

Board Positions and Resolutions



Washington State PTA Resolutions are issue positions adopted by membership. They are vetted by the Resolutions Committee and the Washington State PTA Board of Directors, and then voted on by delegates at either the WSPTA Legislative Assembly or the WSPTA Convention. Resolutions are reviewed annually; they may be combined, amended or recommended for retirement.

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Board Positions

Washington State PTA (WSPTA) Board Positions are initiated and approved by the board of directors. They are temporary unless submitted as a resolution and approved at the next WSPTA convention or legislative assembly as provided for in the WSPTA Uniform Bylaws. Any board position not ratified by membership within a year will expire and be removed from this document.

[Comprehensive Sexual Health Education Position Statement](#) – adopted February 2020

Resolutions

Washington State PTA resolutions are adopted by membership and guide our work from the local to the state level. They are usually broader in scope than legislative issues. They are vetted by the WSPTA Resolutions Committee and the Washington State PTA Board of Directors, and then voted on by delegates at either the WSPTA Legislative Assembly or the WSPTA Convention. Resolutions are reviewed annually; they may be combined, amended or recommended for retirement.

Resolutions are a resource that can be cited by members, the board, committees and staff to represent association positions. [Resolutions](#) complement the rest of our grassroots platform which includes board positions, [short-term legislative platform issues](#) and [long-term legislative principles](#); as well as [National PTA position statements](#), [National PTA resolutions](#), and [National PTA federal public policy agenda](#).

Retired Resolutions

Retired resolutions are kept on the books to indicate association positions. Typically, they are retired because the objectives have been met. (A rescinded resolution is taken off the books; it no longer reflects an association position.) Details on resolutions that have been retired are located in the *WSPTA Retired Resolutions* document located on the [WSTPA website](#).

Current resolutions are as follows:

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

1.8 Substance Use Disorder Education and Prevention

Resolution passed 1990; amended 2019

Whereas, Washington State PTA recognizes that substance use disorders will continue to be a significant threat to the well-being of families, children and youth, and that the use of multiple substances during adolescence increases the likelihood of substance use disorder and health risks in adulthood; and

Whereas, children and youth in homes with substance use disorders are commonly involved with child welfare and foster care systems, creating long-term challenges; and

Whereas, Healthy Youth Survey data continue to show that substance use can start in middle school and that up to 20% of high school seniors regularly use more than one substance (alcohol, marijuana, tobacco products, prescription or non-prescription drugs); and

Whereas, many teens believe prescription drugs are safe because they are prescribed by a doctor, yet 66% of individuals over the age of 12 who misuse prescription opioids get them from family or friends; and

Whereas, evidence-based substance use disorder education programs based in schools and communities have been successful at decreasing substance use in youth; and

Whereas, an American Psychological Association study on zero-tolerance school discipline policies concluded that zero-tolerance policies did not deter future substance use, but did have negative effects on child development, decreased student education outcomes and increased racial disparities and referrals into the juvenile justice system; and

Whereas, Washington State PTA supports alternatives to expulsion and suspension, including restorative justice and other programs that focus on prevention, treatment and rehabilitation.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports legislation and policies to increase funding for evidence-based education and abuse-prevention programs for students, families, caregivers, and community members regarding the methods, symptoms, effects and dangers of alcohol, tobacco/vaping, marijuana/edibles, and drug abuse, including “off-label” use of prescription and non-prescription drugs; and for school staff training for early identification, intervention, and follow-up care for students; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils work for increased awareness of existing regulations and laws that protect children and youth from these hazards to their health and well-being, including prohibitions on advertising, marketing or knowingly providing to minors any information that would be harmful, or selling materials to minors that are illegal, including, but not limited to alcohol, tobacco and vaping products, drugs and other substances; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA advocates for programs and projects that offer positive alternative activities to drug use and abuse for children and youth; for collaborative and holistic services that support families, children, and youth; for school districts to review their policies and procedures around disciplinary consequences of alcohol and substance use by students; and for expansion of alternatives to suspension, expulsion or incarceration, including alternative discipline and restorative justice programs, for students with substance use disorders; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA continues to work in cooperative relationships with school districts, state and local government agencies, child welfare organizations, education support organizations, professional medical and advocacy organizations and the general public to deliver the most current evidence-based research curriculum regarding substance use disorders, promote substance and drug use disorder education, outreach, prevention and treatment; and to expand programs that reduce access of children and youth to prescription drugs, such as safe storage and take-back programs, and restrictions on internet pharmacy sales of opiates and other addictive prescription drugs.

1.9 Furnishing Alcohol to Minors

Resolution passed 1990; amended 2007; amended 2013

Whereas, two of the purposes of Washington State PTA are to “promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, places of worship and throughout the community;” and to “advocate for laws that further the education, physical and mental health, welfare, and safety of children and youth;” and

Whereas, 28 percent of Washington state 10th-graders and 40 percent of 12th-graders reported having a drink in the past month, and students in grades 6 to 12 that drank in the last month reported it was easy to get alcohol from friends, at parties or from home; and

Whereas, youth who begin drinking by the age of 15 are four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence than those who wait for adulthood to use alcohol; and

Whereas, Washington state law states that “it is unlawful for any person to sell, give, or otherwise supply liquor to any person under the age of twenty-one years or permit any person under that age to consume liquor on his or her premises or any premises under his or her control;” and

Whereas, underage drinking cost the citizens of Washington state \$1.4 billion in 2007.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA encourages its local PTAs and councils to inform and educate the membership about ways to cooperate with the Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board and law enforcement agencies in reporting “furnishing liquor to minors” violations; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will work with local PTAs, councils, regions, state agencies, associations and education officials to develop and implement a program that deals with the use of alcohol by students, with consequences that are applied to all students, throughout the state, regardless of community, socio-economics of the student and/or parents, or the impact to the school, school-sponsored teams or school-sponsored activities; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will encourage its local PTAs, councils, and regions to develop and implement programs that address underage drinking, social hosting, and educating parents on the impact of alcohol abuse on the life-long health, safety, and well-being of their children.

1.10 Adolescent Marijuana Use Prevention

Resolution passed 2014; amended 2014; amended 2019

Whereas, in Washington state, the Healthy Youth Survey results for 2018 found that state-wide, high school students who used marijuana were more likely to get lower grades (Cs, Ds, or Fs) compared to those who do not use; and

Whereas, since legalization in 2012, the perception of harm of marijuana use among high school students in Washington state has decreased significantly; and

Whereas, in 2018, about one in five 10th graders and one in four 12th graders in Washington state used marijuana in the past month; and

Whereas, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, up to thirty percent of those who use marijuana may have some degree of marijuana use disorder, and youth who begin using marijuana are four to seven times more likely to develop a marijuana use disorder than adults; and

Whereas, marijuana dependence accounts for more than half of the youth admissions to Washington state treatment programs; and

Whereas, use of marijuana has a variety of adverse health effects: youth who use marijuana are more likely to have lifetime asthma than youth who do not; and the psychoactive chemical, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), responsible for marijuana's psychological effects, has been linked with depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, psychosis and the incidence of suicidal thoughts in adolescents. The nearly five-fold increase in marijuana THC levels since 1995 means that daily use today can have stronger effects on a developing teen brain than it did 10-20 years ago; and

Whereas, unintentional marijuana ingestions by young children has emerged after modification of Washington state's drug enforcement laws for marijuana possession. Marijuana should be treated like any other medication, keeping it stored out of reach of children.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils shall support legislation and policies that protect children and youth from being exploited by advertising and marketing campaigns and commercial industries that sell addictive drugs and stimulants, including marijuana products; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils shall support legislation that regulates the proper growing, packaging, handling, labeling, and sale of marijuana products, especially near schools; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA shall encourage its local PTAs and councils to sponsor presentations and workshops aimed at the prevention, intervention, and control of marijuana use by youth; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate for school staff training for early identification, intervention, and follow-up care for students exhibiting symptoms of marijuana use; for school districts to incorporate the most current evidence-based research regarding the impacts of marijuana use by youth into their curricula and related substance use programs; for school districts to review their policies and procedures around disciplinary consequences of marijuana use by students; and for expansion of alternatives to suspension, expulsion or incarceration, including alternative discipline and restorative justice programs, for students with substance use disorders.

CHILD SAFETY AND PROTECTION

2.1 Safe Travel Routes and Parking Lots

Resolution passed 1980; amended 2019

Whereas, Washington State PTA advocates for all children and youth to have the opportunity to travel safely to and from school and in and out of the school parking lot; and

Whereas, Washington state has the third fastest-growing traffic volumes of any state in the nation, growing at a rate of 3.4% annually across all roads; and

Whereas, Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is an approach that promotes walking and bicycling to school through infrastructure improvements, enforcement, tools, safety education; 10%–14% of car trips during morning rush hour are for school travel. SRTS initiatives improve safety by removing cars from the road and also increase levels of physical activity for students.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate to ensure all children and youth have safe routes to and from school, accommodating all modes of travel such as walking, biking, scootering, driving, busing, etc., that include, but are not limited to:

- safe, visible, and adequately lit sidewalks, crosswalks, and walking paths in compliance with all ADA requirements
- street signage, signals, paint striping, safety devices, and traffic enforcement as needed
- parking lot designs, plans and procedures to safely accommodate buses, cars, and pedestrians; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate for existing school facilities to regularly review their current routes to and from school and their parking lot designs, plans, and procedures and improve safety and remove potential dangers as needed; and that new and remodeled school facilities be designed and built with these safety concerns in mind; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils work actively with their local government involved in the urban planning of housing and business developments and the location of schools to help ensure safe routes to and from school areas; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA encourages its local PTAs and councils to research and pursue Safe Routes to School and Healthy Lifestyle grants in collaboration with their school districts and community agencies.

2.2 Child Identification Programs

Resolution passed 1984; amended 2019

Whereas, one of the purposes of Washington State PTA is “to promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community and place of worship”; and

Whereas, many children are never reported missing; there is no reliable way to determine the total number of children who are actually missing in the U.S.; and

Whereas, when a child is reported missing to law enforcement, federal law requires that child be entered into the FBI’s National Crime Information Center (NCIC). The NCIC’s Missing Person File contained 85,459 active missing person records as of 2018, with juveniles under the age of 18 accounting for 29,758 (34.8%) of the records and 38,561 (45.1%) of the records when juveniles are defined as under 21 years of age; and

Whereas, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) assisted law enforcement with more than 25,000 cases of missing children in 2018 with 92% being endangered runaways, 4% family abductions, 3% critically missing young adults ages 18-20, less than 1% nonfamily abductions, and 1% lost, injured or otherwise missing children. Of the runaways reported to NCMEC in 2018, one in seven were likely victims of child sex trafficking; and

Whereas, vital current information will be helpful to school administrations and law enforcement agencies in finding/identifying a missing child; and

Whereas, families may have incomplete or outdated records of their child’s vital statistics and other necessary identifying information.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will partner with programs and/or provide information to families encouraging healthy conversations about trusted adults and personal safety awareness for children; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils work with school administrations and law enforcement to promote child identification programs which include, but are not limited to:

- up-to-date child information including a written description with measurements and identifying markers
- current photos
- medically important information
- and other pertinent information.

2.8 Bicycle Helmet Safety Education

Resolution passed 1990; amended 2013

Whereas, one purpose of Washington State PTA is to “promote the welfare of children and youth in the home, school community, place of worship, and throughout the community”; and

Whereas, bicycle crashes are a major cause of death and disability to children between the ages of 5 and 14 years of age; and

Whereas, 75 percent of all bicyclists’ deaths each year are from head injuries incurred in bicycle accidents; and

Whereas, many bicyclists are permanently impaired as the result of head injuries sustained in bicycle accidents.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA actively encourage and promote the wearing of Consumer Product Safety Commission approved helmets by all bicycle riders; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA encourages its local PTAs and councils to use educational program materials that promote bicycle safety available from the Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute (<http://bhsi.org>).

2.9 Emergency Preparedness

Resolution passed 1992; amended 2009; amended 2019

Whereas, one of the purposes of Washington State PTA is to advocate for laws that further the education, physical and mental health, welfare, and safety of children and youth; and

Whereas, numerous public school districts throughout Washington State lack adequate infrastructure and preparation for emergency conditions that can result from natural disasters (e.g., earthquake, volcanic activity, lahar, flooding, wildfire, avalanche, drought, landslide, tsunami, and severe weather); human-made disasters (e.g., civil disturbance, terrorism, active shooter, bomb threat); and unintended disasters (e.g., dam failure, release of hazardous material, pipeline failure, and urban fires) any of which may expose children and youth to grave hazard; and

Whereas, many existing school structures, having been built before the development of the statewide building code (established in 1975), are especially at risk to seismic effects which, in the event of an earthquake, may render buildings structurally unsafe and too dangerous to occupy or result in collapse; and

Whereas, school buildings are public assets and may be required to support communities after disasters as temporary mass shelter facilities or resource centers during times of crisis; and

Whereas, large segments of the public remain uninformed about coping with emergency conditions; and

Whereas, first responder resources may be overwhelmed in a large-scale emergency, delaying aid to schools and school personnel may be called on to provide emergency assistance to students until traditional First Responders arrive, or students are reunited with their families; and

Whereas, schools need to have on-hand essential emergency supplies and equipment; and

Whereas, being prepared will reduce fear, anxiety, and losses during disasters; and

Whereas, preparedness drills and emergency response exercises help reinforce skills and knowledge needed during an actual emergency and can also enhance response effectiveness when schools work in collaboration with emergency response agencies, including fire, police, and trained community volunteers.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA its local PTAs and councils urge the legislature to strengthen laws, education and funding to fully implement comprehensive safe school and emergency preparedness plans and a means for verifying compliance with minimum standards at all public schools; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA shall promote and encourage cooperation and collaboration between all public schools, OSPI, regional school safety centers, and emergency management authorities in the development, implementation and regular updating of comprehensive safe school and emergency preparedness plans, which shall include provisions for emergency supplies and equipment, age-appropriate drills, and hands-on training for staff in accordance with best practices and guidelines

from leading governmental and non-governmental organizations and healthcare providers; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA shall support legislation and funding for school building seismic hazard mitigation. This includes structural (i.e., buildings) and non-structural (i.e., falling objects) considerations for all public schools to reduce injuries/fatalities during earthquakes and to help ensure that buildings can serve as safe shelter areas after an event; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA shall encourage local PTAs and councils to promote public awareness about comprehensive safe school plans and emergency preparedness.

2.11 Promoting the Safety and Well-Being of Children Through Decreased Exposure to Violence

Resolution passed 1994

Whereas, Washington State PTA is an organization that promotes safety and welfare for all children and works to secure adequate laws for the protection of youth; and

Whereas, violent acts committed against and by youth are on the rise in Washington State and across our nation, both in our communities and in our schools; and

Whereas, there is increasing gang activity in all communities in Washington state; and

Whereas, statistics prove that an increase in gang activity equates to an increase in violence; and

Whereas, children and youth are influenced by the violence they see and hear on television and other media; and

Whereas, the safety and well-being of our children in their own homes and schools is compromised by incidents of violence; and

Whereas, the safety and well-being of our children is jeopardized by the prevalence and accessibility of dangerous weapons.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will actively support legislation and other activities/efforts that aim to reduce or eliminate violence by or against youth and to ensure the safety of schools, neighborhoods, and communities; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will actively support implementation and continuation of gang and violence intervention and prevention programs; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will assist its members in promoting media literacy and responsible supervision of children's access to television and the media; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA encourages its local PTAs and councils to work within their local communities to address these and many other forms of violence and the causes thereof which threaten our children.

