

Wisconsin PTA Legislative Priorities in Brief 2011-2012

The Legislative Priorities of Wisconsin PTA are determined at the annual Wisconsin PTA Convention based on the resolutions brought forward and passed by our delegates. These resolutions then determine the main focus of our legislative activity for the year. Wisconsin PTA will also remain alert and responsive to other issues that may arise and are covered by other resolutions or positions of Wisconsin and National PTA. PTA is a nonprofit organization. It takes positions on legislative issues, but is nonpartisan and endorses no candidates for public office.

Parent Involvement

The Wisconsin PTA would like to work for more parental involvement and the positive role affect that can have on the state and federal levels and by working with the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) on furthering the recognition and inclusion of parents and communities in our schools.

Education

Funding for Schools and School Programs—We need to work to educate the public and ourselves about school funding reform. We need to follow the legislative process and make sure the elected officials represent our need for adequate school funding where all students can get a quality education.

The adequate and fair funding of our schools is the single most important issue in education in Wisconsin today. All other programs and initiatives depend on having the funding to support them.

Funding for Mandated Programs—Both state and federal governments have required many programs but the funding has not been provided. This draws resources from other programs and moneys are not going to the purpose intended. This must stop.

Closing the Achievement Gap—The achievement gap is a strong indicator that our educational system is not fair and equitable. We need programs that work and the funding to provide those programs. We need parents, administration and educators all involved in the solution.

Gifted and Talented Programs—The brighter children of Wisconsin often are lacking the resources to fulfill their potential. Although required by the state, there is no reporting requirement so many schools have no program at all or have a coordinator named who is not allotted time for a program.

English Language Learners—Help for our students whose first language is not English. When they are able to communicate effectively, they become contributors to society.

Common Core Standards— Educate parents about the Common Core Standards and teach them to advocate for their students. These new curriculum standards in Math and Reading are nationwide, and are intended to move the current curriculum ahead to be more competitively on an international basis.

Health and Welfare

Encourage schools to participate in the school breakfast program to make sure that children start the day with a healthy meal. Children who eat breakfast perform better in school than kids who do not eat breakfast.

Encourage the purchase and serving of locally grown foods in schools. This food tends to be fresher and healthier and uses fewer resources to get from the farm where it was grown to the place it is eaten.

Encourage education about obesity prevention, nutrition and the importance of healthy eating and healthy behavior including exercise as a life style.

Encourage local units to disseminate information on teen driving safety including distracted driving such as texting, talking on cell phones and eating.

Advocating educational opportunities for Military children

Discourage use of energy drinks by teens or younger because of the high sugar and caffeine contents.