

# 2010

## MARYLAND PTA Legislative Agenda

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Maryland's Largest Child and Family  
Advocacy Group's Platform



**Maryland**  
**PTA**<sup>®</sup>

everychild. onevoice.

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## THE AGENDA'S **OBJECTIVE:**

To advocate for parental and community involvement in public schools, and enhancement to education for all children.

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

PTA was founded to provide a means for parents to advocate on behalf of all children. Over the past 100 years, our advocacy efforts have resulted in such programs as school lunches, kindergarten, and school health programs. But there's more to be done. The Maryland PTA looks forward to addressing our 2010 Legislative Agenda.

**Sam Macer**  
*President*

## THE AGENDA'S **PURPOSE:**

The Legislative Platform establishes the authority, direction and priority for action on public policy. Annual approval of the platform by MD PTA state convention delegates establishes the authority to address issues on behalf of all MD PTA members. All directives are developed from state and National resolutions, position statements, or policy statements.



## **FEDERAL FOCUS:**

### Parental Involvement provisions within ESEA/NCLB:

- **Title I, Section 1118** requires schools receiving Title I funds to develop and enact parent involvement programs, and requires school systems to monitor those programs.
- **Parental Involvement and Resource Centers (PIRCs)** grants provide training, information and support for both urban and rural low income regions.
- Federal education funding must be increased to meet the needs of children being served through Title I, PIRC's, IDEA, Teacher Quality State Grants and Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants.
- **Truancy/Chronic Absenteeism** problems must be addressed through programs such as Head Start, PBIS, school-parent compacts, evidence-based practices, and the elimination of zero-tolerance suspension policies.
- **Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization** needs to be modified to keep truants out of secure lockup facilities; to promote effective family-focused, school-based interventions for truancy; to require an annual report on the number of children jailed on status offenses and the length of imprisonment by state; to ensure that underage children are protected pre-trial; and to redefine "adult inmate" so that children convicted in adult court will be sent to juvenile facilities instead of adult prison, without risking federal funding.
- **Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization** must require USDA to update nutritional requirements for school foods; increase reimbursement rates for school lunch programs; require policies for the provision of recess, physical education, and regulation of food marketing in schools to be included in local wellness policies; authorize the use of funding for nonfood purchases such as kitchen equipment; and develop incentives for purchase of local foods and produce when possible.
- **State Children's Health Insurance Program** reauthorization must increase SCHIP funding to provide coverage to additional eligible, uninsured children, and strengthen SCHIP by including additional types of coverage, measures to ensure efficacy of the program, and protections for equitable access.

# STATE FOCUS:

## Parent/Family/Community Involvement

- Initiatives must include accessible, equitable opportunities for meaningful involvement of parents/guardians, business and community stakeholders in development and review of public policies, educational standards, graduation requirements, and environmental and health standards.

## Public Education

- Public education funding must support the funding needs of public schools to initiate or continue to offer high quality educational services to children from early childhood through high school graduation.
- Public funds must ensure high quality educational services for all special populations (Physical, Intellectual, and Emotional Disabilities, Gifted and Talented, English Language Learners, and other special needs).
- A high quality education supports the whole child, including music, the arts, physical education, as well as the eight (8) federally mandated core subjects.
- State funding must be equitable to address the varied needs of our diverse state, such as GCEI.
- Public funds must not be used to support nonpublic schools or institutions through vouchers, scholarships, or tax credits.
- Public education funding must support the use of technology as a teaching tool as well as provide educational opportunities for students to utilize a broad range of technology to meet future career objectives.

## Health, Wellness and Safety

- Public policy must recognize the essential relationship between health and learning. Health is not just the absence of disease - it is the complete physical, mental and social well-being of children and youth in a safe, healthy and nurturing home, school, and community environment.

## Juvenile Justice

- Dropout prevention programs must be instituted to address the diverse needs of students at risk of leaving school without a diploma.
- Truancy programs must be evidence-based interventions which are non-punitive, support effective family counseling, and provide community-based solutions.

## School Construction and Modernization

- Public school construction and modernization funding must address the physical condition of school buildings and the capacity of the building to provide the appropriate space for physical education, technology education, and state-rated class sizes.
- Eliminate the use of portable structures.
- Review and modify state rated capacity formula and teaching stations.
- Opportunities for public input and oversight of construction projects must be available to parent and community stakeholders.

## Teacher Education

- Teacher education programs, both in-service and pre-service, must include elements of effective parent involvement and cultural proficiency.
- Full funding is needed to ensure that all students benefit from high quality teachers and programs designed to meet Maryland's high student performance standards.
- Maryland PTA supports programs that prepare professional educators to teach a diverse student population (ethnicity, socio-economic status, English Language Learners (ELL), giftedness and inclusion of students with special needs) in regular classrooms.

Maryland PTA is proud to support local units' advocacy efforts. For that reason, we have created the framework to address nearly every issue at the school, county, state, and federal level. To see the complete Maryland PTA Legislative Platform, visit: [www.mdpta.org](http://www.mdpta.org).

Maryland PTA Councils, local PTAs and its members may support or abstain from taking action,  
**but they MAY NOT take action in opposition  
or conflict with Maryland or National PTA**  
(i.e., Policies, Directives, Resolutions, Position Statements, etc.).

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## KEY LINKS:

National PTA Votes 2008 Election Guide, **“What PTAs May and May Not Do Around Elections”**  
available at: [www.pta.org/Documents/PTAElectionGuide2008.pdf](http://www.pta.org/Documents/PTAElectionGuide2008.pdf)

## OTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES:

National PTA Takes Action:  
[www.pta.org/take\\_action.asp](http://www.pta.org/take_action.asp)



Maryland PTA Legislation:  
[www.mdpta.org/bridge\\_legislation.html](http://www.mdpta.org/bridge_legislation.html)



Maryland PTA Takes Action:  
[capwiz.com/npta2/md/home](http://capwiz.com/npta2/md/home)

### **PTA Mission:**

- To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, and before government bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children;
- To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children; and
- To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.

### **PTA Purposes:**

- To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community and place of worship.
- To raise the standards of home life.
- To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.
- To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth.
- To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social and spiritual education.