2.13 Youth Suicide Prevention

Resolution passed 2005; amended 2013; amended 2019

Whereas, an increasing number of Washington youth report feeling sad, hopeless, or anxious, or having suicidal thoughts; and

Whereas, suicide is the second leading cause of death for people aged 15-19 nationally, with American Indian and Alaskan Natives at the highest risks for suicide. In addition, LGBTQ+ are at an increased risk for suicide, with the transgender suicide rate the highest of that population; and

Whereas, adolescents with access to firearms are 2.6 times as likely to die by suicide as adolescents without access to firearms; and

Whereas, the detection of the warning signs of suicide and the reduction and restriction of suicide means can make the difference between life and death.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate to ensure staffing levels in schools are funded to meet student need and to support student learning and well-being, and encourage the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to emphasize the importance of knowing the warning signs of suicide among youth with our Washington state education service districts, school and district administrators, educators and staff, students, families and caregivers; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils support culturally and linguistically appropriate programs, projects and training for youth suicide prevention, including awareness of the warning signs of suicide and risk factors like anxiety, depression, stress, and destructive behaviors; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate for the creation of funding for suicide prevention and intervention programs, including support services for survivors of suicide attempt and for families that have lost someone to suicide; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils support youth suicide prevention research, programs, and policies that include the reduction of access to the methods for attempting and completing suicide, including firearms and prescription and non-prescription medication.

2.14 Child Abuse Prevention Supports

Resolution passed 2007; amended 2019

Whereas, RCW 26.44.020 defines child abuse or neglect as sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or injury of a child by any person under circumstances which cause harm to the child's health, welfare, or safety; and

Whereas, Washington State PTA is concerned about the health, safety, and welfare of all children; and

Whereas, child abuse crosses all boundaries of economics, race, ethnic heritage, religious faith, or geographic location; and

Whereas, child abuse is associated with lower school achievement, juvenile delinquency, substance use disorders, and mental health problems.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will assist local PTAs, councils, and regions statewide in creating, acquiring and implementing programs that emphasize the vital role of community, early intervention services, and caregiver education to help keep children safe from abuse, both physical and emotional; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will partner and provide voice, advocacy and resources to legislators, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Department of Children, Youth and Families, Indian Child Welfare, Kinship Care services, local agencies, school districts, schools, local PTAs and councils to advocate for the necessary services and resources with the required funding needed to support and educate families and communities.

2.15 E-911 Safety Training for Youth

Resolution passed 2014

Whereas, as of 2012 more than 39% of American homes report that they have discontinued use of traditional landlines and rely solely on cellular telephone service; and

Whereas, over 70% of all 911 calls originate from a wireless device; and

Whereas, under current FCC rules, wireless devices can be pinpointed only in latitude and longitudinal directions which may leave questions for emergency personnel as to where a victim may be located in a multi-story building; and

Whereas, the proposed changes to FCC rules to use “Z-Axis” coordinate mapping for emergency personnel receiving cellular calls from indoor origins will not go into effect for at least 2 to 5 years; and

Whereas, even should the FCC mandate the rules change and cellular companies quickly comply, many jurisdictions still do not utilize up-to-date technology for their Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP); and

Whereas, many children are growing up in households that are Cellular Phone Only and may not understand the need to identify their location when calling 911 to report an incident; and

Whereas, many of Washington state’s children would benefit from simply educating them always to be observant of their surroundings and how to effectively use the 911 system.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will encourage adoptions of laws and policies to ensure children are sufficiently trained on the importance of how to use the 911 system.

2.16 Water Safety and Instruction

Resolution passed 2015

Whereas, National PTA and Washington State PTA purposes are to advocate for the health, safety, education, and welfare of children; and

Whereas, in Washington state there are over 169 major rivers, 113 major lakes, 60 major dams, and 237 canals, plus numerous public and private swimming pools. Washington state has the 8th highest number of hot tubs in the United States; and

Whereas, thirty-six percent of children aged 7-17 years, and 15% of adults in the United States, swim at least six times per year; and

Whereas, as of 2009, drowning is the third highest cause of death of youth 19 and under, only after motor vehicle deaths and suffocation – and the number one cause of death for children aged four and under, more than motor vehicle deaths; and

Whereas, drowning is the leading cause of unintentional injury death among children aged 1–4 years and is the second leading cause of unintentional injury death among children 5–9 years; and

Whereas, water safety in general, and swimming instruction specifically, provides a lifetime of benefits for individual health, and safety.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils promote education of parents, students, school personnel and communities regarding the risks associated with water and water activities and the benefits of water safety and swimming instruction; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA encourage the development of consistent, quality standards for water safety and swimming instruction and support policies and legislation to make such programs accessible to all students; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils encourage and support public school districts including curriculum in water safety and swimming skills to ensure all children receive such instruction and guidance; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils seek opportunities to join with other relevant coalitions, partnerships, organizations and associations in advancing water safety and swimming instruction for children and youth.

2.17 Child Sex Trafficking

Resolution passed 2016

Whereas, children are potential victims of both commercial and sexual abuse by traffickers due to lack of education, gender disparity, inequality, violence, corruption, poverty, lack of employment opportunities, demand for cheap labor and services and an expanding globalized sex industry; and

Whereas, UNICEF estimates that globally, 1.2 million children are trafficked each year within countries, as well as across borders including the United States; and

Whereas, at least 200,000 or more children may be victims of domestic trafficking within the United States, leaving no state is immune from trafficking; and

Whereas, the majority of child trafficking cases go unreported due to the highly clandestine nature of the crime; policies and practices encouraging civil participation and cooperation in the prosecution of traffickers must be developed and enforced; and

Whereas, it is also important that police, prosecutors and courts punish traffickers within a system that is quick and respects and safeguards the rights of the victims to privacy, dignity, and safety; and

Whereas, the Federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act and existing state anti-trafficking statutes need improvement to fully protect and support the child victims of trafficking, and approximately 25% of states have no anti-trafficking laws at all.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA support the adoption and enforcement of laws that will deter the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA advocate for the protection of rights of victims and support efforts to provide measures for the physical, psychological, and social recovery of victims of child trafficking; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA encourages and call for members, policymakers in government, inter-governmental bodies and non-governmental, school, and community organizations to raise awareness and to address those conditions and situations that contribute to child trafficking.

2.18 Trauma Informed Care

Resolution passed 2017

Whereas, a positive school climate improves students' ability to learn and grow; and children should come to school excited to learn in a safe and nurturing school environment, without the fear of bullying, hunger or violence; and

Whereas, an estimated 46 million American children will be affected by violence, crime, abuse or psychological trauma in a given year – referred to as an adverse childhood experience (ACE); and

Whereas, ACEs significantly harm a child's brain development; and are the root cause of most chronic and mental illnesses and future violence in their adult years; and

Whereas, research shows that childhood exposure to ACEs significantly impacts both mental and physical health through adulthood, and early research highlights the promise for family and community-based interventions to reverse the negative impact of ACEs.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will support public policy that advocates for all schools to be trauma-informed or sensitive schools; providing resources and supports so that all adults within the school community can respond to trauma and chronic stress, so that the school can provide evidence-based interventions and access to necessary services for students affected by ACEs; creating connected communities, positive school climates that keep students healthy and in school; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports continued efforts to research and promote evidence-based systemic prevention and intervention programs that enhance youth development, growth, and safety. Furthermore, Washington State PTA will continue to call attention to the importance of family engagement in the development and implementation of school policies, positive school climate, family-focused interventions for youth involved in the juvenile justice system and mental health services and delivery to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all students; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA urges state and local jurisdictions to seek a comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of children exposed to violence and trauma.

2.19 LGBTQ+ Inclusion

Resolution passed 2017

Whereas, all children, youth, and teens should be able to attend school in a safe, accepting, and inclusive environment free from discrimination, be able to freely access their school campus, facilities, and community environment, and freely participate in school and community programs; and

Whereas, all families, guardians, and foster parents should have the right to be safe, included, and free to participate in schools and community programs; and

Whereas, history has shown that civil rights laws are effective in contributing to such environments; and

Whereas, explicit federal statutory protections currently address discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and sexual orientation, but not gender identity. However, Washington state law prohibits discrimination against any person based on his or her sexual orientation or gender identity; and

Whereas, the lack of awareness and understanding of issues facing LGBTQ+ children, youth, teens, and families has contributed to a higher rate of isolation, depression, drug and alcohol use, and suicidal ideations and attempts; and

Whereas, one of Washington State PTA's purposes is to promote the collaboration and engagement of families and educators in the education of children and youth; and

Whereas, education regarding LGBTQ+ issues increases understanding, cultivates acceptance of and respect for LGBTQ+ children, youth, teens, and families; and

Whereas, harassment and bullying policies that specifically mention sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression are associated with: students feeling safer, lower levels of bullying, decreased incidents of harassment related to sexual orientation, increased teacher/staff intervention, and greater reporting of incidents.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports the right for all children, youth, teens, families, guardians, and foster parents to be safe, included, and free to participate equitably in schools and community programs; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA encourages state, councils, and local PTAs to review school policies regarding bullying, and supports revisions and amendments to those policies that specifically address the topics of sexual orientation and gender identification/expression as they relate to harassment, intimidation, bullying, and violence; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will work with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to incorporate standards regarding age-appropriate, medically accurate and culturally sensitive information on LGBTQ+ issues into existing health and other appropriate curricula; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils seek and support legislation that creates a safe, supportive and accepting environment in schools, specifically with training for educators and other school-related professionals to support all students, updating health education standards that deal with the issues of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

2.20 Improving Outcomes for Foster and Homeless Youth

Resolution passed 2018

Whereas, the main factors contributing to youth being placed into foster care are physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, medical neglect, incarceration, abandonment, truancy, parental death, runaway, juvenile offender, and addiction of either the child or parents/guardians; and

Whereas, the causes of homelessness typically stem from the impact of several factors over time such as structural factors (lack of adequate income/poverty, affordable housing, health supports, medical expenses or discrimination), system failures (inadequate transitioning from child welfare, foster care, hospitals, immigrant/refugee, corrections, mental health, addiction support or facilities), and individual factors (job loss, family breakup, pregnancy, domestic violence, and addiction); and

Whereas, it is difficult to capture the true number of homeless/houseless as many youth/families experience a fluid state of homelessness, cycling from sleeping in cars or parks to a shelter to a friend's home and back again to a shelter in which improvements in income, housing, health, safety, and education are hard to achieve and maintain; and

Whereas, foster and homeless youth face educational challenges to complete on-time grade level progression and graduation as well as be college- and career-ready because they face significant hurdles such as access to transportation, adequate food, educational supports, consolidating credit for work completed between schools and consistent advice from academic counselors.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will support public policy that advocates for all foster and homeless youth to receive the timely supports needed to prevent and break the cycle of homelessness; to protect their right to a healthy, safe and crisis-free environment; to provide the legally required support of removing all barriers to on-time grade level progression and graduation (transportation, credit consolidation, access to counselors, effective measurement of academic progress, etc.) so that graduation rates can meet or exceed the state graduation rates with a meaningful path to career success; and to continue to ensure the provisions of McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 are reducing homelessness equitability while increasing access to education; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA provide voice, advocacy and resources to legislators, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Children, Youth and Families, Indian Child Welfare, school districts, schools, local PTAs and councils, parents, teachers, partner organizations, and other relevant groups to further the awareness and action to improve outcomes for foster and homeless youth; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA encourages councils and local PTAs to review school policies to ensure adherence to the laws providing protection and access to education for foster and homeless youth while partnering with school districts, parents, government organizations, partner organizations and other relevant groups to bring awareness and implement solutions through advocacy and family engagement programs.

2.21 Sexual Violence and Harassment Prevention and Survivor Supports

Resolution passed 2018

Whereas, Washington State PTA is a strong advocate for the well-being and education of all children; and

Whereas, national surveys of adults suggest that between 9-32% of women and 5-10% of men report that they were survivors of sexual abuse and/or assault during their childhood. Eighty percent of Washington state women's sexual assault experiences occurred prior to the age of 18; and

Whereas, underserved populations such as LGBTQ, Native Americans, and the developmentally disabled experience sexual assault rates up to at least twice that of the general population; and

Whereas, twenty percent or more of college-age students report being survivors of sexual harassment and sexual violence; and

Whereas, research further indicates that educational institutions are the most common location of peer sexual victimization; and

Whereas, sexual violence or sexual harassment have devastating effects on students by negatively impacting their emotional and physical well-being, and can become a barrier to equal and free access to public education; and

Whereas, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. Sec. 1681 et seq., prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex (including sexual harassment or sexual violence) in any federally-funded education program or activity without, however, requiring prevention strategies or support services for victims; and

Whereas, WAC 392-410-140 allows local school boards to opt-out of including sex education curricula in their districts, and RCW 28A.300.475 lacks a requirement that adopted sex education curricula include discussions of consent, affirmative or otherwise.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils urge and support the strengthening of Title IX and other federal, state and local laws that identify, address the effects of, and prohibit sexual harassment and sexual violence impacting students; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils collaborate with school administrations, institutions of higher learning, and community partners to ensure that every school:

- Provides support services for survivors of sexual harassment and sexual violence; and
- Presents awareness and prevention programs that address sexual harassment and sexual violence affecting students; and
- Includes training on the responsibilities of educational institutions, as well as the rights of sexual violence and sexual harassment survivors under Title IX and other laws and regulations; and
- Promotes inclusive education about mutual respect and affirmative consent for students of all abilities, gender identities/expressions, and sexual orientations; and
- Provides equitable and confidential reporting mechanisms for survivors of sexual harassment or violence and their families.

2.22 Digital and Internet Safety

Resolution passed 2007; amended 2013; amended 2019 (formerly 14.4 Internet Safety)

Whereas, 95% of teens now report they have a smartphone or access to one. Between computers and mobile devices, children have more access to the internet than ever before with 45% of teens now saying they are online on a near-constant basis; and

Whereas, there are growing concerns about the impact of digital technologies, the internet, online gaming and social media on children’s emotional and physical well-being, particularly regarding fear, anxiety, and depression; and

Whereas, school districts must annually review their policy and procedures on electronic resources and internet safety, per RCW 28A.650.045, including the consideration of best practices, resources, and models for instruction in digital citizenship, internet safety, and media literacy, including methods to involve parents; and

Whereas, the dangers to youth on the internet and through wireless and other electronic communications may include access to inappropriate material, solicitation by sexual predators, sexual or racial harassment, cyberstalking, cyberbullying, and identity theft.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will work with school districts, educators, families, students, partners and the community to heighten technological awareness and skills to promote responsible, safe and ethical use of the internet, wireless and other electronic resources; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will advocate for digital and internet safety model policies and restorative justice programs for students; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will work with internet providers, lawmakers, law enforcement agencies, and communications companies in developing, implementing and enforcing resources and programs that will ensure the safety of youth when using the internet, wireless, and other electronic communication devices and limit the accessibility to inappropriate materials by minors.

2.23 Gun Violence Prevention and Safety – Students and School Staff

Resolution passed 2019; amended 2020

Whereas, one of the purposes of Washington State PTA is to advocate for laws that further the education, physical and mental health, welfare, and safety of children and youth; and

Whereas, firearms are the second leading cause of death for American children and teens nationally, with nearly 1,600 children and teens dying by gun homicide every year; and over 950 children and teens dying of suicide by gun every year; and the rate of firearm suicide is up by 61 percent in the past 10 years; and

Whereas, children exposed to gun violence, crime and abuse are more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol; suffer from depression, anxiety and posttraumatic stress disorder; fail or have difficulties in school and engage in criminal activity; and

Whereas, due to its tremendous impact on the health and wellbeing of our youth, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control has declared gun violence a public health problem which must be dealt with using many multidisciplinary strategies and approaches; and

Whereas, recent research strongly supports that safe storage of firearms reduces the risk of suicide, domestic violence homicide, and unintentional injury; and

Whereas, the lethality, and severity of injury to the wounded is greatly increased by the shooters' use of semi-automatic assault weapons, including both pistols and rifles; and

Whereas, possession of firearms on school premises is not permitted by law, except by persons engaged in military, law enforcement, or school district security activities under the direction of a school administrator; and some school districts employ commissioned law enforcement as school resource officers (SROs) or other armed school security personnel; and

Whereas, if a school district chooses to have an SRO program, the school district must confirm that every SRO has received specified training and engage in specific community outreach and accountability actions specified in RCW 28A.320.124.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA encourages its local PTAs, councils, and members, as well as its fellow state PTAs, to support and advocate for legislation and policies that aim to prevent gun violence and reduce youth suicide; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA advocates for legislation and policies that reduce dangerous gun access, including:

- enforce all existing gun violence prevention laws
- strictly regulate civilian ownership of firearms and non-sporting ammunition, including high capacity magazines holding more than 10 rounds
- restrict dangerous access to all firearms, especially by children and by people with a history of violence including, but not limited to, domestic abusers, violent criminals, and/or people with histories showing a pattern of threatening behavior
- require the best available background checks on all firearm sales

- mandate safety training for firearms ownership
- hold legally accountable those corporations, businesses, and individuals who facilitate dangerous access to firearms
- oppose the defensive arming of teachers and school staff, other than:
 - properly trained and uniformed school resource officers (SROs)
 - properly trained persons performing school security activities under the direction of a school administrator with equivalent training and community accountability as SROs.

