

PROPOSED 2015 SCPTA LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTIONS – STATEMENTS OF BELIEF

1. Advocacy Initiative

Belief: SCPTA's primary mission is to advocate on behalf of all South Carolina's children. Accordingly, SCPTA strongly encourages local PTA units and members to take a leadership role in developing support for public education at all levels of government and in their local communities. When PTA members participate in SCPTA's advocacy efforts, they are fulfilling PTA's mission to provide every child in South Carolina with one voice.

2. Constitutional Amendment

Belief: SCPTA believes the South Carolina Constitution should be amended to require the General Assembly to provide a high quality system of free public schools open to all children and allowing each student to reach his highest potential.

3. Early Childhood Education

Belief: SCPTA believes that the South Carolina General Assembly should enact legislation and provide adequate funding to ensure that all four-year-olds in South Carolina have the opportunity to attend a child development program at a public school. Preschool services should be expanded at the state level within already existing structures in the State Department of Education, appropriate state and federal agencies providing services to at-risk families, and in local school districts.

4. Education Achievement Gap

Belief: SCPTA believes in meaningful, research-based national, state and local initiatives with measurable outcomes that close the educational achievement gap for all students.

5. Full Funding of Current Education Programs

Belief: SCPTA believes that the General Assembly must meet its commitment to fully fund state-mandated educational programs for public schools prior to passing legislation containing new mandates unless that new mandate is fully funded by the state.

6. Tuition Tax Credits and Vouchers

Belief: SCPTA believes that public education should be fully funded by the General Assembly prior to the consideration and any state-mandated programs that directly or indirectly subsidize elementary or secondary private, religious or home schools with public funds.

7. Mandatory Kindergarten Participation

Belief: SCPTA believes that all children who are five years of age on or before the first day of September must attend a kindergarten program.

8. Teacher Salaries

Belief: SCPTA believes in raising teacher pay to the national average for teacher salaries and establishing a salary structure that would be appropriate considering differentiated responsibilities so as to compensate teacher leaders in relation to skills and performance.

9. Tobacco, alcohol and drug-free school districts and school property

Belief: SCPTA believes school districts, schools, school property and school-related activities should be free of tobacco, electronic cigarettes, alcohol, anabolic/androgenic steroids, mind or behavior altering substances, and all unauthorized drugs.

10. Education Funding Reform

Belief: SCPTA believes that South Carolina needs legislation to reform the state's education funding structure. Any revision should be based upon specific analysis and should include recommendations on (1) the current tax structure and the state's taxing policy, (2) the current education funding formulas and their ability to equalize educational opportunities statewide, and (3) a realistic means of computing the base student cost, which is aligned with state-imposed student performance standards and expectations.