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THE PRESIDENT'S ROLE AS A PTA ADVOCATE

The Mission of PTA is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children. As a PTA leader, it is your role to advocate for your child—and every child in your school and community.

According to National PTA, "PTA advocacy means supporting and speaking up for students in schools, in communities, and before governing bodies and other decision-makers of policies or practices affecting students." Use this plan from National PTA to get started:

Get Organized and Make a Plan

Step 1: Identify a Legislative/Advocacy Vice President.

The primary responsibility of a local PTA Legislative and/or Advocacy Vice President is to serve as the link between PTA's Public Policy program and your members. Begin by making sure advocacy is a regular conversation point—on your agenda at meetings, in your social media, and as updates via email. Learn more about the roles and responsibilities of a legislative or advocacy chair.

Step 2. Discuss Ways to Support Your School Improvement Plan.

Ask your principal for a meeting to talk about how your PTA can support the school improvement plan. Send a representative to your school community council meetings. Identify one to three objectives that will engage and empower families to be part of the solution at your school. Use the School of Excellence program as a road map to strengthening your family-school partnership around a specific school improvement goal.

Step 3. Mobilize Around a Specific School or Community Improvement.

The PTA can amplify your members' voices to make positive changes for students in your school and community. Maybe your issue is advocating for a safe route to school for students. Or perhaps your classrooms are overcrowded, or your roof needs major repairs.

Step 4. Learn from PTA's History.

For more than 120 years, PTA has influenced national policies and practices that promote children's education, health, and well-being. The results of PTA's advocacy include early childhood education, kindergarten, child labor laws, juvenile justice system, school lunch programs, and much more.

Step 5. Use and Understand the National and Utah PTA Public Policy Program to determine action on state and local legislation.

The Utah PTA Public Policy Program is the primary authority for public policy action and statements by Utah PTA on state and local legislation and administrative policies and regulations. Utah PTA can only speak to items where a Resolution or Position Statement are in place. Study the Utah PTA resolutions at utahpta.org/resolutions to gain a better understanding of the Utah PTA advocacy efforts.



Step 6. *Sign Up for State and Federal Action Alerts.*

Email the Utah PTA Advocacy Vice President, Kristina Pexton, at kristina@utahpta.org, to join the Utah PTA Take Action Network for notifications when PTA members are needed to take action on significant state legislation or policy alerts. Sign up at [PTA.org/Home/Advocacy/Take-Action](https://pta.org/Home/Advocacy/Take-Action) to get alerts from National PTA.

Step 7. *Save the Date --- Utah PTA Advocacy Conference and Utah PTA Day at the Capitol.*

Join the Utah PTA commissioners and learn about the critical issues facing Utah's children at the annual Utah PTA Advocacy Conference in the fall. Let your legislators know that Utah PTA is in the House by attending Utah PTA Day at the Capitol during the legislative session. See UtahPTA.org for exact dates.

Step 8. *Join the Utah PTA Advocacy Facebook Group.*

Share with other PTA leaders what you are doing to advocate for the children in your school. Get updates from Utah PTA commissioners in the areas of community engagement, education, family life, health, individual development, safety, and student development.

Step 9. *Get Involved in Statewide Advocacy Efforts. Join a Utah PTA commission or the Legislative Advocacy Committee.*

Encourage your Legislative/Advocacy Vice President, any member of your PTA, or take the opportunity yourself to join a Utah PTA commission or the Legislative Advocacy Committee (LAC).

Commissions in the areas of community engagement, education, family life, health, individual development, safety, and student leadership meet three to four times per year and discuss current issues related to the topic of the commission. Community Partners from outside organizations provide meaningful information and allow attendees to become better acquainted with the needs of children throughout the state.

All Utah PTA members are invited to join LAC. This committee meets once per month during the school year and weekly during the legislative session. This committee discusses and recommends the positions Utah PTA should take on legislation and other policy issues. Contact the Utah PTA Advocacy VP, Kristina Pexton, at kristina@utahpta.org for more information on LAC.

Step 10. *Increase Utah PTA Advocacy Efforts by Submitting a Resolution.*

Is there an area where you feel that Utah PTA should be advocating for children? Check to see if there is a resolution in place and if not, then submit a resolution on that topic.

A resolution is a call for action. It is a statement which may give direction for that action, such as legislative directives and policies, and state and local community involvement. A resolution may also memorialize, commemorate, or express appreciation. Local PTAs, councils, regions, and Utah PTA commissions and committees may submit resolutions for consideration to the Utah PTA Resolutions Committee. For more information send an email to Resolutions@utahpta.org.



