



2019-2020 Legislative Program

Priority Issues * Continuing Concerns * Position Statements



Indiana PTA:
Advocating for Every Child with One Voice since 1912.

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



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Dear Advocates,

Indiana PTA welcomes you in your role as Legislative Chairperson for your local unit or your council. PTA has been advocating for the welfare and public education of every child across our country for more than 100 years.

The need to continue the fight has never dwindled. In fact, it has become even more relevant as public education reform has been identified as a hot issue with our policy makers. From vouchers, to teacher licenses, to state assessments to school board takeovers, our schools now more than ever are facing a plethora of obstacles and roadblocks when providing our children with a great education. The need for engaged and active members who share their voice is imperative.

As a Legislative Chairperson, it's your job to bridge the communication gap between parents, teachers and administrators. Indiana PTA will provide you with all of the resources necessary to be an effective advocate and great communicator. Please take the time to review the enclosed materials and contact us if you have any questions or need any additional information or assistance. Indiana PTA wants to be your valued resource.

The 2019-2020 Legislative Program is included in this packet and may also be found in the advocacy section of our website. The delegates attending the 2019 state convention reaffirmed the Legislative Program of the Indiana PTA.

You have the opportunity to help make a difference for all children! Let's do this together! If we do not take our advocacy efforts outside the school building or community, we are not taking full advantage of the voice PTA has. Our strength is in our numbers as we speak up for every child with one voice!

More information about the legislative conference and issues will be distributed at a later date. Visit our website, www.indianapta.org, for updates and information.

With our gratitude,

Julie Klingenberger, President
Indiana PTA

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2019-2020 Legislative Program

Action on legislation is an integral part of PTA work. Indiana PTA's membership, through the association's bylaws and the actions of delegates at Indiana PTA's conventions, directs PTA actions on legislative issues. The Indiana PTA Board of Managers is responsible for conducting the affairs of the association, including directing action on legislative issues. Specific activities of the Board of Managers may include:

- Analyzing proposed legislation at the state and federal level.
- Taking PTA positions on specific bills and ballot measures as directed by the PTA Legislative Program, policies, resolutions and position statements.
- Advocating for the passage or defeat of selected legislation, including utilizing the Legislative Program as a basis for official testimony.
- Working cooperatively with like-minded organizations when appropriate.
- Informing members about PTA positions on current legislation and encouraging the mobilization of members when needed.

The 2018-2019 Legislative Program, passed by delegates at the 2018 convention, establishes authority and direction for the Board of Managers to advocate as an association on behalf of our members. This document is comprised of Priority Issues, Continuing Concerns and Position Statements. These items reflect adopted positions that guide and prioritize member actions to improve laws, regulations, policies and conditions on issues that affect the health and welfare of children. The positions stated in this document should also be used to guide your local unit or council when taking action on a local, state or national issue and may be cited by PTA members when contacting their legislators. By directing our association's advocacy efforts through formalized positions, we unite and strengthen our efforts to speak on behalf of every child with one voice.

Indiana PTA 2019-2020 Advocacy Committee

Carissa Dollar - Vice President of Advocacy & Federal Legislative Coordinator
Rachel Burke - President-Elect & State Legislative Coordinator
Peggy Puzzello, Chrissy Smith, Destiny Hatcher - Committee Members

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2019-2020 PRIORITY ISSUES

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND DISCIPLINE

The Indiana PTA

1. Will support legislation which moves school discipline away from zero-tolerance discipline policies when combined with the use of exclusionary practices which restrict direct instruction for nonviolent or non-criminal misbehaviors.
2. Will support legislation ensuring equity and fairness in the school discipline process.
3. Will support legislation mandating positive discipline approaches.

RATIONALE:

1. Indiana PTA understands that kids cannot learn if they are not in receiving instruction. School exclusionary practices combined with inflexible, zero tolerance policies and practices are associated with poor school climate, academic failure and dropout, student disengagement and increased risk of involvement in the juvenile and criminal justice systems.
2. Data conclusively demonstrates that youth of color and children with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by the practices listed above.
3. Research shows that positive school discipline and restorative justice approaches improve individual student and school-wide outcomes by creating a positive school learning environment that engages youth while keeping them in school and on a path to success as adults.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Indiana PTA

1. Will support establishment of a broad-based parent involvement policy at the state level.
2. Will support parents of public school children serving on all education-related decision-making boards, commissions or committees that affect children and youth.
3. Will support current Indiana parent involvement policy and promote the implementation of a comprehensive parent involvement policy in preschool, early childhood and public schools in Indiana.

