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Meet the Candidates or Meet Your Legislators Night

Candidates and Legislators appreciate a forum where they can meet with their constituents, discuss their views, and listen to concerns. During an election year (even years) this forum would be a meet-the-candidates night. On non-election years (odd years) this could be an issues night. When organizing these events, it is best to combine with other schools within your Region or Council. Remember, this is a PTA event and you are in charge. However, you may invite other entities such as the League of Women Voters to join.

To Organize the Event:

- Begin planning your event early, in August or Early September, contact all political parties to give the date of event.
- Decide on the community to be involved—High School (plus feeder schools) or Region or Council.
- Invite the Legislative VPs from all the schools to be involved in the planning.
- Determine the time, date, and location.
 - October is usually the best month.
 - A large auditorium may not be the best facility for the event.
- Obtain the names and information on **ALL** candidates (in election year) and all elected officials (non-election year). It is imperative that all candidates be invited to protect our 501(c)(3) status.
- Include local and state school board candidates during election year.
- Send formal invitations to each candidate with an RSVP date given.
- Advertise the event through schools, posters, newspapers, social media, etc.
- Invite the entire community, not just PTA members.
- Plan an outline and format for the evening:
 - Open House
 - 30 minutes prior to general meeting
 - Allows one-on-one conversations
 - Tables for candidates to put materials
 - General Meeting
 - Welcome, Reverence, Flag Ceremony
 - Allow one minute for each candidate or legislator to introduce themselves
 - Hand out 3x5 cards for the audience to write questions
 - Have a moderator and timer with time cards
 - All questions are written and given to the moderator
 - 30-second answers from each candidate allow for more questions
 - Give each Candidate or Legislator a one-minute wrap-up at the end

Send Thank You cards to all the Candidates and Legislators who attend.

Legislation

Local Legislative Information

This information can be obtained through the Utah Legislative website: www.le.utah.gov

Representative(s) _____

Email Address(es) _____

Phone Number(s) _____

Senator(s) _____

Email Address(es) _____

Phone Number(s) _____

Legislative Advocacy Committee (LAC)

All Utah PTA members are invited to join the Utah PTA Legislative Advocacy Committee (LAC). LAC members attend legislative meetings to gather information on issues and bills which impact the lives of children. The committee meets monthly (weekly during the legislative session) to discuss issues and legislation. The committee recommends positions on specific bills and determines action to promote, amend, or defeat legislation. Utah PTA only takes bill positions based upon PTA resolutions.

Utah PTA Member-to-Member Network

The Utah PTA Member-to-Member Network is an email list which members are encouraged to join. This list is not given out to anyone but is used to keep our members informed of the activities of our Legislature and how they can become involved. The Network is activated as **alerts and calls to action** are needed during the session. The members also receive monthly updates during the interim sessions and weekly updates during the Legislative Session. To join the Utah PTA Member-to-Member Legislative Action Network send your name, school, and email address to the Utah PTA Legislative VP, found on the Utah PTA website (www.utahpta.org). The network is maintained from year to year.

Utah PTA Weekly Bill Sheets

Utah PTA Weekly Bill Sheets are prepared from those positions recommended by the Utah PTA Legislative Advocacy Committee (LAC) and adopted by Utah PTA commissioners and executive committee. These sheets are available to any PTA member through the website and are updated weekly throughout the legislative session at www.utahpta.org.

School Board Meetings

Your presence at your local school board meetings is important. As the school board members get to know you and your PTA, they will be more responsive to the needs of your parents. This responsibility can be shared with other members of your board. A member of your board could be given the specific assignment of School Board Representative and would attend all board meetings and report back to the board.

Resolutions

All Resolutions are online at: www.utahpta.org/advocacy

Utah PTA Business and Resolutions Meeting

All Utah PTA Positions are based upon the PTA Purposes and Mission along with resolutions which have been adopted at annual Utah PTA Leadership Conventions and the Utah PTA Advocacy Conferences by delegate members.

Proposed new resolutions are available on the Utah PTA website 30 days prior to the October Legislative Advocacy Conference, and/or 30 days prior to the Utah PTA Leadership Convention held in May. They are debated at the Business/Resolutions meetings held during the Utah PTA Leadership Convention and at the Legislative Advocacy Conference. It is important that local members be made aware of, and voice their opinions and/or concerns about these resolutions. Ensure that resolutions information is given to your members in a timely manner. Arrange to have a discussion to answer questions on the resolutions prior to the Leadership Convention and Advocacy Conference so that you may speak for or against the resolution based on the desires of your members.

