

## **EDUCATION: A 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY VISION**

Adopted by Convention Delegates April 30, 2005

- WHEREAS,** The constitution and laws of California say “The State, therefore, has a non-delegable duty to ensure that its statewide public education system is open on equal terms to all and that no student is denied the bare essentials to obtain them;” and
- WHEREAS,** The California State PTA believes that all children and youth should have equal opportunities to develop and reach their maximum potential in every phase of life, including education; and
- WHEREAS,** To remain competitive in a global society, California has a responsibility to provide an educational program and support services to develop responsible, productive citizens for tomorrow, and
- WHEREAS,** The California State PTA has positions on a wide range of issues that define what every student needs to reach his or her fullest potential including, but not limited to, curriculum offerings, educational programs, facilities, funding, learning materials and supplies, and personnel resources; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA, its units, councils and districts engage public policy makers and community members in the discussion of what is required to define a vision for a 21<sup>st</sup> century education, and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA, its units, councils and districts take a leadership role in defining a 21<sup>st</sup> century education include, but not be limited to, class size that allows every student to reach his or her fullest potential, voluntary, universal pre-school for three- and four-year-olds, appropriate instructional minutes for all grade levels, alternative learning modes for students of all ages, adequately compensated and fully credentialed teachers supported by ongoing staff development, adequate materials for learning, including library materials, appropriate facilities/infrastructure to support the school program, and an environment that supports parent involvement; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA, its units, councils and districts, take a leadership role in defining curriculum in schools include but not be limited to: arts, instrumental and choral music, dance, visual and performing arts, English/language arts/writing, public speaking, foreign language instruction beginning in primary grades, the liberal arts including but not limited to social studies, history, government, etc., health and physical education, sciences, including but not limited to biology, chemistry, physics, etc., mathematics at least through calculus, technology, and career education; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA, its units, councils and districts define support services to schools to include, but not be limited to, adequate numbers of school site administrators, counselors in the ratios recommended by the American School Counselor Association, credentialed school nurses at all school sites, and library media centers in all schools staffed with credentialed librarians; and be it further

**RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA, its units, councils and districts, support legislation to implement the vision for a 21<sup>st</sup> century education for all California children.

###

## **BACKGROUND SUMMARY**

Neither the state of California nor the California State PTA has a clearly defined or agreed upon overall vision and strategy for what is necessary to provide a 21<sup>st</sup> century education to develop responsible, productive citizens for the future. California State PTA has positions on a wide range of education issues and several resolutions about the support services necessary for children to be successful in school, but does not have a resolution that specifically addresses a total educational package.

In recent years, there has been much discussion about the changing skills children need, and education's role in preparing workers for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In order to compete globally, businesses are becoming more and more vocal about the need for an educated workforce. Parents and schools have sued for access and adequacy in funding and facilities. California has implemented a standards, assessment and accountability system and proposed many educational system reforms including the Master Plan for Education: Pre K-University and the Quality Education Commission. These reforms and proposals need to be put in the context of what each child needs to achieve his or her potential and become a contributor to our global economy. It is time for the State of California to act on these issues and support an educational plan that develops the workforce of the future.

California State PTA is in a unique position to present a view of how a 21<sup>st</sup> century education should be delivered. This resolution will enhance the California State PTA's ability to participate in the process of defining the vision and to support legislation for a 21<sup>st</sup> century education for every student in California.