (2007) R	HCC/E
Electro-Magnetic Fields (1994) R	HCC
Energy Conservation (2011) PS	HCC
Environmental Protection, Programs	HCC
Environmental Health and Environmental Education (2012) PS	E/HCC
Hazardous Waste Management (1980) R	HCC
Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) in Schools (2007) R	HCC
Lead Poisoning (2005) PS	HCC
Longitudinal Integrated Statewide Data System (2008) R	E
Pesticides (1972) R	HCC
Protection of Children from the Harmful Effects of Aircraft Emissions (1998) R	HCC
Sun Safety: Skin Cancer Prevention Measures at School (2005) R	HCC
Teen Driving Safety (2009) R	HCC
Toxins (Persistent and Bioaccumulative) and Their Effects on Children (2002) R	HCC
Trees for Life (1989) R	HCC

EQUAL RIGHTS

Achievement: Eliminating the Gap (2009) R	E/F
Assistance to Families in Need (2012) PS	HCC
Child Trafficking in California (2010) R	HCC
Desegregation and Neighborhood Schools (1979) R	E
Equity for All Children and Youth (2009) PS	L
Fair Housing (2011) PS	HCC
Family Responsibility and Accountability (2012) PS	F
Family Services (2022) PS	HCC
Freedom to Learn (2010) PS	E
General Principles, #1 Principle	L
Interpersonal Relations (2012) PS	HCC
Rights and Services for Undocumented Children and Children of Undocumented Immigrants (2012) PS	HCC

FACILITIES

Computer Workstation Health (2010) R	HCC
Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) in Schools (2007) R	HCC
Mitigating Earthquake Hazards in Public Schools (1989) R	HCC/E
Revenue from Sale or Rental of School Properties for Maintenance Services and Repair of School Sites (1979) R	E
Safe School Environments (2011) PS	HCC
Safety Problems Related to Freeway Construction Near Schools (1970) R	HCC/E
School Buildings and Railroad Safety Requirements (1990) R	HCC/E
School Closure (2013) PS	E
School Construction Funding (1986) R	E
School Facilities and Public Planning (1991) R	E
School Facilities Crisis (1990) R	E

FAMILY

Assistance to Families in Need (2012) PS	HCC
Credential Requirement: Parent/Family Involvement Component (1993) R	F
Family Engagement in Credentialing Programs (2012) PS	F
Family Planning (2012) PS	F
Family Preservation: An Alternative to Out-of-Home Placement (1990) R	HCC
Family Responsibility and Accountability (2012) PS	F
Family Services (2022) PS	HCC
Foster Families (1999) R	F
Homeless Families and Children, Programs	HCC
Homeless Families and Children (1988) PS	HCC
Homeless Families With Children (1989) R	HCC
Prevention and Intervention Programs (2010) PS	HCC/F
Rights and Services for Undocumented Children and Children of Undocumented Immigrants (2012) PS	HCC

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Achievement: Eliminating the Gap (2009) R	E/F
Basic Education (2010) PS.....	E
Character Education (2013) PS.....	E
Charter Schools (2010) PS.....	E
Computer Workstation Health (2010) R.....	HCC
Credential Requirement: Parent/Family Involvement Component (1993) R	F
Early Childhood Development and Education (2000) R.....	E/F
Education: Parental Choice in Public Schools (2010) PS.....	E
Education: Support of Public Education (2010) PS	E
Family Engagement in Credentialing Programs (2012) PS.....	F
Financial Literacy for Youth (1999) R.....	F
Foster Families (1999) R.....	F
Literacy Education (1989) R.....	E/F
Nutrition Education (1991) R	HCC/F
Nutrition and Physical Activity Education (2019) PS.....	HCC
Parent and Family Involvement, Programs.....	F
Parent/Community Action for Effective Schools (1993) R	E
Positive Youth Development (2012) PS.....	HCC
Prevention and Intervention Programs (2010) PS.....	HCC/F
Public Involvement in School Governance (2009) PS.....	L
Safe Routes to School for All Children (2008) R.....	HCC
Save Our Kids (1983) R	F
School Absenteeism/Dropouts (1986) R.....	HCC
School Based Decision Making (2009) PS	E
Self-Esteem and Personal and Social Responsibility Awareness (1991) R	F
Suicide Prevention Education and Awareness (1983) R.....	HCC/F
Suicide Prevention Education and Awareness (2010) G.....	HCC/F
Support for Quality Child Care (1986) R	F
Television/Screen Time Awareness (2006) R.....	HCC
Violence in the Home (1977) R.....	HCC/F

