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## **NASSAU REGION 2022 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

### **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

Nassau Region PTA supports:

- prohibiting discrimination based on race, gender identity, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, national origin and culture, language, religion, age, physical, neurological and academic ability, and sexual orientation.
- the creation and implementation of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives and practices in all schools.

### **PUBLIC FUNDS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Nassau Region PTA: supports:

- the opposition of direct or indirect federal, state or local aid for non-public schools including but not limited to the diversion of funds from public schools for vouchers, charter schools, and tuition tax credits that fund unrelated federal and state interests
- legislation that would change the method of funding charter schools to eliminate any adverse impact on existing school districts and ensures charter school accountability
- full funding to ensure a safe schools environment including clean water, air, and soil, free of toxic substances
- funding and services for CR Part 154 Regulation (Comprehensive ELL Education Plan) implementation

## **FUNDING FOR CHILD RELATED PROGRAMS**

Nassau Region PTA supports:

- funding for quality, affordable, accessible, and accredited childcare, including school-based before and after school programs
- funding for community-based youth services programs
- funding for Pre-K Technical Assistance Centers on Long Island
- continued funding and implementation of a free year-round universal school based nutritional meals program for all children and youth

## **FUNDING FOR EDUCATION**

Nassau Region PTA supports:

- education finance reform that provides a funding formula that is adequate, equitable, transparent, reliable, and sustainable for ALL school districts, that provides the opportunity for EVERY child, including undocumented and unaccompanied children, to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE)
- equitable funding for schools with consideration of regional cost factors
- timely, equitable, predictable, and sustained funding by the State of all education mandates, including New York State Next Generation Learning Standards professional development, Pre K, full-day kindergarten, English Language Learners (ELL) and Bi-lingual, and mental health education mandates
- the elimination of any state-imposed tax cap and the requirement for a supermajority vote on public school district budgets
- the exemption of Special Education and transportation from any State-imposed tax cap
- state aid of a minimum of 50% of total educational costs distributed equitably per student\*
- updating the Foundation Aid Formula to reflect current school conditions and need, sustained funding that ensures optimal class size for all grade levels\*
- adequate and equitable funding for maintenance and modernization of school facilities
- funding by the State for parent training and workshops on all education mandates including New York State Next Generation Learning Standards
- funding for comprehensive tobacco education programs inclusive of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) and other vaping products \*

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Nassau Region PTA supports:

- equal opportunity for all students with special needs to reach their full potential
- the placement of special needs children based on data or research-based criteria, and in accordance with the mandated Individualized Education Program (IEP) in the least restrictive environment (LRE)
- the continuation of full funding of the federal commitment of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- mandatory inclusion of a checklist for Eligibility for the Compensatory Safety Net Option prior to and at all CSE/504 meetings, education of parents/caregivers of New York State Education Department (NYSED) options for students with disabilities to graduate with a local diploma.
- measuring the level of growth of students with special needs through a more appropriate academic assessment based on the student's cognitive and developmental level

## **EDUCATION**

Nassau Region PTA supports:

- equitable access for all students to a quality education to prepare them for career, college and citizenry
- digital and technology equity for all students
- the right of all children residing in NYS, regardless of their immigration status, to have access to a quality public education
- mandatory full-day kindergarten for all children
- universal pre-k for all children
- promoting awareness of neurodivergence by educating parents/caregivers, teachers and staff, and school administrations, on neurodiversity (individual differences in brain functioning regarded as normal variations within the human population)
- assessments with flexible application to measure the achievement of New York State Next Generation Learning Standards
- opposition to linking components of APPR to student achievement based on high stakes state testing
- legislation that seeks waivers from federal and state mandates that allow for reduced restrictions on testing, including those for students with special needs and English Language Learners (ELL)
- sufficient time for professional development and creation of instructional materials for any new NYSED academic standards
- the expansion of Multiple Pathways to Graduation

## **FAMILY/SCHOOL/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Nassau Region PTA supports:

- effective and meaningful family/school partnerships in the decision-making process that are evaluated and assessed in accordance with the National PTA Standards
- enhancement of communication linking parent/primary caregiver and teacher, home, and school
- initiatives to include non-English speaking parents and families in the school community
- dissemination of information regarding mandated parent involvement policies
- leave for parents/primary caregivers to take children to health care providers, attend parent-teacher conferences, participate in school decision-making committees, and attend school activities
- increased opportunities for parents/primary caregivers to become involved in community coalitions
- funding to support and expand the New York State Education Department Office of Family and Community Engagement
- access to age-appropriate and educationally sound LGBTQ+ affirming resources and support among students, families, school employees, and community members