RATIONALE:

1. Studies indicate that parent involvement at any level increases student achievement, improves attendance and behavior, and may change student/parent attitudes about education.
2. Indiana PTA believes that parents should be involved in local, state and federal committees and commissions.

3. A strong parent involvement policy at the state level sets an example for local school corporations.

EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

The Indiana PTA

1. Will support efforts to provide a high quality educational process.
2. Will support programs that strengthen the constructive and supportive role of parents in educational decision-making processes.
3. Will support mandatory school attendance to age 18 unless graduation requirements have been met earlier.

RATIONALE:

1. In its advocacy role Indiana PTA is charged with helping to provide the best environment in which children can learn..
2. As partners in the education of students and as required by legislation , it is important that parents are involved in the decision making process at all levels of education.
3. Indiana students are presently required by law to attend school from age 7 to age 16. Raising mandatory attendance to age 18 would allow more students to achieve state standards and receive a diploma.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

The Indiana PTA

Will publish on its website and promote a Legislative Report for state and federal legislators in regards to their votes on issues of concern to Indiana PTA.

RATIONALE:

Indiana PTA believes the election process should be transparent and the electors informed. To serve this goal we will publish a roster of votes on issues that Indiana PTA is involved in as are defined by their Legislative Program and their resolutions. This listing shall be non-partisan and shall not constitute an endorsement or rejection of any candidate.

LOCAL SCHOOL CONTROL

The Indiana PTA

1. Will support state legislation that will include parents, teachers, secondary students, administrators and school boards in having a voice in shaping the educational system which serves the needs of their school community.
2. Will support state legislation that will leave the final decision controlling the local schools with the local school boards.
3. Will support Public Law 217 (*collective bargaining*) and will work to see that it is being used effectively and properly throughout the state.
4. Will support state legislation that leaves the final selection of textbooks with the local school corporation.

RATIONALE:

1. Research confirms that parent involvement in education improves student achievement. Including parents, teachers, secondary students, administrators and local school boards in determining the needs of their school community will give local ownership and will lead to increased achievement.
2. Local school control allows for increased accountability at the local level, giving parents more opportunity to be involved in the decision making process.
3. Providing for collective bargaining, Public Law 217 meets the needs of public school teachers throughout the state.
4. The Indiana PTA believes that the final selection of textbooks should be left with the local school corporation. If legislation is enacted mandating that local school corporations provide free textbooks for all children, PTA will support legislation providing full state funding for textbook purchases.

SCHOOL PERSONNEL

The Indiana PTA

1. Supports appropriate legislative action that would develop a procedure making it possible to replace some of the lost instructional time due to inclement weather and unavoidable school closings.
2. Believes that the current State public school administration system in Indiana has become convoluted and over-wrought. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Indiana Department of Education, State Board of Education, State Board of Education staff, State Education Roundtable, Governor, and Indiana General Assembly all are grappling for control of different parts of the education process. We believe it is in the best interest of the children of Indiana and in order to best serve the public good (and public dollars) that these separate groups should each stay within their traditionally defined (pre-2011) spheres of interest and control.

RATIONALE:

1. Indiana PTA believes that children are denied learning opportunities when schools are closed excessively due to inclement weather or unavoidable school closings. School personnel who are responsible for instructional time should see that excessive losses be made up, without additional remuneration, within contract year. Excessive loss would be determined by the local school corporation.
2. Indiana PTA believes the work of all of these agencies and groups is inherently important. However, having clearly defined spheres of interest and separations between policy, governance, administration, and management is of the utmost importance. Just as a local school district would have day-to-day difficulty if all management and administrative decisions had to be approved by its local school board, school governance and administration on a state level should be recognized as separate institutions and entities. Having overlapping realms of interest also leads to confusion as to which organization or person is in charge of or has the final say in various education matters. This confusion is negatively impacting schools and the children who attend them. Furthermore, the Indiana PTA believes it is fiscally wasteful and confusing to have multiple organizations, all of which are funded by taxpayers, which exist to do the same work.

PRESCHOOL/EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The Indiana PTA

Will support legislation to provide early childhood programs and full funding for those programs.

