

What is Advocacy?

In the context of PTA, advocacy is supporting and speaking up for children—in schools, in communities, and before government bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children.

Advocating for Federal Policy

PTA is the oldest and largest volunteer child advocacy association in the United States. Founded in 1897, PTA has a long, successful history of influencing federal policy to promote the education, health and well-being of all children—resulting in kindergarten classes, child labor laws, school lunch programs, a juvenile justice system, and strengthened parent-teacher relationships. National PTA continues that legacy today by fighting for change under its federal public policy priorities:

- Family Engagement in Education
- Quality Education for All Children
- Adequate Funding for Education
- Child Health and Nutrition
- Safe Schools and Communities
- Fair Juvenile Justice Laws

Advocating for State Laws

State laws have a major impact on education and child welfare. State and local PTAs can play a pivotal role in promoting PTA priorities by involving their members in advocacy to help secure adequate state and local laws for our students.

Ways to Advocate

There are many ways to be an advocate! Some ways families can be involved are to:

- Meet with school leaders to discuss a topic of importance to the district.
- Attend a school board meeting and/or serve on the school board.
- Work with the school and state leaders to implement strong family engagement policies.
- Sign up for the National PTA *Takes Action* Network to get updates on important federal policies and send messages to your members of Congress. Check your state PTA's website to see if they have a network as well.
- Write a letter to the editor to stress the importance of family engagement and other PTA policy priorities.
- Educate your members of Congress and their staff on PTA's federal public policy priorities.

Advocacy Resources

National PTA has many advocacy resources for our members and state affiliates that are easy to find and easy to use. Here is an overview of the resources and how to find them:

Advocacy Toolkit: The Advocacy Toolkit contains helpful information on how to work with legislative leaders and the media, as well as the federal budget and legislative processes. It also includes videos on PTA's advocacy history, and "lobbying the PTA way."

PTA.org/AdvocacyToolkit

Takes Action Network: The PTA *Takes Action* Network is the hub of National PTA's federal advocacy activities. You can look up your members of Congress and send messages on PTA priorities, catch up on news impacting children, and connect with PTA.

PTA.org/TakesAction

Federal Policy Agenda: National PTA prepares a Federal Public Policy Agenda (PPA) each year that outlines PTA's policy priorities and recommendations to Congress. The PPA website includes the full agenda, plus an executive summary in both English and Spanish, and webinars.

PTA.org/Advocacy

Election Guides: Created in partnership with Nonprofit VOTE, these materials provide PTAs with election-related information, including candidate forums, ballot measures and election engagement.

PTA.org/ElectionGuides

Common Core Toolkit: The toolkit will assist PTAs located in states implementing the Common Core Standards and revised assessments. The toolkit features our *Parent's Guide to Success* for each state, as well as assessment guides, relevant articles, and advocacy information.

PTA.org/CommonCore

Special Education Toolkit: This toolkit includes information on federal disability policy, navigating the special education system, helpful acronyms, and a list of outside resources for parents of children with special needs.

PTA.org/SpecialEducation

Support and Training

PTA offers its members support and training for their advocacy efforts, such as:

- Policy Workshops
- PTA Federal and State Legislative Chairs
- Legislative Committee
- Government Affairs Staff

Join the PTA Takes Action Network today!

Sign up at PTA.org/TakesAction