2.24 Furniture Tip-Over Prevention

Resolution passed 2020

Whereas, in the U.S. furniture tip-over incidents result in a child visiting the emergency room every 37 minutes, and one child dying every 11 days per the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission; and

Whereas, use of tip restraints or furniture anchors is an effective way to prevent tip-overs, but only 27% of Americans anchor their furniture per Consumer Reports; and

Whereas, the current federal furniture manufacturing standard for clothing storage units is voluntary and insufficient to prevent child injuries and death as shown by research conducted by Kids in Danger and Shane's Foundation; and

Whereas, state legislatures can pass laws regulating furniture safety and New York state passed laws in 2019 prohibiting the sale of new clothing furniture units that do not meet the voluntary standard and requiring all heavy furniture and televisions to be anchored in public spaces for children, including daycare facilities, foster care homes, and schools; and

Whereas, current federal legislation, the STURDY Act (Stop Tip-overs of Unstable, Risky Dressers on Youth), has been introduced in the U.S. House and Senate and would require new mandatory safety standards for all free-standing clothing storage units, and testing that more closely simulates real world use including to account for impact on clothing storage unit stability of carpeting, drawers with items in them, multiple open drawers, dynamic force and use by children up to 72 months of age and 60 pounds.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils shall support child safety through advocacy for the STURDY Act and other applicable federal legislation; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils shall support and advocate for state legislation to require sale of anchoring kits with new furniture units, to require anchoring of furniture and televisions in public spaces including, but not limited to, childcare/daycare facilities, schools, and foster care facilities, and to prohibit sale of new furniture that does not meet anti-tip safety standards; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA encourages its local PTAs and councils to educate families and the community about the dangers of unanchored furniture in their homes and public spaces.

2.25 Restorative Justice and Improving Student Outcomes

Resolution passed 2020

Whereas, Civil Rights Data Collection reports show that students with disabilities and students of color continue to be disproportionately over-represented in suspension rates at the national level; and a study by the U.S. Government Accountability Office found that discipline disparities for Black students, boys, and students with disabilities continue to be widespread and persistent, irrespective of the type of disciplinary action or school and the level of poverty at the school; and

Whereas, evidence points to the prevalent use of punitive and zero-tolerance policies as contributing to increased levels of exclusionary discipline and racial disparities, even while failing to improve school learning environments or reduce overall student misbehaviors and producing collateral consequences that negatively impact all students; and

Whereas, every absence is a learning opportunity lost and can have long-term impacts on student success in school. Recent state data shows disproportionate rates of student discipline and exclusion related to race, income, and special need; and

Whereas, in the context of the school system, restorative justice is a set of promising evidenced-based practices that includes preventative as well as responsive strategies to create opportunities for social emotional learning, foster a school-wide culture of relationship-based accountability, and provide alternatives to exclusionary discipline practices, and research indicates that restorative justice practices are most effective when embedded within a school-wide philosophy and approach; and

Whereas, the goals of a restorative approach in schools are accountability, community safety, and competency development; and

Whereas, the three pillars of restorative justice require that we address harms and needs, hold people who harm accountable, and require an obligation to address the harm; and restorative justice programs involve all aspects of the community: students, schools, and the community of parents, guardians and social-emotional support systems; and

Whereas, community-based restorative justice efforts are largely focused on the goal of providing alternative approaches to practices that perpetuate injustices within existing power structures, and eliminating the school-to-prison pipeline seen in incarceration and exclusionary discipline rates; and

Whereas, common outcomes associated with restorative justice initiatives primarily include reductions in suspensions, expulsions, and discipline referrals; additionally include a reduction in law enforcement involvement, improved social skills, and school engagement; and hold the potential for improving student-teacher relationships, creating positive school climates, and reducing racial disparities in school discipline practices.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will advocate to replace exclusionary discipline and language whenever possible with evidence-based, developmentally appropriate, and culturally responsive behavior best practices and promising strategies such as:

- Restorative justice

- Multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) and behavioral frameworks
- Positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS)
- De-escalation techniques, ongoing training, and follow-up services
- Social emotional learning (SEL) instruction
- Trauma-informed practices and healing-centered engagement
- Professional development on unconscious/implicit bias, cultural competence, social emotional learning, and school-to-prison pipeline impacts of disparities in discipline for educators and administrators, including academic and disciplinary intervention staff; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will support restorative justice initiatives that encourage school leaders to create buy-in by involving students, families, community members, and staff to:

- Co-create restorative justice pilots, initiatives, practices, and implementation
- Identify specific behaviors represented in exclusionary discipline data that can alternatively be referred to restorative justice practices
- Integrate restorative justice language into district discipline policies, office referral policies, and classroom instruction to encourage the systemic adoption of restorative practices
- Develop a district-wide restorative justice training program that can support consistent and frequent ongoing training for all staff
- Integrate student voice in school-wide implementation
- Partner with local law enforcement and juvenile courts to integrate restorative justice into diversion processes; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will advocate for consistent statewide collaborative partnerships between trained juvenile justice decision-makers, educators, and other stakeholders to reduce risk of involvement in the criminal justice system while also increasing student engagement in schools.

2.26 Dismantling Institutional and Systemic Racism

Resolution passed 2020

Whereas, systemic racism and historical dehumanization of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities is deeply embedded in every aspect of our society, including government, healthcare, our economy, housing, legal and justice systems, and our schools; and

Whereas, in 1970, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers and the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers came together as one association because they understood the power of unity in our efforts; and

Whereas, Washington State PTA recognizes and acknowledges that all children are affected by the wrongful deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor, and too many others to name throughout history, and that we must know and honor their legacies. Washington State PTA's vision is that every child's potential becomes a reality, which can only happen in a just society that places equal value on every person's well-being, education, and safety. Every child means just that, every child; and

Whereas, National PTA "stands firmly against racism in all forms and the culture of oppression that permeates the United States" and "views the systemic harm, abuse and attack on individuals and communities of color and other marginalized groups in the United States reprehensible and as civil rights violations"; and

Whereas, PTA recognizes that it can either be a racist or anti-racist association, as there is no neutral space, and therefore must be committed to dismantling the systemic and institutionalized racism faced by BIPOC students and families and increasing authentic engagement with BIPOC families; and

Whereas, students benefit from educational environments, curricula, and instruction which truly honor and reflect their histories, cultures, experiences, and identities; and

Whereas, according to the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, racial disparities persist in our education system: BIPOC youth have disproportionately lower access to preschool, higher rates of suspension from preschool onward, and limited access to advanced classes and college counselors compared to their white counterparts; and

Whereas, the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee states "gaps are not due to our students' and families' failures, but rather the failed responsibility of our system"; and Washington state report card data shows disparate outcomes for BIPOC students in kindergarten readiness, meeting math, science, and English language arts standards, dual credit course completion, and graduation rates; and

Whereas, Washington state report card data also shows disparate outcomes by race in the percent of students who are excluded in response to a behavioral violation, as well as in the length of time students are excluded for out-of-school exclusionary discipline actions in schools; and

Whereas, Washington state enrollment data shows a large racial gap in the classroom between student and classroom teacher demographics; and evidence supports that having BIPOC teachers and educational leadership has positive effects on BIPOC students, including boosting overall academic

performance, improving reading and math test scores, improving graduation rates, increasing aspirations to attend college, and reducing the number of absences.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils commit to being anti-racist and look within to end practices that adversely affect our BIPOC students, families, and communities by:

- Practicing anti-racism, equity, and inclusion in all decision-making; dismantling discriminatory practices and systems; and individually and collectively recognizing and addressing unconscious bias, belief gaps, and prejudice in our leadership, governing structure, and local PTA and member support
- Prioritizing and partnering with BIPOC consultants and compensating them for their intellectual capital, time, and expertise
- Conducting training and providing resources regarding anti-racism, equity, inclusion, and unconscious bias at all levels of PTA
- Conducting anti-racism and equity audits to review association policies and practices to remove implicit or explicit bias, institutional racism, and discrimination
- Actively recruiting, sharing power, and promoting full participation and authentic engagement of BIPOC families in PTA membership and leadership
- Promoting language access by providing printed and/or digital PTA resources translated in multiple languages; and removing language barriers during meetings (online and in-person) and with other oral communication practices
- Creating safe, welcoming, and healing-centered opportunities and environments for courageous conversations and listening sessions with historically marginalized BIPOC families as part of educating ourselves on their histories, cultures, experiences, and identities
- Creating partnerships with BIPOC community organizations, who have trusted relationships with families within our school community, to work with and among PTAs
- Creating and sustaining anti-racism, equity, and inclusion committees; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will collaborate with all district and school staff to end institutional and systemic racism in our schools by prioritizing, implementing, supporting, and sustaining:

- Meaningful and ongoing anti-racist and anti-bias training, including professional development on social emotional learning and healing-centered engagement, for all educators and staff, as well as anti-racist and anti-bias pre-teacher training.
- Explicitly anti-racist curricula, teaching practices, and school library materials that honor the histories, cultures, traditions, identities, and perspectives of BIPOC communities, including ethnic studies content and pedagogy that is student-centered and offers counter-narratives to current, Eurocentric curricula
- Anti-racist school district policies, including but not limited to support of BIPOC student activism and leadership, culturally responsible school building names and mascots, and anti-racism, equity, and inclusion committees
- Recruitment and retention of, and removal of barriers for, BIPOC educators, administrators, and school board members
- School cultures that honor, respect, reflect, and are welcoming to BIPOC students and staff

- Language access by providing printed and digital materials for families translated in multiple languages; and removing language barriers during school and district meetings (online and in-person) and with other oral communication practices
- Partnerships with trusted community organizations that work with BIPOC students and families
- Accurate identification of and services and resources for BIPOC students and families that also receive or should receive special education services
- Authentic student assessment metrics that honor the brilliance of BIPOC students; eliminate potential assessment barriers, biases, and discriminatory practices
- Education and engagement for BIPOC students and families that remove barriers to early learning programs and post-secondary education and pathways; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will advocate at all levels to:

- Identify and dismantle unjust and discriminatory student disciplinary and zero-tolerance policies that perpetuate generational trauma and the school-to-prison pipeline
- Require comprehensive guidelines and anti-racist and anti-bias training for all school staff about when it is, or is not, appropriate to involve law enforcement or child protective services, and about the use of force by school resource officers, other law enforcement officers, security personnel, and staff; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will advocate for anti-racist legislation and policies to end systemic and institutional racism, including but not limited to:

- Addressing funding and resource inequities to ensure allocations and supports reflect the needs of BIPOC and other underserved communities.
- Ensuring equity, eliminating discrimination, and combating racism in our government, public health, healthcare, economy, housing, legal and justice systems, and schools.

COOPERATIVE ROLE OF PARENTS AND EDUCATORS

4.3 Excellence in Our Education System

Resolution passed 1983

Whereas, the purposes of Washington State PTA are “to promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, places of worship, and throughout the community” and “to engage the public in united efforts to secure the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being of all children and youth;” and

Whereas, schools in Washington state face limited budgets and declining enrollments, causing them to make difficult decisions about cuts in educational programs and staff; and

Whereas, the education of children and youth in our schools is dependent upon the excellence of the educators working with the children; and

Whereas, Washington State PTA has a responsibility to the children of Washington state to work within the educational community to ensure that the professionals working in our schools are the best qualified and most able educators.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA work together with other members of the education community to recommend improvements for evaluative procedures and/or changes in policies, where needed, that will enable the schools to encourage and reward those educators who upgrade their skills and work effectively in the schools and to provide counseling for those who need to become more skilled or those who need to consider other employment; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA encourages local PTAs and councils to provide information to members of their school communities on procedures for expressing concerns about staff members.

4.7 Public School Dropout Prevention/Retrieval

Resolution passed 1988; amended 2007; amended 2013

Whereas, Washington State PTA has a purpose to “engage the public in united efforts to secure the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being of all children and youth”; and

Whereas, an unacceptable percentage of Washington state’s students do not finish high school on schedule; and

Whereas, dropping out of school is one of the strongest predictors of decreased employment opportunities, lower lifetime earnings potential and increased chances of incarceration; and

Whereas, receiving a high school diploma is a vital connection to society and the economy, and it is a required credential for most jobs in America; and

Whereas, obstacles to successful dropout prevention/retrieval programs include budget constraints, overcrowded schools and classes, difficulties in the home, poor academic preparation, lack of coordination between schools and social services, and the negative image that accompanies dropout programs.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA work with other members of the education community and social services to commit to effective dropout prevention; and be it further

Resolved, that local PTAs and councils be encouraged to work for and promote effective strategies to keep students in school such as: early referral, assessment and intervention with at-risk youth; techniques and incentives to increase motivation and achievement among at-risk youth; parent and social service involvement in planning and services; programs that improve academic performance; options to assure an appropriate learning environment; programs that help students and adults make connections, providing students with a community of support; programs that link schooling and the realities of work and employment skills; programs that emphasize goal setting and decision making as a key to future options.

4.12 Family and Community Engagement in Education

Resolution passed 1994; amended 2005 incorporating Board Positions 4.10 and 4.11; amended 2019

Whereas, it is recognized that families are the first and primary teachers of their children; and

Whereas, findings from the Global Family Research Project report show that when families and teachers join together to support children’s learning and development, children are more likely to succeed in school, graduate and stay on their path to college or a career; and

Whereas, research consistently demonstrates the benefits of family-school-community partnerships via increased communication among families, teachers and school leaders, more community support for the school, and higher morale.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils shall encourage family and community engagement, an essential part of the PTA mission, by promoting an environment in which families are valued as the primary influence in their children’s lives and essential partners in their children’s education and development; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA encourage the business community to form partnerships with schools and support employees in their quest to become involved in schools; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils work with educational leaders to develop partnerships between educators, families, and communities while promoting National Standards for Family-School Partnerships:

- Welcoming All Families into the School Community
- Communicating Effectively
- Supporting Student Success
- Speaking Up for Every Child
- Sharing Power
- Collaborating with Community.

4.13 Subsidizing Certificated and Classified Staff Salaries

Resolution passed 2012

Whereas, it is common practice for PTAs to supplement the educational experiences available to the children in their communities through programs conducted outside of the regular school day; and

Whereas, supporting such programs may in individual instances require payment of a stipend to a school staff member for work conducted beyond the staff's contract with the school district; and

Whereas, such support is consistent with PTA's mission of being a resource for parents and communities, and with PTA's vision of making every child's potential a reality; and

Whereas, National PTA states that a PTA renders a greater service by working to secure adequate funding for programs that have an enduring benefit and strongly suggests that PTAs should not contribute to the problem of inequities within a school district by engaging in excessive fundraising; and

Whereas, Washington State PTA, as a child advocacy organization, believes that a key focus should be advocating for improved and sustainable education funding for all students and that PTAs should not fund additional school staff during the school day, an occurrence that places school districts in the difficult position of trying to continue funding said staff once PTA funding ceases; and

Whereas, the Washington State Constitution states that it is the "Paramount duty to make ample provision for the education of all children without distinction or preference on account of race, color, caste or sex" and further directs the legislature to "provide for a general and uniform system of public schools", and these duties were recently reaffirmed by the Supreme Court of the State of Washington; and

Whereas, it is necessary for the state to be held fully accountable for the funding of basic education; and

Whereas, the subsidizing of additional school staff during the school day through use of PTA funds carries a number of risks including, but not limited to, increasing inequities in students' learning experiences, creating a misleading perception of the resources available to a school or district, skewing data used for tracking student progress and creating an ongoing obligation for the district that it cannot sustain.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will continue to advocate for and support education reform measures including adequate and sustainable funding for basic education; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA advises its local PTAs and councils to use their resources to enhance every student's educational experience through the funding of programs and activities outside of the regular school program rather than by providing resources for additional staff during the school day.

