

18.22 Children with Special Needs

Board position 1986; resolution passed 2007; amended 2008; amended 2013

Whereas, Washington State PTA works to ensure that the state and federal government maintains an education and funding commitment to children with special needs, including, but not limited to, students with disabilities, highly capable students, English language learner students, career technical education students, and refugees and entrants (those offered sanctuary by the United States government); and

Whereas, the program needs of these populations have never been fully funded; and

Whereas, it has become evident that as competition for education dollars at the state, district and local school has increased, existing programs for special needs students have been compromised, jeopardizing both their current and long-term educational opportunities; and

Whereas, Washington State PTA recognizes that some of these children are the most vulnerable, with no voice as their families are overwhelmed by a plethora of circumstances, often lacking the time and knowledge needed to navigate the system.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA advocate on behalf of special needs students at the federal, state and district levels, requesting adequate funding for services needed to help all students achieve their potential; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA advocate that the funding and expenditures be transparent not only to the governing bodies (legislature, state superintendent's office, and school boards) but to the families involved, so that they can see that the monies, resources and services allocated by federal and state law are being spent on and delivered to their students. When it is apparent that there is a lack of funding or misappropriations of designated monies and resources, the Washington State PTA would weigh in on those occasions, requesting performance audits to ensure that monies and resources were expended where designated; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA advocates that Washington state school districts be funded for the full cost of providing educational services to all students who qualify for special education, with no cap applied to the number of students requiring special services whose education can be funded; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will advocate at the federal, state and district levels to ensure that parents have the information and opportunity for meaningful engagement and participation in their child's educational program in school, resulting in students receiving appropriate supports and services to be prepared for college, career, and citizenship, to the maximum extent possible.