FAMILY PLANNING

Condom Availability Through the Schools (2012) G.....	HCC
Family Planning (2012) PS.....	F
Health Care Access for Children, Youth, Pregnant Women and Their Families (2022) PS	HCC
Minor Consent for Health Care (2011) PS	HCC
Prevention and Intervention Programs (2010) PS.....	HCC/F
Prevention of Teen Pregnancy (2012) PS	HCC

FILMS (SEE MASS MEDIA)

FINANCE AND FUNDING – EDUCATION

Adequate and Equitable School Finance System (1987) R	E
Assistance to Families in Need (2012) PS.....	HCC
California K-12 Public School Funding Crisis (1998) R	E
Education: Opposing Vouchers, Tuition Tax Credits and Deductions as Systems of Education Aid (2010) PS	E
Education: Support of Public Education (2010) PS	E
Educational Technology Funding (1995) R.....	E
Financing California's Public Schools (2007) R.....	E/L
Equal Access to School Improvement Program Funds (1983) R	E
Funding Sources for Adult Crossing Guards (1981) R.....	HCC
Lottery Revenue and Public School Funding (2009) PS	E
Lowering the 2/3 Vote Requirement on School and Library Bonds (1999) R.....	L
Nonsuspension of Proposition 98 (1991) R	E
Opposing Vouchers, Tuition Tax Credits and Deductions, Education (2008) PS.....	E
Post Proposition 13 Funding of Public Education (1979) R.....	E
Property Tax Limitation (1978) R.....	L

Public School Governance Authority (2007) R.....	E/L
Rights and Services for Undocumented Children and Children of Undocumented Immigrants (2012) PS.....	HCC
School Buildings and Railroad Safety Requirements (1990) R	HCC/E
School Construction Funding (1986) R.....	E
School Facilities and Public Planning (1991) R.....	E
School Facilities Crisis (1990) R.....	E
School Funding (1981) R.....	E
School Library Media Center Funding Crisis (1988) R.....	E
School Support Program (1976) R.....	E
School Transportation (1981) R.....	E
Support of Public Education, PTA Priority (1980) R.....	E
Tuition Tax Credits (1982) R*	E

FINGERPRINTING

Credentialed School Personnel (2010) PS	E
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FIREARM SAFETY (SEE WEAPONS)

FUNDING (SEE FINANCE AND FUNDING)

GANGS

Gang Awareness (2011) PS.....	HCC
Gangs, Programs	HCC
Positive Youth Development (2012) PS.....	HCC
Safe School Environments (2011) PS	HCC
School Absenteeism/Dropouts (1986) R.....	HCC
Strategies to Reduce School, Family and Community Violence (1995) R.....	HCC
Violence Prevention in Schools (1999) R.....	HCC

GOVERNANCE, PUBLIC SCHOOL

Public Involvement in School Governance (2009) PS.....	L
School Based Decision Making (2009) PS	E

GUNS (SEE WEAPONS)

HANDICAPPED (SEE SPECIAL NEEDS)

HAZARDOUS/TOXIC MATERIALS (SEE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION):

Environmental Protection, Programs	HCC
Hazardous Waste Management (1980) R	HCC
Pesticides (1972) R.....	HCC
Toxins (Persistent and Bioaccumulative) and Their Effects on Children (2002) R.....	HCC

