

Texas Children Need You!

Texas children and youth need you to get involved, to become educated about current issues and challenges in public education, educate each other, and educate your lawmakers. Your voice is key to our efforts to pass laws that protect and enhance the lives of the children of Texas, offering educational opportunity to all. There are many ways that you can be involved:

Sign up for Legislative Briefings and for Action Alerts. These updates will keep you apprised of activity in the legislature on our legislative priorities. Go to www.txpta.org to sign up or **fill out the card in your conference bag today and drop it off at the Texas PTA booth!!**

Schedule a meeting with your legislators in your home district. **NOW** is a great time to meet with your legislators. Take a couple of other PTA members with you and sit down with your legislators. Share the PTA Legislative Success document and tell your school's story. How is your school handling the budget cuts? Legislators are more likely to consider your opinions as a constituent than almost any other. You don't need to have a polished speech or printed business cards. **You just need a passion for issues that impact the children of Texas.** The next Texas Legislative Session is still several months from now, but it will be, in many ways, even tougher than last session. Funding for Texas schools will be at risk yet again. We want every one of our legislators traveling to Austin with PTA on their minds! To find your Texas State Representative and your Texas State Senator visit <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/>. Texas PTA's Success Document, a summary of past legislative success, is found at www.txpta.org/legislative/.

Invite your state representative or state senator to an upcoming meeting of your PTA. That is another easy way to remind your legislators of your interest in state policy and how it impacts your children. If you aren't already, one or two visits will put you on a first name basis with your legislators! Contact information is available at the website above.

Make calls to your legislators to communicate Texas PTA's position on critical issues before the legislature. As this past session's budget cuts are being implemented be sure your elected official is aware of the real impact of those cuts on your students.

Share information with your PTA about the State Board of Education (SBOE), the 15 member elected board of persons whose job it is to establish policy and set standards for curriculum, instructional materials/textbooks, and oversees the Permanent School Fund:
<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=1156>.

Participate in Advocacy Workshops at Convention and Summer Leadership Seminar to learn about Texas PTA's priorities, how you can be involved at your local and state level.

The most important thing to remember is that your voice is important. You CAN and you DO make a difference when you decide to use your voice.

A thousand thanks to those of you who have worked hard to help Texas PTA secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth. Stay involved!