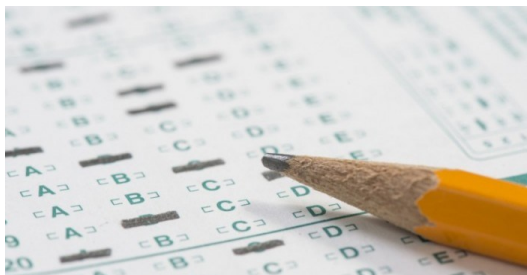


HIGH-STAKES TESTING

Florida PTA opposes the use of a national, mandated, standardized test as the sole criterion for measuring a school or student progress.

PTA believes that student assessments should identify how instruction and learning can be improved. Assessments should be used to help parents and teachers determine the specific academic needs of students and increase opportunities for student learning.



"Therefore, test scores should not be used as a sole determinant in decisions such as the prevention of advancement to the next grade, graduation eligibility, or placement into a remedial course."

Independent Verification of the Psychometric Validity for the Florida Standards Assessment Final Report by Alpine Testing Solutions and edCount LLC (August 31, 2015)

ACCOUNTABILITY AND ASSESSMENTS

Florida PTA recommends that the Florida Department of Education and the state:

- Allow for proper field-testing and test development in areas with similar demographics to Florida's diverse demographics;
- Suspend the issuance of school letter grades until performance data has been deemed reliable;
- Allow additional testing and calculation flexibility to students with disabilities and students who speak limited English;
- Consider using multiple years of a new exam as a baseline for generating school grades and teacher evaluations.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION / REDUCING CHILDHOOD OBESITY

Florida PTA urges the legislature to support daily physical education programs taught by certified PE teachers as an integral part of every child's education and to support efforts to improve the nutritional value of foods and beverages served and sold in schools throughout the state.



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Florida PTA®

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2016 Legislative Priorities



Taking Action for Kids!

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FUNDING

Florida PTA urges the Legislature to fully fund strategies and programs that ensure the health, safety, and education of the children of Florida.

SCHOOL CHOICE

PTA supports public school choice and the creation of public charter schools based on a set of principles that are designed to keep the integrity of public schools intact. Public charter schools (including full-time virtual schools) must establish a level playing field in areas of fiscal responsibility, accountability and student enrollment, and involve parents in decision-making processes.

VOUCHER EXPANSION

The Florida PTA urges the Legislature to impose strict eligibility requirements on private institutions and non-public K-12 schools receiving public dollars through any state funded voucher, grant, or scholarship programs, and at a minimum, require them to meet the same accountability standards at their cost as public schools, including, but not limited to school-wide participation in any statewide mandated assessment program, and school performance grade category designation and improvement rating.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Florida PTA urges the legislature to support and fully fund high-quality child care and preschool programs that are affordable and accessible, coordinated at all levels (federal, state, and local), and characterized by high standards for teaching, training, health, and safety.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

PTA encourages collaboration between law enforcement, the judicial system, and child welfare agencies; promotes alternative dispute resolution techniques that provide a range of possible sanctions; urges the prevention of the incarceration of youth in adult facilities; and supports assisting youth leaving the juvenile justice system with programs that prevent recidivism.



REFORM OF SCHOOL POLICIES REGARDING ZERO TOLERANCE

Florida PTA urges the Florida Legislature and school boards to revise disciplinary policies known as "zero tolerance" that mandate either expulsion or referral of students to juvenile or criminal court, without regard to the circumstances or nature of the offense or the students' history.

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

SEXUAL VIOLENCE & HARASSMENT

PTA urges and supports the strengthening of Title IX and all other laws that identify, address the effects of, and prohibit sexual harassment and sexual violence impacting students, and compliance by recipients of federal funds with the provisions of Title IX.

PTA also urges collaboration with school administrations, institutions of higher learning, and community partners to ensure that every school provides support services for victims, and presents awareness and prevention programs that address sexual harassment and sexual violence affecting students, including training on the responsibilities of educational institutions, and the rights of sexual violence and sexual harassment victims under Title IX and other laws and regulations.

CHILD TRAFFICKING

PTA supports the adoption and enforcement of laws that will deter the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. PTA further urges the legislature to protect the rights of victims and support efforts to provide for the physical, psychological, and social recovery of victims of child trafficking; as well as to address those conditions and situations that contribute to child trafficking.

BULLYING

PTA supports policies and programs that address the prevention, intervention, and elimination of bullying.

