PTA Mission & Values

The overall purpose of PTA is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

- Creation of Kindergarten classes
- Child labor laws
- Public health service
- Hot and healthy lunch programs
- Juvenile justice system
- Mandatory immunization
- Arts in Education
- School Safety

National PTA is the largest volunteer child advocacy organization in the nation.

•Supports nationally agreed upon voluntary standards if they are derived by consensus at the state and local levels. *Parents must be involved in this process.*

•Opposes federal legislation and/or regulations that mandate standardized testing or would lead to such testing, as well as federal policies that mandate comparisons of states, school districts, or individual schools and student retention based on a single test or sole criterion and the practice of social promotion.

•Believes that valid assessment does not consist of only a single test score, and that at no time should a single test be considered the sole determinant of a student's academic or work future.

National PTA

Position statements and Resolutions are:

Written by local/state PTA boards

Voted by individual states

Carried forward to the National PTA convention for confirmation by all state members

1)Consistent and clear standards prepare students for college, career, and citizenship.

2) Clear, consistent standards equip parents to understand and support what their children should learn and know.

3) Curriculum, assessments, and professional development aligned to clear standards will prepare and support teachers so that they can be effective in the classroom.

4) Internationally-benchmarked standards will guarantee that all our nation's students are able to compete in a globally competitive workforce.

Rhetoric that parents hear:

A recent study by ACT found that only 23 percent of high school graduates were likely to earn at least a "C" or higher in first-year college courses.

5) Common core standards ensure that all students, regardless of income or geography, have the opportunity to engage in equally challenging work

Rhetoric that Parents hear:

A recent report by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics revealed that the literacy scores of America's fourth graders rank 11th among industrialized nations.

Driven by a desire to better prepare graduates for college and careers, the *Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (EED),* with the support of Alaska educators and stakeholders, have created new English/Language Arts and Mathematics Standards to adequately prepare Alaskan students for college and careers.

The new, more rigorous, academic standards clearly outline what students should know and be able to do at each grade level to be globally competitive.

The State Board of Education adopted the standards in June 2012.

Rhetoric that Parents hear

Forty-five states have adopted a common set of academic standards, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which are designed to help prepare students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in college and careers.

Across the nation, many educational materials and resources aligned to the Common Core State Standards are being created.

Educators and others have asked if Alaska will be able to take advantage of these materials. The answer is yes.

One goal of Alaska's standards revision process was to ensure that Alaskan schools would be able to use the materials produced for the CCSS. Alaska standards and the CCSS are very similar, and Alaska took great care to make sure that its standards are equal in rigor.

Although the sets of standards are equivalent, they are not identical. In general, where differences exist, it is for the following reasons:

Rhetoric that Parents hear:

Alaskan Differences:

1. Alaska educators were focused on making sure that the standards had clarity to ensure that teachers would easily understand the focus and purpose of each standard; and

2. Alaska educators wanted key Alaskan standards retained, especially math standards in measurement in the elementary grades.

CCSS Anchor Standard 2 is about themes and summaries of texts. The Alaska Anchor Standard is more specific about how to restate and summarize text.

- CCSS Grade 7 Standard 2 for Reading Literature code: RL.7.2

- Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

- Alaska's Grade 7 Standard 2 for Reading Literature code: RL.7.2

- Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; restate and summarize main ideas or events, in correct sequence, after reading a text.

- CCSS grade 5 standard 10 for Reading Literature
- RL.5.10 RL.5.10

- By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 4–5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

- Alaska's grade 5 standard
- 10 for Reading Literature
- RL.5.10 RL.5.10

- By the end of the year, read and comprehend a range of literature from a variety of cultures, within a complexity band appropriate to grade 5 (from upper grade 4 to grade 6), with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

CCSS Mathematics Standard 4.NBT.3. Alaska Mathematics Standard 4.NBT.3.

- Use place value understanding to round multidigit whole numbers to any place.

Alaska Mathematics Standard 4.NBT.3.

- Use place value understanding to round multidigit whole numbers to any place.
- Use place value understanding to round multidigit whole numbers to any place using a variety of estimation methods; be able to describe, compare, and contrast solutions.

Parents' Guide to Student Success: A Sample of What Your Child Will Be Working on in Kindergarten

- Naming upper-and lower-case letters, matching those letters with their sounds, and printing them
- Comparing the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories, such as fairy tales and folktales
- Retelling familiar stories and talking about stories read to them using details from the text
- Using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to describe an event, including his or her reaction to what happened
- Stating an opinion or preference about a topic or book in writing (e.g., My favorite book is . . .)
- Taking part in classroom conversations and following rules for discussions (e.g., learning to listen to others and taking turns when speaking)
- Speaking clearly to express thoughts, feelings, and ideas, including descriptions of familiar people, places, things, and events
- Asking and answering questions about key details in stories or other information read aloud
- Understanding and using question words (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how) in discussions
- Learning to recognize, spell, and properly use those little grammatical words that hold the language together (e.g., a, the, to, of, from, I, is, are)

Keeping the conversation focused.

- Using knowledge of letters and letter-sound correspondences to figure out how to spell words as they sound

- Reading and understanding a story designed for early readers

- Ask to see a sample of your child's work. Ask the teacher questions such as: Is this piece of work satisfactory? How could it be better? Is my child on track? How can I help my child improve or excel in this area? If my child needs extra support or wants to learn more about a subject, are there resources to help his or her learning outside the classroom?