4.14 Vital Impact of Membership on PTA's Sustainability

Resolution passed 2019

Whereas, Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils rely on advocacy at all levels to further the PTA mission, vision, and purposes; and

Whereas, decision-makers at the school building, school district, city, county, state, and national levels provide time and preference to the priorities of their largest constituent bodies; and

Whereas, the larger the PTA membership, the louder and more influential the collective PTA voice to effectively advocate at all levels (school building, school district, city, county, state, and national).

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will raise awareness of the importance of membership at all levels of PTA (local PTA, council, region, and state); and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will actively participate in year-round membership recruitment that includes all potential PTA members (families, students, staff, community members, and anyone who supports the mission of PTA) to amplify our collective voice; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will provide and recommend participation in and use of membership training, materials and resources for all leaders at every level of PTA; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will prioritize communicating the relevancy and mission of the PTA and membership recruitment as the most critical components of our association's sustainability.

4.15 Mission-Focused Fundraising

Resolution passed 2019

Whereas, the mission of Washington State PTA is to be (1) a powerful voice for children, (2) a relevant resource for families, schools and communities, and (3) a strong advocate for the well-being and education of all children; and

Whereas, as a child advocacy association, there are many challenges facing today's children and youth that need PTA's focus and advocacy; and

Whereas, the National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships are a tool for empowering people to work together with an end goal of building family-school partnerships and student success, and they focus on advocacy and family and community engagement; and

Whereas, Washington State PTA advises affiliated local PTAs to use their resources to best serve and enhance the educational experience of every child through the funding of programs, events and activities that support the PTA mission and their local PTA goals, as those that are heavily focused on fundraising are frequently exclusionary; and

Whereas, it is an adopted position of Washington State PTA that local PTAs should help eliminate and not contribute to the problem of inequities within a school district by engaging in excessive fundraising; and

Whereas, the Washington State Constitution states that it is the "paramount duty to make ample provision for the education of all children without distinction or preference on account of race, color, caste or sex" and further directs the legislature to "provide for a general and uniform system of public schools"; and

Whereas, over twenty years of Washington State PTA legislative priorities have focused on holding the state accountable for the funding of basic education.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will educate its local PTAs and councils about fundraising best practices; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA encourages its local PTAs to evaluate their current fundraising practices and budgets to focus on the mission of PTA, and for councils to advocate for reasonable and equitable fundraising policies for all parent organizations in their school districts; and be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA strongly advises its local PTAs and councils not to fund certificated and classified staff, school operations, and programs that are included in the definition of basic education; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils continue to advocate to the state legislature to amply fund education per our state constitution.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

11.1 Students with Diabetes

Resolution passed 1974; amended 2013; amended 2019; amended 2020

Whereas, diabetes is one of the most common chronic diseases of childhood in which the body does not produce insulin (type 1 diabetes) or does not produce enough insulin or properly use it (type 2 diabetes); and

Whereas, according to the American Diabetes Association (ADA), type 1 diabetes accounts for 5 to 10% of all cases of diabetes and is the most prevalent type of diabetes among children and adolescents; and type 2 diabetes is seeing an increase in diagnoses among children and adolescents; and

Whereas, according to the ADA and the Endocrine Society, the cost of insulin to patients has nearly tripled in the past fifteen years, making it difficult for many families to afford this medication and effectively manage the disease. This has put patient safety in jeopardy, as some families ration their insulin or forego other medical care; and

Whereas, multiple federal laws protect children with diabetes and consider it a disability, making it illegal to discriminate against students with diabetes. Federal law requires an individualized assessment of any child with diabetes, and these required accommodations should be documented in a written individualized health plan (IHP) developed under the applicable federal law and added to a Section 504 Plan or Individualized Education Program (IEP); and

Whereas, diabetes must be managed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and effective diabetes management is crucial for (1) the immediate safety of students with diabetes, (2) for the long-term health of students with diabetes, (3) to ensure that students with diabetes are ready to learn and to participate fully in school activities, and (4) to minimize the possibility that diabetes-related emergencies will disrupt classroom activities; and

Whereas, there are many important aspects to properly managing diabetes at school, as younger and newly diagnosed students depend on school staff to monitor blood sugar and administer insulin, other students need support as they self-manage, and all students need trained school staff who can recognize and treat high and low blood glucose and administer emergency glucagon; and

Whereas, in a supportive school environment, school personnel understand the needs of students with diabetes and can respond appropriately in emergency situations, young people can manage their diabetes effectively throughout the school day and at school-sponsored activities; and

Whereas, many schools do not have a full-time nurse or licensed healthcare professional available on-site to recognize and handle diabetes emergencies quickly, and nursing duties are often performed by other school personnel.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate for equitable access to affordable quality healthcare, medical supplies and medications (including insulin and all necessary monitoring supplies) for all children and youth; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate for training for school staff, including pump training skills and the use of continuous glucose monitors (CGMs), as recommended by the American Diabetes Association:

- Level 1 training for all school staff members, which includes a basic overview of diabetes, typical needs of a student with diabetes, recognition of hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia, and whom to contact for help in an emergency
- Level 2 training for school staff members who have responsibility for students with diabetes, which includes all content from level 1 plus treatment of hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia and required accommodations for those students (IHP/504/IEP, emergency care plans, what to do in a schoolwide emergency, legal rights of students with diabetes in the school setting, etc.)
- Level 3 training for a small group of school staff members who will perform or assist the student with diabetes care tasks as allowed by law, such as blood glucose monitoring, insulin administration, and glucagon administration when a school nurse is not available to perform these tasks, which includes all content from level 1 and level 2 training.

11.11 Indoor Air Standards

Resolution passed 1989; amended 2013; amended 2019

Whereas, two of the purposes of Washington State PTA are to “advocate for laws that further the educational, physical and mental health, welfare, and safety of children and youth;” and to “promote the collaboration and engagement of families and educators in the education of children and youth”; and

Whereas, improper indoor air quality/ventilation creates a buildup of toxic chemicals and gases which will result in hazardous health problems; and

Whereas, Washington state has not implemented specific minimum standards for indoor air quality for schools that cover both children and adults.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports implementation of legislation that provides specific minimum standards for indoor air quality/ventilation in all public schools and portable structures housing students and staff, protecting the health of children and staff; and be it further

Resolved, that legislation should include directives, timelines, and funding for remediation to bring non-complying schools up to minimum standards; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will initiate/support legislation in Washington state mandating immediate testing by EPA approved or certified contractors to determine precise levels of indoor air contaminants in all educational facilities used by grades K-12; and be it further

Resolved, that parents and teachers be notified of the nature, location, and dates of testing seven days prior to testing and be advised of the results within 14 days of completion of such tests.

11.17 Tobacco Settlement Money

Resolution passed 2000; amended 2005; amended 2014

Whereas, tobacco use rates among youth have stalled in past years but are still too high; and

Whereas, smoking kills more than 480,000 Americans each year and tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of death in the United States, with exposure to secondhand smoke causing 49,000 deaths; and

Whereas, the use of emerging tobacco products is increasing among United States youths; and

Whereas, smoking-related diseases in Washington state result in \$1.6 billion in health-care costs annually; and

Whereas, in 2012, 10 percent of Washington state youth 6th through 12th grade smoked. Washington state ranks 15th among the states of youth that smoke; and

Whereas, in 2012 in Washington state, 50 youth start smoking cigarettes each day, one in three of all youth smokers will die prematurely from a smoking-related disease, and smoking is associated with the increased risk of drug use and low academic performance; and

Whereas, nearly 9 out of 10 smokers started smoking by age 19, and 99 percent started by age 26, with progression from occasional to daily smoking almost always occurring by age 26; and

Whereas, there are 124,000 kids now under the age of 18 living in Washington state who will ultimately die prematurely from smoking; and

Whereas, National PTA endorses the concept of a smoke-free young America and encourages all PTAs/PTSAs to cooperate in educational and promotional activities designed to discourage students from smoking or using tobacco in any form; and

Whereas, in 2012, the Healthy Youth Survey reported that 1 percent of Washington state sixth-graders, 5 percent of eighth-graders, 10 percent of tenth-graders, and 16 percent of high school seniors had smoked a cigarette in the past 30 days; and

Whereas, comprehensive tobacco prevention programs cost money; and

Whereas, Washington state will receive \$620 million in tobacco-generated revenue in 2014 and has budgeted only \$760,000 in tobacco prevention spending in that same fiscal year; and

Whereas, states that are having a successful reduction in tobacco usage have initiated comprehensive tobacco prevention programs.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils continue to support legislative efforts to increase the allocation of tobacco settlement funds recommended to support health programs aimed at the (including prevention, intervention, and control of tobacco product use by youth; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils collaborate with other organizations in lobbying for legislative action; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils sponsor presentations and workshops aimed at the prevention, intervention, and control of tobacco product use by youth.

11.20 Energy Drinks

Resolution passed 2009

Whereas, caffeine is an addictive drug. Consumption is dangerous to young brains and can cause insomnia, restlessness, high blood pressure, and increased heart rate, heart palpitations, anxiety, headaches, and adrenal exhaustion; and

Whereas, many energy drinks are marketed as “dietary supplements.” As a dietary supplement, the Food and Drug Administration limits on caffeine content for soft drinks (71 mg per 12 oz. can) does not apply to energy drinks. Caffeine content can be as high as 500 mg per 20 oz. serving; and

Whereas, marketing for energy drinks is an estimated 6.5 billion in the United States and is expanding at a rate of 55 percent annually. Marketing campaigns are targeting children sending them the message that kids need these drinks to get a buzz to get through the day, to feel differently, or get a boost; and

Whereas, energy drink sales grow substantially every year. Sales were 3.7 billion in 2006 and 4.7 billion in 2007.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA lobby for legislation to regulate marketing and labeling of energy drinks for children ages 18 and under, and to urge its constituent organizations to work collaboratively together; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA work with health organizations to provide resources and educational programs for parents and schools; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA councils and local PTAs are encouraged to work with their districts and schools to educate them about the negative aspect of energy drinks and urge them to prohibit the sale or consider the restriction of their use on school campuses.

11.21 Alignment of Sleep Requirements for Optimum Health With School Start Times

Resolution passed 2012

Whereas, Washington State PTA supports legislation in the areas of children’s health, safety, well-being, and education, and this resolution supports an important health and safety issue for children attending public school: start times that ensure enough sleep for health requirements; and

Whereas, “Adolescents today face a widespread chronic health problem: sleep deprivation. Although society often views sleep as a luxury that ambitious or active people cannot afford, research shows that getting enough sleep is a biological necessity, as important to good health as eating well or exercising. Teens are among those least likely to get enough sleep; while they need on average 9 1/4 hours of sleep per night for optimal performance, health and brain development, teens average fewer than 7 hours per school night” (National Sleep Foundation); and

Whereas, the latest research shows that teens worldwide have natural sleep rhythms that make them unable to go to sleep before 11 p.m. and that they need an average of 9-10 hours of sleep, yet most high schools start early in the morning. In addition, the student must get ready for and find transportation to school, so simple math shows there is not enough time available for adequate sleep; and

Whereas, schools are looking for solutions to poor academic performance, poor attendance, students falling asleep in class, and problems with student depression and aggression, yet studies show that simply getting adequate sleep will positively impact all these problems; and

Whereas, studies show adolescents get an inadequate amount of sleep due to early start times, increasing teen driver accident rates; and

Whereas, some school districts have responded to the research and changed their start times. “Since the discussion on school start times began more than a decade ago, not a single district that has made the change has decided to change back.” (LA Times 8/23/2010, School Start Times and ZZZ’s to A’s)

Therefore, be it

Resolved, Washington State PTA will encourage and support school start times that meet the optimum health requirements for sleep needs.

11.22 Allergies and Asthma

Resolution passed 2013; amended 2019

Whereas, allergies among youth continue to increase every year, with more than half of the over 5.6 million youth with food allergies developing the food allergy in the last 12 months; and

Whereas, one out of 25 children have a food allergy, and hospitalization of children for food allergies has also increased, and children with food allergies are two to four times more likely to have asthma or other allergic diseases; and

Whereas, children with both food allergies and asthma are at greater risk to suffer a near-fatal or fatal anaphylaxis reaction, and their airways are more sensitive to allergic triggers; and

Whereas, food allergies are a health concern in the school environment, with about 18 percent of children with food allergies having allergic reactions to accidental ingestion of food allergens while in school; and

Whereas, twenty-five percent of anaphylaxis reactions in schools occur among students without a previous food allergy diagnosis and the FDA confirms that symptoms first presenting as mild upon ingesting food allergen, if not treated promptly, can quickly become severe and lead to anaphylaxis; and

Whereas, asthma is one of the most common chronic disorders in childhood, with more than 6.2 million children suffering an asthma attack or episode with the odds of having asthma increasing by 23% for children in low-income families; and

Whereas, many schools do not have a full-time nurse or licensed healthcare professional available on-site to handle medical emergencies, and nursing duties are often performed by other school personnel, and this impacts the timely development of appropriate Section 504 plans which impacts a student's ability to access school; and

Whereas, according to the primary manufacturer, the prices of some prescribed epinephrine auto-injectors (EpiPen) have increased 400% since invented in 2007; and

Whereas, Washington state now allows schools to keep their own supply of epinephrine injectors provided and maintained at the school's expense that can only be administered by the school nurse, but no physicians statewide will write a standing-order prescription for the injectors.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils urge all school districts across the state to develop model policies and follow an indoor air quality management plan that protects the health of the students and staff occupants, and also to develop teacher and staff training on signs and symptoms of asthma and allergic reactions; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils support ongoing efforts and requirements that an appropriate number of staff per school obtain specific training on allergy and asthma care, anaphylaxis emergency protocols to include the use of epinephrine delivery and identification and treatment of symptoms of allergy, asthma, and anaphylaxis as allowed by individual state statutes and licensures; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils promote awareness of allergy and asthma care, anaphylaxis emergency protocols to include the use of epinephrine delivery, and identification and treatment of symptoms, of allergy, asthma, and anaphylaxis, and development of timely Section 504 plans; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate for equitable access to affordable quality healthcare, medical supplies, and medications for all children and youth.

11.23 Access to Health and Dental Care

Resolution passed 2014

Whereas, in order to do well in school children must have their basic medical and dental needs met; and

Whereas, the key challenge facing children in the opportunity gap is a healthy, safe and stable home life that allows them to be ready to learn in the classroom; and

Whereas, access to basic health needs, even with the increases in health insurance coverage statewide, is proving difficult in rural communities throughout the state; and

Whereas, many children and youth are more likely to have unmet medical and dental needs or the inability to access a primary care physician or dentist because of financial costs or geographical location; and

Whereas, Washington State PTA is the largest child advocacy organization in the state; and

Whereas, Washington State PTA supports the promotion of the safety and well-being of all children.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA works with health care and child advocates to advocate in Olympia and Washington, D.C., to expand access to medical and dental care options for all of Washington state's children.

