

PSEA

ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS 2018-2019

May 2018

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The constitution of the Pennsylvania State Education Association states, "The purpose of this Association shall be to promote the general educational welfare of the state, to protect and advance the interests of its members, to foster professional zeal, and to advance educational standards."

To facilitate the purposes of the Association, each House of Delegates sets forth statements of resolutions committing the Association to action. A resolution is an expression of the belief or position of the Association.

A resolution calls for the interpretation or action by various agencies including the Association.

I. TO PROMOTE THE GENERAL EDUCATIONAL WELFARE OF THE STATE

I.1 The Resolutions Process

A-1 SAFEGUARDING THE RESOLUTIONS PROCESS

The Association is committed to (1) developing its policies through a resolutions report prepared by active members by action by the House of Delegates and (2) requiring that its elected officers be accountable for progress and implementation of resolutions. The Association is committed to safeguarding this same process in the NEA.

Committees, commissions, departments, and those PSEA members appointed to state boards and commissions should be knowledgeable of PSEA resolutions and adhere to the concepts therein. (80,95)

I.2 Civil and Human Rights

A-2 EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

The Pennsylvania State Education Association believes that public education should be provided from early childhood through adulthood, be suited to the needs of the individual, be non-segregated, be offered at public expense, and be required through the secondary school. The individual must be free to choose, to supplement, or to substitute at his own expense education in privately supported nonpublic schools that meet Pennsylvania Department of Education standards. (81,96)

A-3 CIVIL RIGHTS

The Association is committed to the achievement of a totally integrated society. The Association calls upon all Americans to eliminate all barriers of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, and economic status that prevent some individuals, adult or juvenile, from exercising rights enjoyed by others, including liberties decreed in common law, the Constitution, and statutes of the United States. Civil order and obedience to the law must be ensured without abridgment of human and civil rights. Individuals, adult or juvenile, must be assured a speedy and fair judicial process with free legal counsel for those in need. To be effective citizens, individuals must be trained and aided in developing strategies and expertise that will enable them to operate effectively in a democratic society. (93,09,17)

A-4 ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AND STEREOTYPING

The Association believes in the equality of all individuals. Discrimination and stereotyping based on such factors as disability, economic status, ethnicity, gender and gender identity, immigration status, marital status, occupation, race, religion, and sexual orientation must be eliminated.

The Association believes that equal access to all resources and programs must be available to all individuals.

The Association also believes that members must take an active role in promoting tolerance and respect for all individuals in all educational settings. The elimination of discrimination and the practice of stereotyping should only occur through the addition, and not the reduction or deletion, of time and/or programs.

The Association believes that the total school curriculum should incorporate the positive aspects of human relations. (80,81,83,84,95,00,11,13,16)

A-5 SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The Association believes that school employees and students must be protected from sexual harassment.

The Association believes that every school district must develop educational programs designed to aid in the recognition, understanding, prevention and elimination of sexual harassment. The Association believes that every school district must develop strong policies prohibiting sexual harassment.

The Association further believes that every school district must develop and publicize procedures regarding sexual harassment that facilitate the reporting of incidents of sexual harassment, resolve complaints promptly, and protect the rights of all parties.

The Association believes that school districts must provide counseling for students and school employees who are affected by sexual harassment. (15)

A-6 ATTACKS ON HUMAN DIGNITY

The Association believes in the preservation of human dignity for all people. The Association rejects the use, commercial or otherwise, of names, symbols, caricatures, emblems, logos, and mascots that promote prejudice. (99,00,18)

I.3 School Funding

A-7 EQUITABLE SCHOOL FUNDING

The Association supports legislation that creates an education funding formula that would allocate state tax revenues to public schools in a fair, transparent, and equitable manner, as well as provide targeted property tax relief. Any tax relief proposal worthy of consideration must address the present and future needs of public schools and provide sufficient funding to replace any lost property tax revenue.

The Association opposes any legislative effort that drains school subsidies from public schools by capping future funding at a rate that does not reflect actual costs. (14)

A-8 FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR EDUCATION

The Association affirms and supports the mandate of the state constitution to the General Assembly to maintain and support a thorough and efficient system of public education guarantees educational opportunities and resources for every resident.

The Association also believes in a broad-based federal, state, and local tax program that equitably and fully funds the needs of all public-school entities as well as any federal and state mandates without referenda.

The Association further believes that subsidies to public school entities should be paid in full at the beginning of each month.

The Association believes that all state and federal laws, regulations, and mandates governing public schools must apply to any publicly funded educational provider. (80,81,82,86,87,90,94,95,99,06,13,17)

A-9 FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PUBLIC VOCATIONAL, CAREER, AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The Association supports legislation that provides increases for the student reimbursement ratio and all recognized programs of public vocational, career, and technical education.

The Association recommends that all funding for public vocational, career, and technical education should be allocated on the basis of the educational services provided and persons served. (13)

A-10 FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Association believes that all special education services should be funded fully by state and federal revenues.