UTAH PTA PUBLIC POLICY PROGRAM

The Utah PTA Public Program is the primary authority for public policy action and statements by Utah PTA on state and local legislation and administrative policies and regulations.

The Utah 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 in to closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate more 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, social, and spiritual education.

The Utah PTA Public Policy Program has five components:

1. The National PTA and Utah PTA Mission statement and values
2. The National PTA and Utah PTA Resolutions
3. The Utah PTA Legislative Policy
4. The Utah PTA Legislative Priorities
5. National PTA and Utah PTA Position Statements

1. The National PTA and Utah PTA Mission statement and values

National PTA Mission

PTA's Mission is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

National PTA values

COLLABORATION: We will work in partnership with a wide array of individuals and organizations to

broaden and enhance our ability to serve and advocate for all children and families.

COMMITMENT: We are dedicated to children's educational success, health, and well-being through strong family and community engagement, while remaining accountable to the principles upon which our association was founded.

DIVERSITY: We acknowledge the potential of everyone without regard, including but not limited to: age, culture, economic status, educational background, ethnicity, gender, geographic location, legal status, marital status, mental ability, national origin, organizational position, parental status, physical ability, political philosophy, race, religion, sexual orientation, and work experience.

RESPECT: We value the individual contributions of members, employees, volunteers, and partners as we work collaboratively to achieve our association's goals.

ACCOUNTABILITY: All members, employees, volunteers, and partners have a shared responsibility to align their efforts toward the achievement of our association's strategic initiatives.

Utah PTA Mission statement

To make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

Vision of Utah PTA:

To fulfill the Mission, Utah PTA will:

Advocate by speaking on behalf of all children and youth in schools, in the community, before governmental bodies, and before other organizations that make decision affecting children.

Develop programs, resources, and leadership skills that enhance the lives of all children, youth, and their families.

Engage the public in united and equitable efforts to secure the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being of all children and youth.

2. The National PTA and Utah PTA Resolutions

Resolutions and positions are formal statements of



PTA public or association policy voted by the delegates at the annual Advocacy Conference or the annual National PTA and Utah PTA Conventions.

The process for moving forward a Utah PTA resolution is:

1. A PTA can propose resolutions to the Utah PTA Resolutions Committee.
2. The Utah PTA Resolutions Committee reviews submitted resolutions and recommends action to the Utah PTA Board of Directors. The Utah PTA Board of Directors forwards resolutions to the delegates at either the Advocacy Conference or the Leadership Convention for consideration.
3. Resolutions must be approved by the conference or convention body to become official policies of the association.

Utah PTA resolutions and position statements are found on the Utah PTA website: www.UtahPTA.org/Statements-Positions

3. The Utah PTA Legislative Policy

The legislative policy is the philosophy and general principles which guide the Utah PTA’s consideration of proposed legislation.

The Utah PTA is a non-profit, grassroots, child advocacy association made up of parents, teachers, and students. The legislative program of the Utah PTA is derived from the work of PTA in home, school, and community. PTA efforts “to secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth” are based upon: (1) the recognition of the home as the foundation of our society; (2) parental involvement as an essential component of all policy-making processes pertaining to children; (3) the observance and understanding of the rights and obligations of responsible citizenship and ethical government; and, (4) the realization that maintaining a free and public education system is a cornerstone of democracy—that the Utah Public Education System is created in the state Constitution to “secure and perpetuate” freedom.

General Principles for Consideration of Proposed Legislation:

1. Equity in the form of equal justice, privileges, opportunities, and responsibilities in every phase of life for all children and youth, while recognizing.....

that each child is unique with individual needs and talents.

2. High standards for those who work in all areas concerned with children and youth. Coordination and planning by all agencies with clear definition of responsibility at each level of government.
3. Prioritizing the needs of all children and youth, while adhering to fiscal responsibility in government.
4. Maximum local control when it serves the best interest of all children and youth.
5. Continued maintenance of the constitutional guarantee of financial support for public schools as the first claim on state revenues.
6. Maintenance of Utah PTA’s viability as a non-profit voice for children.

4. Utah PTA Legislative Priorities

The Utah PTA Legislative Priorities are based upon the actions called for by the Utah PTA and National PTA resolutions and position statements. Rather than providing an exhaustive list of the areas in which the Utah PTA is involved, the priorities are indicative of issues on which PTA expects to target its efforts and activity. All PTA statewide public policy work is consistent with the Utah PTA’s priorities, resolutions, and position statements.

Utah PTA Legislative Priorities are approved by Utah PTA members annually during the Advocacy Conference Business meeting. Refer to the Public Policy Program under the Advocacy Vice President section at UtahPTA.org for the current year legislative priorities.