RATIONALE:

Programs need to be in place and funded adequately to ensure that families enter public school with a background of support and experiences that help children achieve greater success.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Indiana PTA

Supports legislation that benefits children with special needs and will work to see that Indiana laws (i.e. Public Laws 94-142 and 99-457) are implemented so that children with special needs receive appropriate education and services

RATIONALE:

Each year approximately 7.6% of babies born in Indiana are at risk of experiencing a developmental delay. They need help to enhance development at the time when human learning and development is most rapid; to provide support and assistance to families; to maximize the child's potential benefit to society and to reduce the probability of requiring special education services. Public Law 94-142 guarantees all school-aged children with special needs the right to a free, appropriate public education designed to meet the individual's needs. Public Law 99-457 extends these services to preschool – aged children with special needs and their families.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

The Indiana PTA

1. Will support legislation to abolish corporal punishment of school children in Indiana. PTA will support efforts to develop alternative discipline programs to provide an orderly climate for learning.
2. Indiana PTA will encourage the necessary training of school staff for implementation of positive alternative discipline programs.

RATIONALE:

1. Fifty years of research have shown that corporal punishment is a short-term solution to a long-term problem. It stops disruption for the moment, but it does not teach students better ways of solving problems. Corporal punishment increases learning problems. Far from calming students so they can return to their studies, corporal punishment decreases student's ability to concentrate and remember. Fearful or angry children cannot learn.
2. Indiana PTA believes it a necessary that all school staff receives training for the implementation of these alternatives.

FINANCING PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Indiana PTA

1. Will support the funding of a school distribution formula that allows all public schools to operate effectively.
2. Will support the financing of educational needs of all Indiana public school students including vocational education, special education, gifted education, bilingual education and all remedial education.
3. Will continue to oppose legislation allowing the use of tax funds, tax credits, scholarships, tuition transfers or vouchers for non-public schools.
4. Will support full funding of all mandates placed upon public schools.

RATIONALE:

1. The Indiana PTA believes that a realistic state formula must recognize increasing school costs and be adequately funded by a mixture of state and local revenues which are allowed to increase in proportion to school costs. Increased school costs include instructional materials and supplies, maintenance and operation of physical plants, teacher salaries, transportation and auxiliary services. Additionally, Indiana PTA supports excluding public schools from gasoline and utility taxes. Energy conservation, recycling materials and establishing state-wide bids for common goods (paper products, cleaning supplies, etc.) will be encouraged to help reduce local school costs.

2. A school distribution formula that includes services for all children and programs (special education, gifted/talented, vocational/technical education, compensatory education and all remedial education) are necessary aspects of a comprehensive public education.
3. Indiana PTA's position is that the public schools are not yet adequately funded; therefore it is fiscally irresponsible to take on the additional responsibility of funding non-public schools. PTA believes free public education must be recognized and supported as the cornerstone to a free democracy.
4. Local school corporations should receive full funding, for all mandates placed on public schools (i.e. required testing, remediation, professional development, school "report cards", etc.).

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND OTHER DRUGS (ATOD)

The Indiana PTA

1. Will support legislation that will eliminate the availability of alcoholic beverages to minors.
2. Will oppose legalizing marijuana or any other controlled substance.
3. Will support legislation that would define drug paraphernalia and also support laws intended to prohibit the manufacture, advertisement, delivery or use of such paraphernalia.
4. Will support advertising and programs that notify families of the hazards of substance abuse.
5. Will support legislation that will eliminate the availability of tobacco products to minors.

RATIONALE:

1. Indiana PTA believes more needs to be done to lessen the availability of alcoholic beverages to minors. According to the "Kids Count in Indiana" 2003 Data Book from the "Indiana Youth Institute" (IYI) statistics show that 68% of high school sophomores in Indiana and 67% of high school sophomores nationally have tried an alcoholic beverage at least once. In the same survey, 53% of 8th grade students (Indiana) and (nationally) 47% have tried alcohol.
2. Nationally, from data that has been collected, marijuana has been the most widely used illicit drug for 30 years. One in five 12th grade students surveyed report using marijuana on a monthly basis. That would be nationally (21%) and for Indiana (21%).
3. Indiana PTA believes that if the paraphernalia were not so easily available it's use would be curtailed.
4. The Indiana PTA believes families should be constantly reminded of the dangers involved in substance abuse.
5. Tobacco use by Hoosier youth has decreased steadily over the past decade, yet rates remain above national rates. Cigarette smoking is said to be a "gateway" drug that can lead to using

other drugs. Young smokers are 10 to 50 times more likely than non-smokers to use marijuana, cocaine and other illicit drugs.