Talking to Your Child's Teacher

When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In kindergarten, these include:

Keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In 8th grade, these include:

- Reading closely and drawing evidence from grade-level fiction and non- fiction works that most strongly supports an analysis of the material

- Developing a rich vocabulary of complex and sophisticated words and using them to speak and write more precisely and coherently

Talking to Your Child's Teacher

When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything.

English Language Arts & Literacy

■ Make time in everyone's busy schedule for family discussions about things going on around the world. Weekends can be a chance for everyone to catch up

■ Visit the campus of a local college with your teen. Begin talking about college early. What does he or she expect from college? What high school courses will your child need to pass to prepare for college?

Mathematics

Ask your child to share with you any work he or she is doing in math class that strikes him or her as interesting. Some possibilities might include:

■ Solving interesting problems involving cylinders and spheres, such as figuring out how much water fits inside a garden hose, or how many earths would fit inside the sun

■ Analyzing data with a scatterplot, for example to decide whether exercise and obesity are related…When….

Help Your Child Learn at Home

Try to create a quiet place for your child to study, and carve out time every day when your child can concentrate. You should also try to sit down with your child at least once a week for 15 to 30 minutes while he or she works on homework. This will keep you informed about what your child is working on, and it will help you be the first to know if your child needs help with specific topics. Additionally, here are some activities you can do with your child to support learning at home:

The education experience for many military-connected students can be frustrating. Some students find themselves in a class where they do not have the expected

- knowledge and skills needed to do well, skills their classmates learned the previous year. Other students find themselves repeating material and are expected to be content to spend class time reviewing."

- The adoption and implementation of CCSS are a critical step and particularly important to the mobile military-connected student because they provide consistency, continuity, and clear expectations of the knowledge and skills students need in each grade.

Why are Common Core Standards so important to Military Connected Students?

1 military family
+1 change of duty station
+A change of address, change of school and teachers,
+Change of friends, change of place of worship, change of weather, change of scenery
+ Change of schedules, change of neighborhood, change of sports, and change of routine

- In the 2002 research review A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement, Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp conclude that there is a *positive* and convincing relationship between family involvement and student success, regardless of race/ethnicity, class, or parents' level of education.

To put it another way, when *families are involved* in their children's learning both at home and at school, their children do better in school. The report also points to specific types of involvement as being especially beneficial to children's academic success.

Finding 1: Involvement programs that link to learning improve student achievement.

It's simple:

The more parent and community involvement activities focus on improving student learning, the more student learning improves. Learning-focused involvement activities may include

- Family nights on math or literacy.
- Family-teacher conferences that involve students.
- Family workshops on planning for college.

Finding 2: Speaking up for children protects and promotes their success.

Children whose parents are advocates for them at school are more confident at school and take on and achieve more. The more families advocate for their children and support their children's progress, the longer their children stay in school and the better their children do.

Families should

- Become knowledgeable about the operations of schools and the laws that govern those operations.
- Be confident about their ability to work with schools.
- Expect only the best from their children and for their children.
- Join PTA.

Finding 3: All families can contribute to their children's success.

Family involvement improves student success, regardless of race/ethnicity, class, or parents' level of education. For involvement to happen, however, principals, teachers, and parents themselves must believe that all parents can contribute to their children's success in school. Parents can promote their children's academic success by

- Teaching their children the importance of education.
- Finding out what their children are expected to know and to be able to do and reinforcing lessons at home.
- Sending their children to school ready to learn every day.

Principals and teachers must support parent involvement by

- Making parent involvement a priority.
- Recognizing and removing barriers to parent involvement.
- Sharing decision-making power with parents and community members.
- Working to understand class and cultural differences.

Finding 4: Community organizing gets results.

Engaging community members, businesses, and organizations as partners in children's education can improve the learning community in many ways. For example, community partners may be able to

- Provide expanded learning opportunities.
- Build broad-based support for increased school funding.
- Provide quality after-school programs.

The findings presented by Henderson and Mapp provide a framework for strengthening parent/family involvement programs. PTA, working with leading experts on parent involvement and school-community partnerships, has updated its National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs to reflect recent research and improve parent and community involvement practices. To reflect this change, the standards have been renamed the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships.

The updated National Standards shift the focus from what schools should do to involve parents to what parents, schools, and communities can do together to support student success

National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

Standard 1: Welcoming all families into the school community—Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

Standard 2: Communicating effectively—Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

Standard 3: Supporting student success—Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

Standard 4: Speaking up for every child—Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

Standard 5: Sharing power—Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

Standard 6: Collaborating with community—Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

- Earn higher grades and pass their classes,
- Attend school regularly and have better social skills,
- Go on to postsecondary education.

When families, schools, and communities work together,

- Student achievement improves,
- Teacher morale rises,
- Communication increases,
- Family, school, and community connections multiply.

Research Shows:

Family involvement promotes student success. Students with involved parents are more likely to:

What does it take to become a National PTA school of Excellence

1. Enroll your PTA between May 1 and September 30, 2013 . You will receive the Getting Started Guide, which describes program components, including your first steps to gather feedback from families and set goals with your school partner.

2.Conduct a Family-School Partnership Scan and share your results with National PTA by November 15, 2013.

3.Receive a customized Roadmap to Excellence containing recommendations that respond to your specific results from the Family-School Partnership Scan.

4.Complete the National PTA School of Excellence application before June 1, 2014.

5.Celebrate your excellence! All National PTA School of Excellence recipients will receive a toolkit to support celebration activities.