

Proposed Resolutions - Retentions

RETENTION #1

Enforcement of Current Regulations for Placement of Children and Youth with Disabilities - 2004 (R-'97, R-'90, R-'83);

- Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. oppose any changes in federal or state laws and/or regulations that could lead to delays or extensions of state deadlines regarding the evaluation and appropriate placement of children and youth with disabilities.
- Resolved that the New York State PTA oppose any changes in federal or state laws and/or regulations that would allow any increase in class size.
- Resolved that the New York State PTA urge the Commissioner of Education to strongly enforce all the current regulations regarding the education of children and youth with disabilities.
- Statement: Recent discussions related to mandate relief for New York State school districts have included proposals to align NYS special education regulations with federal regulations. NYS regulations are often stricter than associated federal regulations, and in some cases, there are no federal regulations or guidelines at all. It is important that New York State PTA continue to advocate against changes that could reduce the opportunity for students with disabilities to succeed in school.

RETENTION #2

Community Schools Program - 2004 (R-'97, R-'90);

- Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. encourage development and support of the Community Schools Program in areas where needed and appropriate.
- Resolved that the New York State PTA promote continued allocation of the resources necessary for the continuance and expansion of the Community Schools Program.
- Statement: The Community Schools Program (CSP) is a New York State Education Department initiative that seeks to raise student achievement and enrich family life by making the local school a focal point of educational, recreational, cultural, social and health services provided in partnership with community organizations. While funding for the CSP may have decreased, it is still a worthy program consistent with PTA's mission and goals.

RETENTION #3

Recess for Students – 2004;

- Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge the Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department to encourage every school district to offer at least twenty minutes a day of supervised, unstructured time (recess) for all elementary students in NYS.
- Resolved that the New York State PTA urge that recess not be eliminated from a child's school day due to academic failure and that teachers, parents and administrators consider alternative behavior modification methods before denying any child recess activities.
- Statement: A New York State Education Department Commissioner of Education's ruling in 1993 states that recess may not count towards the mandated physical education requirement in public schools, but it does not address retention or elimination of recess itself. In light of current spending reductions and the fact that recess is not protected in such rulings or legislation, it has become common to replace recess with academic work and/or services or withhold recess for disciplinary reasons. Recognizing this fact, in 2006 National PTA launched a "Rescuing Recess" campaign calling for the preservation of recess. Studies reveal that children who engage in unstructured physical and social activity during recess benefit socially and academically; therefore, the need to advocate for recess remains.

RETENTION #4

Multiple Day Test Administration for All Students With Extended Time and Two Regents on the Same Day - 2004;

- Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. seek to have the New York State Education Department revise its policy so all students, who have extended test time of any duration as determined by the CSE or 504 Committee, be permitted to use multiple day test accommodation when scheduled for two Regents exams on the same day regardless of the student's particular disability or management needs.
- Resolved that New York State PTA seek to have the New York State Education Department revise its procedure that will grant the local school district CSE or 504 Committee the authority to make the decision to allow the use of multiple day test accommodation with an obligation to inform the New York State Education Department, through its building principal, but not require New York State Education Department's approval for accommodation.
- Statement: The process of securing the State Education Department's permission for a student to have multiple day administration of exams is a lengthy one that must be initiated with at least 90 days' notice. In addition, some students with extended time in their Individualized Education Programs (IEP) or 504 Accommodation Plans may not be approved for multiple day testing, depending upon their disabilities.

RETENTION #5

Mandated School Budget Votes- 2004 (R-'97);

- Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc.'s units and councils educate their community about the effects of a late state budget on its school district.
- Resolved that the New York State PTA's units and councils urge the legislature to meet its constitutional duty by passing the budget on time.
- Statement: If the NYS Legislature does not pass the state budget on time, the impact on a school district can include potentially late funding and the district's inability to project state aid accurately while building its own budget for timely presentation to voters. PTA members should be familiar with these potential impacts and use that information in advocating to their legislators for an on-time budget.

RETENTION #6

Leveling Up Low Wealth Districts - 2004 (R-'97, R-'90, R-'83);

- Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. continue to support state aid formulas that provide for more equitable educational opportunity by leveling up the low wealth districts.
- Statement: New York State PTA has long advocated for an equitable distribution of state education funds that will provide equal educational opportunities for students in all public schools. A state aid formula that levels up low wealth school districts provides a sound method to achieve this end without disadvantaging higher wealth districts.

