

Advocacy Report

What do hot school lunches, polio vaccines, gun safety, substance abuse education and family involvement requirements within No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation have in common?

PTA has advocated for them all!

Did you know that PTA is the largest and oldest child advocacy organization dedicated to the health, welfare, safety and education of children? Advocacy is an intrinsic part of PTA:

The PTA Mission:

- A powerful voice for all children
- A relevant resource for families and communities
- ***A strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child***

The PTA Purposes:

- To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community, and place of worship
 - To raise the standards of home life
- ***To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth***
- To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth
- To develop between educators and the general public such efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education

So we have discussed the why, so how about the what...

What can you do? As a parent we are all advocates for our children. PTA helps with that by providing parent education and supporting family involvement in the schools. Because PTA is a respected part of the education and youth community, we often have a say with governmental and other organizations. You are a part of that by just joining PTA. Being a member is your first additional step in advocacy. Perhaps you want to take advocacy another step. Stay informed! That is where the PTA Advocacy Committees come in. Please look for this report and look to other resources (listed below). An even bigger step is to contact legislators or others about issues that concern you. Check out the National PTA "Advocacy Toolkit" for more information (www.PTA.org Advocacy pull down menu). Ohio & National PTAs have created great tools for online advocacy:

SIGN UP for the "PTA Takes Action" from the Ohio PTA home page click on "SIGNUP - Listserve and Notifications"

National PTA Visit: <http://cqrcengage.com/npta2/home> and "Join the Network" on the right side of the page

Useful Advocacy websites:

Ohio PTA	www.ohiopta.org (Advocacy tab)
National PTA	www.pta.org (Advocacy tab)
State of Ohio	www.ohio.gov
Ohio School Boards Assoc.	www.osba-ohio.org

TAKE ACTION: Family Engagement Act 2015 "Take Action Network" pulldown Advocacy tab
Provide contact information and use the prepared email or create your own

Please contact me (Elise Fessler @ bfsing@cinci.rr.com, HCC Advocacy Chair) to get on a distribution list for Advocacy Reports (this report can be used as is for meetings and newsletters or edit it as desired but please keep the references mentioned).

2015 Ohio PTA Legislative Priorities

Ohio PTA promotes legislation designed to protect all children and youth; legislation designed to meet the education, health, and welfare needs of children and youth, and legislation designed to assist in preparing children and youth to intelligently assume the ever increasing responsibilities of citizenship.

Ohio PTA 2015 #1 Main Focus Area SUPPORT A SAFE AND EFFECTIVE EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT ADEQUATE FOR ALL CHILDREN

Position Statements:

- Ohio PTA Board of Directors supports the concept of challenging our students to be successful through completing a rigorous curriculum.
- Ohio's school districts need to have the resources to provide such a curriculum through qualified teachers in the areas of math and science, adequate classroom physical space and supplies which do not exist currently.
- Access for remediation and developmental education will be universal throughout the state, not just at two year community colleges which are located in select areas of our state.
- Our PTAs through its units and councils will advocate to our decision makers to provide our school districts the resources to prepare our students for the challenges ahead to meet these expectations.

Legislative Focus Areas

- Oppose the use of public funds for non-public schools, vouchers and tax credits.
- Support only charter schools that are governed by local school boards, open to all students, do not divert moneys from public schools, comply with federal and state laws governing public schools and do not charge tuition or fees not charged by public schools.
- Support increased physical activities during the school day for K-12 students.
- Support strong relations that will include Arts education in the core requirements for a high quality comprehensive public education.
- Support privacy of student recruiters (in regards to military recruiters).
- Ohio PTA Board of Directors supports and promotes the Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators.

Health and Safety Issues

- Support emphasis on the importance of nutrition education and encourage the implementation of a comprehensive nutrition program in Ohio schools.
- Support an increased cigarette tax and taxing of other tobacco products with a portion of the tax increase funding tobacco cessation programs.
- Oppose the use of corporal punishment and promote effective research-supported disciplinary measures.
- Stand on firearms safety awareness.
- Stand on beverage choices in school vending machines.
- Support introduction of a health education standard in Ohio curriculum.
- Juvenile justice system
- Safe driving
- Human trafficking

Education Funding

- Funding to support an infrastructure for state support for family engagement.
- The financial responsibility for administering any background check should not negatively impact the volunteer organization or the volunteer activity.
- Support school funding reform.

(This page is from the Ohio PTA Website: <http://www.ohiopta.org/Advocacy.aspx>)