

JANUARY 19, 2007
LEGISLATION INFORMATION ALERT
BARBARA PAXTON, FEDERAL ADVOCATE

PTA ADVOCACY WEEK FEBRUARY 19-23

National PTA is asking all units, councils and districts nation wide to reach out to their local government representatives during Advocacy Week, February 19-23, 2007. California State PTA encourages its units, councils and districts to support this effort and once again lead the nation in speaking out for all children.

Advocacy week presents an opportunity for PTA members to meet with their representatives in person in their hometown offices. Bring your top PTA priorities to their attention and ask your legislators to work toward solutions.

To help in this effort, National PTA mailed a PTA advocacy tool kit on CD ROM on January 16, 2007 to all council and district PTA leaders. Council and district leaders may use these materials to work with their units and members of their communities to form a plan of action for Advocacy week activities. In addition, PTAs may visit the National PTA web site at www.pta.org to access the "PTA Grassroots Advocacy Kit" for additional resources, templates and helpful guides to organizing grassroots advocacy. Many similar materials can be found in the Advocacy section of the California PTA Toolkit at www.capta.org.

Don't forget to make contact with your congressional representatives as well. They will be in their home offices during Advocacy week. California PTAs have increased opportunities to influence federal decision-making as California congressional representatives are in key leadership positions:

Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi - Speaker of the House of Representatives
Congressman George Miller-Chair, House Education and Labor Committee
Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, Vice Chair, House Education and Labor Committee

To locate information about who your congressional representatives are and their local office addresses, visit www.thomas.soc.gov, click on House of Representatives or Senate and then use the search fields.

As the No Child Left Behind Act 2007 reauthorization process begins, now is the time for California PTA members to begin educating their congressional representatives about the affects NCLB is having on education in California. PTA district presidents can provide unit and council PTA leaders with information about California PTA's concerns about the affects of NCLB on California's children and schools.

For advocacy to be effective, the more specific information you can share with elected representatives about how their decisions directly impact the schools and children in their constituent areas the more meaningful the message.

Advocacy Week should be the beginning of unit, council, and district involvement rather than an end in itself. This important week should begin PTA efforts to establish ongoing relationships with decision-makers at all levels.

Remember to share your advocacy efforts up PTA channels. In doing so you will generate more support and enthusiasm for your concerns.