MANDATORY KINDERGARTEN

The Indiana PTA

1. Supports fully funded mandatory kindergarten, half day or full day.
2. Also supports informing parents of any waiver process available for kindergarten entry.

RATIONALE:

1. Research and various studies indicate that kindergarten children do better than non-kindergarten children in academic readiness, school adaptation and general achievement. Research also shows that for every (\$1.00) one dollar invested in high-quality, comprehensive early care and education, society saves over \$7.00 seven dollars in welfare, special education and criminal justice costs. Mandatory kindergarten is a vital step to reducing the “achievement gap” that separates low-income and minority students from their peers.
2. Parents are entitled to make an informed choice about the starting date for kindergarten, including being informed about how a waiver process works in their respective school districts.

EQUITY AMONG EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The Indiana PTA

Supports and will actively pursue legislation that mandates that all requirements, statutes, oversights, accountabilities, policies, and laws that apply to public schools should also apply to charter and private schools that receive state funding.

RATIONALE::

Indiana PTA believes that all schools that receive public funds should receive equal treatment and scrutiny under the law and should be held to the same standards and practices.”

BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR ADULTS

Indiana PTA recognizes the importance and necessity of comprehensive background checks for adults who have contact with children in our schools.

Indiana PTA believes all schools regardless of type (public, private, charter, online, etc.) should be held to the same standards in background checks.

Indiana PTA believes credit scores/checks should not be a part of the background check process. Indiana PTA believes that any mandated increase in level or frequency of background checks should include additional funding to cover the costs.

Indiana PTA supports background checks for volunteers with common sense stipulations to help encourage parental involvement:

- (1) Registered non-expunged sex offenders, those guilty of violent crimes against children, and anyone guilty of the crimes defined by IC 11-8-8-5 should not be permitted to volunteer.
- (2) A non-violent felony conviction older than 5 years should not stop a volunteer background check from being approved.
- (3) Any felony conviction not covered in (1) older than 10 years should not stop a volunteer background check from being approved.
- (3) Misdemeanor convictions not covered in (1) should not stop a volunteer background check from being approved.
- (4) Minor drug offences older than 3 years not involving children or school property should not stop a volunteer background check from being approved.
- (5) These requirements and exemptions shall be clearly posted and printed on background check forms for volunteers.

RATIONALE:

All children in all schools should be surrounded by safe adults. Comprehensive background checks help to ensure this. However, parental involvement is affected when past mistakes stop parents from even trying to volunteer. Background check requirements should be clear and fair to all prospective volunteers in order to encourage greater parental involvement.

2019-2020 CONTINUING CONCERNS

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH

The Indiana PTA

1. Will continue to support legislation that promotes good health for children and youth and will continue to oppose legislation that would adversely effect the mental, physical and emotional health of children and youth.
2. Will support legislation which will protect the ecological and environmental qualities of life necessary to the development of healthy, productive children and youth.
3. Supports the immunization program of Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) as posted yearly in the IN State Department of Health School Immunization Requirements to keep childhood diseases at a minimum.
4. Supports the expansion and development of the mental health programs serving children.

RATIONALE:

1. The Indiana PTA believes that good health is essential to learning and contributes to the development of emotionally healthy children and youth.
2. Indiana PTA believes that the proper use and disposal of hazardous substances is a necessity in order to protect children and youth from harmful chemical substances.
3. Immunization is an important part in prevention of serious childhood diseases. Lack of immunization may result in a child being kept out of school or childcare.
4. Health is based on the quality of life of the whole child—emotional, intellectual, physical, and social. Indiana PTA believes we must expand the spectrum of mental health programs available to children and families.

JUVENILE PROTECTION

Indiana PTA supports legislation which will provide additional protective services for children in relation to juvenile protection, safety, rehabilitation, treatment and prevention of problems.

RATIONALE:

The Indiana PTA believes that a child's rights must be protected and that appropriate alternative services must be provided for neglected, delinquent, or at-risk students.

