

Arizona PTA 2017-2018 Legislative Platform Priorities

Arizona PTA and its constituent local PTA/PTSA units are members of the largest volunteer child advocacy association in the nation. Our association provides families with a powerful voice to speak on behalf of every child while providing the best tools for families and communities to help their children to be healthy, safe and successful as students. Arizona PTA and National PTA work in cooperation with many state and national education, health, safety and child advocacy groups, as well as state and federal agencies to collaborate on projects that benefit children and bring valuable resources to our members. In Arizona, the term, “public schools” includes district schools and charter schools.

Public Education – Arizona PTA

1. Will work toward the creation of sound and sustainable public education revenue streams necessary and appropriate to invest in quality teaching and learning that meets high standards.
2. Supports efforts and incentives to ensure a supply of capable and highly-qualified teachers for the education of Arizona’s children and youth.
3. Supports making teacher evaluations professional learning tools, and for school districts to provide effective professional development to promote excellence in the classroom.
4. Will work to educate the public and legislators about the effects of inflation on education funding.
5. Will work to increase funding for all public schools; district and charter, with a sustainable and fair solution recognizing that current levels of funding are both inadequate and inequitable.
6. Supports public schools by ensuring that the historic school trust lands are allowed to fulfill the purpose for which they were originally created and advocate for sound financial management of the school trusts to provide the maximum benefit to the children in public education who are the beneficiaries of those trusts, and shall work to ensure that these funds do not supplant existing education funding.
7. Opposes any public funds being funneled to private or religious schools in any form including tuition tax credits and vouchers.
8. As a matter of public interest, accountability and greater transparency, Arizona PTA supports separating voucher school funding from community-based school funding and the State’s general fund.
9. Supports legislation that increases transparency and accountability in reporting from all schools that receive any public funds used for K-12 education, and that all reports are equitable and include performance measures.
10. Supports investing in the education of the whole child, including but not limited to art, music, technical education, critical thinking, decision- making and creative thinking, instead of the use of high stakes testing as the only criteria to determine eligibility for grade promotion or graduation

11. Supports effective high-quality early childhood education and development programs that are adequately funded and accessible; are developmentally appropriate and that coordinate comprehensive services for young children and their families; characterized by high standards for teaching, training, health and safety and incorporate strong family engagement components.
12. Supports expanding Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten to fund school districts ready to implement the program with ability to lease spaces and use mixed delivery models at the site and district level.
13. Supports high-quality after school programs that are affordable and accessible to all children; and characterized by high standards for teaching, training, health and safety; and encourages members (PTA) to collaborate with communities to establish affordable, high-quality after-school programs.
14. Supports high-quality education standards for K – 12; and supports families, teachers and community to advocate for the policies and resources needed for Arizona schools and school districts to develop, implement, maintain and evaluate adopted standards and enacted policies.
15. Supports requiring and facilitating the ability of Arizona post-secondary institutions to partner with high schools to preserve the early college opportunities for juniors and seniors without interruptions in concurrent enrollment with blended delivery models.
16. Supports the updating and continued examination of high school course and standards requirements to best equip young adults with the knowledge and life skills to be productive citizens and meet the changing and complex challenges of the World's Best Workforce.
17. Supports education that leads students to the appropriate path of post-secondary education including College, Trade School, and Military Service.
18. Supports legislation that advocates for the rights of ALL children. These rights include, but are not limited to confidentiality of school records, equal access to quality public education, adequate food and shelter, and their health care services, including mental health assessment and treatment.

Health and Safety – Arizona PTA

1. Supports education, programs and policies that promote the importance of improving child and youth wellness and safety to reflect the current health and safety evidence based information and science trends.
2. Believes that the safety of children, youth, and school personnel in all school settings is a fundamental right and will work to support state and federal programs and policies related to that right.
3. Opposes any form of corporal punishment in schools and all other institutions, public and private, where children are cared for and educated and supports legislation to outlaw the practice.
4. Supports education and key employees that support the whole child, which includes support for students suffering from emotional trauma. This can be the result of the

- loss of a loved one, removal from the home, suicide of a classmate or other harrowing circumstance.
5. Supports the allocation of funding to mandate licensed, registered nurses to be on duty at the appropriate ratio in each school district and charter school.
 6. Supports policies and programs that address the prevention, intervention and elimination of bullying, and the advancement of research-based Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs in schools.
 7. Supports the protection of children and youth from violence in schools.
 8. Supports and promotes the importance of healthy eating and physical activity both at home and at school among children and youth to combat the growing national epidemic of childhood obesity.
 9. Supports students, families and community to advocate for schools and school districts to develop and implement policies for school recess that include adequate unstructured outdoor play and indoor play (for inclement weather days); that include student education about safe playground rules, ensure the safety of playground equipment, and develop an adequate adult to student ratio.
 10. Supports educating the public on firearm safety and current information on gun safety devices as well as requiring making stored guns inaccessible to children to reduce the risk of accident, suicide and homicide.
 11. Supports legislation requiring that a bike helmet be worn by children.
 12. Supports legislation to abolish the use of pickup truck cargo areas for passengers.
 13. Oppose all legislative attempts to suppress aggregate information about family diversity and sexual orientation.
 14. Supports legislation to ensure that the rights of children and youth with behavioral and mental illnesses are protected and to encourage and facilitate consumer and family input into all aspects of an individual's treatment and plan for recovery.

Family and Community Engagement – Arizona PTA

1. Supports comprehensive and evidence-based policies at the state and local levels that seek to engage families and members of the community at every level of education and will effectively involve and include families and whole communities in the education of children.
2. Encourages students working towards a teaching certificate to received training prior to graduation to effectively involve and include all parents and families in the education process of their children.
3. Supports community engagement policies, procedures, and laws which assure that school-based decisions such as school policies, curriculum decisions, and all programs related to the public schools are made with the input of families.
4. To promote effective family focused, school-based interventions for children who are truant.
5. Encourages awareness about the growing need to provide consumer protection for youth and families.

Arizona PTA will monitor all legislation and will take positions to support bills that enhance and oppose bills that detract from the Arizona PTA Legislative Platform.

The Legislative Platform represents Arizona PTA's current legislative priorities. It is based on the public policy statements and resolutions of the Arizona PTA and National PTA.

The 2017-2018 Legislative Platform was adopted June 10, 2017 at the Arizona PTA Convention General Session II.