Individuals may be asked to advocate for issues or positions with which they personally disagree. With our diverse membership this is likely to occur. If you feel you cannot advocate for a particular position, you must remain neutral on the topic within your role as a PTA leader. **You are responsible to pass information on to board members.**

Emergency Resolutions

Emergency resolutions may be brought to the Utah PTA Convention or Advocacy Conference floor if the following provisions for submitting them are met:

- The urgency of the subject matter shall not have arisen until *after* the June 15th or the November 15th resolutions deadline.
- Emergency resolutions shall conform to all established criteria for other resolutions.
- Emergency resolutions must be submitted to the Utah PTA President 15 days prior to convention to allow the resolutions committee to review them.
- Copies of the emergency resolutions approved for presentation to the Convention/Advocacy Conference body shall be prepared for the delegates by the submitting group and distributed to the delegates at the Leadership Convention/Advocacy Conference.
- A 2/3 vote of the delegate body is necessary to bring an emergency resolution to the floor to be considered.

Utah PTA Resolutions Procedure for Submitting

Deadline for Submission of Notification of Intent for Debate

October Legislative Advocacy Conference -----May 1st
May Leadership Convention ----- October 1st

Deadline for Submission of Resolutions for Debate

October Legislative Advocacy Conference ----- June 15th
May Leadership Convention ----- November 15

What is a Resolution?

A resolution is a call for action. It is a statement which may give direction for that action, such as legislative directives and policies, and state and local community involvement. A resolution may also memorialize, commemorate, or express appreciation. Local PTAs, Councils, Regions and Utah PTA commissions and committees may submit resolutions for consideration to the Utah PTA Resolutions Committee.

How is a Resolution Processed?

The Utah PTA Resolutions Committee meets and considers all resolutions sent to them that meet resolution submission requirements. Resolutions approved by the committee are presented to the Utah PTA Board of Directors for approval. The Board of Directors **cannot accept** any resolution that is not consistent with PTA Purposes or policies. (See Utah PTA Bylaws, Article XX Section 1.) Resolutions approved for state action will be available online at www.utahpta.org, or 30 days before May convention, or October Advocacy Conference. The convention delegates will then take action on those resolutions at convention.

The Utah PTA Resolutions Committee reviews submitted resolutions against established criteria. To assure that your resolution meets these criteria, please use the following checklist:

This resolution:

- Is in harmony with the purposes and basic policies of Utah PTA and National PTA.
- Concerns a matter that is statewide in scope and requires statewide action for solution.
- States a position not previously adopted by Utah PTA.
- Is written in approved Utah PTA resolution format using 11pt. Times New Roman. (see examples of current resolutions at www.utahpta.org)
- Is accompanied by background material that is statewide or national in scope and from a variety of sources.
- Includes two background references from reputable, academic sources for each "whereas," with the "whereas" footnoted to the full citation at the bottom.** (see documentation instructions below)

- Uses current resource material (less than 6 years old).
- Does not use PTA materials as references.
- Provides sufficient background to give a person with no knowledge of the subject enough information to make an intelligent decision.
- Includes paper copies of all documented sources. (If the source is over 30 pages, the title page and only the relevant sections may be included, provided it is clearly noted that the entire source is not being submitted.)
- Is accompanied by the “Utah PTA Resolutions Cover Sheet” from the current Utah PTA Handbook with the appropriate signatures.
- Background material should support each "whereas" clause of the resolution and should indicate that the subject of the resolution was well researched by the submitting group.
- Background material should be **statewide or national**, not local, in scope.
- Background material should include a variety of sources. Otherwise, there is a danger that only one person’s or one organization’s opinion is being reflected and that a comprehensive view is not presented.
- Background material should be factual. It can include, but is not limited to: information such as educational, safety, and welfare articles or updates; copies of documented research; copies of pertinent laws, government publications and regulations; and copies of articles from professional publications. Newspaper articles, abstracts, editorials, and websites alone are not sufficient background material as they are secondhand sources and often statements of opinion. Avoid using material from other organizations intended for lobbying or advocacy purposes as these items may present a biased view and often do not cite their sources.
- The background material should be sufficient to give a person with no previous knowledge of the subject enough information to make an intelligent decision. PTA materials are not acceptable documentation, since this is “circular” information; it says, in effect, that “PTA believes this is true because PTA says so.” Independent sources are required as proof for establishing new positions.
- Personal letters, logs of phone calls, and email printouts are not good documentation because they cannot be verified.
- There must be two sources of documentation for each “whereas,” and these must be footnoted in the “whereas” with the full citation after the resolved statements.
- Minutes from the PTA meeting where the resolution passed on the Local level.

Deadline Information:

Resolutions must be received at the Utah PTA office no later than June 15 to be considered for action at the Legislative Advocacy Conference in October or November 15 to be considered for action at the Business & Resolutions sessions of the Utah PTA Leadership Convention in May. In the event that the 15th falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or a holiday, the resolution will be accepted on the next business day. Resolutions submitted after the June 15 or November 15 deadline will not be presented at the next convention or conference.

Resolutions that do not have sufficient supporting documentation will not be considered. Resolutions are strengthened when the documentation has been thoroughly researched. Therefore, it is essential to submit thorough and sufficient documentation with each resolution.