DIVERSITY IN STUDENT POPULATION

The Indiana PTA

1. Promotes and supports diversity in all schools.

RATIONALE:

1. A diverse population enhances the learning and working environment through appreciation of cultural, racial, ethnic and religious differences, and better prepares students for living in a diverse society.

SAFETY

The Indiana PTA

1. Will support/oppose any legislation which affects the safety of children; it will support legislation which protects the safety of students, patrons and school personnel in the school environment.
2. Will support and work towards the repeal of legislation allowing firearms (not carried by law enforcement officials or authorized school personnel) on school property or a property being used by a school for a school function.
3. Will support legislation for safety and accident prevention.
4. Will support enforcement of safety inspection laws for school bus transportation.
5. Will support legislation and existing laws for prosecution of persons or organizations that harm anyone within the education system or on school grounds.

RATIONALE:

1. Indiana PTA believes teachers, students, school personnel and patrons should be free from disruption by students or outside factors.
2. Indiana PTA believes that school safety is of the utmost importance. Allowing unauthorized firearms on school property or at an off-site school function is an inherent risk to the safety of children. Indiana PTA stands opposed to current Indiana law which takes away the power of schools to create gun-free zones for the safety of students and staff.
3. The health and safety of public school students requires that legislative initiatives addressing school buildings and grounds, environmental conditions, crime by and against youth, as well as use of seat belts in ALL vehicles, firearm and bicycle safety, etc, be kept current.
4. PTA has a special concern for school bus safety and the safety of children as they travel on city and county roads and highways.
5. Protecting the health and safety of those in our schools demands that offenders be prosecuted and punished to the letter of the law.

CURRICULUM/STANDARDS

The Indiana PTA reaffirms our long-standing policy which states that curriculum/standards development at the state level is the responsibility of the State Board of Education.

RATIONALE:

The Indiana PTA believes that a proposed mandate to teach a specific subject should be referred to the Superintendent of Public Instruction the Indiana Department of Education, not to the state legislature.

RECREATION

The Indiana PTA

Will continue to support and encourage adoption of legislation providing for greater coordination between public recreation and park agencies and local school corporations.

RATIONALE:

Indiana PTA believes that opportunities for children and youth are enhanced when the above entities form partnerships to develop indoor/outdoor recreational facilities.

SUPPORT SERVICES TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The Indiana PTA

1. Will continue to support legislation that will provide support services for children and families.
2. Supports legislation that will provide support for children and families including Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and to children with special needs.
3. Supports a constructive system of retraining, rehabilitation, family counseling and group counseling to help break the cycle of dependency.

RATIONALE:

1. Concern for the child requires that support services programs reflect the need for human dignity, healthy family life and self-help.
2. To meet the complex needs of our growing and diverse population, federal and state initiatives must be provided for a range of education, health and social services.
3. Indiana PTA believes it is important to provide assistance to the family, helping them achieve economic self-sufficiency.

2019-2020 CURRENT POSITION STATEMENTS

The Indiana PTA policy is that educational programs mandated by the state legislature and federal legislatures and other state regulatory agencies be fully funded by state and federal revenues.

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS

The Indiana PTA:

1. Will support one general diploma with specific distinctions if all costs associated with the diploma (including testing) is fully funded by the State and that school districts be allowed to introduce work arounds and/or exceptions for key groups if necessary.
2. Will only support Graduation Pathways if there is an allowance for a “local” pathway to accommodate students with special needs.

(April 2018)

CLASS SIZE

The Indiana PTA supports legislation to limit class size thereby reducing the teacher/student ratio, and supports research of how smaller class sizes lead to higher achievement.

TEACHER ISSUES (Professional Standard Board)

The Indiana PTA supports:

1. A well-monitored, strong certification program for those entering the teaching profession.
2. Annual teacher evaluations.
3. Increased teacher salaries in order to attract and retain quality teachers.
4. Annual cost of living (COLA as determined yearly by the Social Security Administration) salary increases for teachers in order to attract and retain quality teachers.
5. Parent-teacher conference days, fully funded by the state, in addition to the present (180) instructional days.
6. Supports staff development days, fully funded by the state, in addition to the present (180) instructional days.
7. All full-time teachers actively employed in our schools must be licensed teachers.

ELEMENTARY COUNSELORS

The Indiana PTA supports the addition of elementary school counselors, fully funded by the state.

DAY CARE/LATCH KEY PROGRAMS

The Indiana PTA supports daycare and latch key programs that address the need for care before, during and after school hours.

PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING

The Indiana PTA supports:

1. Equitable per pupil expenditures to meet the increasing needs of public education.
2. Full funding of all mandated programs.
3. Additional funding provided by the state to meet increased operating costs. (Examples: energy, insurance, transportation, etc.)
4. Funding of efforts to attract and maintain high quality school employees.
5. The implementation of a long-range financing system which is dependable, equitable and sufficient to sustain a public education system over the next decade and beyond for school corporations of ALL sizes.
6. A minimum increase in General Fund spending on public education in every biennial Indiana budget which is equal to two times the cost of living adjustment (as calculated by the Social Security Administration) of the greater of the previous two years. Funds for Indiana's Choice Scholarship Program (Vouchers) should not be included in this calculation.

CHOICE

The Indiana PTA believes options and alternatives within public schools should ensure that:

- The community sustains a viable public school system.
- Parents have the opportunity for involvement in their children's schools.
- Free and appropriate transportation be provided for students to ensure equity.
- Specialized schools provide for a fair and equitable selection process.
- Standards governing school curricula, personnel and student performance provide access to equal opportunities.
- Adequate and objective information be available to parents so that they can make informed decisions.

Indiana PTA opposes any program that allows public funds for non-public schools. PTA believes equitable funding must be available to all public schools in any choice program.

(1991)

INCLUSION

The Indiana PTA supports efforts to provide the least restrictive environment for students with disabilities. We also support staff development for those working with these students and the funding to accommodate their special needs.

(1995)

TEXTBOOK FUNDING

The Indiana PTA supports full state funding of textbooks for each student in public schools with additional fees normally charged by the school still to be paid by parents.

(May 1996)

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

The Indiana PTA supports the concept of state funded alternative education with the authority to establish a learning environment that addresses the needs of an at-risk student left to the local school board.

(May 1996)

SCHOOL NURSES

The Indiana PTA supports full time school nurses in every school and would encourage every school corporation to make this a priority.

(May 1996)

SCHOOL LIBRARIES

The Indiana PTA supports the addition and updating of books and materials for school libraries annually. Funding should be included in the General Fund formula along with technology.

(May 1996)

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Indiana PTA supports the function of public library boards as they are now in their communities. We will oppose legislation that will create elected public library boards.

(May 1996)

CHARTER SCHOOLS

The Indiana PTA acknowledges charter schools as one avenue to school reform and supports the creation of charter schools only if the schools reflect the positions and principles of the Indiana PTA.

The Indiana PTA will support legislation creating charter schools that meets the following specific conditions:

- Be open to all students
- Be supported by specifically allocated public funds in amounts that do not exceed and do not divert monies from public schools.
- Adhere to all federal and state laws which protect the health and safety of children, prohibit discrimination and insure access for all children, and comply with the Freedom of Information and Open Meetings Acts.
- Comply with federal and state laws governing public schools which require fiscal responsibility and accountability.
- Be made accountable to the local school boards in the districts in which they are located.
- Ensure the professional staff are certified for the positions they hold.
- Have a mechanism for independent evaluation to determine if they are providing students with an education at least comparable to public schools and fulfilling their mission of innovation.
- Involve parents in the decision-making process.

Indiana PTA will not support charter schools that:

- Are operated by for-profit organizations, or are affiliated with a non-public sectarian, religious or home-based school
- Charge tuition or fees not charged by public schools
- Have a negative impact on public schools

(1997)

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Indiana PTA supports the position that schools need to be held accountable for the quality of children's education. This includes:

- In-service and professional development of faculty/staff,
- Progress and growth in individual student assessment scores,
- Enforcement of attendance policies, and
- Involvement of parents in the strategies for education of their children

(May 1997)

ASSESSMENT

1. The Indiana PTA supports assessment of Indiana students that will demonstrate basic to advanced abilities in reading, writing, math and problem solving to ensure that high expectations and high standards are met for success in a competitive global society. Higher level thinking skills must be taught and assessed. The assessment program must be stable over several years so that achievement standards and test results are comparable.
2. Indiana parents and local school districts must be involved in developing this assessment program. Detailed information on the test and the consequences of scores must be provided to all parents in an understandable manner.
3. Full funding for training/in service for all Indiana teachers and time to introduce new curriculum must be provided prior to the start of the assessment program. Full funding must be guaranteed for remediation of all children that fall below the established norm.
4. The Indiana PTA believes that high stakes decisions, such as graduation or retention of students, should be based on multiple measures rather than a single test.