HEALTH (SEE AIDS/HIV, MENTAL HEALTH, PREGNANCY, SEXUALLY-TRANSMITTED DISEASES, SUBSTANCE ABUSE)

Aid to Victims and Survivors of Sexual Violence and Their Families (2023) R	HCC
Air Pollution (1973) R	HCC
Antibiotic Resistance Awareness (2001) R.....	HCC
Assistance to Families in Need (2012) PS.....	HCC
Attention Deficit Disorder in Children (1998) R	HCC
Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Awareness in Schools (2011) R.....	HCC
Behavioral Health and Social Emotional Development (2010) PS	HCC
Breakfast in Every School (2003) R.....	HCC
Breast Cancer Early Detection Awareness and Education (1988) R.....	HCC
Community and Wellness Fairs, Programs.....	HCC
Computer Workstation Health (2010) R.....	HCC
Condom Availability Through the Schools (2012) G.....	HCC
Control of Look-Alike Stimulants and Depressant Drugs (1982) R.....	HCC
Credentialed School Nurses (2005) R	E/HCC
Dangers of Energy/Caffeinated Beverages (2019) PS.....	HCC

Developmentally-Appropriate Physical Education (1999) R	HCC
Duplicate Emergency Forms at Athletic Events (1974) R	E
Education on Health Hazards in the Use of Anabolic Steroids (1989) R	E/HCC
Electro-Magnetic Fields (1994) R	HCC
Environmental Health and Environmental Education (2012) PS	E/HCC
Family Planning (2012) PS	F
First Aid and/or Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (C.P.R.) (1987) R	HCC
Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis in Schools (2004) R	HCC
Grief-Sensitive Schools: Building Healthy Coping Skills (2021) PS	HCC
Hazardous Waste Management (1980) R	HCC
Health, Job Description	HCC
Health, Programs	HCC
Health Care Access for Children, Youth, Pregnant Women and Their Families (2022) PS	HCC
Health Education (2005) PS	HCC
Healthy Lifestyles for All Children (2004) R	HCC
HIV/STD Prevention Education in Our Schools (2008) R	HCC
Hot Weather Standards in the School Setting (1992) R	HCC
Immunization Awareness and Educational Programs (1975) R	HCC
Increased School Nurse-to-Student Ratios (1997) R	HCC
Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) in Schools (2007) R	HCC
Lead Poisoning (2005) PS	HCC
Measles (Rubeola) Vaccinations (1990) R	HCC
Mental Illness: Treatment and Support (1999) R	HCC
Nutrition Education (1991) R	HCC/F
Nutrition and Physical Activity Education (2019) PS	HCC
Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness (1999) R	HCC
Pesticides (1972) R	HCC
Physical Education (K-12) (2009) PS	HCC
Prevention and Intervention Programs (2010) PS	HCC/F
Prevention of Teen Pregnancy (2012) PS	HCC
Protection of Children from the Harmful Effects of Aircraft Emissions (1998) R	HCC
School-Based/Linked Health Centers (2009) PS	HCC
School Emergency First Aid Plan (1973) R	HCC
Scoliosis Screening (1980) R	HCC
Suicide Prevention Education and Awareness (1983) R	HCC/F
Suicide Prevention Education and Awareness (2010) G	HCC/F
Television/Screen Time Awareness (2006) R	HCC
Minor Consent for Health Care (2011) PS	HCC
Toxins (Persistent and Bioaccumulative) and Their Effects on Children (2002) R	HCC
Treatment Centers for the Sexually Abused (1978) R	HCC
Venereal Disease Education and Control (1973) R	HCC

HIV (SEE AIDS)

HIV/STD Prevention Education in Our Schools (2008) R	HCC
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HOME AND SCHOOL SAFETY (SEE SAFETY)

HOMELESS (SEE FAMILY)

Assistance to Families in Need (2012) PS	HCC
Child Trafficking in California (2010) R	HCC
Homeless Families and Children, Programs	HCC
Homeless Families and Children (1988) PS	HCC
Homeless Families With Children (1989) R	HCC
Missing and Exploited Children, Programs	HCC
School Absenteeism/Dropouts (1986) R	HCC

