

Advocacy October 2011!

What do hot school lunches, polio vaccines, gun safety, substance abuse education and family involvement requirements within No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation have in common?
PTA has advocated for them all!

Go to : <http://www.pta.org/4786.asp> to watch an excellent short video
"PTA Advocacy: A Legacy of Leadership" and for other Advocacy information.

Did you know that PTA is the largest and oldest child advocacy organization dedicated to the health, welfare, safety and education of children? Advocacy is an intrinsic part of PTA:

The PTA Mission:

- A powerful voice for all children
- A relevant resource for families and communities
- ***A strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child***

The PTA Purposes:

- To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community, and place of worship
 - To raise the standards of home life
 - ***To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth***
- To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth
- To develop between educators and the general public such efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education

So we have discussed the why, so how about the what...

What can you do? As a parent we are all advocates for our children. PTA helps with that by providing parent education and supporting family involvement in the schools. Because PTA is a respected part of the education and youth community, we often have a say with governmental and other organizations. You are a part of that by just joining PTA. Being a member is your first additional step in advocacy. Perhaps you want to take advocacy another step. Stay informed! That is where the PTA Advocacy Committees come in. Please look for this report and look to other resources (listed below). An even bigger step is to contact legislators or others about issues that concern you. National PTA has also created a great tool for online advocacy:

Join the "PTA Take Action Network" by signing up at:

<http://www.pta.org/takesaction/>

Useful Advocacy websites:

Ohio PTA	www.ohiopta.org
National PTA	www.pta.org
State of Ohio	www.ohio.gov
Ohio School Boards Assoc.	www.osba-ohio.org
Ohio Education Assoc.	www.oea.columbus.oh.us

See the next page for current advocacy updates.

Please contact me (Elise Fessler @ bfsing@cinci.rr.com, HCC PTAs' Advocacy Chair) to get on a distribution list for Advocacy Reports (this report can be used as is for meetings and newsletters or edit it as desired but please keep the references mentioned).

The following is taken from the Ohio School Board Assoc. "Facts in a Flash":

House Education Committee

As of 9/30/11 this committee heard testimony on House Bill (HB) [296](#) and HB [255](#).

[HB 296](#), would require the chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents to establish standards and protocols for approving career-technical planning districts to award associate degrees to students.

[HB 255](#), would require school districts and community schools to establish school breakfast programs in school districts rated "academic emergency" and include implementation of that program in its academic improvement plan. The proposal also would require districts that are excused from providing an otherwise required school breakfast, lunch or summer food program to develop plans to eventually provide such a program.

HB 136 voucher bill update

The Ohio House has not voted on HB 136, sponsored by Rep. Matt Huffman (R-Lima), yet.

HB 136 creates the Parental Choice and Taxpayer Savings Scholarship (voucher) Program (PACT), a new statewide program allowing K-12 students to use a voucher to attend private schools.

- Expands vouchers to students in all school districts, regardless of the academic report card rating of the school building or school district. The only qualifier for eligibility is household income. Students whose family income is less than \$95,000 would qualify.
- Allows students currently enrolled in private schools to be eligible for the voucher (phases in over 4 yrs).
- If the private school tuition is less than the voucher amount, it allows parents to bank the excess dollars for college tuition and textbooks at any private school or college in Ohio.
- Deducts funding for the voucher from the resident school district's funding (aggregate amount deducted from district cannot exceed a district's state aid funding.)

Senate Education Committee

AS of 9/30/11 this committee heard testimony Senate Bill (SB)183, SB175, SB221, SB177 and HB116.

[SB 183](#), would exempt from closure certain community schools that enroll students receiving behavioral health services for poor academic performance.

[SB 175](#), would generally prohibit a community school from admitting a student from the school district in which it is located if the student's district school has a better performance rating than the community school.

[SB 221](#), would make elementary-level achievement assessments public records. HB 153, which passed in June, included an amendment that limits public access to these records for the 2011-2012 school year.

[SB 177](#), would require public high schools that receive federal school improvement grants to establish student advisory committees.

[HB 116](#), would require age-appropriate school anti-bullying instruction to the extent that federal or state funds are appropriated for this purpose.

From the National PTA website:

Common Core Information

Check out the Common Core information that PTA has put together at:

http://www.pta.org/common_core_state_standards.asp

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