

PREJUDICE AWARENESS EDUCATION

Adopted by Convention Delegates May 5, 1989

Reviewed by Board of Managers April 2010

- WHEREAS, A democratic society protects the civil rights of each individual; and
- WHEREAS, It is projected that by the year 2000, combined minorities will form the majority in over 50 American cities; and
- WHEREAS, These changing patterns in our social fabric have presented society with serious concerns in the area of human relations; and
- WHEREAS, California's school age population is changing dramatically and is becoming increasingly diverse both culturally and ethnically; and
- WHEREAS, PTA promotes fostering cooperation and positive interaction among peoples of diverse cultural groups, and the National PTA and California State PTA have emphasized outreach activities as a priority for involving this diverse population in our communities and schools; and
- WHEREAS, The classroom and the home are both effective environments in which to teach children prejudice awareness and human relations education; and
- WHEREAS, Society must understand the dangers of stereotyping and discrimination that have existed throughout history, and that this lack of understanding of prejudice can result in actions that become violent; and
- WHEREAS, Prejudice awareness education can emphasize the contributions of **all** groups and individuals to the development of the United States; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA urge its units, councils and districts to encourage local school districts to implement the recently adopted History-Social Science Framework, K-12, including the "Model Curriculum for Human Rights and Genocide;" and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA, its units, councils and districts utilize PTA communications and publications to further appreciation of the cultural differences in our society; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA provide materials, guidance and leadership to assist its units, councils and districts in intensifying their efforts to reach out to all populations; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA submit this resolution to the National PTA for consideration at the June 1989 National PTA Convention in Atlanta, Georgia.

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Continued on next page

BACKGROUND SUMMARY

As a nation of immigrants whose Bill of Rights guarantees the rights and quality of all people, it is difficult for us to comprehend that hatred, prejudice and ignorance are combining to tear apart the fabric of our society. Through television, radio and print media we are constantly bombarded with instances of racial strife, bigotry and discrimination aimed at members of our minority communities.

The lack of educational programs to identify and reduce prejudice against cultural and ethnic minorities can result in situations that escalate from simple harassment to acts of extreme violence. Unless we confront these problems, the country of which we are so proud chances becoming a land of racial warfare, rather than a country where civil rights are protected for **all**, not for just a privileged few.

It is of deep importance in our increasingly multicultural society, and interdependent world, that we recognize the sanctity of life and dignity of each individual. The school and the home must promote this understanding so we can learn to respect our differences and appreciate our many similarities.

Public schools, as the cornerstone of our democracy, have an obligation to provide this understanding through implementation of the mandated “Model Curriculum for Human Rights and Genocide” (adopted by the State Board of Education, 1988), and through use of the prejudice awareness curriculum, “A World Of Difference,” developed by the Anti-Defamation League.

PTAs have the opportunity to work with parents and schools to help students learn to appreciate the value of human life, and to recognize those governmental policies that practice or condone bias and prejudice. In this dramatically and rapidly changing society, we must ensure that future generations are prepared to be rational and humane decision makers able to exercise their responsibilities as citizens in a democratic society.