ICE CREAM VENDORS

Background Checks of Mobile Food Vendors (2012) G	HCC
Background Checks of Ice Cream Truck Vendors (1986) R	HCC

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND TIME

Freedom to Learn (2010) PS.....	E
Instructional Materials (2009) PS.....	E
Minimum Instruction Time (1983) R.....	E
Support for the Civic Mission of Schools (2006) R.....	E

INTERNET (SEE MASS MEDIA)

JUVENILE JUSTICE

Child Victims/Witnesses Rights (2012) PS	HCC
Family Preservation: An Alternative to Out-of-Home Placement (1990) R.....	HCC
Foster Families (1999) R.....	F
Juvenile Justice Reform – A Priority (1983) R	HCC
Juvenile Offenders in the Justice System (2012) PS	HCC
Positive Youth Development (2012) PS.....	HCC
School Absenteeism/Dropouts (1986) R.....	HCC

LEGISLATION

Ballot Propositions (Initiatives) (1999) R.....	L
Financing California's Public Schools (2007) R.....	E/L
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Underfunding (2007) R.....	E/L
Local School Parcel Tax Measure Threshold Reduction (2008) R.....	L
Lowering the 2/3 Vote Requirement on School and Library Bonds (1999) R.....	L
Lowering the Vote Requirement in the California State Budget Process (2009) R.....	L
Property Tax Limitation (1978) R.....	L
Public Involvement in School Governance (2009) PS.....	L
Public School Governance Authority (2007) R.....	E/L
Qualifications for Candidacy in California Elections (2013) R.....	L
State Government Responsibility for a Rational Budget Process (1992) R*	L
State Tax Reform (1991) R	L
Voting.....	L

LIBRARY

Freedom to Learn (2010) PS.....	E
Library and Media Facilities in Schools, Programs	C
Lowering the 2/3 Vote Requirement on School and Library Bonds (1999) R.....	L
School and Public/Community Library Services (2022) PS.....	E
School Library Media Center Funding Crisis (1988) R	E

LITERACY

Creating Lifelong Readers (1998) R	E
Financial Literacy for Youth (1999) R.....	F
Literacy Education (1989) R.....	E/F

MASS MEDIA (FILM, INTERNET, PRINT, TELEVISION, VIDEO)

Alcohol Beverage Advertising That Targets Youth (1992) R.....	HCC/C
Closed Captioned TV (1978) R.....	C
Computer Technology in Education (1983) R	E
Drug Advertising (1970) R.....	HCC
Freedom to Learn (2010) PS.....	E
Internet Access for California Classrooms (2000) R.....	C
Mass Media and the Family (2012) PS	C
Online Safeguards for Internet Use by Children and Youth (1997) R.....	C
Opposition to Televised Commercials in California Classrooms (1990) R*	E/C
Quality of Life Portrayed on Television (1979) R.....	C
Regulation of the Display and Sale to Minors of Drug-Use Information and Paraphernalia Including Cigarette Papers (1979) R ..	HCC
Studying the Impact of Video Games (2012) G	HCC
Television Literacy and Program Accountability (1993) R.....	C

Television Programming (2009) PS	C
Television/Screen Time Awareness (2006) R	HCC
Use of Children as Subjects in Pornographic Materials (1977) R	HCC/C

MENTAL HEALTH

Aid to Victims and Survivors of Sexual Violence and Their Families (2023) R	HCC
Increasing Counselor-to-Student Ratio in Schools (2000) R	E
Behavioral Health and Social Emotional Development (2010) PS	HCC
Grief-Sensitive Schools: Building Healthy Coping Skills (2021) PS	HCC
Mental Illness: Treatment and Support (1999) R	HCC
Prevention and Intervention Programs (2010) PS	HCC/F
Prevention of Teen Pregnancy (2012) PS	HCC
School-Based/Linked Health Centers (2009) PS	HCC
Self-Esteem and Personal and Social Responsibility Awareness (1999) R	F
Suicide Prevention Education and Awareness (1983) R	HCC/F
Suicide Prevention Education and Awareness (2010) G	HCC/F
Treatment Centers for the Sexually Abused (1978) R	HCC