RETENTION #7

Healthy School Foods – 2004;

- Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. support initiatives that would encourage local school districts to provide optional plant-based vegetarian (vegan) school entrees and nutrition education materials and instruction; eliminate high calorie, high fat, low nutrition desserts from the menu; eliminate a la carte and vending items that are low nutrient, high calorie, high fat or high sodium and replace them with high nutrient and generally low calorie items; and support Farm to School programs, including organic foods where possible.
- Resolved that the New York State PTA encourage its units/councils to educate parents and school district staff about healthy eating patterns, including plant-based entrees.
- Resolved that the New York State PTA urge its units/councils to participate in the decision making about implementing, within their own schools and school districts, the recommendations of NYS Legislative Resolutions J3971 (Senate) and K1888 (Assembly) and to support legislative resolutions that promote healthy choices, such as vegetarian, in school lunch programs.
- Statement: One in three children in the United States is overweight or obese and at great risk of developing diabetes, high blood pressure, asthma and other serious diseases, as well as facing a lifetime of obesity. School lunch programs need to continue to promote healthy eating by replacing high calorie, low-nutrient foods with healthful, low-calorie options like the free and accessible drinking water with school meals mandated by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. It is essential that families and local PTAs be actively engaged partners in this effort.

RETENTION #8

Head Injuries – 2004 (R-'97);

- Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. seek and support legislation establishing a state tracking system for head injuries in all children and students and a record that would follow each child and student from year to year.
- Resolved that the New York State PTA seek and support legislation establishing guidelines for return to play after a concussion.
- Resolved that the New York State PTA urge local school districts and community athletic organizations to include the addition of head injuries on health summaries and yearly physical forms.
- Resolved that the New York State PTA local units and councils educate their community on the dangers of head injuries.
- Statement: Annually, half a million children and youth visit emergency rooms for traumatic brain injury. A state tracking system and return to play protocol would enable school systems to collect, analyze and monitor information related to the circumstances of head injuries, medical treatment to control those injuries, and the cumulative effects on youth who sustain head injuries.

RETENTION #9

To Require Coordinating Councils on School Health as a Means of Effectively Using School Time - 2004 (R-'97);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge the Board of Regents and the State Education Department to require every school district to establish a district wide comprehensive school health and wellness advisory council which would include health and education professionals, parents, community leaders, and other stakeholders.

Statement: This resolution calls for every school district to create a comprehensive school health and wellness advisory committee. While many school districts have created such committees, the only districts required to do so are those that participate in the federal school lunch program.

RETENTION #10

"Inert Ingredients" - 2004 (R-'97);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge and support legislation which would require pesticide manufacturers and formulators to disclose by product labeling the total composition of pesticide products including each "inert" ingredient in the formulation.

Statement: Inert ingredients are substances added to a pesticide to make it more effective, more stable, or easier to use. The fact that they are not the active lethal element of a pesticide does not mean, however, that they are safe or harmless, and in fact many are hazardous to the environment and human health. While the Environmental Protection Agency does monitor the inert ingredients found in specific pesticides, it does not make this information public and rarely requires manufacturers to do so. We believe the public needs this information to be able to assess the risks posed by these products.

RETENTION #11

CPR/AED and First Aid - 2004 (U-'97, R-'90, R-'83);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. encourage the New York State Education Department to require, and encourage funding for, all schools to provide the opportunity for all school personnel to receive annual training in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR)/automated external defibrillation (AED) and first aid.

Statement: Whenever public schools are used for school-sponsored or school-approved curricular or extracurricular events or activities and whenever a school-sponsored athletic contest takes place at any location, the law requires that there be present at least one staff person who is trained in the operation and use of an AED. Adequate training is essential for correct use of an AED, CPR or first aid care, and the State Education Department should promote such training of school personnel in any way possible.

RETENTION #12

Rapid Weight Loss Diets - 2004 (R-'97, R-'90, R-'83);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. encourage school districts to include as part of nutrition education the possible health hazards of rapid weight loss diets.

Resolved that coaches not encourage rapid weight loss or gain for participation in sports programs.

Proposed Resolutions - Retentions (continued)

Statement: Studies over the past two decades have described increasingly widespread body weight dissatisfaction and body image disturbances among children and adolescents. Dissatisfaction with body weight frequently leads to extreme dieting and the use of unhealthy or “pathogenic” weight control methods that may seem to give quick results, but can also be highly unsafe for young people to use. While some sports involve either a requirement to reach a specific weight or a perception that an athlete will have an advantage if he or she performs at a lower weight, coaches must not encourage these behaviors.

