



Updated summer 2011

## ABOUT OUR PROCESS: **2010-12 LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM**

We will be adjusting our [2-year platform](#) this fall – possibly adding to the list of supported issues and possibly amending our compensation position. We will not be re-ranking the issues.

### **Top issues:**

1. Following up on reforms of 2009 and 2010
  - New program of basic education ([HB 2261](#))
  - Accountability, evaluations and family engagement ([SB 6696](#))
2. Math and science instruction
3. Literacy screening and instruction
4. Reduction in force/layoff policies -- Consider traits other than just seniority, such as teacher effectiveness
5. Fund education first in the state budget process
6. New, research-based model for teacher compensation: Emphasize rewarding teacher effectiveness in improving student learning

### **Also supported, as of fall 2010:**

- Improve food quality in breakfast and lunch programs
- Make physical education/health a core subject

### **Platform sets short-term priorities**

Washington State PTA's advocacy is guided by [legislative principles](#) as well as [resolutions](#) and [National PTA's positions](#). Our priority platform helps us focus our legislative advocacy and determine which issues warrant the full PTA/PTSA push.

Every two years we create an all-new platform.

- In year one of the process, voting delegates decide whether issues warrant priority status; then they rank them.
- In year two of the process, voting delegates consider new issues to add as “also supported” and consider amending existing priorities.

### **The steps in year one:**

1. Members submit an issue. They can do so individually, as part of a group of members, on behalf of a local PTA or PTSA or on behalf of a council. (Councils are coalitions of PTAs and PTSAs, and are often organized by school district or city.)
2. The legislative committee reviews the proposal and ascertains that it aligns with our mission and vision, and that it falls within the parameters set by our legislative principles, our resolutions or National PTA's positions. If it does not, the issue does not advance.

3. The legislative committee evaluates the relevancy and importance of the issue and gives a Pass/Do Not Pass recommendation to the board.
4. The board reviews the proposals; if members concur the issue meets requirements they recommend either a Pass or Do Not Pass action to members.
5. Delegates discuss and vote at Legislative Assembly. First they vote whether to include the issue on the priority platform; second they rank the issues. The final platform will include issues ranked from 1 to 5 (and exception was made in 2010 due to a 1-vote difference) and issues that are “also supported.”
6. Members are encouraged to advocate for any or all the issues; staff will devote the most time and resources to the higher ranked issues.

#### **The steps in year two:**

1. New issues – follow the same procedure noted above; can only be added as “Also supported.”
2. Amendments -- also follow the procedure noted above. Amendments are intended to keep an issue timely; sometimes new research or legislation warrants adjustment.

Our two-year cycle aligns with the state legislature’s two-year cycle of long- and short-term sessions.

- Year 1, state legislature convenes for 105 days; two-year budgets are passed, plus policy bills.
- Year 2, state legislature convenes for 60 days; supplemental budgets are passed, if necessary, plus policy bills.

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#### **About our advocacy**

- Washington State PTA has been working to improve children’s lives since 1905. With more than 140,000 members and about 920 local PTAs and PTSAs, we are not only the largest child advocacy association in the state, we are the largest membership association of any kind. We are chartered by National PTA and belong to its network of about 5 million members.
- Legislative advocacy involves change in governance and can include budget or policy work. At the state level, we meet with legislators and testify before committees, but we also work with government entities responsible for oversight of education and children’s health and welfare services. Currently we serve on the oversight committee for the Teacher and Principal Evaluation Pilot; the advisory committee for the governor’s education ombudsman; the anti-bullying work group, and a communications panel for Common Core State Standards.
- At the school district or city level, many of our PTAs and PTSAs are organized into councils and do similar work – testifying before and meeting with school and city leaders, and serving as volunteers on various work groups and advisory committees. Most PTAs and PTSAs are organized around school communities, but not all.
- Washington State PTA also participates in education and awareness campaigns, and many local PTAs and PTSAs run programs that benefit children’s well-being and education. Our advocacy is knowledge-based and membership driven.

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#### **Resources**

- [How Are We Doing?](#)  
A 2011 Summary
- [Our legacy](#); Looking back at 100 years of speaking up
- [Our advocacy program](#)
- [National PTA’s programs](#)
- [Federal public policy agenda](#)