

# Fourth District Legislative Advocacy Communicator



FOURTH DISTRICT ADVOCACY TEAM

APRIL 2011

## Viva la Resolution!

The primary purpose of our upcoming California State PTA (CAPTA) Convention is to conduct the business of the association, and a key part of that business involves the opportunity for delegates to debate, vote, and adopt resolutions. Where do these resolutions come from?

You! and members of PTAs just like yours!

The resolution process starts with an issue centered on children, youth, or families. Interested grassroots advocates prepare a resolution for PTA convention adoption, which then gives PTA the authority to advocate that position in matters of public policy. A successful resolution on behalf of children and youth may be realized in laws and public policy across California.

You (yes, *you*) start with a personal or community issue of concern. Check the Advocacy section of the *Toolkit* (section 4.4, available on the [capta.org](http://capta.org) website) to see if CAPTA has already adopted a position on this topic. If not, ask yourself if action on this issue will benefit others; if so, you can proceed to prepare a resolution.

### Criteria

Each resolution submitted to the California State PTA for consideration and possible action by convention delegates must meet these criteria:

1. Concern a CAPTA field of interest;
2. Be in harmony with the Purposes and basic policies of the PTA (1.1.1 and 1.1.4);
3. Concern a matter that is statewide in scope, not merely one of local interest;
4. Be accompanied by the background resource material that substantiates the statewide concern and each “WHEREAS” statement (Where We Stand 4.4, 4.5, 4.6);
5. Include a brief narrative summary, a table of contents listing the background material, and an index indicating where in the background material substantiation may be found for each “WHEREAS”; and
6. Be written in appropriate resolution format and submitted in accordance with all specifications set by the California State PTA Board of Managers.

### How to start

To begin, the PTA (unit, council, or district) should vote to support the preparation of a resolution and form a

## Calendar of Events

### Advocacy Roundtable:

Friday, April 15, 9:30-11:00 a.m. at FVUSD Board Room

### 2011 Calif. State PTA Convention, Long Beach:

Events run April 28 – May 1. [www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org)

#### Legislation workshops:

*From Issues to Action – All Politics are Local!* (Thursday);  
*What Every PTA President Needs To Know About Advocacy* (Friday);  
*Hot Topics: Get the Latest From Sacramento & D.C.* (Friday);  
*How To Be Heard in Sacramento* (Saturday).

committee to undertake the research and preparation required.

The committee researches the topic and gathers background material. At least three credible sources must be included to document each WHEREAS statement. Primary and/or original sources of material must be included in the final submittal. An example of a primary source might be a study that has been written up in a journal. Careful documentation is key to the acceptance of a resolution. Statements of opinion alluding to sources but not describing the work are not acceptable. Background material must not be cyclical; each source must be independent of the others.

### Preamble & Request for Action

A “WHEREAS statement” is a declaration of fact supported by current, valid documentation. Each WHEREAS statement is numbered, and should contain one idea. Here’s how they’re put together:

- All WHEREAS statements except the last begin with the word “WHEREAS” and end with a semi-colon and the word “and.” For example: “*WHEREAS, A resolution seeks to address concerns that affect children and youth; and*”
- The last WHEREAS statement begins with the word “WHEREAS” and ends with a semi-colon followed by the phrase, “now therefore be it.” For example: “*WHEREAS, A resolution provides sufficient evidence to give a person with no knowledge of the subject enough information to make an intelligent decision; now therefore be it...*”

...which then goes on to put forth your actual resolution in a similar format, known as your “RESOLVED statements” – the action called for as the expressed opinion and will of

the PTA organization. There may be more than one RESOLVED statement. Each action request is listed in a separate RESOLVED statement, in this format:

- All RESOLVED statements except the last begin with the words “RESOLVED, that” and end with a semi-colon followed by the phrase “and be it further.” For example: “*RESOLVED, That the originating PTA organization submit by the draft due date the draft resolution, background summary, initial list of resources and preliminary Convention Resolution Action Cover Sheet; and be it further*”
- The last RESOLVED statement begins with the words “RESOLVED, that” and ends with proper punctuation.

### **Background Summary**

In addition to the Preamble (the WHEREAS statements) and Request for Action (the RESOLVED statements), the third part of your resolution is the Background Summary – a narrative highlighting the most important facts from the resource material. The Background Summary furnishes a brief (150 word) synopsis of the pertinent facts found in the materials used to document the resolution. It substantiates each of the WHEREAS and RESOLVED statements.

### **Other documents needed**

The final documents needed for submission:

- Index – A cross reference of WHEREAS statements to the location of the source material (bibliography).
- Resource List – This is the bibliography of the resource material. Include the author, title, journal or publisher, volume number, date and page numbers for each resource. Include the URL if an Internet source is from a university, library, or government body; if not, then include the URL and information about the organization from which the resource material is obtained.
- Resources – The actual documents and information sources supporting the claims in the WHEREAS statements. Submit complete articles of the resource material.
- Action Cover Sheet – Proposed resolutions must be accompanied by an Action Cover Sheet. It provides the title of the resolution, where it originated, contact information and signature authority

### **Authorization and approval**

Authorization and approval goes through channels to the California State PTA Resolutions Committee, then the State PTA Board of Managers to determine whether to present the resolution at convention. Details, forms, checklists, and step-by-step directions for resolution submission are available at [capta.org](http://capta.org) in a PDF download, “Preparing a PTA Convention Resolution.”

### **Ask the Advocacy Team**

If you have any questions concerning advocacy issues, please contact us at: [advocacy@fourthdistrictpta.org](mailto:advocacy@fourthdistrictpta.org).

### **Key PTA Links**

[www.fourthdistrictpta.org](http://www.fourthdistrictpta.org) – Click on Advocacy  
[www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org) – Select from menu: **Programs and Services: Advocacy** and **Children’s Issues: Legislation**  
[www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org) – Click on Take Action

### **Then what happens?**

If your resolution is approved at convention, then this constitutes a directive to the California State PTA Board of Managers. Following convention, the resolutions chairman shall assign the adopted resolutions to the appropriate commission(s) or committee(s) or to the president of the California State PTA for implementation or for preparation of guidelines for further action. The commission(s), committee(s), or the president shall be requested to give these resolutions priority consideration. A report on the implementation of the resolutions shall be given to the delegates at the next annual convention. Upon review, adopted resolutions may also be forwarded to the National PTA.

### **Sometimes it’s local**

Keep in mind that this process for creating a resolution can also be useful even if it isn’t right for adoption at the state level. PTAs that want to address matters of concern at the local community level, for example, may similarly prepare a resolution for adoption by the PTA and subsequent presentation to the school board, city council, county government, or other appropriate entity.

### **Does it make a difference?**

Yes! A resolution by Orange Community Council PTA prompted CAPTA to actively lobby for passage of AB 2486 (Feuer), making a social host (an adult who knowingly furnishes alcoholic beverages to a minor) legally accountable for damages suffered by that young person, or for injury to the person or property, or death of any third person resulting from the consumption of those beverages. The bill went into effect in January 2011.

First District PTA’s resolution, “Longitudinal Integrated Statewide Data System,” led California State PTA Legislative Team members to lobby legislators and other policy makers to develop and adopt CALPADS (the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System), which is now being prepared at the state level.

Maybe your resolution will be next!