Utah PTA Resolutions Notification of Intent

In order that we may provide assistance, Utah PTA requests any PTA considering submitting a resolution to complete and return the information below by May 1 or October 1.

Utah PTA
Attention: Resolutions Chairman
5192 S. Greenpine Drive
Salt Lake City, Utah 84123

The following PTA intends to submit a resolution to the Utah PTA Resolutions Committee by the deadline of June 15 or November 15 for voting at the following Utah PTA Convention/Conference.

Local PTA _____

Council _____

Region _____

Contact Person:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

Subject of intended resolution: _____

Have you started work on the resolution? _____

Note: Submission of this Notification of Intent does not obligate the originating PTA to submit a resolution.

Utah PTA Resolutions Cover Sheet

When submitting a resolution, please submit an electronic version of the text of the resolution in MS Word.

This sheet must accompany each resolution that is submitted to the Utah PTA office for consideration by the Resolutions Committee. Resolutions MUST be submitted by June 15 or November 15 of each year. Complete photo copies of documentation pieces must be included for each “whereas” addressed in the resolution.

Each resolution must:

- Have a title and be written in a resolution format.
- Meet all of the requirements for submitting a resolution.
- Have been voted on by the local PTA membership or by the local Board before it is submitted, thus showing Utah PTA that this represents the views of the PTA submitting the resolution. Minutes from that meeting shall be submitted with the resolution.

We have reviewed the checklist. Yes No

Title of Resolution _____

Name of Submitting PTA _____

Address of Submitting PTA _____

Council _____ Region _____

Name of Contact Person _____ Phone _____

Date Submitted _____

Signature of PTA President

Signature of PTA Secretary

After consulting the Resolutions Checklist in the Utah PTA Handbook, please submit the following with this cover sheet:

1. A copy of the resolution.
2. A copy of all supporting documentation for the resolution.
3. A copy of the minutes of the meeting at which the resolution was submitted for approval.
4. Submit via email an electronic version of the resolution. Call the Utah PTA office for the correct email address.

SEND TO:

Utah PTA, 5192 S. Greenpine Drive, Salt Lake City, UT 84123

Date Received at Utah PTA Office _____

National PTA Legislative Program

The National PTA Legislative Program is the primary authority for action taken by the National PTA on federal legislation and regulations.

The National PTA Legislative Program has four components:

- Policy Statements are broad statements on children’s issues that form the basis for resolutions and position statements. Policy statements become official when they are passed by the National PTA Convention delegates or the National PTA Board of Directors and by 60 percent of state PTAs.
- Resolutions with legislative intent can be proposed by any PTA. The National PTA Board of Directors recommends resolutions for consideration by delegates at the National PTA Convention. Resolutions must be approved by the Convention body and then ratified by the National PTA Board of Directors to become positions of the organization.
- Position Statements are initiated by committees and commissions of the National PTA Board of Directors. They are approved by the National PTA Board of Directors.
- Legislative Directives are the organization’s current legislative priorities. They are reviewed by the National PTA Board of Directors and approved by the Executive Committee every two years.

National PTA Legislative Procedures

- PTA Takes Action, the National PTA’s legislative newsletter, provides current information on legislative issues and suggests advocacy strategies. It is emailed to member-to-member participants and also contains Action Alerts.
- The National PTA website (www.pta.org) Legislative Activity page provides information about PTA legislative issues and initiatives.
- National PTA’s toll free legislative information line, (800) 307-4PTA (4782).
- National PTA Resolutions, Position Statements, and Legislative Directives are accessible at all State PTA offices, and many are found online at www.pta.org.

PTA Is a Non-profit Organization. It takes positions on legislative issues but is non-partisan and endorses NO Candidates for Public Office.

Practical Parliamentary Guide

(A Simple Table of Most Frequently Used Motions)

Motion	Second ?	Debatable ?	Amendable ?	Vote Required	Reconsiderable ?
Adjourn	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Amend a Pending Motion	Yes	Yes if motion to be amended is debatable	Yes	Majority	Yes
Close Nominations	Yes	No	Yes	2/3	No
Debate limit or extend	Yes	No	Yes	2/3	Yes
Division of Assembly	No	No	No	Any member	No
Main Motion	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Point of Order	No	No	No	Ruled on by chair	No
Postpone to a Definite Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Previous Question	Yes	No	No	2/3	Yes
Question of Privilege	No	No	No	Majority	Yes
Recess	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
Reconsider	Yes	Yes if motion to which applied is debatable	No	Majority	No
Refer (commit)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	No
Rescind	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority with notice 2/3 without notice	Yes
Suspension of Rules	Yes	No	No	2/3	No
Table	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Take from Table	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Withdrawal of Motion	No	No	No	Majority	No

1. A tie vote is a lost vote.
2. Hasty action may be corrected by use of the motion to reconsider. This motion may be mad only by one who voted on the prevailing side.
3. To stop debate and force the vote a member should obtain the floor and say, "I move the previous question." This requires a second and a 2/3 vote.