(April 1998)

CHARACTER EDUCATION

The Indiana PTA believes that having good character means understanding, caring about, and acting upon core ethical values such as honesty, respect and responsibility to one's self and community.

The Indiana PTA believes parents are the first and most important moral educators of their children. However, the Indiana PTA recognizes the vital role public schools have in teaching character education. The Indiana PTA believes that each child's moral development is as essential to the school's mission as academic learning.

Public schools provide an environment bridging ethnic and cultural differences to ensure a democratic society. Character education is the vehicle by which a community of caring is established. Indiana PTA encourages councils and local units to develop and promote character education initiatives that will provide children and youth with opportunities to grow in character.

Indiana PTA believes that parents should collaborate with others in their community to develop character education initiatives for their schools and communities. Working together as communities to develop such initiatives is essential to the well-being of our children and youth and to the preservation of our public schools.

(April 2002)

SAFE DRINKING WATER

Indiana PTA believes there is a need for parents to be informed about the quality of drinking water in public schools. PTA believes that parents should be aware of drinking water testing done at schools and have access to the results on a regular basis.

(May 2004)

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Indiana PTA supports efforts to improve children's health and nutrition. Indiana PTA will support legislation to update, expand and enhance programs, which will support efforts by public schools and parents to improve the quality of health and nutrition for children. Indiana PTA will oppose legislation cutting funding and/or programs that allocate physical education in public schools. Indiana PTA will support legislation which promotes healthy food, snacks and beverage choices for students in public schools.

(May 2004)

INDIANA'S P-16 PLAN (Improving student achievement)

The P-16 Plan for Improving Student Achievement is a document that is full of promise for the students of Indiana, and the Indiana PTA will seek to ensure that the Plan clarifies the meaning of parent involvement, identifies specific strategies in promoting parent involvement.

The Indiana PTA:

1. Supports the inclusion of the National PTA's National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement as the basis for clarifying the meaning of parent involvement and identifying parent involvement strategies.
2. Supports the inclusion of specific training in parent involvement for educators and administrators in their educational preparation classes by incorporating the National PTA program, Building Successful Partnerships, as a required part of the college teacher education curriculum.
3. Supports providing mandatory professional development for building and district leaders focused on engaging and working with parents and community through trainings utilizing the Building Successful Partnerships program.
4. Supports establishment of programs utilizing the National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement to help parents learn and understand how to help their child succeed.
5. Supports the establishment of a research-based evaluation tool for parent involvement by adopting the National PTA's Schools of Excellence Certification, the gold standard in assessment and evaluation.
6. Supports a public engagement campaign that will take the message of parent involvement to the grassroots, the people, in language that they can understand.

(May 2004)

AIR QUALITY IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Indiana PTA believes there's a need for parents to be informed about air quality in and around schools. In 2002, the Indiana General Assembly passed Senate Enrolled Act 407 (SEA-407). This law mandates that the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH):

1. Inspect a school for which ISDH has received a complaint about the quality of air in the school; and
2. Report the results of the inspection to the persons making the complaint to the school district superintendent, principal, the Indiana Department of Education and to the local health department.

Indiana PTA believes all parents at schools where a complaint has been filed have the right to be informed about a complaint about air quality as soon as the complaint has been filed public record.

Indiana PTA believes legislation is needed to amend SEA-407 to include the right to know for all parents with children attending schools impacted by air quality complaints.

(April 2011)

DATA PRIVACY

The Indiana PTA

- Recognizes that in the 21st century data has considerable intrinsic value.
- Believes that all school employees have the right to protect the privacy of their personal data.
- Believes that students (and their parents) have the right to protect the privacy of their personal data.
- Is against the sale or disclosure of personal or private data to any entity that the subject of that data has not agreed to have it shared with or who does not have an established legal right to the data.

(May 2015)

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The Indiana PTA supports:

That the Indiana General Assembly should continue funding the current wage/demand based Career and Technical Education (CTE) funding formula at least at current levels. The Indiana PTA opposes any funding formula proposal that decreases current enrollment funding.

That if the General Assembly should decide to add outcome-based funding, Indiana PTA opposes all forms of outcome-based funding that would have the effect of lowering the per student foundation.

(May 2015)