



Onevoice

Special Update

ACTION NEEDED

APRIL 3, 2007

PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP

VAPTA ACTION ALERT

Dear friends of Virginia PTA,

Please contact your members of Congress and set up a meeting to discuss the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind between April 2 and 13 when they are home!

PTA has a legislative initiative to improve the parent-involvement provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act that were announced earlier this week.

We need your help getting our parent-involvement recommendations included in the Senate and House reauthorization bills.

- Set up a meeting with your member of Congress between April 2nd and 13th when they are working in their local offices
- You can help shape the federal law. By talking to your Senator or Representative, you can make a difference
- If you can't meet face to face, e-mail or call to show support for the PTA Parent Involvement Initiative
- Ask members of your community and school to add their voices to the conversation.

Congress appears ready to move quickly to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, including No Child Left Behind -- so you should be ready too.

ACTION – Please distribute the following information to your members, your school principal, and interested community members. Also PLEASE POST IN YOUR TEACHERS LOUNGE AND COPY ROOM AREA IF POSSIBLE.

As Congress moves towards reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), reauthorized in 2001 as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), PTA has crafted specific recommendations to improve the parent involvement provisions within the law. While ensuring local flexibility, PTA recommends creating a system of accountability designed to encourage parents to be active partners in their child's education.

Studies have documented that regardless of the economic, ethnic, or cultural background of the family, parent involvement in a child's education is a major factor in determining success in school. Successful parental involvement strategies vary from region to region, school to school and this flexibility needs to be supported by the law.

Though Congress cannot mandate parental engagement, PTA believes that the government can and must provide parents multiple opportunities to be active participants in their child's education. PTA's recommendations for the ESEA-NCLB reauthorization are built on four core principles:

More accountability to parents

Parents must be better informed of what is going on in their child's school and each state must hold schools accountable for implementing their parent involvement plans.

Better data through a more understandable delivery system

Information from school accountability systems should be geared towards informing parents—since parents have the primary decision making responsibility for their child's education.

Better resources to help teachers and parents

Parental Information and Resource Centers and other existing state and local resources with expertise in parent engagement and community outreach should be better utilized as part of the solution. Further, teachers need better preparation on how to engage and develop positive partnerships with parents to support active parent participation in their child's education.

Community support

Schools need to be an active, essential part of a community again. Residents, businesses, and organizations in the community must collaborate with schools in making the schools more successful, and must understand that they have a stake in children's education.