

**ALCOHOL RELATED DRIVER EDUCATION**  
 Adopted by Convention Delegates May 7, 1982  
*Reviewed by Board of Managers March 2012*

- WHEREAS,** In California over the last five years, alcohol related accidents resulted in approximately 12,000 deaths and 325,000 injuries; and
- WHEREAS,** Children and youth are innocent victims and/or perpetrators of these alcohol related accidents; and
- WHEREAS,** The availability of K-12 alcohol education programs are minimal and in some cases nonexistent, as are teachers who are adequately trained to teach such programs; and
- WHEREAS,** Moneys are collected under current laws for traffic violations; therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA, its units, councils and districts urge that the appropriate state agencies cooperate with local school boards in developing and implementing a comprehensive and continuing educational program on alcohol and traffic safety that fits local needs and is adequately funded by the Legislature; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA go on record supporting the present drinking driver laws and the effective prosecution of those convicted under these laws; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA oppose attempts to weaken the present drinking driver laws.

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**BACKGROUND SUMMARY**

According to the Governor's Task Force on Alcohol, Drugs and Traffic Safety report, June 1981, the largest single cause of death for young people is motor vehicle accidents. Thirty percent of the drivers under 20 involved in fatal accidents had been drinking.

These statistics show the enormity of the problem that resulted in the toughest drinking driver laws in the country and penalties more severe and unavoidable.

Driver education classes are currently the main source of information about alcohol and driving. The fact that this time is minimal reflects the public's attitude towards its importance.

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**Alcohol Related Driver Education - continued**

The development of curriculum dealing with alcohol and driving needs to be coordinated with a number of state and local agencies. The Department of Education has the responsibility to monitor the existing programs in driver education and should continue to be the leader in development of this comprehensive K-12 alcohol education program.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration 402 funds are but one possible source of allocations toward a comprehensive K-12 alcohol and traffic safety program.

In response to one of the most effective public outcries regarding the severity of the drinking driver problem in the state of California, the Governor has signed several bills strengthening the sanctions against driving under the influence. For most drunk driving offenses, fines and jail sentences have been increased. Suspended, restricted or revoked licenses will be the rule. Penalties increase in severity with recurrence of the offense and become extremely severe if bodily injury or death occurs. Prior reckless driving convictions which were alcohol or drug related will now count as prior drunk driving offenses, thus increasing penalty severity.

Reference: Governor's Task Force on Alcohol, Drugs and Traffic Safety