MINORS

Alcohol Beverage Advertising That Targets Youth (1992) R	HCC/C
Basic Education (2010) PS	E
Child Abuse (2011) PS	HCC
Child Abuse Prevention, Programs	HCC
Child Trafficking in California (2010) R	HCC
Family Responsibility and Accountability (2012) PS	F
Juvenile Offenders in the Justice System (2012) PS	HCC
Missing and Exploited Children (2011) PS	HCC
Missing and Exploited Children, Programs	HCC
Online Safeguards for Internet Use by Children and Youth (1997) R	C
Positive Youth Development (2012) PS	HCC
Regulation of the Display and Sale to Minors of Drug-Use Information and Paraphernalia Including Cigarette Papers (1979) R ..	HCC
Rights and Services for Undocumented Children and Children of Undocumented Immigrants (2012) PS	HCC
Status Offenders (2011) PS	HCC
Student Participation in Public Demonstrations (2011) PS	HCC
Student Records (2011) PS	E
Support for the Civic Mission of Schools (2006) R	E
Television/Screen Time Awareness (2006) R	HCC
Use of Children as Subjects in Pornographic Materials (1977) R	HCC/C
Youth Involvement (2004) R (Student Involvement Committee)	F
Youth Involvement (2010) PS	S

NUTRITION

Assistance to Families in Need (2012) PS	HCC
Breakfast in Every School (2003) R	HCC
Nutrition Education (1991) R	HCC/F
Nutrition and Physical Activity Education (2019) PS	HCC
School Nutrition Programs: Improvement and Expansion (1991) R	HCC
Rights and Services for Undocumented Children and Children of Undocumented Immigrants (2012) PS	HCC

PARENTING EDUCATION

Child Abuse (2011) PS	HCC
Child Abuse Prevention, Programs	HCC
Child Trafficking in California (2010) R	HCC
Family Engagement in Credentialing Programs (2012) PS	F
Interpersonal Relations (2012) PS	HCC
Parenting Education and Skills Development (2008) PS	F
Family Engagement, Job Description	F
Patent Involvement (2005) G	F
Family Engagement, Programs	F

Save Our Kids (1983) R F

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY (SEE SAFETY)

PESTICIDES (SEE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, HAZARDOUS/TOXIC MATERIALS)

Pesticides (1972) R HCC

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Developmentally-Appropriate Physical Education (1999) R HCC

Nutrition and Physical Education (2019) PS HCC

PLAYGROUND

Playground Equipment Safety Standards (1996) R HCC

Playground Surface Safety (2002) R HCC

POLITICS

Local Candidates Forum Event Planning L

Purposes of PTA ---

Voting L

POLLUTION (SEE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION)

PREGNANCY

Condom Availability Through the Schools (2012) G HCC

Family Planning (2012) PS F

Health Care Access for Children, Youth, Pregnant Women and Their Families (2022) PS HCC

Prevention and Intervention Programs (2010) PS HCC/F

Prevention of Teen Pregnancy (2012) PS HCC

Save Our Kids (1983) R F

Substance Use and Abuse During Pregnancy (1987) R HCC

Minor Consent for Health Care (2011) PS HCC

SAFETY

Antibiotic Resistance Awareness (2001) R HCC

Background Checks of Ice Cream Truck Vendors (1986) R HCC

Background Checks of Mobile Food Vendors (2012) G HCC

Ban on Military Assault-Type Weapons (1989) R HCC

Ban on the Manufacture and Sale of Saturday Night Specials/Junk Guns (1997) R HCC

