

# ARTICLE IX

## SECTION 1



**Your Oath, Your Duty**



**2010 Florida PTA Rally in Tally  
Waller Park at the Capitol  
(same site as last year)  
March 25, 2010  
11:30-AM-1:30 PM**

The date is set and the site secured for PTA members to let their voices be heard once again in Tallahassee. You were loud and clear last year with your rallying cry of "NO MORE CUTS." You made a difference—the proposed cuts were restored.

This year your task is to not only persuade legislators to restore the previous cuts, but to make provisions for an adequate, stable source of funding for education when the stimulus dollars run out in 2010. Recognizing the challenge this presents, as well as the distance many of you will be travelling, we will provide an orientation and advocacy training on the evening of March 24<sup>th</sup>.

We encourage you to arrive in Tallahassee sometime on March 24<sup>th</sup> to visit your legislators and attend the orientation. A link to Tallahassee hotels is provided for your convenience. You will also have time to visit the Capitol on the morning of March 25<sup>th</sup> and after the rally.

**Update January 19, 2010-** It has been confirmed that National PTA President, Chuck Saylor will be joining us and speaking at the rally.

**Update January 19, 2010-** Orientation/Advocacy Training will take place on March 24<sup>th</sup>, from 3:30PM to 6:30PM in the Florida Education Association (FEA) conference room, 213 South Adams Street, Tallahassee, FL 32301.

### **Tallahassee Hotels**

[http://maps.google.com/maps?hl=en&source=hp&um=1&ie=UTF-8&q=Tallahassee,+FL+hotels&fb=1&gl=us&hq=hotels&hnear=Tallahassee,+FL&view=text&ei=0\\_UcS-WmFcqPtgehrYn3CQ&sa=X&oi=local\\_group&ct=more-results&resnum=1&ved=0CCwQtwMwAA](http://maps.google.com/maps?hl=en&source=hp&um=1&ie=UTF-8&q=Tallahassee,+FL+hotels&fb=1&gl=us&hq=hotels&hnear=Tallahassee,+FL&view=text&ei=0_UcS-WmFcqPtgehrYn3CQ&sa=X&oi=local_group&ct=more-results&resnum=1&ved=0CCwQtwMwAA)

### **Logo and Tag Line**

Our logo and tag line are provided at the top of this page. You are welcome to use it on all of your materials. We urge you to start planning your campaign now and put it into action in January 2010. An outline of the proposed events surrounding the rally, as well as advocacy strategies and month by month guidelines for planning your campaign follow.

Please note that an updated schedule and information will be provided as events evolve. Please check the Florida PTA website [www.floridapta.org](http://www.floridapta.org) regularly for updates.

## **Rally Agenda**

(subject to change)

### **March 24**

Legislative visits (on your own)

**3:30-6:30 PM**      Orientation/ Advocacy Training  
(site TBA)

### **March 25**

Legislative visits (on your own)

11:30 AM-1:00 PM

Rally

Legislative visits (on your own)

## Advocacy Strategies

### Step 1

**Form a committee** to handle this advocacy campaign. Outline your goals, plan your action steps and assign specific tasks to its members. Be sure to set timelines for each goal and task and keep lines of communication open to keep everyone apprised of the progress of your campaign.

**Get the Facts:** Contact your school district and school and find out what cuts are taking place. Paint a picture of the very real impact on your school and community. Gather examples and actual stories about what is happening in your community.

### Step 2

**Expand your Base:** Identify other groups/organizations (allies) that support your position. Communicate with them and expand your base by forming coalitions with these groups that support the issue. Work with media and other organizations to communicate PTA's position to the community

### Step 3

**Build a network of advocates** within your PTA membership and school community. Provide your network as well as the media with fact sheets. Talking points are provided for your use further down. You can do your own research and find facts that will be applicable to your community.

**Spread this message** to the community at large. Write letters to the editor, Op-Ed pieces, articles etc. in support of your position, using the information we have provided. Look for new and updated information in newspapers and other sources, particularly ones that are related to your community. Tell your story---be specific about the impact on your school, community etc., in these pieces. Speak to your principal, teachers, city officials and ask what is being cut in your school and community and get the information out to the public.

Attend meetings held in the community such as homeowners associations and other civic/community group meetings. Ask for time on the agenda and inform them of the issue or ask for permission to distribute your written information.

Hold similar conversations with other parents at your children's sporting events etc.

