

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION: EQUITABLE AND ADEQUATE FUNDING

(Adopted by Convention Delegates May 2004)

Reviewed by Board of Managers February 2014

- WHEREAS, The current pupil transportation funding formula has not changed substantially in 25 years, is outdated, and does not address enrollment growth and;
- WHEREAS, The current formula results in the underfunding of actual school district transportation costs resulting in the need to use general fund monies to make up the deficit; and
- WHEREAS, The State of California provides transportation funding to school districts at an average rate of 46 percent with a range from 100 percent funding for some school districts to zero percent funding for others; and
- WHEREAS, California has nearly half of the nation's pre-1977 school buses which do not meet current federal safety requirements for school buses; and
- WHEREAS, Many of the pre-1987 buses do not meet the State of California Air Resources Board particulate standard; and
- WHEREAS, Underfunded transportation costs make it difficult for some districts to purchase buses that meet current health and safety laws; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA and its units, councils and districts support legislation that provides more equitable and adequate funding for home to school transportation and replacement of school buses that do not meet current safety standards.

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BACKGROUND SUMMARY

One of the purposes of the PTA is to “secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.” Existing law authorizes the governing board of any school district to provide for the transportation of pupils to and from school, whenever in the judgment of the board, the transportation is advisable and there are good reasons for providing the transportation. California public schools operate one of the oldest and most outdated school bus fleets in the nation. Over 1,000 pre-1977 school buses do not meet current federal safety standards and there are another 5,500 pre-1987 school buses that are directly contributing to public exposure to toxic diesel particles. Additionally, California recently passed a law mandating the use of seat belts on newly built school buses. The continued use of older buses means that some school districts are not providing the safest available transportation for students.

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School Transportation: Equitable and Adequate Funding — continued

Currently the funding mechanism for pupil transportation services is outdated and inadequate to provide for California's growing student enrollment. Allocation of state funds to school districts for transportation services is significantly less than actual costs incurred by the districts, so districts are using monies from their general fund to support transportation costs. A new pupil transportation