11.24 Paid Sick and Family Leave

Resolution passed 2014

Whereas, the Washington State PTA has a long history of supporting legislation that encourages healthy environments for Washington state's children; and

Whereas, supporting Family and Medical Leave legislation will advance the cause of increasing family and community engagement in our schools; and

Whereas, many Washington state residents have been adversely affected by the economic downturn and are working longer hours or lower-paying jobs to pay off debt and stabilize their finances; and

Whereas, families who are faced with standard illnesses (colds, flu, routine treatment, and care) should not be fiscally penalized for staying home to care for themselves or their children; and

Whereas, the direct costs of providing paid sick leave are very small, less than 1% of payroll according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics and business owners themselves who have implemented in Seattle; and

Whereas, providing paid sick leave benefits businesses through higher morale and productivity, less absenteeism, less spread of disease in the workplace, fewer workplace accidents, and lower rates of turnover, offsetting employers' direct costs; and

Whereas, without laws requiring that all workers receive paid sick leave, 6 in 10 workers in private industry will not have access to sick and or family leave benefits in Washington state.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports legislation or policies advancing the cause of paid sick and/or family leave in Washington state.

11.25 Mitigating Environmental Hazards and Contaminants in Schools

Resolution passed 2016

Whereas, the school environment impacts learning for all children. Educational achievement is directly linked to students' health and their learning environment. Schools have a responsibility to use products with safer chemicals to promote a healthy school environment. Implementing green cleaning programs and integrated pest management in schools has many benefits, and chief among them is helping students stay healthy and ready to learn. A school rule to establish minimum environmental standards for schools was 'frozen' in 2008. This rule encouraged solutions to pest prevention, maintenance, capital improvements, and other physical improvements. It also provided funds for schools to test water for lead and other contaminants. Reinstating and revamping this rule would safeguard the health of over one million students; and

Whereas, children are at greater risk as their small size results in a higher concentration of pollutant exposure. Children exhibit behaviors that put them at greater risk – they play on the floor or grass, for example, where pesticides are commonly applied. They are more vulnerable to lifelong detrimental effects of chemical toxins, because developing hormonal, neurological, and other systems can be disrupted by pesticides and other chemicals. This can result in long-term negative health effects (Williams, Linker, Waldvogel, Leidy, & Schal, 2005). The EPA states that concentrations of air contaminants are often found to be two to five times higher indoors than outdoors due to the tighter buildings, reduction in outdoor air brought into schools for ventilation, reduced maintenance budgets, and the proliferation of indoor sources of contaminants. Chronic absence in kindergarten is strongly associated with lower reading and math performance in fifth grade for poor children (Chang and Romero, 2008); and

Whereas, chemicals of concern exist in widely used products in schools. Chemicals such as herbicides/pesticides, bleach, ammonia, triclosan, quaternary ammonium compounds, fragrance, artificial dyes, and other chemicals typically found in hand soaps, sanitizers, wipes, and commercial cleaning agents are commonly used in school settings. Teachers, staff, custodians and sometimes students use these products even though they are proven or suspected to exert neurological, psychiatric, developmental, hormonal, reproductive, and/or carcinogenic effects (Kroger, 2005) (Kerry & Kroger, 2012) (<http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Schools/EnvironmentalHealth>); and

Whereas, less toxic and cost-comparable product alternatives are widely available. Less toxic and cost-effective alternatives exist for cleaning, managing pests, procuring art and science supplies, etc. These safer alternatives are now widely available. For cleaning products, third-party certifications Green Seal, UL ECOLOGO, and the EPA's Safer Choice program have health-promoting criteria and are regulated by respected third-party organizations. While green chemicals used to cost more, in today's market, costs are similar or in many cases even less than traditional products. And schools can save when switching to equipment and processes that are more efficient and effective for custodial staff; and

Whereas, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policies in schools is supported by the National PTA. IPM has been found to reduce pesticide use by 71% and reduce pest complaints by 78% to 90% with no increase in costs (Gouge, Lame and Snyder, 2006). IPM is a long-term policy solution, and when coupled

with individualized technical assistance to schools, these policies can improve indoor air quality, improve test scores and reduce absenteeism (Chambers, et al, 2011); and

Whereas, state laws and district policies mandating safer chemicals in cleaning and pest management programs provide a clear framework to ensure healthy school environment standards. Washington state should follow the lead of the more than 12 states that have adopted green cleaning legislation or safer chemical legislation in schools. A summary of those laws can be found [here](#). In some cases, districts have adopted broad guidelines for safer chemical use, for example, in the Palo Alto Unified School District. Integrative Pest Management (IPM) in schools has been mandated in Oregon, Arizona, California, and Illinois, among others (see EPA strategic plan: <https://www3.epa.gov/pestwise/ipminschoools/strategicplan.pdf>); and

Whereas, pediatricians and health agencies call for safer chemical policies in schools. In 2012, the American Academy of Pediatrics issued a strong statement that children should not be exposed to any pesticides and recommended IPM as a solution to reduce risk (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2012). Similarly, the Washington State Department of Health has reinforced these findings and concluded that pesticide exposure reduces school student performance. Additionally, in the fall of 2014, a recommendation letter signed by the EPA, Washington State Department of Health, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and Washington State University Extension, collectively recommended that schools implement IPM as a means to reduce pesticide exposure and protect the health of children in Washington state. IPM is encouraged nationally by the EPA to reduce pesticide use in schools (Center of Expertise for School IPM, 2014).

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports adoption and enforcement of legislation and policies that improve environmental health in schools with safer chemical use, specifically in school cleaning programs, pest management, and grounds maintenance, and work to update and support minimum environmental standards for all educational facilities; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA should support all efforts to implement safer chemical policies at the state and school district levels. This can include advocating for minimum environmental health standards for all of Washington state, IPM in schools, and green cleaning policies that focus on safer procurement of cleaning supplies for district and school custodial staff as well as purchasing lists used by parents for classroom supplies; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA encourages and calls for members, policymakers in government, inter-governmental bodies and non-governmental, school and community organizations to raise awareness to reduce and mitigate environmental hazards in schools; and be it further

Resolved, that in recognizing that every Washingtonian is accumulating a body burden of toxic chemicals associated with health impacts, we call for appropriate policies that ensure that only the safest chemicals are used in all schools, and we call for efforts to update and support stronger environmental standards in schools.

11.26 Supporting the Mental and Behavioral Health Needs of Children and Youth

Resolution passed 2017; amended 2020

Whereas, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines mental health disorders, as “serious deviations from expected cognitive, social and emotional development” – including, but not limited to anxiety, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, alcohol or substance use disorder, and depression; and

Whereas, research also shows that most mental health disorders will emerge or begin to manifest symptoms by age 14 and the prevalence of mental health disorders among children and youth is a critical issue due to the effects on the child/youth, their family, and the community; and

Whereas, Washington State Healthy Youth Survey data show more than half of students in grades 8-12 report feeling anxious and one-third report being depressed for more than two weeks in the last year; and

Whereas, mental health disorders for children and youth are often misdiagnosed or never identified; and

Whereas, early intervention and prevention can help to address mental and behavioral health needs before symptoms exacerbate into more detrimental social, emotional or academic behaviors or activities; and

Whereas, many children and youth do not receive treatment because of stigma and negative perceptions of mental health disorders; consequently, they may develop behavioral problems resulting in disciplinary action such as suspension, which increases risk for dropping out of school and contact with the criminal justice system; and

Whereas, even as access to mental and behavioral health care for children and youth has been increased, the lack of mental and behavioral healthcare providers and of treatment facilities remain significant barriers; and

Whereas, schools are uniquely situated to provide mental health prevention and intervention models and provide appropriate connections to mental health services and providers, as they have daily contact with children and youth and their families; and

Whereas, National PTA’s position is that it is imperative that parents and families are part of any school-based or medical decision-making team that provides early intervention, preventive programs and/or mental health services; and that a strong and trusting relationship among the providers, school, school-based mental health professionals, school leadership, educators, and parents is essential to support positive mental, behavioral, interpersonal, and academic outcomes for children and youth.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils support and promote an environment of well-being throughout all schools that does not stigmatize mental health disorders but encourages addressing mental health as pro-active, positive, and necessary in order for everyone in the community to thrive;

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils support mental health education for school staff, and professional development to assist with addressing mental health disorders with emphasis on early detection and early intervention; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate for:

- state and local policies which prioritize the funding and availability of mental health professionals for school-based mental health interventions and services—pre-kindergarten through grade 12— including adequate access to school psychologists, school counselors and school social workers
- equitable access to integrated and culturally competent community-based services
- and funding to expand residential treatment facilities; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils promote education about the importance of mental health professions as a critical career option for students and adults who wish to have a vital and positive impact on society.

11.28 Mitigating the Health Effects of Climate Change

Resolution passed 2018; amended 2020

Whereas, a primary focus of PTA is the health and well-being of every child; and

Whereas, Washington State PTA has resolutions addressing the causes of and reducing the effects of external pollutants for asthma, health care for all children and youth, mitigating environmental hazards, and increasing access to mental health; and legislative principles that support increased access to health care for children and youth, mental health parity, school nutrition, and effective prevention and intervention programs; and

Whereas, multiple national and international agencies have published scientific research on adverse health effects of climate change on children (dehydration; heat exhaustion, cramps or stroke; trauma from extreme weather like floods, fire or storms; increased lung disease and illness from infectious diseases; malnutrition), including the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), and the U.S. Global Change Research Program; and

Whereas, NIH research shows that climate change increases airborne allergens and pollution; affects the ecology and temperature of a region, resulting in increased disease vectors such as mosquitoes, ticks, and flies; may be associated with staple food shortages, malnutrition, and food contamination; affects changes in coastal ecosystem health that could increase the incidence of water contamination with harmful pathogens and chemicals; and

Whereas, the NIEHS reports that, "strategies for mitigating and adapting to climate change can prevent illness and death in people now, while also protecting the environment and health of future generations;" and

Whereas, the WHO reports that, "Today, humankind's activities are altering the world's climate. We are increasing the atmospheric concentration of energy-trapping gases, thereby amplifying the natural 'greenhouse effect' that makes the Earth habitable. These greenhouse gases (GHGs) comprise, principally, carbon dioxide (mostly from fossil fuel combustion and forest burning), plus other heat-trapping gases such as methane (from irrigated agriculture, animal husbandry, and oil extraction), nitrous oxide and various human-made halocarbons;" and

Whereas, the WHO concludes that, "Unprecedentedly, today the world population is encountering unfamiliar human-induced changes in the lower and middle atmospheres and world-wide depletion of various other natural systems (e.g., soil fertility, aquifers, ocean fisheries, and biodiversity in general). Beyond the early recognition that such changes would affect economic activities, infrastructure, and managed ecosystems, there is now recognition that global climate change poses risks to human population health"; and

Whereas, the global urgency to address climate change increased when the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded that at the current rate of warming, the global warming will reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052, that any risks due to climate change will increase further with a 2°C change, and that the national mitigation goals of the Paris Agreement won't limit global warming to 1.5°C; and

Whereas, uncoordinated and incomprehensive government actions in Washington state addressed greenhouse gas emissions (GHGE) and climate change, with the state of Washington enacting legislation to reduce anthropogenic (manmade) GHGE specifically for state agencies to 95% below 1990 levels and achieve net zero GHGE, and the King County Council, updated its Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) for cities to voluntarily adapt and reduce regional GHGE and prepare for climate change impacts, especially in communities severely impacted by climate change; and

Whereas, National PTA has had a position statement on Environmental Health, Remediation, Sustainability and Climate Change since 2003, recognizing “the scientific consensus surrounding climate change and the impact of human activities. Children represent a particularly vulnerable group already suffering disproportionately from both direct and indirect adverse health effects of anthropogenic global warming” and that “PTA members have a responsibility to promote environmental health and safety, and to help protect our world’s finite natural resources.”

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils urge national, state and local policymakers to acknowledge that climate change is a health crisis that disproportionately and adversely impacts children and youth, and to adopt and enforce legislation that enables people to adapt to climate change and mitigates the effects of climate change, and that uses market forces, incentives, and regulations to sequester carbon and reduce emissions of CO₂ and GHGs with the goal of slowing, halting, and reversing climate change; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA encourages and calls for members, policymakers in government, inter-governmental bodies and non-governmental, school and community organizations to raise awareness and advocate for increased research to reduce and mitigate adverse health effects resulting from climate change; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA promotes utilization of the existing K-12 Integrated Environmental and Sustainability Education Learning Standards, including educating students on climate and energy literacy and human sustainability; and educates its members on how to calculate their carbon footprint, ways they can reduce their carbon footprint, such as green and clean energy changes they can make in their lives; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils urge policymakers to take action to make schools and communities more energy-efficient, including the use of renewable, sustainable energy and technologies, to provide funding and technical assistance to jurisdictions to develop, adopt and implement Strategic Climate Action Plans (SCAP) that focus on reducing school district, city, county and regional GHGE and prepare for climate change impacts, especially those communities severely impacted by climate change, and to enact environmentally healthy land-use policies that take into account the geographic, economic, ethnic, cultural, and other societal factors that influence the incidence, exposure, and effects of environmental health hazards.

11.29 School Nutrition, Breakfast and Lunch Policies

Resolution passed 2020

Whereas, nutrition is a cornerstone to the health, well-being, development, and academic achievement of children and youth; and

Whereas, children and youth facing food insecurity are at increased risk of falling behind their peers academically and socially; food insecurity is linked to lower reading and mathematics test scores and increased behavioral issues; and

Whereas, children in Washington state that participate in the Breakfast after the Bell program experience reduced disruptive behavior, reduced instances of absence and tardies, and increased academic achievement; and

Whereas, the need to promote healthy eating habits and food choices has intensified with the national epidemic of obesity, and consumption of nutrient-dense foods correlates with the amount of time children and youth have to eat; and

Whereas, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the United States Department of Agriculture recommend that schools ensure sufficient time for students to receive and consume a meal, with at least ten minutes for eating breakfast and twenty minutes for eating lunch after being seated; and

Whereas, scheduling recess before lunch and promoting a positive school lunch environment lead to increased healthy food choices and consumption, and decreased food waste and discipline referrals; and

Whereas, Washington state law, known as the Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights, says, "School personnel, school district personnel, and volunteers are prohibited from taking any action that would publicly identify a student who cannot pay for a school meal or for meals previously served to the student, including requiring the student to wear an identifying marker or serving the student an alternative meal." and should apply to all students.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will advocate for policies at all levels regarding school nutrition and lunch policies to:

- Expand equitable access to school meals, including Breakfast After the Bell
- Include measurable goals and standards regarding child nutrition to include an emphasis in meeting or exceeding the national time standard of 20 seated lunch minutes and implementation of recess before lunch for elementary students; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils:

- Advocate for the high-nutritional quality of meals served and other food available in schools (such as vending machines, student stores, student fundraising projects, and classroom snacks) to ensure the best nutrition for our state's children and youth, and foster good habits that will contribute to a lifetime of good nutrition
- Encourage meal providers to review meals in consultation with a nutrition professional, and stakeholders for feasibility of school to farm and/or organic ingredient meal planning

- Encourage development of nutritionally complete and palatable components that include whole grains and fresh fruits and vegetables as well as limit the use of excessive additives and preservatives; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils work with districts and school staff to develop best practices for:

- Mealtime hygiene and nutrition habits
- Respectful and supportive mealtime environments, including the elimination of silent lunch periods
- A minimum of the national standard of 20 seated lunch minutes - in addition to the time required for the acquisition of meals; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will advocate for the removal of meal debt policies that shame or humiliate students—or prevent children from receiving and consuming a full meal equivalent to their peers.

