

## NUTRITION EDUCATION

Adopted by Convention Delegates May 1991  
*Reviewed and deemed relevant April 2018*

- WHEREAS, Nutrition education has traditionally been a major concern of PTA, and PTA has long recognized that adequate nutrition is necessary for optimum physical, behavioral and intellectual development of each individual; and
- WHEREAS, The recently released *Surgeon General's Report on Nutrition and Health* documents the overwhelming amount of evidence that the risks for five of the ten leading causes of death in the United States are associated with dietary excess or imbalance and another three causes have been associated with excess alcohol consumption; and, together, these account for nearly two-thirds of the annual deaths in this country; and
- WHEREAS, It has become increasingly evident that coronary heart disease, certain types of cancer, stroke, diabetes mellitus and atherosclerosis are linked in part to consumption of diets too high in fat, calories, salt and alcohol and too low in the consumption of whole grain foods and cereal products, vegetables (including dried beans and peas) and fruits; and
- WHEREAS, Parents, teachers, children and youth should be educated about the changing knowledge regarding healthful nutrition; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That a concerted effort be made by local units, councils and districts to emphasize the importance of improving nutrition education and awareness programs for parents, youth and the community; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That PTAs urge school boards to include continually updated nutrition information in the curricula and urge teacher training institutions to include updated nutrition education as a part of the program for teacher credentialing; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That local units, councils and districts mount an education and awareness campaign for parents, teachers and communities based on the United States Surgeon General's Report (1988) to promote dietary habits designed to extend and increase the quality of our lives; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA forward this resolution to the National PTA for consideration by the delegates at the National PTA Convention.

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## **BACKGROUND SUMMARY**

The PTA has a long history of involvement in nutrition education and recognizes that parents should have access to information regarding adequate nutrition. Parents, teachers, children and youth should be educated about the increasing information on the effects of good nutrition.

The *Surgeon General's Report on Nutrition and Health* documents the overwhelming amount of evidence that dietary changes can improve the health prospects of many Americans. What we eat may affect our potential risk for several of the leading causes of death for Americans, notably coronary heart disease, stroke, atherosclerosis, diabetes and some types of cancer. The report's main conclusion is that over consumption of certain dietary components is now a major concern for Americans.

While many food factors are involved, chief among them is the disproportionate consumption of foods high in fats, often at the expense of foods high in complex carbohydrates and fiber that may be more conducive to health.

The report also documents the possible role of poor diet as a contributor to the higher infant mortality rate. The goal is to reduce risk for disease caused by dietary imbalance and excess, and to extend and increase the quality of our lives through better eating. The American Heart Association and the American Cancer Society concur.

PTAs can be instrumental in bringing this information to the public and in working with school districts to see that policies are adopted and implemented that provide all students with information about the importance of good nutrition. **As the former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop states, "I am convinced that with a concerted effort on the part of policy makers throughout the Nation, and eventually by the public, our daily diets can bring a substantial measure of better health to all Americans."**