RETENTION #13

Fingerprinting Children - 2004 (R-'97, R-'90, R-'83);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc., in areas where fingerprinting programs are to be implemented, urge the local units and councils to adopt the following guidelines: (1) Seek advice and cooperation from police departments so that fingerprints are taken properly. (2) Program should be arranged for other than school hours (evenings or Saturday) so that there is no possibility of fingerprinting a child without a parent’s or guardian’s permission. (3) A parent or guardian must accompany the child to the fingerprinting program. (4) All sets of fingerprints should be retained by the parent or guardian, thus avoiding conflicts over lost fingerprints or any question of improper use of fingerprints. (5) The cost of the program, if possible, should be defrayed by nominal fees. (6) Parent or guardian should be advised of how best to retain fingerprint records.

Statement: Child fingerprinting programs assist law enforcement agencies and parents of missing children to locate and identify them and ensure their safe return. Currently, no federal or state guidelines exist for local units and councils to follow when they choose to implement a child fingerprinting program. This resolution proposes guidelines that promote a community-based approach to fingerprinting yet are sensitive to parental concerns about privacy.

RETENTION #14

School Prayer Amendment - 2004 (R-'97, R-'90, R-'83);

Resolved that New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. oppose a constitutional school prayer amendment.

Statement: This is still a timely issue, as attempts were made in 2007, 2009 and 2011 to create a constitutional amendment on school prayer. Even though each attempt failed, New York State PTA should be diligent in opposing this amendment.

RETENTION #15

Traffic Light Installation at Schools Which are Located on State Owned Roads - 2004 (U-'97, R-'90);

Resolved that New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. support the passage of legislation that would enable the Dept. of Transportation (DOT) to expend funds for the installation and maintenance of traffic lights at schools which are located on state owned roads.

Statement: According to Vehicle and Traffic Law 1681C, state funds may not be used for the purpose of erecting or maintaining traffic signals at the entrances to schools which are located on state-owned roads. Clearly, installing traffic signals at schools in such locations would enhance student safety.

Proposed Resolutions - Retentions (continued)

RETENTION #16

Seat Belt Usage on School Buses - 2004 (R-'97, R-'90, R-'83);

Resolved that New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. encourage its units and councils to support the use of seat belts on all school buses.

Statement: While New York State was the first of six states that require seat belts on school buses, the state does not require that the seat belts actually be used. The decision is left up to individual school boards. Research shows that use of seat belts on buses saves lives, yet according to the New York Association for Pupil Transportation, only about 35 of the state's 690 school districts require their students to use the belts. New York State PTA encourages units and councils to work with their school boards to promote the use of seat belts on school buses.

RETENTION #17

Emergency Telephone Number 911 - 2004 (R-'97, R-'90, R-'83);

Resolved that New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge its units, councils, and districts to disseminate information to its members regarding the emergency telephone number 911, both its proper use and precautions about misuse.

Statement: Today more than 70% of 911 calls come from mobile phones. This creates unique challenges for emergency response personnel because mobile phones are not associated with a fixed location or address, and any information they provide is usually not specific enough for rescue personnel to reach and assist the caller quickly. Units and councils can therefore do a great service by educating the public about proper use of 911 on mobile phones.

RETENTION #18

Youth Camp Safety - 2004 (R-'97, R-'90, R-'83);

Resolved that New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. support the passage of a federal youth camp safety act.

Statement: While local health departments are responsible for the safety of children in summer camps, a federal youth safety act would bring protection to all children. State regulations tend to focus on food sanitation and pool safety. Several bills, such as H.R. 3671 and H.R. 2145, have been brought forward over the years, but all have died in committee.

Proposed Resolutions - Updates

KEY: WORDS IN = ADDITIONS

WORDS IN = REMOVAL

UPDATE#1

Movies' Influence on Tobacco Use - 2004;

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. encourage units/councils to educate the public that **viewing media** (*remove: watching movies*) that depict tobacco use greatly increases the probability that children and youth will experiment with and become addicted to tobacco.

Statement: Research shows that observing the use of tobacco in movies and other forms of media greatly increases the likelihood that a child will begin to use tobacco. Children and youth today have access to a wide range of media that expose them to tobacco use.