11.30 Equitable Access to Recess, Play, Unstructured Time, and Physical Activity

Resolution passed 2020

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), all children and youth ages 6-17, regardless of ability, should engage in at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day, and because children and youth spend a large portion of their awake hours at school, and for many students, school is their only opportunity for physical activity; and

Whereas, schools in lower-income neighborhoods and those serving a higher percentage of students of color often schedule significantly less recess than schools in affluent and often white neighborhoods; and

Whereas, elementary school children who have more recess time have been found to have better classroom behavior, and OSPI states that recess should not be viewed as a reward, but as a necessary educational support component for all children; and

Whereas, physical fitness and engagement in physical activity are associated with greater academic achievement and cognitive functioning, and increased physical activity during the school day does not adversely affect student academic achievement; and

Whereas, research on the neuroscience of learning suggests that students of all ages need brain breaks, physical activity, creative movement, and unstructured time; benefits include improved mood, conflict resolution, enhanced problem-solving, creative thinking, and memory; and

Whereas, recess provides unstructured play opportunities that allow children to engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity and should not replace physical education classes that provide sequential instruction to enhance the development of motor skills, movement concepts, and physical fitness; and

Whereas, more than 30 minutes of recess per day (and ideally more than 45 minutes) provides the most benefit, and longer recess periods (more than 20 minutes in one period) have increased benefits over shorter recess periods; and

Whereas, middle and high school students also benefit from unstructured breaks and physical activity, and teenagers who engage in more physical activity have better physical and mental health and are more likely to have an active lifestyle in adulthood; and

Whereas, although schools are required to comply with the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and provide appropriate physical education and physical activity opportunities for students with disabilities, the CDC reports that only 24% of children and adolescents with disabilities are meeting the recommended time for daily physical activity.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate for equitable access to adequate recess for elementary school students and unstructured physical activity and creative movement throughout the school day for all K-12 students, especially for students of color, students from low-income households, and students with disabilities; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate for legislation and policies that provide:

- Each elementary student each day - at least one period of recess for a minimum of 30 minutes (45 minutes recommended), or a minimum of five minutes per hour of daily instruction
- Each middle and high school student each day - at least one unstructured break in addition to the lunch period and passing periods; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils oppose the practice of the denial of school recess as a disciplinary measure or for additional instruction time and recommend that the practice be abolished; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils strongly recommend that school districts provide ADA-compliant new and replacement playgrounds, develop and implement inclusive policies for school recess that include unstructured outdoor play suitable for students with disabilities and unstructured alternative play for inclement weather days, educate students on safe playground rules, and ensure the safety of ADA-compliant playgrounds, by providing staff training and ensuring an adequate adult to student ratio.

11.31 Social Emotional Learning and Student Success

Resolution passed 2020

Whereas, Washington state has adopted Social Emotional Learning (SEL) standards, and SEL is broadly understood as a process through which individuals build awareness and skills in managing emotions, set goals, establish relationships, and make responsible decisions that support success in school and in life; and

Whereas, the relationship between positive school climates and social and emotional learning is interactive and reciprocally beneficial and creates the conditions for safety, respect, engagement, and relational trust at school and in school policies (including disciplinary policies), norms, physical environment, and partnerships with families and the community; and

Whereas, Washington state SEL guidelines affirm the following essential elements:

- Supportive Conditions - Create the conditions to support student SEL, maintain a positive school climate and culture, and infuse SEL into school policies and practices inside and outside of the classroom
- Collaboration - Work with the full school community from the outset of planning, through implementation and review; include families, students, youth-serving organizations, educators, and professionals who play critical roles in the life of a school (e.g., school counselors, social workers, and psychologists)
- Adult Capacity - Build capacity and readiness to engage social emotional skills to support and relate with all students, to identify and counter bias, and to create learning environments in which students feel safe enough to stretch their learning; and

Whereas, Washington state SEL is shaped by a commitment to the following four guiding principles:

- Equity: Each child receives what they need to develop their potential
- Culturally responsive: Culture is viewed as a resource for learning, not a barrier
- Universal design: Learning differences are planned for and accommodated
- Trauma-informed: Knowledge of the effects of trauma is integrated into policy and practice; and

Whereas, SEL competencies are necessary for success in academic learning and are associated with increased academic achievement, higher income, better health, and social engagement; and

Whereas, as social and emotional competencies develop, indicators of various health and student success have been shown to improve, such as:

- An increase in regular student attendance and academic achievement
- A decrease in overall behavior referrals in schools
- An increase in student resilience
- An increase in teacher/educator well-being and job satisfaction
- A workforce that meets the needs of employers.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate for school district implementation of Washington SEL standards in schools that are:

- Trauma-informed and healing centered

- Culturally responsive
- Incorporates the principles of equity and universal design; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will advocate for legislation, policies, and school district initiatives that facilitate collaboration between educators, students, families, and community members at every stage of SEL implementation and ensure that the voice, cultural background, and assets of all stakeholders are recognized and valued; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will advocate for legislation, policies, and school district initiatives that build adult capacity to develop their own and their students' SEL competencies through teacher preparation programs, in-service teacher and administrator preparation and professional development, family and community engagement, as well as the capacity to implement school-wide SEL in an evidence-based cycle of continuous improvement; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will advocate for legislation, policies, and school district initiatives to ensure staffing levels that meet the social, emotional, and academic needs of all students, including but not limited to: psychologists, counselors, family and community engagement coordinators, social workers, speech-language pathologist, behavior specialists, and nurses.

SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

18.5 Funding for Basic Education

Resolution passed 1986; amended 2007; amended 2013

Whereas, Washington state’s constitution and certain court decisions and legislative acts have provided a strong and enduring foundation for the state’s K-12 public education system; and

Whereas, the Washington state constitution provides that:

- “It is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders...” (*Article IX, Section 1*); and
- “The legislature shall provide for a general and uniform system of public schools. ...” (*Article IX, Section 2*); and

Whereas, state courts in School Funding I and II interpreted these articles of the state constitution and established important funding principles for the state, including that:

- The legislature is required to define “basic education” and provide ample funding for it from regular and dependable tax sources. *School Funding I*
- Programs considered basic education are Regular Apportionment, Vocational Education, Special Education, Pupil Transportation, Transitional Bilingual Education, Learning Assistance, and Institutional Education. *School Funding II*
- The legislature is “required to continually review, evaluate, and revise, if necessary, the educational system of the state and the program of education and its funding to meet the current needs of the children of the state.” *School Funding II*
- Once the legislature has established what is considered 100 percent funding of basic education needs, it cannot reduce that funding level due to state revenue problems. *School Funding II*
- The legislature may not use special excess levies to fund basic education, although such levies may be used to fund enrichment programs. *School Funding I*; and

Whereas, in 1977, the legislature passed the Basic Education Act in response to the pending court decision of School Funding I. The Basic Education Act established:

- “Basic Education” in terms of broad educational goals, and specified minimum hours, days and instructional programs that school districts were required to offer; and
- State funding formulae consisting of staff-per-student ratios; and

Whereas, in 1993, the legislature passed the Education Reform Act to place greater emphasis on how well students learn rather than on time spent learning. The act established four basic education goals for all students:

- Read with comprehension, write with skill, and communicate effectively and responsibly in a variety of ways and settings;
- Know and apply the core concepts and principles of mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; civics and history; geography; art; and health and fitness;

- Think analytically, logically, and creatively, and to integrate experience and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems;
- Understand the importance of work and how performance, effort, and decisions directly affect future career and educational opportunities; and

Whereas, Washington State PTA believes that the 1993 Education Reform Act's four basic education goals together with the Essential Academic Learning Requirements and the Grade Level Expectations redefined basic education and provided a solid foundation for an updated program of basic education; and

Whereas, in 2009 the legislature adopted a new basic education funding formula based on a prototypical school funding model that includes small K-3 class sizes and staff mixes for elementary, middle and high school; established a new funding formula for student transportation; created workgroups to define funding details for levies, levy equalization and salary models; and broadened the definition of basic education to include the categorical programs of highly capable, special education, transitional bilingual and learning assistance; and changed the program of instruction to include full-day kindergarten, an additional 80 hours of instruction in grades 7-12, and the opportunity for all students to complete the 24- credit career- and college-aligned graduation requirements; and

Whereas, despite the 2012 Supreme Court decision in the McCleary case that said the state was not amply providing for the education of all children, but that reform passed in 2009 (ESHB 2261) would satisfy the court, the legislature continues to delay implementation of the funding structure it designed to ensure full funding of the program of basic education, including educational requirements and challenges of the future; and

Whereas, funding is still lacking, despite legislative intent declared in 2009 (ESHB 2261) and 2010 (SHB 2776) that redefined the program of basic education and funding, so that it would be fully implemented by 2018, and despite the court order in 2012 that it be funded by 2018.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA urges the legislature to review the implementation of the revised basic education funding formula to ensure that it fully funds the definition of basic education created in 2009 and gives all children the opportunity to complete the 24-credit career- and college-aligned graduation requirements by 2018; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA support revisions to the basic education funding formulas that are clear and transparent to taxpayers, allowing them to understand how funding is tied to the costs of educating different types of students and all students; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports regular and timely revision of the state's education programs and funding systems, including the basic education funding formulas.

18.6 Uninterrupted Operation of Public Schools

Resolution passed 1986; amended 2006

Whereas, Washington State PTA has purposes to “promote the collaboration and engagement of families and educators in the education of children and youth;” and to “engage the public in united efforts to secure the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being of all children and youth;” and

Whereas, quality education is a high priority issue for the Washington State PTA; and

Whereas, Washington state citizens have historically valued the reliable delivery of vital services and the orderly management of public institutions including fire and police services and public schools; and

Whereas, Washington State PTA believes that a disruption to the educational system in the form of work stoppages and/or strikes is often detrimental to the best interest of the children and families affected by those actions, while also acknowledging that more state resources must be committed to the educational process in the State of Washington, including higher salaries for educational employees.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA shall work to produce conditions with regard to the collective bargaining process which will consistently produce, in a timely manner, labor agreements negotiated and fully embraced by the direct parties thereto and which will not cause disruption to the school calendar; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will not support work stoppages and/or strikes which interrupt or disrupt the educational day.

18.9 Participation and Oversight in Education Budgets

Resolution passed 1989; amended 2013

Whereas, the purpose of Washington State PTA is, in part, to bring into closer relation the home and school, so that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of youth; and to engage the public in united efforts to secure the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being of all children and youth; and

Whereas, recent research on school reform demonstrates that meaningful family engagement is an essential component in successful and sustainable school turnaround reforms; and

Whereas, PTA’s National Standards for Family-School Partnerships – based on decades of research of effective practice – include Standard 5, Sharing Power: “Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs;” and

Whereas, some schools or educational services may be authorized by a state agency or commission bypassing district regulation; and

Whereas, schools may receive funds from a variety of sources, including local excess levies and bonds, state allocations, federal title funding as well as publicly and privately funded grants.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA shall work to ensure parents and local community have a voice and vote in school-site budgets and are meaningfully engaged in budget discussions at the state and local level to ensure education funds are allocated and spent in a manner that best supports students; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA shall work to ensure elected officials are accountable for all public education spending; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA work with National PTA to ensure its position on school funding includes elected officials being accountable for public school expenditures.

18.11 Common School Construction Funding

Resolution passed 1991; amended 2019

Whereas, all Washington state children and youth need school facilities that can support the technological, scientific, cultural, social, and other educational programs that will prepare them for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century; and

Whereas, students deserve to learn in school facilities that are safe, up-to-date in all building and construction codes, with flexible and appropriate spaces and design to support, enhance, and deliver the educational programs desired by the local community; and

Whereas, the benefits for school facility investments include increased attendance, improved student performance, and reduced truancy and suspension rates; and

Whereas, Washington state's traditional source of revenue from the tax on the state timber sales for school construction no longer provides a stable source of funding, and the state faces a backlog of modernization, remodeling, and new school construction projects; and

Whereas, the School Construction Assistance Program (SCAP) does not cover the cost of portables, contributes only a small part of the cost to build safe and healthy schools that support learning, and the SCAP median space allocation formula is below the national median and has not been updated since 2006; and

Whereas, eligibility for SCAP assistance is dependent on school districts securing local funds, usually through school construction bonds, and less than 45% of school construction bonds have obtained the required 60% supermajority since 2006; and

Whereas, Washington state's current capital budget does not ensure the construction of classrooms to meet state policies of all-day kindergarten and smaller K-3 and career and technical education class sizes, and the burden of underfunding falls harder on property-poor districts, in the form of higher property tax rates on school construction bonds.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will support efforts that will provide stable and timely financing for permanent school construction, to address capacity, growth, class size reduction, modernization, and safety needs; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will advocate to update the School Construction Assistance Program formulas to provide an updated construction cost allocation and square footage allocation that recognize modern educational needs and alternative facility usage.

18.13 Student Assessment and Testing

Board position 1991; resolution passed 2006; amended 2013

Whereas, Washington State PTA finds that children develop at vastly different rates and have different learning styles, exhibiting differing strengths and weaknesses and thus must be allowed to demonstrate their knowledge in more than one way; and

Whereas, several well-respected education organizations including, the American Educational Research Association, urge that, “Decisions that affect individual students’ life chances or educational opportunities should not be made based on test scores alone. Other relevant information should be taken into account to enhance the overall validity of such decisions”; and

Whereas, policymakers must understand that no one test gives a complete picture of a student’s knowledge, ability, or aptitude. Each type of assessment can provide important information to students, families, teachers, and administration about student achievement, program effectiveness, and alignment of instruction to identified goals and objectives as each type of assessment looks at achievement from a different perspective and for a different purpose; and

Whereas, high stakes state-wide tests have a disproportionate influence on classroom practices. Many teachers believe that state assessments are forcing them to concentrate too much on the limited standards covered by the test to the detriment of other important standards and areas of learning; and

Whereas, Washington state adopted the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics for grades K-12 in July 2011.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will work to enact policies that create a balanced assessment system with high standards and multiple ways for students to demonstrate learning, providing students with wide access to multiple forms of state-wide assessments; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will oppose any efforts to use a single indicator for making decisions about individual student opportunities such as grade promotion, high school graduation, or entrance into specific educational programs.

18.18 Reduction in Class Size

Resolution passed 1995; amended 2013

Whereas, an objective of Washington State PTA is to “promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community, and place of worship;” and

Whereas, the Constitution of the State of Washington states that the “paramount duty” of the state is to provide “ample funds” for schools; and

Whereas, Washington state has the fifth-highest student-teacher ratio in the United States; and

Whereas, small class size provides teachers with increased monitoring of student behavior and learning, more in-depth teaching basic content, more opportunities for children to engage in firsthand learning activities, a more detailed knowledge of each child’s needs as a learner, and more time to meet individual learners’ needs using a variety of teaching styles; and

Whereas, the benefits of small class sizes are evident and consistent throughout inner-city, urban, suburban, and rural locations. However, in Washington state, average class size varies widely from district to district because of differences in school board policies, administrative practices, and funding (levy passage or failure).

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its members will actively support/initiate legislation to reduce certified classroom teacher/student ratios; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will provide information to its members, the media, and government officials on the benefits to society of reducing class size; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will assist and educate its members in the necessary skills to work within the site-based management structure of education reform to advocate for small class size as an essential element for increasing student achievement.

18.19 High School Graduation, College Preparation and Access

Board position 1995; resolution passed 2006

Whereas, every student should be afforded every opportunity to graduate from high school while being adequately prepared for and encouraged to pursue some type of postsecondary education, which includes vocational education; and

Whereas, postsecondary education substantially increases one's long-term earnings potential, lowers incarceration rates, and benefits society as a whole through lessening the burden on social safety net programs; and

Whereas, the cost of postsecondary education is often prohibitive for many, and the availability of non-loan student aid has not kept pace with the increased enrollment tuition, fees, and expenses; and

Whereas, evidence suggests that simplifying the process of applying for financial aid would increase access to postsecondary education, especially for first-generation college students; and

Whereas, every student who has graduated from a United States high school should have the opportunity, regardless of their learning styles or financial means, to attend a postsecondary institution, providing an economically, culturally, and ethnically diverse student population and a richer educational experience for all students.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports legislation and programs intended to increase postsecondary participation through assisting students' secondary school completion and postsecondary enrollment by providing academic (including fine arts) services, parent and student counseling services, and college preparatory services, particularly those programs that will assist students with different learning styles, economically disadvantaged students, and disadvantaged youth; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA support legislation and programs that foster an economically, culturally, and ethnically diverse student population by increasing federal grants to students and other forms of financial aid, simplifying the application process for applying for all forms of aid, and improving and increasing access to information on financial assistance for postsecondary education, and expanding access to in-state tuition levels.

