

August General Meeting – Advocacy Chair Report

1. FloridaPTA.org/Advocacy – information available on take action sign up (join over 300,000 advocates in Florida; registration must be updated yearly), legislation, resolutions, and a guide for being a PTA advocate. Please visit this valuable resource.
2. Resolutions passed at 2017 leadership convention
 - a. Mental Health Support in Florida Schools – Florida PTA and its constituent associations recommend that any mental health intervention, prevention programs or services must include a strong family engagement component – including collaborative relationships with the family, school, and community partners (e.g. early learning caregivers, physicians, and other related health providers) – as well as transparent and open communication and coordination between provider, school, parents, and families.
 - b. Promoting Civil Citations as an Alternative to Youth Arrest –
 - i. The Florida PTA and its constituent associations support and advocate in favor of policies that increase and standardize the utilization of youth civil citations as an alternative to arrest in every county across the state;
 - ii. and be it further resolved that Florida PTA and its constituent associations educate community stakeholders as so the benefits of utilizing civil citations as an alternative to arrest;
 - iii. and be it further resolved that Florida PTA and its constituent associations encourage government and community organizations to provide quality programs, services and resources to positively redirect and support youth who have been issued civil citations.
3. Legislative Session is early this year – January 9th – March 9th (Regular Sessions). Preliminary committee meetings are going on now.
4. Legislative conference January 21-23rd. Plan to go if you can.
5. House Bill 7069 signed into law on June 15, 2017. It now exists as Chapter No. 2017-116, Laws of Florida. There is a white paper available at FloridaPTA.org that explains the pros and cons of this law as well as how the PTA would like to reform it.
6. Legislative Priorities – 2017 are on the website; will be updated with 2018

HOW YOU, YOUR LOCAL UNIT, AND YOUR FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND NEIGHBORS CAN HELP: ☒

- Get to know your legislators personally, follow them on social media, and keep in touch; you have more influence if your name and face are familiar. ☒
- Sign up for Voter Voice on the Florida PTA website, and respond to alerts.
- Follow us on Twitter at @FLPTA_Leg. ☒
- Budget for and attend the 2018 Florida PTA Legislative Conference in January.
- Remember that PTA is nonpartisan and works to direct its efforts at members of all political parties in order to enact change. When PTA officers or lobbyists participate in legislative activities that educate lawmakers about officially adopted PTA positions, or support a particular piece of legislation that is in agreement with the PTA Legislative Program, it is done on a strictly nonpartisan basis.