

# ADVOCATE WITH PTA



All PTA® members can be advocates.  
In fact, you may be an advocate already.  
If not, become one today!!

## WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

In the context of PTA, advocacy is supporting and speaking up for children—in schools, in communities, and before government bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children.

## ADVOCATING FOR FEDERAL POLICY

PTA is the oldest and largest volunteer child advocacy association in the United States. Founded in 1897, PTA has a long, successful history of influencing federal policy to promote the education, health, and well-being of all children—resulting in kindergarten classes, child labor laws, school lunch programs, a juvenile justice system, and strengthened parent-teacher relationships. PTA continues that legacy today by fighting for change under its federal public policy priorities:

- Family Engagement in Education
- Opportunity and Equity for all children
- Child Health

## ADVOCATING FOR STATE POLICY

State laws can have a major impact. Involving PTA members in state and local advocacy can play a pivotal role in securing adequate state laws, funding and policy for the education and well-being of our children.

## WAYS TO ADVOCATE

Child advocates work with policy makers at the federal, state, and local levels to ensure sound policies that promote the interests of all children. Here are a few ways PTA members can influence policy:

- Educate members of Congress and their staff on PTA's federal public policy priorities.
- Sign up for the PTA Takes Action Network at [www.pta.org/takeaction](http://www.pta.org/takeaction) and respond to action alerts to reach your legislators on important issues and legislation.
- Work with the school to implement a strong family engagement policy, as required by federal law.



- Serve on the school board; attend school board meetings.
- Attend school district meetings on such topics as healthy alternatives in the lunchroom and federal, state, and local budget cuts.
- Work with school leaders and state education officials to implement PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships.
- Write a letter to the editor about the importance of family engagement in education.

## ADVOCACY RESOURCES

Go to [PTA.org/TakeAction](http://PTA.org/TakeAction) for the following resources to help you speak up for federal, state, and local policies that benefit our children:

- **PTA Takes Action Update:** A monthly electronic newsletter about federal legislation affecting families, schools, and communities, plus action alerts that help members make a difference on key issues.
- **PTA Public Policy Agenda:** National PTA's recommendations on key legislation and policies up for consideration by Congress and the Administration.
- **Online Advocacy Toolkit:** How-to's for building relationships with members of Congress, working with the media, and understanding the legislative process.
- **Policy Issue Briefs:** Information on research, best practices and federal legislation related to PTA's public policy priorities. Issue briefs detail the history of the law and PTA's involvement on the issue, explains current provisions in the legislation, and highlights best practices and research in the field.



- **PTA Policy Issue Cards:** Brief synopses of National PTA's positions and key messages on important issues of the day, ranging from education funding to safe school environments.
- **State Laws on Family Engagement in Education:** A reference guide on family engagement provisions within state education laws, intended to help families better advocate for their children at the school and district level, to guide development of legislative reform initiatives by policy makers and advocates, and to support efforts to monitor the implementation of laws already in place.
- **Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI):** Resources to support the adoption and implementation of common core state standards. CCSSI is a voluntary, state-led effort to develop clear, consistent academic standards in English language arts and mathematics.

Through the PTA network, you also have access to advocacy support in the form of training and leadership:

- **Policy workshops & Training of Trainers:** National and state PTA conventions, as well as the National PTA Legislative Conference, offer federal and state policy workshops each year. National PTA also hosts advocacy training of trainers workshops to engage and educate parent advocates at every level, whether on the district, state, or federal level.
- **PTA federal legislative chairs:** these state leaders ensure that all members have information about PTA's federal policy priorities and lead members in speaking on behalf of children and youth. They have relationships with their states' U.S. senators, representatives, and congressional staffers, and coordinate their states' responses to PTA action alerts. To get in touch with your state's federal legislative chair, contact your state PTA office.
- **Legislation Committee:** Appointed by the President of NPPTA, the Legislation Committee serves as an advisory group to the Office of Public Policy and the Board of Directors on key policy and advocacy initiatives.

## JOIN THE PTA TAKES ACTION NETWORK TODAY!

Sign up at [PTA.org/TakeAction](http://PTA.org/TakeAction)



**National PTA**  
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