



National PTA Legislative Checklist

116th Congress

Embed Parent and Family Engagement into Education Related Legislation

Parents and their children are the consumers of our nation's public education system, and parents have always been essential partners in education. However, they haven't always been included at the decision-making table. **Congress must:**

- ✓ Include effective parent and family stakeholder engagement provisions in education and youth-related reauthorization bills
- ✓ Enact legislation that establishes parent and teacher advisory committees, which report to the U.S. Secretary of Education and Members of Congress on the implementation of ESSA
- ✓ Conduct appropriate oversight—including hearing directly from parents and families—on ESSA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Head Start Act, Children Nutrition Act and the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act

Continue to Increase Investments in Education Through a Regular Appropriations Process

National PTA urges Congress to raise the discretionary spending caps and build on its recent investments in public education. **A final appropriations bill must:**

- ✓ Increase funding for the Statewide Family Engagement Centers (SFECs), under Title IV-E in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), from \$10 to \$15 million
- ✓ Provide continued investments in Title I, Part A, including an increase to the family engagement set-aside in Title I, Sec. 1116 of ESSA from 1% to 2%
- ✓ Refrain from funding any private school choice proposals, including private school voucher programs, tax credits and tuition tax deductions
- ✓ Fund Title IV-A, the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), at its authorized level of \$1.6 billion
- ✓ Fully fund state grants under Part B, Sec. 611 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to ensure students with special needs receive the necessary resources to succeed in school and beyond
- ✓ Maintain funding at \$27.4 million for Parent Information Centers under National Activities in IDEA which includes Parent Training and Information Centers (PTIs), Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRC), and Technical Assistance for Parent Centers
- ✓ Sufficiently invest in the Head Start and Early Head Start programs under the Head Start Act

- ✓ Make resources available to states and school districts to increase student support services to meet recommended ratios of students to school counselors (250:1), school psychologists (500:1), school nurses and school social workers (250:1)
- ✓ Provide dedicated resources and incentives for states and localities to support and improve school facilities and infrastructure

Enact Legislation to Protect Youth, Families and Communities From Gun and Other Violence

Firearms are the second-leading cause of death for American children and teens, with nearly 1,600 children and teens dying by gun homicide every year. **Congress must:**

- ✓ Fund federal research on the causes and effects of gun violence on youth and in communities, as well as research on evidence-based strategies to reduce gun violence
- ✓ Prohibit the use of any federal funds, including Title IV-A, to purchase or train school personnel in the use of firearms
- ✓ Require a waiting period and a comprehensive background check for any individual prior to buying a firearm from both licensed and unlicensed dealers
- ✓ Restrict internet gun sales including sales of kits, such as bump stocks, that can be used to make or modify guns
- ✓ Ban the sale, transfer, manufacturing and importation of military-style assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines

Reauthorize the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The programs and services authorized in IDEA have had a tremendous impact on the lives of more than 6.7 million students with disabilities. In the reauthorization of IDEA, **Congress should:**

- ✓ Include a legal definition of family engagement in education based on National PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships within Section 602 of IDEA
- ✓ Require transition planning services for students with disabilities to begin no later than the age of 14 and incentivize school districts to employ specialized staff to provide these services
- ✓ Support the inclusion of behavioral intervention plans in a student's IEP and 504b plan

Protect Student Privacy Online and Increase Access to Technology

Federal laws must be updated to better protect our children and their educational information online, while increasing students' access to the technological services they need to succeed in a 21st-century learning environment. **Congress should:**

- ✓ Reauthorize the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) to require states, school districts and schools to be transparent and engaged with families on the development, implementation and notification of student data privacy policies and procedures
- ✓ Reauthorize the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) to provide sensible protections on the collection, use, storage, security and destruction of student data and educational records
- ✓ Provide resources to states and school districts to pilot creative methods of increasing access to digital devices and high-capacity broadband services, especially for students and families in rural and lower-income communities
- ✓ Support FERPA's Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC), which provides valuable resources and guidance to ensure the privacy, security and confidentiality of student records

Reauthorize the Child Nutrition Act

One in six adolescents are obese, while one in five face hunger daily. The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) is a critical piece of legislation that improves nutrition standards in our nation's schools. **Reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act must:**

- ✓ Boost child health by including robust school meal requirements on milk, whole grains, fruits and vegetables, calorie limits, and limits on sugar and sodium
- ✓ Require schools to make nutrition information more readily available and enhance opportunities for parents to participate in the development of local school wellness policies
- ✓ Ensure low-income and at-risk youth have access to school meals programs
- ✓ Deliver technical assistance and resources to schools that are not meeting the nutrition standards
- ✓ Provide federal grants and loan assistance for schools to improve kitchen infrastructure and equipment

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For over 120 years, National PTA advocates have been at the heart of our nation's greatest advances for youth, such as child labor laws, universal kindergarten classes, and a juvenile justice system.

We are committed to working with the 116th Congress to enact legislation that provides children with access to a high-quality public education in a learning environment that is safe, healthy and secure. We urge Congress to **Take Action for Kids** on the issues in this checklist.



For additional information on National PTA's Public Policy Agenda, visit [PTA.org/PolicyAgenda](https://www.pta.org/PolicyAgenda) or contact the Government Affairs staff at GovtAffairs@PTA.org.



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