18.20 School Bond Election Reform

Resolution passed 1986; amended 2010

Whereas, a purpose of Washington State PTA is to advocate for laws and further the education, physical and mental health, welfare, and safety of children and youth; and

Whereas, the constitution of the State of Washington states that the “paramount duty” of the state is to provide “ample funds” for schools; and

Whereas, a significant portion of school funding in many school districts in the state is obtained through bonds; and

Whereas, the 40 percent validation and 60 percent super-majority requirements that apply only to ballot issues for school funding place the interests of children and youth at a disadvantage relative to other groups competing for dwindling public funds.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA support legislation that would lead to a constitutional amendment to remove the 40 percent validation requirement and replace the 60 percent super-majority with a simple majority requirement for passage of school bond elections.

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.

18.24 Meaningful High School Diploma

Resolution passed 2008; amended 2013

Whereas, more than 50 percent of community and technical college students who graduated from state high schools in 2010 required remedial classes in math, English or reading; and

Whereas, four-year colleges expect students to exceed current minimum requirements in nearly every subject.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA recommends to the legislature that high school requirements should include 24 credits; and be it further

Resolved, that all students should be automatically enrolled in the course of study referred to as “Career and College Ready Graduation Requirements” that includes access to English, math, science, social studies, career and technical education, arts and world language; and be it further

Resolved, that all students should be required to take a foundation of 18 credits, as follows:

- 4.0 credits of English
- 3.0 credits of math
- 3.0 credits of science
- 3.0 credits of social studies
- 2.0 credits of arts
- 1.5 credits of fitness
- 0.5 credit of health
- 1.0 credit of career and technical education; and be it further

Resolved, that all students should be required to take 24 high school graduation requirements, but that students should be given the flexibility to substitute courses beyond the 18 foundational credits so they can tailor a path of instruction according to their High School and Beyond Plan; and be it further

Resolved, that these requirements be enacted only if adequate, sustainable, supplemental funding is provided from the state.

18.25 Rights and Services for Undocumented Children and Youth

Resolution passed 2009; amended 2019

Whereas, Washington State PTA’s vision is that every child’s potential becomes a reality; and

Whereas, the first version of the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act has resulted in undocumented immigrants receiving protection under Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA); the American Dream and Promise Act of 2019 allows current, former and future undocumented high-school graduates and GED recipients a three-step pathway to U.S. citizenship through college, work or the armed services; and

Whereas, Washington State PTA believes that every child residing in the United States – regardless of their immigration status – has the right of access to a high-quality public education, adequate food and shelter, and basic health care services.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA shall actively support legislation and policies that provide immigrants who have received protection under DACA and the DREAM Act the ability to reach their fullest potential; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate for legislation and policies that:

- Prevent undocumented school-age children from being denied an education without extra fees or surcharges through coercion, illegal data collection, profiling, or interference via threats of deportation by:
 - Preventing schools and school districts from collecting the immigration status of students
 - Requiring schools to make it clear that students and families are not required to provide social security numbers to the school
- Designate the area 500 feet around schools as “sensitive locations” and continue to limit immigration and ICE officers from enforcement actions in K-12 schools, and expand the definition to include preschools, colleges and universities, and other institutions of learning, such as vocational and trade schools.

18.26 Levies and Local Effort Assistance

Board position 2009; resolution passed 2010

Whereas, levies and Local Effort Assistance (LEA) are important supplements to Washington state funding and by law, intended to provide districts the means to enrich their school programs; and

Whereas, Washington state has acknowledged the need to reform the current levy and LEA system and through ESHB 2261 has ordered a workgroup to develop more fair options that adhere to giving local communities the flexibility to go beyond the basics, to enrich their school programs, experiment and innovate, and tailor programs to local needs; and

Whereas, the current levy formula is unfair to students because it authorizes levy limits by district that translate across the state into widely varying levy funds per student. These differences occur for no cost-based, rational reason; and

Whereas, the current LEA formula is unfair to taxpayers and students because districts with similar property values per student and similar levy tax rates are eligible to receive very different amounts of state LEA aid per student. These funding differences are neither entirely cost-based nor rational; and

Whereas, ESHB 2261 has ordered the workgroup to recommend a phase-in plan for the new system of levy and LEA funding that ensures no school district suffers a decrease in funding from one school year to the next during the implementation of the new system.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports a new levy and LEA funding system that does indeed provide districts the means to meet their unique needs and enrich their programs; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports a new levy and LEA funding system that is transparent so as to be understandable to policymakers, educators, parents, and voters; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports an equitable levy system that is fair to all students and only allows for the differences in the amount of levy money raised per student that are based on rational and justifiable costs. Such rational and justifiable costs include those for the additional resources needed to educate students in special education or English Language Learners programs or who live in poverty, and operating schools in a high-cost region, whether it is urban, suburban or rural; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports an equitable LEA system that only permits cost-based and rational differences in the maximum state LEA aid per student that a district may receive. Such cost-based and rational differences should include those for a district's high-cost students and for operating in a high-cost region; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports a new levy and LEA funding system that includes a "do-no-harm" provision. The total amount of local and state funding per student under the new funding system in each district should be no less than the district's prior total funding per student.

18.28 Increasing Revenue to Support Our Legislative Principles

Resolution passed 2010

Whereas, our legislative principles state that “the Washington State PTA shall identify and initiate education and action on public policy affecting tax policies that are fair, equitable, and provide stable, adequate revenues for public education and for programs that benefit children and youth;” and

Whereas, Washington State PTA has long had redefinition of and fully funding basic education for all students as a top legislative and policy priority, and worked to help win approval of the basic education reform legislation and enhanced funding formulas embodied in ESHB 2261 and SHB 2776, in addition to a substantial history of support for health and welfare legislation and policy for our children and youth; and

Whereas, the implementation of education reforms approved through ESHB 2261 and SHB 2776 will require substantial additional funding for K-12 education from Washington state; and

Whereas, in the 2009 education funding lawsuit *McCleary vs. the State of Washington*, Superior Court Judge Erlich ruled in favor of the plaintiff, noting that there has been substantial underfunding of public education over many years; and

Whereas, despite the Superior Court ruling calling for additional funding, recent revenue shortfalls have caused Washington state to reduce the K-12 education budget; and

Whereas, realizing efficiencies in state spending by reducing waste and reprioritizing funding toward education may be possible and desirable, but will not alone be sufficient to avoid cuts and pay for education reform; and

Whereas, instead of having fair and equitable tax practices, Washington state is recognized as having one of the most regressive tax systems in the United States.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will encourage reprioritization and efficiency in state spending to increase funds available for education when these spending changes are consistent with our legislative principles, which include protecting and promoting the health, safety, and welfare of children and youth; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will consider taking public positions in support of fair, equitable and ample revenue increases as a necessary component of fully funding education and meeting other needs of children and youth; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will consider all major legislation and initiatives that impact education funding as they emerge and take action consistent with our goal of achieving and maintaining ample education funding, and our Legislative Principles pertaining to protecting and promoting the health, safety, and welfare of children and youth.

18.31 Financial Literacy

Resolution passed October 2014

Whereas, the National Financial Literacy Test conducted by National Financial Educators Council in 2013 revealed that of the youth in 35 states who completed the exam, 72.2% scored a failing grade; and

Whereas, according to the 2013 Consumer Financial Literacy Survey published by Harris Interactive, a reputable polling firm, that many adults (40% 2013, 42% 2012, 41% 2011) now give themselves a grade of C, D or F on their knowledge of personal finance, marking a statistically significant change from 2010, when as many as nearly 2 in 3 adults (65%) gave themselves an A or B; and

Whereas, Washington state ranks as one of the worst states in the nation for financial literacy requirements as reflected in a study by Champlain College; and

Whereas, members of congress in 2013 sponsored HR 2920 which would create incentive grants to states that agree to provide financial literacy education in Title 1 public elementary and secondary schools; and

Whereas, states like California, which also ranked low by the Champlain College Survey, are making strides in the last legislative session to improve educational opportunities for financial literacy.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will work with other advocates and legislative partners to increase opportunities for Washington state's children to have access to financial literacy courses and materials.

18.32 Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia, Dyspraxia

Resolution passed 2016

Whereas, language-based learning disorders including but not limited to dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia, impacts 1 in 5 students, approximately 20% of the population or more than 200,000 students in Washington state's public schools; and

Whereas, language-based learning disorders have been defined to include a variety of neurological conditions that interfere with a person's ability to store, process, or produce information which may interfere with learning. The Brain Balance Achievement Center provides specific definitions as follows:

- Dyslexia is a reading disorder characterized by difficulty recognizing letters, learning letter sounds, and identifying rhyming words
- Dysgraphia is a learning disability characterized by distorted and incorrect handwriting as well as issues with fine motor skills
- Dyscalculia is a disorder characterized by problems with learning fundamentals that include one or more basic numerical skills
- Dyspraxia, also called Apraxia, is a condition characterized by significant difficulty in carrying out routine tasks involving balance, fine-motor control, and kinesthetic coordination. Verbal dyspraxia describes a difficulty in the use of speech; and

Whereas, language processing disorders are currently addressed in state and federal law. The term dyslexia is included in the Revised Code of Washington under the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and in federal law under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) within the broad eligibility category of a Specific Learning Disability (SLD). IDEA states: specific learning disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculation, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. Despite these references in law, many public schools have historically avoided the term identification of these language-based disabilities in evaluation, when determining special education eligibility, and in Individual Education Program (IEP) documents; and

Whereas, there is compelling scientific evidence that early identification and intervention using an evidence-based multisensory, direct, explicit, structured and sequential approach to instructing students with language processing disorders, known as multisensory structured, language, teaching, improves literacy outcomes for most students with symptoms of dyslexia; and

Whereas, in 2009 the Washington state legislature provided guidance and funding for pilot intervention programs and to develop a dyslexia handbook for educators along with a few additional resources for parents which have been available on the website of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, however, funding has not been continued and was limited to only dyslexia; and

Whereas, most teacher preparation programs provide no training regarding language processing disorders, appropriate accommodations, or evidence-based multisensory structured language teaching, leaving most teachers unprepared to adequately address the learning needs of students with language processing disorders.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils support early screening for signs and symptoms of language processing disorders including but not limited to dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, with parental notification; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils support legislation for funding to support training of parents, teachers and other school personnel in early identification of language processing disorders including but not limited to dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, and use of evidence-based programs that provide explicit instruction including Multisensory Structured Language Teaching, with appropriate accommodations to provide students with equitable access to the general education curriculum.

18.33 Increasing Access and Affordability of Post-Secondary/Higher Education and Certificates

Resolution passed 2017

Whereas, in Washington state, about 70% of all jobs require some type of higher education, but currently (2015), only 44% of Washington adults have an AA degree or higher, and only 31% of high school 9th graders complete a certification in seven years. These trends are leaving students without appropriate training/education and employers without qualified employees. Will employers import talent or relocate to fulfill their needs; and

Whereas, in Washington state, job growth is averaging about 150,000 jobs per year, and 70% (103,000) will require a certification (certificate or degree). The ability to graduate certificated students is about half of the demand for qualified, certified employees; and

Whereas, Washington state has shifted the costs of tuition from state to the students. In 2001, students paid only 21% of the higher education costs (Washington state paid 79%), but as of 2017, students pay almost half (48%) of tuition costs. Washington has the 10th highest tuition increase (at 50%) in the country, and Washington state tuitions are higher than Oregon and Idaho. Tuition (2017) is less affordable than it was in 2008 (despite recent tuition freezes). Nationally tuition costs have tripled while incomes remain flat; and

Whereas, the high costs for campus housing or rentals contribute to the inaccessibility of post-secondary education, especially if you are not able to commute to one of the six public state universities. Cost (2017) for 4-year tuition, books, and housing/food range from \$88,400 to \$110,000 for a BA/BS degree. Students cannot work enough hours to pay for their education. Nationally, 70% of college students have an average of \$30,000 in student debt, and total United States student debt is more than \$1.3 trillion which exceeds all car and credit card loans (2016 data); and

Whereas, currently (2017) and for the upcoming years, demand for BA/BS degree graduates exceeds Washington state's capacity to meet employer needs, especially in STEM fields. Options to expand access for BA/BS degrees include expanding local community and technical colleges (CTC) with staff and courses so they can provide BA/BS degrees. Another option is to expand the number of CTC who offer "Applied" BA/BS degrees and to expand Washington state college/university regional locations; and

Whereas, Washington State Need Grants (SNG) help low-income students defray some costs, but it suffers from inadequate state funding as over 30,000 qualified students cannot receive grants due to lack of state funding (2017 data); and

Whereas, the College Bound Scholarship program which targets at-risk, low-income, and foster youth who enroll in middle school and meet program requirements works. College Bound students have a 33% higher high school graduation rate, as compared to qualified students who did not enroll. However, enrollment is limited to middle school regardless if students become income-eligible in the 9th or 10th grade and that should change; and

Whereas, in 2011, Washington state passed the "Launch Year Act" into law that encouraged all public high schools to increase the number of dual credit courses offered to maximize a student's 12th year. Within existing resources, districts shall expand and inform students/families, especially underrepresented groups, about options to earn at least one year of post-secondary credit towards a

CTE certificate, apprenticeship, or BA/BS degrees, thereby “launching” their careers while still in high school. However, funding was to come from existing school districts’ budgets, and therefore this was an “unfunded suggestion”; and

Whereas, dual credit opportunities expand access to post-secondary credits/certificates in high school at little or no cost to the student. Options include national exam courses at the local high school such as Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Cambridge International (CI) plus College in the High School (CIHS) and Tech Prep Dual programs. High school programs also include off-site programs such as Running Start to start an AA/AS degree while in high school, innovative programs such as “Career Start” that allow students to earn a CTE certificate, many apprenticeship programs including “Core Plus” which teaches basic manufacturing skills applicable to industries across Washington state. There are many other intern programs and partnership programs, but they vary district by district and are therefore not accessible by all students.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA initiate/support legislation that helps to increase access to higher education/post-secondary degrees and certificates by increasing state funding for tuition, books and affordable student housing (on and off-campus) without taking funds away from K-12 education or other social/health programs and are not regressive funding sources. Also, support “Free Community and Technical College for All” that includes wrap-around support services to ensure graduation success; and be it further

Resolved, that the Washington State PTA initiate/support legislation that specifically targets low-income students by expanding College Bound Program and State Need Grants. Also, support legislation that provides relief for middle-income students by expanding State Need Grants with higher eligibility thresholds and support services; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA initiate/support legislation and community partnerships that increase access to BA/BS degrees by expanding the number of regional campus of our state universities, and also expand the number of CTC colleges that can offer BA/BS and Applied BA/BS degrees; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA initiates/supports legislation and community partnerships that realize the “Launch Year Act” to provide every high school student with at least one year of dual credit, thereby allowing them to earn college credit while in high school and to help launch their career. Options include AP, IB, CI, and CIHS programs, plus Tech Prep, Running Start, Career Start, Core Plus, AJAX and many other dual credit or vocational/intern programs.

18.34 Universal Design for Learning

Resolution passed 2018

Whereas, Washington state schools are made up of diverse learners with a wide variety of skills, needs and interests; and

Whereas, learning is unique and varied for each individual, and therefore, for optimal learning to occur, a variety of methods and materials to implement, support, and measure learning is needed; and

Whereas, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) provides a framework for curriculum design, instructional processes, and assessment that gives all students equal opportunities to learn and to demonstrate what they have learned; and

Whereas, all learners benefit from UDL, including students who are gifted and talented, students who are English language learners, and students with disabilities; and

Whereas, UDL is nationally recognized and embedded in the 2008 Higher Education Opportunity Act, the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act, and the 2016 National Education Technology Plan.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will advocate for the principles of Universal Design for Learning to be incorporated into the policies, practices, and curriculum of the education systems and learning settings in Washington state, and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will engage in deliberate efforts to reduce barriers in classroom instruction, allow for meaningful access through multiple pathways for learning and multiple pathways to show what a student has learned while maintaining high achievement expectations for all students.

