

## Juvenile Justice

The Florida 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;
- supports assisting youth leaving the juvenile justice system with programs that prevent recidivism.

## Mental Health

The Florida PTA urges state and local policy makers and school districts

- to employ evidence-based best practice ratios of those most qualified to provide school-based mental health: school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and school nurses.
- to provide the necessary resources and supports to ensure students have access to the proactive continuum of mental health services and they be incorporated with a strong family engagement component.

## Response to Sexual Harassment & Sexual Violence Affecting Students

The Florida PTA urges and supports

- the strengthening of Title IX, and other federal, state, and local laws that identify, address the effects of, and prohibit sexual harassment and sexual violence impacting students.
- compliance by recipients of federal funds with the provisions of Title IX.
- collaboration with school administrations, institutions of higher learning, and community partners to ensure that every school provides support services for victims of sexual harassment and sexual violence.
- awareness and prevention programs that address sexual harassment and sexual violence affecting students.
- training on the responsibilities of educational institutions; as well as include training on the rights of sexual violence and sexual harassment victims under Title IX and other laws and regulations.

## Funding

The Florida PTA urges the Legislature to fully fund strategies and programs that ensure the health, safety, and education of the children of Florida. It is the paramount duty of the state to make adequate provisions for the education of all children residing within its borders.

## Accountability

All educational institutions receiving public dollars, whether directly or indirectly, should be held to the same academic and accountability standards as public schools.



A Family of Advocates for ALL Children!

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# Florida PTA®

*everychild. one voice.*

2021

## Legislative Priorities



A Family of Advocates for ALL Children!

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## Supporting Florida's Homeless Students

The Florida PTA and its constituent associations shall educate their communities about the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, which is designed to aid in the education of homeless children by providing comprehensive services necessary to guarantee equal educational opportunities.

The Florida PTA urges policy makers:

- to implement and fully fund the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act provisions in all Florida school districts.
- to establish an ample funding allocation for the Title 1, Part A set-aside and Title X, which are funding sources used to support the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

## Student Involvement in Education

The Florida PTA urges:

- all school district superintendents and school boards to include student representatives on district and advisory committees.
- appoint school board student advisors.
- the Legislature and State Board of Education to appoint student representatives or advisors to the State Board of Education and all task forces impacting education.

## Voucher Funded School Accountability

While continuing to oppose vouchers in all forms, 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 as public schools. Our association believes that private school choice systems have detrimental effects on our public school systems. Public dollars must remain vested in public schools for the benefit of all students and the future of our nation.

## Assessment & Testing

The Florida PTA opposes the use of state or nationally mandated standardized tests as the sole criterion for measuring student progress or school performance. PTA believes that student assessments should:

- identify how instruction and learning can be improved.
  - be used to help parents and teachers determine specific academic needs of students .
  - Increase opportunities for student learning.
- Policy alternatives to social promotion and grade retention must be established.

*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.*

## Testing in Native Language

The Florida PTA:

- will work to educate its members, educators and legislators about the unique challenges English Language Learner students face in Florida's mandated testing process.
- calls for additional funding that would accommodate subject matter testing of all English Language Learner students in their native language.

## Gun Safety

The Florida PTA supports

- federal & local efforts to protect children and youth from gun violence;
- restricting access to guns by persons who may endanger public safety;
- closing the "gun show loophole";
- implementing of universal background checks
- providing all relevant records to the FBI National Instant Criminal Background Check System;
- outlawing military style semi-automatic weapons.

## Early Childhood Education

The 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, local) and characterized by high standards for teaching, training, health, and safety.

## Career & Technical Education

The Florida PTA provides information to its members and others with respect to benefits of career and technical education for students at all levels of academic achievement, as well as for the general public.

In addition, the Florida PTA urges the Florida Legislature and United States Congress to:

- increase funding for career and technical education programs, including registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs.
- Provide for appropriate market-driven compensation for career and technical education instructors.
- Provide for flexibility in the expansion of career and technical education pathways
- Provide for recruitment of a diverse population of program enrollees.

The purpose of this priority is so that all of Florida's residents will have the opportunity to access, fully participate in, and contribute to the state's economic prosperity.

## Educational implications for Dyslexia & Other Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)

The Florida PTA recognizes that SLD students have significant educational implications and encourages local and state education agencies and institutions of higher education to require pre-service and ongoing post-service training:

- on dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia and other SLD.
- on the warning signs of dyslexia.
- on appropriate instructional approaches.
- on the use of early screening for dyslexia.
- on successful approaches to communicating with parents.