Bicycle Safety Education and Training (1973) R HCC

Bicycle Safety Helmets (1991) R HCC

Child Restraints and Seat Belts, Programs HCC

Child Trafficking in California (2010) R HCC

Computer Workstation Health (2010) R HCC

Disaster Preparedness (1986) R HCC

Disaster Preparedness/Crisis Response, Job Description HCC

Duplicate Emergency Forms at Athletic Events (1974) R E

Emergency School Bus Evacuation (1973) R HCC/E

Environmental Health and Environmental Education (2012) PS E/HCC

Firearm Safety and Awareness (1995) R HCC

Firearm Safety Devices (1999) R HCC

Firearms and Assault Weapons (2011) PS HCC

Fireworks: Hazards to Youth (1990) R HCC

First Aid and/or Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (C.P.R.) (1987) R HCC

Football Safety (1975) R HCC

Funding Sources for Adult Crossing Guards (1981) R HCC

Gang Awareness (2011) PS HCC

Gangs, Programs HCC

HIV/STD Prevention Education in Our Schools (2008) R HCC

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) in Schools (2007) R HCC

Lead Poisoning (2005) PS.....	HCC
Licensing and Registration of Handguns (2000) R.....	HCC
Mitigating Earthquake Hazards in Public Schools (1989) R.....	HCC/E
Paintball Gun Control (1993) R.....	HCC
Pedestrian Safety Education (1990) R.....	HCC/E
Playground Equipment Safety Standards (1996) R.....	HCC
Playground Surface Safety (2002) R.....	HCC
Regulation of Liquor Licenses Near Schools (1997) R.....	HCC
Safe Routes to School for All Children (2008) R.....	HCC
Safe School Environments (2011) PS	HCC
Safe School Approaches for Pedestrians and Bicyclists (1974) R	HCC
Safety, Job Description	HCC
Safety/Disaster Preparedness, Programs.....	HCC
Safety Helmets for Scooter, Skateboard and Skate Users Under the Age of 18 (2001) R	HCC
Safety Problems Related to Freeway Construction Near Schools (1970) R.....	HCC/E
School Buildings and Railroad Safety Requirements (1990) R	HCC/E
School Bus Safety (1993) R.....	HCC
School Bus Safety (2006) PS	HCC
School Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Improvement (2001) R	HCC
School Transportation (1981) R.....	E
Seat Belts and Child Restraint Usage (1983) R	HCC
Sun Safety: Skin Cancer Prevention Measures at School (2005) R.....	HCC
Strategies to Reduce School, Family and Community Violence (1995) R.....	HCC
Student Participation in Public Demonstrations (2011) PS.....	HCC
Teen Driving Safety (2009) R.....	HCC
Temperature Control Standards in the School Setting (2019) R	HCC
Toy Look-Alike Guns (2009) PS	HCC
Use of Children as Subjects in Pornographic Materials (1977) R.....	HCC/C
Violence Prevention in Schools (1999) R.....	HCC
Weapons on Campus (1973) R	HCC

SAFETY HELMETS

Bicycle Safety Helmets (1991) R.....	HCC
Safety Helmets for Scooter, Skateboard and Skate Users Under the Age of 18 (2001) R	HCC
Save Our Kids (1983) R	F

SCHOOL BONDS (SEE FINANCE AND FUNDING)

SCHOOL BUSES

Emergency School Bus Evacuation (1973) R.....	HCC/E
Safe Routes to School for All Children (2008) R.....	HCC
School Bus Safety (1993) R.....	HCC
School Bus Safety (2006) PS.....	HCC
School Transportation (1981) R.....	E
Social Host Accountability and Underage Drinking (2009) R	HCC

SCHOOL NURSES

Credentialed School Nurses (2005) R	HCC
Increased School Nurse-to-Student Ratios (1997) R	HCC
School-Based/Linked Health Centers (2009) PS	HCC