## **Suggested Calendar of Events**

### **December 2009**

Form a committee and begin planning process

### **January 2010**

Inform and educate your membership

Plan events in your community

Visit legislators at their home (district) offices

Contact the media and let them know your plans

Sign up at <http://capwiz.com/npta2/fl/home/> to receive Florida PTA alerts

### **February 2010**

Continue to involve your membership

Have membership write, email, call legislators

Have membership sign up to travel to Tallahassee

Have membership sign up for Florida PTA alerts

Continue to inform and involve the community at large

Write letters to the editor (sample provided below)

Continue legislative visits

Check [www.floridapta.org](http://www.floridapta.org) for updates

### **March 2010**

Make final plans for Tallahassee trip

Make appointments with your legislators in Tallahassee

Check [www.floridapta.org](http://www.floridapta.org) for updates

Continue writing letters, emails, calls to legislators and to media

Attend the rally

Thank your legislators/staff for meeting with you

### **April/May 2010**

Continue your advocacy campaign

Follow the process in Tallahassee and respond to Florida PTA alerts

Keep in touch with legislators

Keep media informed of your efforts

Continue writing letters to editor to raise community awareness and support

### **Signs and Placards**

We encourage you to make signs, T-Shirts, handouts etc. that will allow you to express your thoughts to the policy makers. However, signs cannot be taken into the Capitol building and you will have to make arrangements to place them somewhere until you can pick them up after your legislative visits or discard them neatly in the nearest trash can.

### **Talking Points**

- A quality education system is the key to driving the economic engine
- There was no funding increase for education in 2009-2010
- Funds for the 2009-10 budget came from federal stimulus dollars
- The 2010-11 budget will again be funded with federal stimulus funds that run out at the end of the year
- The Florida Legislature needs to make provisions to secure education funding through a stable source of revenue beyond 2011
- The United States census ranks Florida as 50<sup>th</sup> in education spending.
- Education Week in its 2008 "Quality Counts" rankings of U.S. education gave Florida an "F" in K-12 spending.
- State economists (December 2009) predict that plunging property values will further lower the taxable property value for schools statewide by another 9.5%
- The legislature has identified over \$23 billion in exemptions that Florida does not collect.
- The legislature should begin their work at tax restructuring by repealing unnecessary exemptions that will realize added revenues to the state, before proposing further cuts that will hurt the children of Florida.
- Closing existing loopholes will generate needed revenue without adding a tax burden to average Floridians.
- We support comprehensive tax restructuring that will increase tax revenue through tax structure reform, in order to adequately fund the services necessary to meet the educational, health, safety, recreational and other basic needs of Florida's children.

- Florida PTA supports reforming Florida's system of sales and use taxes. Exemptions for products and services should be retained only where they meet an overriding public policy interest.

### Sample letter to the editor

**(This is just an example to help you construct your own letter. It is best to use your own words and vary the content of the letters so that it does not appear to be a form letter. Please use the Talking Points and other information to help you with your letter)**

Dear Editor:

As a member of the largest child advocacy organization in this state and nation, I am concerned about the massive cuts to the education budget.

The manner in which Florida provides for the educational, health, safety, recreational and other basic needs of Florida's children determines the quality of life for every Florida citizen and providing for those needs lays the foundation of the future of our state.

Recent budget cuts have already resulted in program and service cutbacks in schools and communities. (Provide examples that apply to your community) Some of these cuts are being made up by increased fees and additional charges to the public. Further cuts will increase this financial burden on schools, communities and families.

It is the constitutional duty of the Florida Legislature to meet the educational, environmental and health care needs of our children. Funding for 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 has been provided by federal stimulus dollars. The Legislature needs to step up to the plate and ensure that as this funding runs out in one year, that the needs of Florida's children are met through an adequate, stable source of funding.

The community stands ready to help our policy makers implement strategies that will ensure a stable source of funding to meet the needs of all Floridians.

Sincerely,

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-----PTA

## Resources

### **Florida PTA**

[www.floridapta.org](http://www.floridapta.org)

**UPDATED INFORMATION WILL BE PROVIDED ON OUR WEBSITE  
[www.floridapta.org](http://www.floridapta.org) REGULARLY. PLEASE KEEP CHECKING FOR NEW  
INFORMATION.**

### **Florida Legislature**

<http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Welcome/index.cfm?CFID=72957459&CFTOKEN=31389646>

### **Florida Department of Education**

<http://www.fldoe.org/>

### **Florida School Boards Association**

<http://www.fsba.org/>

### **Florida Association of District School Superintendents**

<http://www.fadss.org/>

### **Florida Education Association**

<http://www.feaweb.org/>

## Questions?

### **Contact:**

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Or

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**Thank You**