5. The Utah and National PTA Position Statements

Position statements are initiated by members of the Utah PTA or National PTA Board of Directors and approved by a majority vote of that body. Position statements provide guidance rather than prescribe specific policy actions to be taken by the association and are meant to be temporary in their nature until a resolution on the issue can be passed by the membership at the annual Utah PTA Advocacy Conference or Leadership Convention. Position statements have the same level of authority as resolutions.

Note: The Utah PTA Public Policy Program is updated every fall. Please attend the Utah PTA Advocacy Conference or the Legislative Advocacy Committee to be involved in the process of updating this document.



PROTECTING THE UTAH PTA 501 C(3) STATUS

Utah PTA is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. The U.S. Constitution, Congress, and the IRS have protected the rights of non-profits to engage in advocacy and legislative lobbying. It is important that PTA leaders follow the non-profit rules regarding our advocacy efforts. The federal tax code and Utah Election policy dictates some important rules to follow.

Remain Non-partisan

The federal tax code states, “that non-profit organizations defined as 501(c)(3) charities may not conduct partisan political activities in support of or opposition to a candidate running for public office.”

Utah PTA local, councils, region, and state boards may not:

- ♦ Endorse or oppose a candidate running for public office.
- ♦ Make a campaign contribution to or expenditure for or against a candidate.
- ♦ Rate candidates on who is most favorable to your issue.
- ♦ Let candidates use the organization’s facilities or resources, unless those resources are made equally available to all candidates at their fair market value.

NonProfitVote.org/NonProfits-Voting-Elections-Online/General-Rules/

No Use of Public Emails

It is important to remember that no school emails may be used for political purposes. If your PTA uses emails associated with school or district accounts, it is imperative that they are not used to create or forward any political information. We encourage all leaders to join the Take Action Hub with your personal email.

The law associated with political activity is located at this link:

LE.Utah.gov/XCode/Title20A/Chapter11/C20A-11-P12_1800010118000101.pdf

Part 12

Political Activities of Public Entities Act

20A-11-1205 Use of public email for a political purpose.

- (1) Except as provided in Subsection (5), a person may not send an email using the email of a public entity:
 - (a) for a political purpose;
 - (b) to advocate for or against a proposed initiative, initiative, proposed referendum, or referendum; or
 - (c) to solicit a campaign contribution.



MEET THE CANDIDATES OR MEET YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS NIGHT

Candidates and elected officials (legislators, state or local school board members) appreciate a forum where they can meet with their constituents, discuss their views, and listen to concerns. During an election year (even years) this forum would be a Meet the Candidates Night. On non-election years (odd years) this could be an issues night. When organizing these events, it is best to combine with other schools within your region or council. Remember, this is a PTA event and you are in charge. However, you may invite other entities such as the League of Women Voters to join.

To Organize the Event:

- ♦ Begin planning your event early, in August or early September, contact all political parties to give the date of event.
- ♦ Decide on the community to be involved—high school (plus feeder schools) or region or council.
- ♦ Invite the Legislative/Advocacy Vice Presidents from all the schools to be involved in the planning.
- ♦ Determine the time, date, and location.
 - October is usually the best month.
 - A large auditorium may not be the best facility for the event.
- ♦ Obtain the names and information on ALL candidates (in election year) and all elected officials (non-election year). It is imperative that ALL candidates be invited to protect our 501(c)(3) status.
- ♦ Include local and state school board candidates during election year.
- ♦ Send formal invitations to each candidate with an RSVP date given.
- ♦ Advertise the event through schools, posters, newspapers, social media, etc.
- ♦ Invite the entire community, not just PTA members.
- ♦ Plan an outline and format for the evening:
 - Open House
 - 30 minutes prior to general meeting
 - Allows one-on-one conversations
 - Tables for candidates to put materials
 - General Meeting
 - Welcome, reverence, flag ceremony
 - Allow one minute for each candidate or legislator to introduce themselves
 - Hand out 3x5 cards for the audience to write questions
 - Have a moderator and timer with time cards
 - All questions are written and given to the moderator
 - Give candidates one minutes to answer individual questions. Limit rebuttals to thirty seconds.
 - Give each candidate or legislator a one minute wrap-up at the end

Send thank-you cards to all the candidates and legislators who attend.



ELECTED OFFICIALS AND LEGISLATION INFORMATION

Local Elected Officials Information

This information can be obtained through the Utah Legislature website: LE.Utah.gov.