## **SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND MENTAL HEALTH**

Nassau Region PTA supports:

- funding for comprehensive school mental health programs that include increased access to psychologists, counselors, social workers, nurses, and other support staff
- training of teachers, administrators, and school district employees to improve their understanding of youth social, emotional, and mental health needs
- education, training, and professional development of school district employees to assist with addressing mental health issues, emphasizing early detection
- mental health educational programs for parents and families to strengthen and promote understanding and reducing stigma of childhood and youth mental health issues
- bias training of school support staff when addressing youth social, emotional, and mental health needs

## **DIGITAL/INTERNET SAFETY**

Nassau Region PTA supports:

- legislation, policies, and regulations that protect children and youth when using the internet, wireless devices, and other forms of digital and electronic communications including the use of their personal data
- programs to educate students, school district staff, school boards, parents, and communities of the dangers of the internet and digital communication for children and youth, including the risk of accessibility to drugs and predators
- felony status for the sale of alcoholic beverages via the internet to minors\*
- legislation requiring age verification for the sale of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, marijuana and vaping products via the internet

## **JUVENILE PROTECTION**

Nassau Region PTA supports:

- strengthening and enforcing laws protecting children and youth from predators
- funding for the development and implementation of preventive strategies and safety measures to address the problem of school violence
- ongoing school violence prevention and crisis response training for school staff working directly with students, education of the school community to address violence including, but not limited to, gangs, guns, bullying, cyber-bullying, hazing, and sexting
- collaboration between school, PTA and law enforcement agencies to establish uniform policies and practices to address school safety measures, school violence, bullying, gangs, alcohol, tobacco, and other drug activity in accordance with the Dignity for All Students Act
- eliminating inequities and improving access to appropriate education and support services within the juvenile justice system, including but not limited to mental health and substance use services
- the use of restorative practices to address problematic behaviors in educational settings, in lieu of punitive actions such as withholding education experiences
- state and federal legislation and regulation that creates a safe, supportive and accepting environment in schools; specifying ongoing training for educators and other school-related professionals in support of all students to increase sensitivity to LGBTQ+ students, and their families
- creation of a safe, inclusive, supportive and accepting environment in schools for transgender and gender non-conforming students; providing training and access to age- and developmentally-appropriate resources for educators, school-related professionals, families, and community members\*
- funding and services for Raise the Age implementation
- ban on all flavored tobacco and nicotine related products, including menthol and mint\*

- the continued opposition of the commercialization and sale to minors of recreational marijuana and to the establishment of dispensaries and lounges.
- initiatives to require the use of appropriate and safe seat belts on school buses\*

### **COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH INITIATIVES**

Nassau Region PTA supports:

- compliance with comprehensive health and wellness policies for all students
- improving the nutritional choices in schools
- compliance with state physical education standards
- eliminating tobacco, vaping, and Electronic Nicotine Delivery System (ENDS) product advertising\*
- increased enforcement, fines, and penalties for any unlawful sale of alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, marijuana and other drugs
- schools developing and enforcing comprehensive tobacco policies inclusive of electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) and vaping products\*
- funding for affordable and accessible licensed substance use disorder prevention and treatment services
- increased access to the life-saving overdose medication Naloxone
- the rightful authority of parents/guardians over a minor to obtain necessary assessments in order to secure and complete chemical/alcohol dependency treatment
- schools providing information on health care proxies to parents and those students turning 18 years of age \*
- banning Genetically Modified Food Products, also known as Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), Genetically Engineered Foods (GE) and Biofortified Products, in school foods and beverages, mandatory transparent labeling of all Genetically Modified Food Products, also known as Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), Genetically Engineered (GE) Foods and Biofortified Products.\*
- the development and implementation of Comprehensive Sexuality Health Education learning standards and K-12 curriculum
- the establishment of regulations for maximum classroom temperatures in school buildings\*
- the establishment of regulations for the use and sale of Cannabidiol (CBD) and related products\*

National PTA Federal Public Policy Agenda: [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)

New York State Legislative Priorities: [www.nyspta.org](http://www.nyspta.org)

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***\* Resolution authored by Nassau Region PTA and adopted by New York State PTA***