SCHOOL-TO-CAREER

Education: Higher Education (2010) PS	E
Education: The Early Years, Ages 3 to 6 (2010) PS	E
Education: The Elementary Years, Ages 6 to 10 (2013) PS.....	E
Education: The High School Years, Ages 14 to 18 (2009) PS	E
Education: The Middle Years, Ages 10 to 14 (2009) PS	E
School-to-Career for All Students (2001) R	E
School-to-Career Technical Education (2004) PS	E

SEAT BELTS

Child Restraints and Seat Belts, Programs.....	HCC
Seat Belts and Child Restraint Usage (1983) R.....	HCC

SEXUAL ASSAULT AND ABUSE (SEE MENTAL HEALTH)

Aid to Victims and Survivors of Sexual Violence and Their Families (2023) R	HCC
Child Abuse (2011) PS.....	HCC
Child Abuse Prevention, Programs.....	HCC
Child Trafficking in California (2010) R	HCC
Missing and Exploited Children, Programs.....	HCC
Save Our Kids (1983) R	F
Treatment Centers for the Sexually Abused (1978) R.....	HCC
Use of Children as Subjects in Pornographic Materials (1977) R.....	HCC/C

SEXUALLY-TRANSMITTED DISEASE

AIDS Prevention Education in the Curriculum (1988) R.....	E/HCC
Condom Availability Through the Schools (2012) G.....	HCC
Venereal Disease Education and Control (1973) R.....	HCC

SMOKING (SEE SUBSTANCE ABUSE)

SPECIAL NEEDS (SEE CATEGORICAL PROGRAMS)

Attention Deficit Disorder in Children (1998) R	HCC
Closed Captioned TV (1978) R.....	C
Education of English Language Learners (2010) PS	E
Equal Access to School Improvement Program Funds (1983) R	E
Funding of Mandated Programs: Effect on Public Education (2010) PS	E
Grade Retention (1991) R	E
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Underfunding (2007) R	E/L
Learning Disabilities and Learning Disabilities in Gifted Children (2000) R	E
School Absenteeism/Dropouts (1986) R.....	HCC
Rights and Services for Undocumented Children and Children of Undocumented Immigrants (2012) PS.....	HCC
Special Education (2010) PS.....	E

STANDARDS

Grade Retention (1991) R	E
Assessment (Statewide) (2009) PS	E
Student Assessment, Achievement and Accountability (2000) R	E

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Alcohol and Tobacco Use in Youth: Education, Prevention and Intervention (2002) R.....	HCC
Alcohol Beverage Advertising That Targets Youth (1992) R.....	HCC/C
Ban on Drug Paraphernalia (1981) R	HCC
Control of Look-Alike Stimulants and Depressant Drugs (1982) R.....	HCC
Drug Advertising (1970) R.....	HCC
Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Abuse Prevention and Awareness (2012) G	HCC
Education on Health Hazards in the Use of Anabolic Steroids (1989) R	E/HCC
Dealing with Establishments That Sell Gasoline and Alcohol Concurrently (2012) G.....	HCC
Limiting Concurrent Sales of Gasoline and Alcohol and the Proliferation of Outlets (1985) R	HCC
Prevention and Intervention Programs (2010) PS.....	HCC/F
Primary Prevention of Substance Abuse (1979) R.....	HCC
Prohibiting the Promotion of Tobacco Products (1987) R	HCC
Regulation of Liquor Licenses Near Schools (1997) R.....	HCC
Regulation of the Display and Sale to Minors of Drug-Use Information and Paraphernalia Including Cigarette Papers (1979) R ..	HCC
Sale of Tobacco Products to Minors (1988) R	HCC
Save Our Kids (1983) R	F
Smoking and Health (1964) R	HCC
Social Host Accountability and Underage Drinking (2009) R	HCC

Student Substance Abuse – Alternatives to Zero Tolerance (2003) R	HCC
Substance Use and Abuse During Pregnancy (1987) R	HCC
Tobacco Advertising That Targets Minors (1993) R.....	HCC

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Mental Illness: Treatment and Support (1999) R	HCC
Suicide Prevention Education and Awareness (1983) R.....	HCC/F
Suicide Prevention Education and Awareness (2010) G.....	HCC/F

