



## ***Delaware PTA Legislative Priorities for 2015-16***

- **Elementary and Secondary Education-**

- 1) Delaware PTA will advocate for inclusion in the ESEA re-authorization that state assessments will not be used as a single indicator for accountability in regards to school ratings, teacher accountability, or individual student accountability. Furthermore, Delaware PTA will continue to push for a multiple parts assessment system to replace using a statewide single test score.
- 2) Delaware PTA will push for an assessment system that measures growth from Fall to Spring, informs instruction for educators, provides immediate results for parents, students, and educators, and one that features data that parents can use and understand while providing specific indicators that students have mastered the standards as they move toward college and career readiness.
- 3) Delaware PTA will continue to advocate for a parent's right to choose what is best for their own child(ren). Delaware PTA will move to have the next General Assembly override the Governor's veto on HB#50.
- 4) Delaware PTA will advocate prohibiting the use of participation rates in the state assessment in order for it to be used toward school accountability. Furthermore, Delaware PTA will work to educate the General Assembly on how the Academic Framework Working Group and DESS is promoting an agenda that is not in the best interest of all children. Delaware PTA will continue to communicate with the US DOE on this issue as counting participation rates towards accountability is not a federal mandate. Including participation rates toward school accountability is a state decision.
- 5) Delaware PTA will continue to advocate for more transparency from the Delaware DOE and The State Board of Education.
- 6) Delaware PTA will work to pass legislation that mandates that all school boards either traditional, vocational or charter schools digitally record their school board meetings.
- 7) Delaware PTA supports full funding for programs under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)
- 8) Delaware PTA opposes any legislation that seeks to divert public money to private schools. Delaware PTA opposes school vouchers.
- 9) Delaware PTA supports local school board term limits to no more than 3 years. Possibly suggesting staggered terms. Furthermore, Delaware PTA supports the removal of school board members by a majority vote if situations occur that will have a negative impact on the local district that it governs.

- **Early Childhood Education-**

- 1) Delaware PTA will advocate for resources and funding to be allocated for early childhood education.

2) Delaware PTA has long advocated that parents are children's first teachers. Delaware PTA will promote family engagement in education and promote the education of families in this arena. Delaware PTA will work with Delaware Department of Education to support training and education for parents and families in engaging them in their student's educational experience. Delaware PTA strongly encourages the inclusion of a family engagement component into all early childhood education programs.

- **Education Funding-**

- 1) Delaware PTA will advocate for a weighted funding formula to ensure that the neediest students are receiving the resources that they deserve. Delaware PTA will advocate for the elimination of unit funding in replace of weighted funding.
- 2) Delaware PTA will work to safeguard funding streams for disadvantaged populations and the students that are at the most risk.
- 3) Delaware PTA will continue to support the community, public, and parent's right to have a vote in educational funding. Delaware PTA will support referendum voting by the community. In the case that The General Assembly continues to fund our schools via a raise in our tax dollars through referendum that the vote remain in school buildings and that voting should not be permitted by US mail unless in the case of an absentee ballot.
- 4) Delaware PTA will continue to advocate for separate funding for Guidance Counselors and related arts in curriculum (gym, music, art and library) in each school building where this does not exist and that such funding would be paid for 100% by the state and not be part of the unit count of a school building.

- **Special Education**

- 1) Delaware PTA will continue to advocate that all special education students graduate from high school, college and career ready or the equivalent in such cases that it is deemed appropriate.
- 2) Delaware PTA will continue to advocate for full inclusion in all our school buildings.
- 3) Delaware PTA will work to ensure that the rights of children with special needs and their parents are fully protected.

- **Child Nutrition**

- 1) Delaware PTA will continue to advocate for healthy and nutritious school lunches.
- 2) Delaware PTA will advocate that all schools serving students that have a high percentage of low income students provide free breakfast and lunch for every student.
- 3) Delaware PTA supports increased funding and resources for mental health services for youth including but not limited to mental health first aid and suicide prevention programs.

- **School Safety**

- 1) Delaware PTA supports legislation to establish uniform guidelines for the hiring and training of all Student Resource Officers( SROs)
- 2) Delaware PTA seeks dedicated funding to enable localities to offer The Department of Justice or similar SRO training such that the school and public safety are not compromised.
- 3) Delaware PTA will work to ensure that student data privacy is protected. Delaware PTA will advocate for a parents' right to choose if and when their child's data can and will be used and shared.
- 4) Delaware PTA continues to support that students' who are on the internet are not being solicited by outside companies that promote an agenda that could harm or cause inappropriate actions to minors.
- 5) Delaware PTA will continue to advocate for the funds for School Resource Officers come from the state and not rest solely on the local school districts.
- 6) Delaware PTA will continue to advocate for zero tolerance of bullying in our schools, and enforcement of school/district reporting guidelines of incidents of bullying.