



## 2017-2018 Kansas PTA Legislative Platform and Priorities

**PTA Mission and Values.** The mission of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children. Initiatives of the PTA are aligned with this mission and guided by five core values: collaboration, commitment, diversity, respect and accountability.

**EDUCATION PLATFORM** – Kansas PTA supports equitable access to quality education that provides all Kansas children the opportunity to make significant growth toward and to achieve the state education standards. The Kansas PTA recognizes no education system can be of the highest quality without the support, involvement and collaboration of parents, caregivers, legislators and the community.

**Priority 1.** Kansas PTA supports efforts to strengthen and improve the Kansas public school finance system, which includes legislation and policies that:

- uphold the state's constitutional obligations to make suitable provision for the finance of the Kansas public schools, achieving both equitable and adequate funding, as informed by actual costs and other credible non-partisan sources.
- pursue solutions to fully fund state and federal educational mandates, including special education, without disproportionately shifting the burden to local communities.

**Priority 2.** Kansas PTA will support an equitable and balanced tax policy to maintain a reliable revenue stream for public education. A policy which draws upon a combination of income, property and sales taxes has been proven by history to be a secure and sustainable approach.

**Priority 3.** Kansas PTA supports policies that promote professional learning communities, teacher retention and recruitment including the restoration and allocation of state funding for teacher mentoring, staff development and other evidenced-based programs and policies that promote quality instruction.

**Priority 4.** Kansas PTA opposes the use of vouchers, scholarships, or tax credits toward the tuition of non-public schools, with the authority to discriminate in admissions, provide sectarian religious instruction and operate under different rules of transparency and accountability than public schools.

**Priority 5.** Kansas PTA supports current state charter legislation, passed in 1994. Charter legislation should assure that charter school authorizing bodies meet the highest levels of accountability, ensure transparency, and meaningfully engage parents. Charter Schools should be open to all students and comply with federal and state laws governing public schools that require transparency, responsibility and accountability. The National PTA Position Statement on Charter Schools can be found at [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org) for complete review.

**Priority 6.** Kansas PTA advocates for evidence-based prevention and early intervention programs ranging from comprehensive early childhood programs, like PreK and Parents as Teachers, to funding for all-day kindergarten, to student engagement programs that reduce dropout rates and increase school completion.

**Priority 7.** Kansas PTA supports the State Board of Education's routine review, revision and adoption of state education standards, including the College and Career Ready Standards (derived from the Common Core States Standards Initiative) and the Next Generation Science Standards. We encourage the State Board's continued use of stakeholder engagement throughout the revision process, including meaningful input from parents and teachers. Kansas PTA opposes legislation that would ban or defund the education standards as approved by our freely elected, non-partisan members of the State Board of Education.

**Priority 8.** Kansas PTA recognizes the value of collecting student data to make informed decisions about educational policy and practices and thus will advocate that data collectors be transparent and engaged with families on the development, implementation and notification about policies and procedures related to the privacy and protection of student data; and, allow for parents and families to retain the right to review and request corrections of their child(ren)'s education records or profiles.

**Priority 9.** Kansas PTA will support efforts to preserve the Kansas Constitutional infrastructure for education, including nonpartisan elections of Kansas school board members and their appointment of our Education Commissioner, as well as, retaining the primary responsibility of defining the state education standards, as facilitated by the Kansas School Board, Kansas Department of Education, and with input from parents, education scholars, practitioners and other education stakeholders.

**Priority 10.** Kansas PTA will encourage the adoption of PTA family engagement standards into relevant legislation and policy.

**HEALTH, WELFARE AND SAFETY PLATFORM** – The Kansas PTA will support legislation and appropriations that safeguard and/or related to the health and safety of children and youth.

**Priority 11.** Kansas PTA supports programming and policies including the protection of children from gun violence, bullying prevention, and safe routes to school.

**Priority 12.** Kansas PTA supports prevention and early intervention programs and initiatives to reduce participation of youth in the juvenile justice system and to promote the prevention of delinquency.

**Priority 13.** Kansas PTA supports access to affordable health and dental care for children and families.

Publication of the Kansas PTA Advocacy Leadership (2017)

Denise Sultz, Kansas PTA President  
Josh Halperin, Kansas PTA Vice President of Advocacy  
Devin Wilson, Kansas PTA State Legislative Chair  
Mary Sinclair, PhD, Team Advocate  
Debbie Lawson, Team Advocate