Representative(s) _____

Email Address(es) _____

Phone Number(s) _____

Senator(s) _____

Email Address(es) _____

Phone Number(s) _____

Legislative Advocacy Committee (LAC)

All Utah PTA members are invited to join the Utah PTA Legislative Advocacy Committee (LAC). LAC members attend legislative meetings to gather information on issues and bills which impact the lives of children. The committee meets monthly (weekly during the legislative session) to discuss issues and legislation. The committee recommends positions on specific bills and determines action to promote, amend, or defeat legislation. Utah PTA only takes bill positions based upon the PTA Public Policy Program and our resolutions.

Utah PTA Take Action Network

The Utah PTA Take Action Network is an email list which members are encouraged to join. This list is not given out to anyone but is used to keep our members informed of the activities of our legislature and how they can become involved. The Network is activated as **alerts and calls to action** are needed during the session. The members also receive monthly updates during the interim sessions and weekly updates during the legislative session. To join the Utah PTA Take Action Legislative Network, send your name, school, and email address to the Utah PTA Advocacy VP, found on the Utah PTA website (UtahPTA.org). The network is maintained from year to year.

Utah PTA Legislative Bill Sheets

Utah PTA Legislative Bill Sheets are prepared from those positions recommended by the Utah PTA Legislative Advocacy Committee (LAC) and adopted by Utah PTA commissioners and Executive Committee. These sheets are available to any PTA member through the website and are updated weekly throughout the legislative session at UtahPTA.org/bills.

School Community Councils/School Board Meetings

Your presence at your local SCC and local school board meetings is important. PTA can partner with the SCC to help with the School Improvement Plan. As the school board members get to know you and your PTA, they will be more responsive to the needs of parents. This responsibility can be shared with other members of your board. If a member of your board is not on the SCC, assign someone to attend SCC and/or the local school board meetings and report back to the board.



NATIONAL PTA LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

The National PTA Legislative Program is the primary authority for action taken by the National PTA on federal legislation and regulations.

The National PTA Legislative Program has four components:

1. Policy Statements are broad statements on children's issues that form the basis for resolutions and position statements. Policy statements become official when they are passed by the National PTA Convention delegates or the National PTA Board of Directors and by 60% of state PTAs.
2. Resolutions with legislative intent can be proposed by any PTA. The National PTA Board of Directors recommends resolutions for consideration by delegates at the National PTA Convention. Resolutions must be approved by the convention body and then ratified by the National PTA Board of Directors to become positions of the organization.
3. Position statements are initiated by committees and commissions of the National PTA Board of Directors. They are approved by the National PTA Board of Directors.
4. Legislative Directives are the organization's current legislative priorities. They are reviewed by the National PTA Board of Directors and approved by the Executive Committee every two years.

NATIONAL PTA LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES

- ♦ PTA Takes Action, the National PTA's legislative newsletter, provides current information on legislative issues and suggests advocacy strategies. It is emailed to member-to-member participants and also contains Action Alerts.
- ♦ The National PTA website ([PTA.org](https://www.pta.org)) legislative activity page provides information about PTA legislative issues and initiatives.
- ♦ National PTA's toll free legislative information line, (800) 307-4PTA (4782).
- ♦ National PTA Resolutions, position statements, and legislative directives are accessible at all state PTA offices, and many are found online at [PTA.org](https://www.pta.org).

PTA is a non-profit organization.

It takes positions on legislative issues but is non-partisan and endorses NO candidates for public office.



PRACTICAL PARLIAMENTARY GUIDE

A simple table of the most frequently used motions

MOTION	SECOND	DEBATABLE	AMENDABLE	VOTE REQUIRED	RECONSIDERABLE ?
Adjourn	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Amend a Pending Motion	Yes	Yes if motion to be amended is debatable	Yes	Majority	Yes
Close Nominations	Yes	No	Yes	2/3	No
Debate limit or extend	Yes	No	Yes	2/3	Yes
Division of Assembly	No	No	No	Any member	No
Main Motion	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Point of Order	No	No	No	Ruled on by chair	No
Postpone to a Definite Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Previous Question	Yes	No	No	2/3	Yes
Question of Privilege	No	No	No	Majority	Yes
Recess	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
Reconsider	Yes	Yes if motion to which applied is debatable	No	Majority	No
Refer (commit)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	No
Rescind	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority with notice 2/3 without notice	Yes
Suspension of Rules	Yes	No	No	2/3	No
Table	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Take from Table	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Withdrawal of Motion	No	No	No	Majority	No

1. A tie vote is a lost vote.
2. Hasty action may be corrected by use of the motion to reconsider. This motion may be made only by one who voted on the prevailing side.
3. To stop debate and force the vote a member should obtain the floor and say, "I move the previous question." This requires a second and a two-thirds vote.