TAXES

Education: Opposing Vouchers, Tuition Tax Credits and Deductions as Systems of Education Aid (2010) PS.....	E
Local School Parcel Tax Measure Threshold Reduction (2008) R	E/L
Lowering 2/3 Vote Requirement on School and Library Bonds (1999) R	L
Property Tax Limitation (1978) R.....	L
State Tax Reform (1991) R	L
State Tax Reform (2009) PS	L
Tuition Tax Credits (1982) R*	E

TEACHERS (SEE CREDENTIALED AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL)

TECHNOLOGY

Computer Technology in Education (1983) R.....	E
Computer Workstation Health (2010) R.....	HCC
Educational Technology Funding (1995) R.....	E
Online Safeguards for Internet Use by Children and Youth (1997) R.....	C
Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education (2011) R.....	E
Television/Screen Time Awareness (2006) R.....	HCC

TELEVISION PROGRAMMING AND VIEWING (SEE MASS MEDIA)

TOBACCO (SEE SUBSTANCE ABUSE)

TOXIC/HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

TOYS

Bicycle Safety Helmets (1991) R.....	HCC
Online Safeguards for Internet Use by Children and Youth (1997) R.....	C
Paintball Gun Control (1993) R.....	HCC
Safety Helmets for Scooter, Skateboard and Skate Users Under the Age of 18 (2001) R	HCC
Save Our Kids (1983) R	F
Studying the Impact of Video Games (2012) G	HCC
Television/Screen Time Awareness (2006) R.....	HCC
Torture Toys (1972) R.....	HCC
Toy Look-Alike Guns (2009) PS	HCC

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

Funding Sources for Adult Crossing Guards (1981) R.....	HCC
School Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Improvement (2001) R	HCC
School Transportation (1981) R.....	E
School Transportation: Equitable Funding (2004) R	E

TRUANCY (SEE ATTENDANCE, GANGS)

Before- and After-School Options for Children and Youth (2008) PS.....	F
Positive Youth Development (2012) PS.....	HCC

VEHICLE SAFETY (SEE SAFETY)

VIDEO (SEE MASS MEDIA)

VIOLENCE AND VANDALISM

Aid to Victims and Survivors of Sexual Violence and Their Families (2023) R	HCC
Child Trafficking in California (2010) R	HCC
Gang Awareness (2011) PS	HCC
Gangs, Programs	HCC
Inclusiveness and Diversity (2008) PS	M
Juvenile Offenders in the Justice System (2012) PS	HCC
Missing and Exploited Children, Programs	HCC
Positive Youth Development (2012) PS	HCC
Safe School Environments (2011) PS	HCC
Status Offenders (2011) PS	HCC
Strategies to Reduce School, Family and Community Violence (1995) R	HCC
Threatening Phone Calls to Schools (1990) R	HCC
Torture Toys (1972) R	HCC
Treatment Centers for the Sexually Abused (1978) R	HCC
Violence and Vandalism (1980) R	HCC
Violence in the Home (1977) R	HCC/F
Violence Prevention in Schools (1999) R	HCC

VOUCHERS

Education: Opposing Vouchers, Tuition Tax Credits and Deductions as Systems of Education Aid (2010) PS	E
Education: Support of Public Education (2010) PS	E
Tuition Tax Credits (1982) R*	E

WEAPONS

Ban on Military Assault-Type Weapons (1989) R	HCC
Ban on the Manufacture and Sale of Saturday Night Specials/Junk Guns (1997) R	HCC
Firearm Safety and Awareness (1995) R	HCC
Firearm Safety Devices (1999) R	HCC
Firearms and Assault Weapons (2011) PS	HCC
Licensing and Registration of Handguns (2000) R	HCC
Paintball Gun Control (1993) R	HCC
Toy Look-Alike Guns (2009) PS	HCC
Weapons on Campus (1973) R	HCC

YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION

Year-Round Education (2011) PS	E
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