UPDATE #2

To Establish Guidelines for the Parent Member of the Committee on Special Education (CSE) and the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) -2004 (R-'97, U-'90);

- Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. support maintaining a parent member as a mandated member of the CSE and CPSE committees.
- Resolved that the New York State PTA urge New York State Education Department's Office for Special Education Services to require training through the Special Education Training and Resource Center (SETRC) (*remove: and establish guidelines*) for the parent member on the CSE and CPSE.
- Statement: There are currently two parent members on a CSE or CPSE committee: the parent of the child with disabilities and a second parent member to advocate on behalf of the child. A well-trained second parent member plays a vital role in assisting parents unfamiliar with the CSE/CPSE through a critical decision-making process that will affect their children's education significantly. The Board of Regents is considering the removal of the second parent member from the CSE and CPSE, and it is important to protect this position.

UPDATE #3

Guidance Counselor Case Load- 2002 (U-'01, R-'94, R-'87);

- Resolved that the New York Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge the State Education Department and Board of Regents to require certified school counselors in all public secondary schools.
- Resolved that the New York State PTA urge the State Education Department and the Board of Regents to establish a maximum number of students per school counselor in all public secondary schools and that this ratio not exceed 200 to 1.
- Statement: Despite several recent attempts to address this matter in the state legislature, New York State does not currently require the existence of school counselors in public schools. There is also no regulation regarding the acceptable student-counselor ratio in those schools that do have school counselors. This resolution has been edited to reflect the current certification terminology of "school counselor" instead of "guidance counselor."

UPDATE #4

Sewage Waste Problems - 2004 (R-'97, R-'90, R-'83);

- Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. support state legislation for (*remove: an*) environmental air quality and **health risk studies** (*remove: genetic study*) of proposed and existing sewage plants.
- Resolved that the New York State PTA urge authorities to establish regulations and enforce existing statutes and regulations in regard to indiscriminate use of sanitary sewage systems for the disposal of unlawful material (toxic waste) by industrial, commercial, and residential users.
- Statement: This resolution has been updated to reflect present awareness of the broad range of environmental health risks. The potential long-term health effects of exposure to sewage plants remain a concern, as does contamination of such facilities through inappropriate disposal of harmful waste, whether intentional or not.

Proposed Resolutions - Updates (continued)

UPDATE #5

Toxic Art Supplies - 2004 (R-'97, R-'90, R-'83);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge school districts to **evaluate** (*remove: check into*) the art products **used** (*remove: already*) in their schools (*remove: for safety*) and to seek removal of such products as may be necessary for the health and safety of students (*remove: using these products*).

Resolved **that the New York State PTA work to educate parents and community members about how to identify unsafe or toxic art supplies.**

Statement: This resolution has been amended to address the need to educate parents and community members about how to identify safe art supplies for use in school and home. Even if a product is designated non-toxic, that label does not necessarily mean it is harmless for children to be exposed to repeatedly or over time. Since parents often provide the art supplies their children use in school, they need to know how to select the safest products for children's use.

UPDATE #6

Limiting Child Labor - 2004 (R-'97, U-'90);

(remove: Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. support legislation that would limit the number of hours worked before a school day; and reduce the maximum number of hours high school students can work when school is in session.)

Resolved that the New York State PTA urge its units and councils to inform parents of the existing child labor laws and the effects of inappropriate work experience on the education, social development, safety and health of our children.

Statement: While excessive work schedules can adversely affect school performance and health, legislation does exist to set reasonable limits on the number of hours a student may work before a school day and when school is in session. PTA units and councils provide a valuable service to parents by educating them on child labor laws and the effects of inappropriate work experience.

UPDATE #7

Missing Children - 2004 (R-'97, R-'90, R-'83);

Resolved that the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. inform its members of the provisions of **legislation regarding missing and exploited children, such as** the Missing Children's Assistance Act **and Amber Alert**.

Statement: The issue of missing and exploited children has resulted in a number of legislative and programmatic initiatives designed to provide parents with information and assistance in locating exploited and missing children. Informing parents of pertinent legislation and programs is necessary to help ensure the safety and protection of all children.

UPDATE #8

Safety Items on School Buses - 2004 (R-'97, R-'90, R-'83);

Resolved that New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. urge school districts to purchase and/or contract for school buses with optional safety equipment such as (*remove: stop arms and*) two-way radios and **external strobe lights**.

Statement: Front and rear stop arms are now required on school buses. The resolution has been updated to provide examples of newer optional safety items.