



2017-2018 *Tennessee PTA Legislative Priorities*

1. Excellent education is not possible without adequate resources and time for implementation.

- Fund education first! We support full funding of the Basic Education Plan 2.0 (BEP 2.0)
- Tennessee PTA is in agreement with the Tennessee School Board Association's (TSBA) position that "Prior to any state or federal intervention based on a School's or district's failure to meet performance or accountability standards, governments' should ensure that local schools and districts receive the necessary resources, support and time to improve."
- We urge the General Assembly to amend T.C.A. § 8-11-110 to provide that funds provided to the trustee or commission from the school fund be returned to the school fund when total funds received exceed the amount needed to operate the trustee's office.

2. Strong public support for higher standards helps raise the bar for education.

- We will continue to support and educate parents about Tennessee's higher academic standards and their implementation.
- We support the establishment of a timely deadline for reporting assessment results.
- We support the higher academic rigor and realistic cut scores implemented by the Tennessee State Board of Education.

3. Parents should be empowered with real choices, as long as the integrity of public schools remains intact.

- We acknowledge high-quality public charter schools as one of many avenues to improve student achievement and support them when designed according to the National PTA's position statements and principles.
- We oppose diverting public funds or tax dollars to private and parochial schools through vouchers or similar efforts.
- We recommend that all schools receiving public funds be held accountable to the same standards and requirements.

4. Children can achieve more when they and their families are healthy.

- The health and well-being of our students must be a top priority to continue to rise academically and be ready for colleges and careers.
- We recommend full service community schools where possible, where coordination of student health services run through schools (Coordinated School Health Program).
- We support lowering the nurse ratio to student ratio currently listed at 1 nurse to 3,000 students according to BEP 2.0. The current nurse to student ratio does not adequately address the priority of student well-being.
- We will continue to work at the local, and state levels to enhance the nutritional health of our children and families.
- We support state legislation to assist in providing necessary support for families in the areas of health, nutrition, and welfare services.



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5. *Effective teachers are a cornerstone of effective student learning.*

- We endorse measures to individualize support and recognition for teachers through annual multiple-measure evaluations.
- We recommend consideration of parent feedback, and support existing teacher evaluation system which includes student growth measurements, student achievement, and classroom observations as part of the annual evaluation process.
- We support strategic compensation for teachers.

6. *Superintendents should be free from the political pressure of elections.*

- We strongly oppose any attempt to allow for the election of superintendents/directors of schools.
- We are in full agreement with the Tennessee School Board Association (TSBA) position of support for board-appointed superintendents/directors.

7. *The phrase “parent teacher association” must be deleted from Tennessee Code Annotated 49-2-603, section 4a, of the School Support Organization Financial Accountability Act*

- The Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act should be the controlling legislation for the Tennessee Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. and its constituent organizations represented by local PTA units. This legislation is in line with the PTA mission and purposes.
- As constituent organizations of the Tennessee Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc., local PTA units should be considered as independent operations for their programs and budgets, their services, their advocacy priorities, and their fundraising projects.
- Inclusion of local PTA units in the School Support Organization Financial Accountability Act has created double-standards of reporting. Local PTA units must file required reports to the State PTA Office to remain in good standing and also must file different required reports for their home school system.