



Kansas PTA 2020 Legislative Policy and Priorities

PTA Mission and Values. The mission of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children. Initiatives of the PTA are aligned with this mission and guided by five core values: collaboration, commitment, diversity, respect and accountability.

This document includes, but is not limited to, the Kansas PTA legislative standing positions and priority positions.

Please visit Kansas PTA at www.kansas-pta.org or National PTA at www.pta.org for complete Policy Statements and Position Papers.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY POSITIONS

Priority 1 – Kansas Constitution. Kansas PTA supports efforts to preserve the Kansas Constitution. This includes Article VI, regarding public education, to protect non-partisan elections of local school board members, to retain legislators' obligation to provide suitable finance for ongoing educational improvement, as well as State Board of Education oversight of state education standards and accreditations.

Priority 2 – Investing in Public Education. Kansas PTA supports a balanced tax policy to ensure that our state has enough funds to deliver core services, for which public education is about half of most state budgets. Tax policy based upon a balanced combination of income, property and sales taxes has a history of reliability and fairness.

Priority 3 – Fully Fund Special Education and other Mandates. Kansas PTA supports efforts to fully fund state and federal education mandates, particularly special education, without disproportionately shifting the required financial obligation to local communities.

Priority 4 – Early Childhood. Kansas PTA supports investment in quality early learning, such as all-day kindergarten, Pre-K programs, and Parents as Teachers, to provide opportunity for every Kansas child to be prepared to succeed in school. Children who enter school kindergarten-ready are more likely to experience academic success and to require fewer resources to achieve state education standards.

Priority 5 – Accountability. Kansas PTA supports efforts of the Kansas Department of Education to implement a new model of accountability and accreditation, designed around multiple measures and leading indicators which can be used to inform improvement at the local level along with lag indicators that tend to record what has already happened.

Priority 6 – Bullying Prevention. Kansas PTA supports anti-bullying efforts to create positive and safe school environments, which empower peers to establish supportive, inclusive relationships and to address the prevention and intervention of bullying behavior.

Priority 7 – Mental Health and Wellness. Kansas PTA supports efforts to restore comprehensive community mental health services, to invest in professional development regarding trauma-informed care and students’ social, emotional and mental health issues with emphasis on early detection, to promote educational programs for families, and to reduce the stigma of mental illness and build a of understanding around children and youth mental health.

Priority 8 – Gun Safety. Kansas PTA supports comprehensive efforts to improve the safety of our nation's youth and our communities, including gun safety and violence-prevention measures.

Priority 9 – Vaping Prevention. Kansas PTA supports efforts to educate the public about the dangers of electronic nicotine delivery devices and restricting their access to youth. Local communities are encouraged to follow the work of the Kansas Vaping Task Force, including policy and programs that supports access to cessation programs which may include the use of FDA approved nicotine delivery systems.

Priority 10 – Access to Affordable Quality Health Care. Kansas PTA supports efforts to develop and fund comprehensive health care programs, including school-linked health clinics, and to provide equitable access to quality, affordable health care for all children.

Priority 11 – Public Dollars for Public Education. Kansas PTA opposes the use of vouchers for the tuition of non-public schools, also known as tax credit scholarships, choice, education freedom. Non-public schools are not required accept all students, can discriminate in admissions, mandate religious instruction, operate under different rules of transparency and accountability, waive access to special education services and such.

Priority 12 – Non-discrimination policies – Kansas PTA recognizes the principle of equal opportunity under the law. Legislative action is encouraged to identify a comprehensive list of classes protected against discriminate on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or any statutorily prohibited basis.

Priority 13 – Student Data, Privacy and Info Sharing. Kansas PTA recognizes the value of collecting student data to make informed decisions about educational policy and practices and thus will advocate that data collectors be transparent andengaged with families on the development, implementation and notification about policies and procedures related to the privacy and protection of student data; and, allow for parents and families to retain the right to review and request corrections of their child(ren)’s education records or profiles.

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