18.36 Equitable Access to Highly Capable Services

Resolution passed 2018

Whereas, Washington State PTA is a strong advocate for the social and emotional well-being and academic needs of all children, so that they may reach their highest potential; and

Whereas, highly capable students often have unique needs and vulnerabilities, including social and emotional challenges, delayed executive function, asynchronous intellectual, social, and motor development, different developmental timelines, and a need for accelerated academics; and

Whereas, successful student outcomes (positive self-image as well as academic achievement) are more likely when student needs have been met, and suffer when they have not been met; and

Whereas, students of color, English-language learners, low-income students, students with disabilities, and twice-exceptional (“2e”) students are 250% less likely to be identified and served in highly capable programs; and

Whereas, best practices for equitable access and identification of highly capable students have been published by the Washington Highly Capable Program Technical Working Group (2010), as well as in national research; and

Whereas, pre-service teacher training programs rarely cover the characteristics and needs of highly capable students.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports removing barriers to the identification of highly capable students of all genders in every demographic group, regardless of prior academic achievement, including students of color, English-language learners, low-income students, students experiencing homelessness, students in foster care, migrant students, students with disabilities, and twice-exceptional (“2e”) students; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports access to highly capable services for ALL students who qualify for highly capable programming using expanded equity promoting criteria, and expressly objects to limiting access to highly capable programming based on space constraints, logistical considerations, lack of transportation, waitlists, special education needs, holding appeals to a higher standard than general identification criteria, or any form of quotas; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports using best practices to remove barriers to the identification of ALL students who would benefit from highly capable services, including the use of universal screening in early elementary grades, and again before secondary school, conducting all screenings and assessments during the regular school day, and other best practices known to improve equity of access; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports teachers, counselors, principals, and administrators receiving meaningful pre-service training and ongoing professional development about the unique characteristics and social, emotional, and academic needs of highly capable and twice-exceptional students.

18.37 Arts in Education

Resolution passed 2005 (combined Resolutions 5.1 and 5.2); amended 2012; amended 2019 (formerly 5.3 Arts Education in Public Schools and Washington State)

Whereas, PTA believes that the arts are central to learning and that infusing the arts into elementary, secondary, and continuing education curricula is key to the development of students; and

Whereas, the arts (dance, media arts, music, theatre, visual, and tactile arts) are recognized as a core academic subject in Washington state, and under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and are also considered part of a well-rounded education under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); and

Whereas, students succeed academically in schools (better grades and score higher on standardized tests and the SAT) with arts integration. At-risk students see the same benefits, helping to close the opportunity gap. Low income students who receive an arts education are twice as likely to attend college as those who receive no arts education; and

Whereas, data support that the populations who could benefit the most from the arts are seeing a decline in availability. Low socioeconomic status students have lower participation rates due to the lack of equitable access to quality arts instruction; and

Whereas, students succeed in social emotional learning with an arts education. The arts are critically needed for students to safely find their own voice through gender and cultural identity; and

Whereas, arts in education helps our society succeed. Studies show that students who are exposed to an arts education exhibit greater understanding of cultures other than their own and engage more in civic opportunities around them; and

Whereas, arts education helps students of all abilities succeed. Arts education provides students with disabilities increase academic, social and functional skill development and knowledge, which can play a crucial role in their overall success. All students of diverse abilities can be successful through the arts; and

Whereas, creativity is one of the top five applied skills sought by business leaders, an arts education fosters creativity and can help students become more employable adults, no matter their career choice; and

Whereas, arts education needs ample funding to be successful. Washington state is 46th in the nation in state arts funding. Washington is a local-control state, which means districts and schools make their own choices about arts education, with little consistency across the state; and

Whereas, arts education needs accountability to be successful. Arts education is not currently tracked on the OSPI State Report Card and is not currently offered in every school in the state.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate for:

- ample state funding for arts education
- equitable access for all students to receive a quality and diverse arts education

- integration of the arts in school curricula as a core subject of basic education
- collection of statistically viable data related to arts education; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils encourage their school districts to:

- apply for available arts grants
- provide professional development for educators about arts integration
- hire certified teachers in the arts
- have clear and measurable arts education goals and educational standards
- collect statistically viable data related to arts education for their school district; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will continue developing public awareness of the need for arts education and equitable access to arts learning in our public schools and formally recognize May as Arts Education Month in Washington state, calling upon the community to celebrate the arts and promote the importance of arts education for every student in Washington state.

18.38 Equitable Education Opportunities to Close Gaps Across the Achievement Spectrum

Resolution pass 2019

Whereas, the term opportunity gap (the inputs) refers to the ways in which the education system continues to provide disparate outcomes for students when their educational experience intersects with race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, English language proficiency, community wealth, familial situations, or other variables, and the term achievement gap (the outcomes) refers to any significant and persistent disparity in academic performance or educational attainment between different groups of students; and

Whereas, Washington state has opportunity and achievement gaps evident in kindergarten readiness, high school graduation rates, and state assessment scores across all subjects and grades, especially related to race, income and special need. These gaps impact a large percentage of students based on the statewide student enrollment as of the 2017-18 school year which consists of 30% students of color, 46% students of low-income families, 11.7% English Language Learners (ELL), 7.5% highly mobile students (homeless, foster, migrant, and military), and 14.6% special education students; and

Whereas, PTA advocates that every child must be provided with a well-rounded, high-quality education, which will ensure that all children have the opportunity to reach their full potential and become productive members of society and that access to a free public education is the most effective method of securing this opportunity and should not be denied to any child; and

Whereas, PTA is committed to removing systemic inequities, institutionalized racism, and disparate educational opportunities faced by students of color, students with socioeconomic disadvantages, and students with special needs; and

Whereas, every absence is a learning opportunity lost and can have long-term impacts on student success in school. Recent state data shows disproportionate rates of student discipline and exclusion related to race, income and special need; and

Whereas, students benefit from high-quality learning opportunities in which their cultures and experiences are valued and reflected in their learning, families who are engaged in their educational experiences, and quality expanded learning opportunities to complement the school day to help build lifelong skills and achieve academic goals; and

Whereas, when social emotional learning (SEL) and trauma-informed care and healing centered engagement are used in public schools, students do better academically and emotionally, and school climate improves; and

Whereas, the Washington State Constitution states that it is the “Paramount duty to make ample provision for the education of all children without distinction or preference on account of race, color, caste or sex” and further directs the legislature to “provide for a general and uniform system of public schools.”

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils believe great educational outcomes are possible for all students, including, but not limited to:

- students of color
- students of diverse cultural or linguistic backgrounds
- students of lower-income status
- students of high mobility (e.g. homeless, foster care, migrant, incarcerated, and military families)
- and students with special needs; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils shall spread the awareness of and support equitable access to high quality:

- health care
- preschool and early learning
- K-12 schools
- post-secondary and higher education
- effective and diverse educators that represent the students and communities they serve
- and expanded learning opportunities; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils shall support research-based instructional supports and best practices shown to close gaps, including, but not limited to:

- multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS)
- positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS)
- professional development on unconscious bias, cultural competence, social emotional learning, and school to prison pipeline impacts of disparities in discipline for educators and administrators, including academic and disciplinary intervention staff
- culturally relevant and responsive curriculum, instruction, policies, attendance policies and school calendars
- meaningful language access and dual language programming
- social emotional learning (SEL) instruction
- trauma-informed care and healing centered engagement
- deficit-based dropout prevention and intervention systems and practices and alternative pathways
- metrics based on adult accountability rather than student achievement
- and authentic family and community engagement; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils shall advocate for allocation of funding for education and other services that close opportunity and achievement gaps for Washington's most vulnerable students so that they may all reach their highest potential.

18.39 Cultural Access Programs and Expanded Learning Opportunities

Resolution passed 2020

Whereas, Cultural Access Programs (CAPs), as defined by the Washington State Legislature, will provide and develop equitable educational opportunities in arts, heritage, and science programs in the counties, cities, and municipalities where CAPs are approved; and

Whereas, CAPs increase public access through:

- Reduced or free admission to cultural and scientific educational organizations
- Creation of new or expanded programs for school districts, their students and families
- Increased cultural activities and employment in both rural and urban areas
- Sustaining organizations that provide regional cultural and heritage benefits for families, economies, and schools; and

Whereas, CAPs increase public school student access through:

- Expanded experiences at schools or on-site at cultural and scientific educational organizations
- Leveraged in-school education through curriculum-aligned scientific, heritage, and arts activities with each school district
- Funded access for every public school student to attend or participate in cultural and scientific learning opportunities every year
- Focusing on schools in economically disadvantaged areas; and

Whereas, Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELOs) are activities offered to students before or after school, during school, during intersession breaks, and during summer. Such opportunities build skills through hands-on, experiential learning, and expand upon, but do not replicate, traditional learning that happens during the school day; and

Whereas, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction's Expanded Learning Opportunities Council (ELOC) established that opportunity gaps (systemic inequity in education that structurally disadvantages certain demographics of students) consistently prevented Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) students, students of lower-income status, and students with disabilities from closing academic achievement gaps (the persistent disparity in academic performance between students from different racial and economic backgrounds), and from developing academic and social competencies, preparing every student regardless of background for career, college, and life; and

Whereas, research shows that expanding a school's CAP and ELO activities and access increases a number of benefits, including improved writing scores, reduced disciplinary infractions, and increased compassion for peers and culturally and racially diverse communities; and

Whereas, CAPs and ELOs improve educational outcomes for all students, especially for historically underserved students or youth who have been marginalized by our education system, such as BIPOC students, students of diverse cultural or linguistic backgrounds, students of lower-income status, students of high mobility (e.g., homeless, foster care, migrant, incarcerated, and military families), and students with special needs.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils help to address opportunity and achievement gaps and improve outcomes for all students by advocating for school and community stakeholders to encourage, support, promote, and renew Cultural Access Programs (CAPs), and ensuring all students receive equitable access to Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELOs).

18.40 Improving Access and Outcomes in Special Education

Resolution passed 2020

Whereas, the U.S. Supreme Court in 2017 in a unanimous opinion (hereinafter “Endrew F.”) ruled the legal standard for measuring progress for students with disabilities must be “markedly more. . . than de minimis progress from year to year;” and

Whereas, the U.S. Supreme Court in Endrew F. stated federal law governing special education requires that “every child should have the chance to meet challenging objectives;” and ruled that special education programs must be “reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child’s circumstances;” and

Whereas, federal and state law governing the rights of students with disabilities promote inclusive educational settings. Specifically, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA '04) states “having high expectations for such children and ensuring their access to the general education curriculum in the regular classroom to the maximum extent possible;” and

Whereas, significant and persistent gaps remain between the achievement of students with disabilities and students without disabilities, such as high school graduation rates and post K-12 access to secondary education, training, or job placement, which remain tragically low; and

Whereas, when compared to other states, Washington state’s rates of inclusion and high school graduation rates across categories and/or groupings of disabilities (i.e., mild to moderate to severe) rank near the bottom of the country; and

Whereas, students with disabilities in Washington state continue to experience uneven and inequitable access to enriching extracurricular activities and learning opportunities that are a necessary component of every child’s education; and

Whereas, people with disabilities have significantly lower rates of employment and educational attainment than their non-disabled peers, and, as a result, also experience higher rates of poverty; and

Whereas, there is a crucial relationship between teacher expectations of students with disabilities and higher levels of achievement, and students with intellectual disabilities educated in general education settings have been found to score higher on literacy measures than students educated in segregated settings; and

Whereas, upholding high expectations for all students and promoting cooperative relationships between students of all abilities can reduce the high incidence of stigmatization; and students, in turn, benefit by forming positive relationships and friendships.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils urge all stakeholders in the educational system – teachers (both general and special education), paraeducators, staff, families, administrators, school board directors, and members of the community to:

- Have and maintain high expectations for students with disabilities with regards to academics, extracurricular activities, and overall school participation
- Create an environment that ensures families of students with disabilities are equal partners in education decision-making
- Provide families of students with disabilities information and opportunities for meaningful engagement and participation in their child’s education
- Publish consistent data on outcomes for students with disabilities that is accessible to all; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils will advocate with all communities to:

- Ensure students with disabilities are educated in the Least Restrictive Environment with appropriate supports alongside their typically developing peers
- Include students with disabilities in all school-based and school-directed activities
- Promote cooperative relationships between students of all abilities through experiences such as peer mentoring, collaborative problem solving, and cooperative working groups, as well as through more casual or unstructured interactions
- Support expansion of school-to-work programs such as apprenticeships; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate for preservice learning for teachers in training and ongoing professional development for all educators regarding adapting instruction and providing accommodations and modifications to meet the needs of students with disabilities in all settings; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate with all communities for the development of a comprehensive statewide technical assistance system and the implementation of best practices in meeting the needs of diverse learners through such practices as inclusion, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), Response to Intervention (RTI), and any other similar instructional practices to support Core Content instruction, as well as access to accommodations including assistive technology for students with disabilities, so that they may reach their highest potential.

18.41 Supporting K-12 Career and Technical Education

Resolution passed 2020

Whereas, Washington State PTA has a long history of supporting Career and Technical Education (CTE). Today's high-wage jobs require education and training beyond high school, and many employers in Washington are unable to find qualified in-state employees. State projections include about 150,000 job openings per year, with almost three-fourths requiring a credential beyond high school; and

Whereas, CTE includes locally-based middle and high school programs that provide 21st century academic and technical skills for all students. High school students involved in CTE are more engaged, graduate at higher rates, and typically go on to post-secondary education. The average high school graduation rate for students concentrating in CTE programs is 95%, compared to an average national freshman graduation rate of 85%; and

Whereas, the Washington state CTE program definition and funding are based on grades 7-12, missing the critical opportunity for incoming 6th graders to experience CTE classes as they establish their middle/junior high school schedules; and

Whereas, current Washington state graduation requirements (HB1599) require a minimum of one CTE class for graduation and also include a CTE graduation pathway option: completing two or more classes that are an approved CTE sequence, industry-recognized certificate, or a Core Plus program; and

Whereas, CTE dual-credit classes allow students to earn tuition-free college credits and high school credits required for graduation, thereby increasing the rate of students advancing to post-secondary education. 91% of high school graduates who earned 2-3 CTE credits enrolled in college compared to the average rate of all high school graduates enrolling in college 80%; and

Whereas, nationally and in Washington state, CTE classes introduce students to family-wage job opportunities in high-growth industries. STEM, healthcare, infrastructure, energy, and manufacturing all report growth opportunities and shortages in the workforce; and

Whereas, skill centers, which are regional secondary schools, serve high school students from multiple schools or districts with specialized and concentrated CTE experiences. Currently, there are 14 skill centers in Washington state, but more are planned to increase opportunities for all students in Washington state; and

Whereas, CTE incorporates both school-based and work-based learning business partnerships, which are key to successful programs. Work-based programs can provide student benefits, including both a paid stipend and high school credits, but can be cumbersome to administer and discourages business participation; and

Whereas, Washington state has eight recognized Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) such as DECA, FLA, FBLA, etc. Students who participate in CTSOs in high school demonstrate higher academic engagement and motivation, civic engagement, career self-efficacy, and employability skills than other students. However, many clubs and students struggle financially to cover dress requirements, travel, applications, and other expenses, thereby excluding them from these proven, positive opportunities; and

Whereas, OSPI reporting for CTE Concentrations (two or more CTE classes) shows disproportionate, low enrollment of some demographic groups, including American Indian/Alaska Native, limited English, and special education students. It is also imperative that all students are given equal access to CTE concentrations and all graduation pathways.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils shall support policies and programs that increase the awareness among parents, guardians, students, counselors, and other educators on the benefits and graduation requirements of K-12 Career and Technical Education (CTE), with an intentional focus to include students with disabilities, students of color and those in the opportunity and achievement gaps; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils shall advocate for expanding the Washington state definition of CTE education from grades 7-12 to grades 6-12, to increase the awareness and class choices when students transition from elementary to middle/junior high schools; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils support expanding funding and student access to:

- CTE skill centers, CTE dual-credit, and certificate-earning courses statewide
- Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) to help offset the financial burdens associated with CTOSs to compete in state and nationally-recognized opportunities, especially among underserved communities; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils encourage improving systems and removing logistical barriers for the business communities to offer more student work-based learning opportunities.