

2012 TN PTA Legislative Priorities

- 1. *Effective teachers are a cornerstone of effective student learning.***
 - a. We endorse measures to individualize support and recognition for teachers through annual evaluations.
 - b. We recommend consideration of parent and student feedback for teachers along with student growth measures, student achievement and classroom observations as part of the annual evaluation process.
 - c. We support strategic compensation for teachers along with comprehensive evaluation.
- 2. *Strong public support for higher standards helps raise the bar for education.***
 - a. We will continue to support and educate parents about Tennessee's higher academic standards to be consistent with NAEP standards.
 - b. We support the establishment of a timely deadline for reporting TCAP scores.
 - c. We applaud the higher academic rigor and realistic cut scores implemented by the State Board of Education in spite of (temporary) decreases in TCAP results.
- 3. *Children can achieve more when they and their families are healthy.***
 - a. We support full funding of the Coordinated Student program.
 - b. We recommend full service community schools where possible, where coordination of student health services run through schools
 - c. We support changes to the BEP that would allocate funding to change the RN/student ratio, currently at 1/3000 to the more manageable 1/750.
- 4. *Education is essential to the health and prosperity of each community. We support the availability of education for all children.***
 - a. PTA values and appreciates diversity, which enriches and strengthens the structure of our society within our state and nation.
 - b. Tennessee PTA will oppose any legislation that seeks to deny access to public education based on a student's (or their parent/guardian's) immigration status.
- 5. *Excellent education is not possible without resources.***
 - a. Fund education first!
 - b. We support full funding of the Basic Education Plan.
 - c. 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.
- 6. *Superintendents should be free from the political pressure of elections.***
 - a. We strongly oppose any attempt to allow for the election of directors of schools.
 - b. We are in full agreement with the TSBA position of support for board-appointed superintendents.
(http://www.tsba.net/getdoc/c2f5b28c-c788-4dc9-91a8-07bc3ff248d8/TSBA_Appointed_Superintendents_Issue_Brief)
- 7. *School start dates should be determined by Local Education Authorities (LEAs)***
 - a. We oppose any attempt to establish state-wide mandatory school start dates.
 - b. Pursuant to TCA Section 49-2-203, a local board of education has the authority to "manage and control all public schools established or that may be established under its jurisdiction."
- 8. *Parents should be empowered with real choices, as long as the integrity of public schools remains intact.***
 - a. We acknowledge charter schools as one avenue to school reform and support them when designed according to the National PTA's recommended principles. (http://www.pta.org/topic_posititon_statement_support-for_public_education.asp)
 - b. We oppose diverting public funds to private and parochial school through vouchers which would hinder our effort and responsibility to provide an excellent education for all students.
- 9. *The safety of our children in both real and virtual worlds must be a priority.***
 - a. We will promote awareness and elimination of hazards and risks in both real and virtual worlds for children/youth.
 - b. We applaud the inclusion and detailed definition of "cyber-bullying" in legislation that addresses harassment in schools.