

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

- Convention 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 convention 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, the 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, the 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 the 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, the 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 May 2014

Preamble

The legislation program of the California Congress of Parents, Teachers, and Students, Inc., is derived from the work of the PTA in home, school, and community. PTA efforts “to secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth” are based on recognition of the home as the foundation of our society, the responsibility of the PTA for parent education, the appreciation of our national heritage, the observance and understanding of the rights and obligations of responsible citizenship, and the realization that maintaining a free and public education system is the cornerstone of democracy.

General Principles

General Principles for Consideration of Proposed Legislation

1. Equal justice, equal privileges, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities in every phase 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 place a high priority on the needs of children and youth.
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. Maximum local control when it serves the best interest of all children and youth.

Legislation Planks

The 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 equal educational opportunity for each student, with particular focus on eliminating the achievement gap.
2. To secure financing for public education that will be sufficient to provide optimum educational opportunity 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.
3. To attain quality counseling and guidance services, school health services and library services, provided by credentialed personnel at all educational levels.
4. To ensure pre-service and in-service teacher preparation programs, remuneration, supportive services and professional development designed to attract and retain qualified men and women in the teaching profession.
5. To provide guidelines for assessing competence in the teaching profession, and to provide for due process in dismissal procedures.
6. To encourage state, county, regional, and local school district organizations and public educational governance structures that effectively serve the needs of all students and maximize efficient delivery of services.
7. 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.

8. To give students the skills they need to become effective citizens and parents.
9. To protect and improve the health of all families through the prevention, treatment and control of disease.
10. To extend and improve physical and mental health services and facilities, including rehabilitation.
11. To protect families from unsafe, impure or ineffective drugs, foods, medical devices and cosmetics.
12. To prevent, control or eliminate hazards to the health, safety and well-being of all children and youth.
13. To require state and local government to publicize and disseminate information regarding issues affecting the public's well-being.
14. To provide effective community services and facilities for all children, youth and adults, directed toward the well-being of the family.
15. To promote public policy that contributes to the stability of families and to the adequate physical, emotional and financial support of children and youth.
16. To provide services and facilities for the care, protection and treatment of abused, dependent, neglected or abandoned children and youth.
17. To secure specialized programs for the prevention of crimes and misdemeanors committed by juveniles.
18. To provide adequate facilities and services for the treatment, education and rehabilitation of juvenile offenders.
19. To promote public policies that protect and conserve natural resources and provide a quality environment for present and future generations.
20. To improve governance systems and practices in order to effectively serve the needs of children and youth.

California State PTA Legislation Policies and Procedures

Adopted May 2015

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.

POLICY 1

The State Board of Managers of the California State PTA is responsible for taking action on state legislation, and proposed or qualified statewide ballot measures.

Until the California State PTA Board of Managers has taken a position on a state issue 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 legislation action committee shall include, but not be limited to, the president, president-elect, director of legislation, legislation advocates, two district PTA presidents, the chairman, and one other member of each commission on community concerns, education, health, family engagement, and others as appointed by the president.

The Legislation Action Committee is also authorized to take action on statewide ballot measures when there will be no meeting of the State Board of Managers between the date the measure qualifies for the ballot and the date of the election. Action taken on ballot measures by this committee is subject to concurrence by the Board of Directors.

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

POLICY 2

Legislative measures selected for action by the State Board of Managers must be of statewide significance, and must fit within the Purposes of the PTA and within the framework of the legislation platform adopted by the convention delegates.

A measure is considered to be a proposed bill in the Legislature, a proposed statewide initiative petition, or a proposition that has qualified for the statewide ballot.

In selecting measures for action, the California State PTA Board of Managers shall consider:

- Studies made by the California State PTA Board of Managers and by units, councils and district PTAs, with supporting information;
- Position statements adopted by the California State PTA Board of Managers;
- Membership opinion as reported by the district PTA presidents;
- Resolutions adopted by the delegates at annual State conventions;
- Information from authoritative and professional sources;
- Historical positions on bills with the same subject matter or intent; and
- National PTA positions consistent with current California State PTA positions.

POLICY 3

Any position on legislation adopted by the California State PTA Board of Managers 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, and 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 he or she 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 legislation and statewide ballot measures taken by the California State PTA Board of Managers shall be posted on the association's website 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 rationale for California State PTA Board of Managers' action shall be prepared by the California State PTA Board of Managers, 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 the California State PTA Board of Managers is studying or has taken action, before taking any action locally. Action may be taken locally by following the appropriate steps.

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 measure, a study, including information from all sides of the issue, shall be conducted. Authorities to take a position (as described in Policy 2) must be documented in the study.

Before taking action, the unit, council or district PTA must take a vote at an association meeting and record the results in the minutes. Adopted positions on statewide ballot measures 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 legislation 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 and may be requested to actively support them. While unit, council and district PTAs are not required to work actively for any position, they should not officially oppose a stand taken by the State Board of Managers. Unit, council, and district PTAs need not vote to affirm a California State PTA position in order to take action. Expressed membership disapproval of a position on legislation should be communicated to the California State PTA Board of Directors through regular channels, with a report of the extent of – and reasons for – the disapproval.

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 the 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.

A current or former PTA officer/board member must not use his/her title, the name of the PTA or the trademark of PTA to take action in opposition to the official PTA position.

POLICY 8

Any unit, council or district PTA may request that the California State PTA Board of Managers consider taking action on state legislation or proposed or qualified statewide ballot measures.

Proposals shall indicate the source of the recommendation.

Approved proposals from units and councils first shall be forwarded to the district PTA.

Each proposal should be accompanied by background information and the reasons for the recommendation.

POLICY 9

A district, council or unit PTA may wish to take action on a state legislative measure that affects only its local

or regional area. The district PTA affected must inform the California State Board of Directors 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 the legislation platform.

After a position has been taken, the district PTA shall report that action to the director of legislation.

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

The district PTAs concerned must accept complete responsibility for communicating their positions on legislation, their actions, and the results to their membership in a timely manner.

Before taking a position on any measure, the district PTA must take a vote of the district PTA at an association meeting.

POLICY 10

Unit, council and district PTAs are responsible for taking action on local issues originating in school districts, cities, regions, or counties, if such action fits within the framework of the Purposes of PTA and legislation platform, adheres to PTA policies, and affects the well-being of children and youth.

The proposed issue shall be carefully studied in order to determine the need for it and to understand its provisions and probable results.

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.

All of the PTA units within a council affected by the issue must be informed and a majority of the units within the council must vote in agreement on the proposed action. This can be accomplished by a vote of a quorum of the authorized unit voting delegates and council board members.

All of the councils and out-of-council units within a district PTA affected by the issue must be informed, and a majority of the councils within the district PTA must vote in agreement on the proposed action.

POLICY 11

*Informational material on PTA positions related to legislative issues 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.

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).)