The Association further believes that full funding based on the principle of excess cost is the most effective method for delivery of services to special education students within the Commonwealth. (82,89,90,98,17)

A-11 PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION

The Association believes that Pennsylvania must maintain and adequately fund a system of public higher education in order to guarantee that every qualified resident will have the opportunity to enroll in public higher education.

The Association also believes tuition for Pennsylvania residents should be eliminated at state universities.

The Association further believes each institution should maintain its own identity and admissions program. Each program should include an initiative to increase enrollment of minority students. (80,82,83,99,12,13, 17)

A-12 COMMUNITY COLLEGES

The Association believes that a tuition-free community college education should be available within each county and must be accessible to all Pennsylvania residents. Financial responsibility for community colleges must lie with the State, and financial constraints should never be the reason for limiting the number of students. Further, in the event of a budgetary surplus at the end of the fiscal year, those funds shall be retained for the betterment of the college and its students.

The Association also believes that community colleges should maintain separate identities and conduct open admissions programs.

The Association further believes that community colleges should provide courses that will assist education employees in obtaining and maintaining certification.

The Association believes that full-time community college students should have elected representation with full voting privileges on community college boards of trustees in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. (80, 85, 91, 93, 98, 07, 10, 11, 18)

A-13 SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

The Association believes that a school bus is the safest form of transportation and that all eligible students should be encouraged to ride the bus. All school buses must be owned, operated, and staffed by the local school entity with the best interests of all students being of primary concern. Each bus driver must be assisted by either human and/or mechanical monitors.

The Association also believes that all safety requirements for buses and other vehicles must be stringently enforced and overcrowding prohibited.

Student driving privileges should be restricted to cases of need as determined by the school entity.

The Association further believes that all aspects of public school transportation should be totally funded by the state. The Association opposes the subcontracting of school transportation services.

The Association believes transportation for nonpublic school students should not be provided at public expense. (80,81,84,03,10)

A-14 SERVICES AND SUPPORTS FOR CAREGIVERS

The Association believes that state initiatives designed to provide information about available services and supports for all designated caregivers of children are beneficial and should be adequately funded. (15)

A-15 VOUCHERS AND TAX CREDITS

The Association opposes the use of vouchers, tuition tax credits, or tuition tax deductions as a way of diverting funds from public education. (84,88,04)

A-16 PUBLIC REFERENDA

The Association opposes public referenda on school budgets in any form and by any name. (04)

I.4 Educational Law and Government

A-17 AWARENESS OF LAW IN THE PROFESSION

The Association believes that copies of the laws, regulations, standards, guidelines, and basic education circulars affecting education and the profession should be readily accessible at the place of employment. Courses pertaining to school laws, regulations, standards, and guidelines should be included in all teacher preparation programs that lead to certification. (87,01)

A-18 ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

The Association believes that a single state board of education, elected by professionals currently engaged in education, should be the policy-making body for educational programs in Pennsylvania. All educational entities must work to employ and maintain competent and dynamic leadership. Local school districts must be organized into administrative units of sufficient size, resources, and enrollment to ensure broad educational opportunities for all.

Governing boards at all levels should be selected on a nonpartisan basis and should understand their role as policymakers. Provisions must be established for professional educators to work effectively and ethically on questions of school policies and professional conditions. (80,87,95)

A-19 PROPONENTS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Association believes that it must work cooperatively and collectively with all organizations, coalitions, and agencies whose interests and goals are to promote and improve the quality of public education at all levels.

The Association also believes that it must continually work to engage private citizens to actively support public education. (80,87,88,96,04,11,14)

A-20 OPPONENTS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Association must be continually aware of the efforts of those individuals or groups identified as opponents of public education. The Association must make a concerted effort to monitor their activities and disseminate regular updates on their goals and activities. (82,88,93,98)

A-21 GERRYMANDERING

The Association opposes the gerrymandering of legislative and congressional districts and supports redistricting standards that take into consideration the compactness of districts as well as the preservation of communities of interest by splitting counties and municipalities only when absolutely necessary to meet population guidelines.

The Association supports efforts to require that when legislative and congressional seats are redistricted following the decennial census that in addition to current requirements for districts to be equal in population, the districts should be drawn so as to maximize compactness and avoid whenever possible the splitting of county and municipal boundaries. (16)

I.5 Public Perceptions of Education

A-22 GOVERNMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Association believes communication with legislative and executive branches must be maintained without conceding the positions taken on issues by the Houses of Delegates. (82,91,02,03)

A-23 ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION/SUNSHINE LAW

The Association supports the Pennsylvania "Sunshine Law" and believes the law must be fully implemented. Pennsylvania's "Sunshine Law" must be implemented in spirit as well as in letter. The Association at state and local levels should cooperate in exposing violations of the "Sunshine Law" as it relates to any governing board. (80,97)

A-24 PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Association believes the goals of public education should be promoted through active and positive public relations, highlighting the achievements of both students and education employees. (80,93,00,01,05)

I.6 School Operations

A-25 SCHOOL CALENDAR/DAY

The Association believes that school calendars must not be legislatively fixed and must be based on local negotiations. The Association also believes that school calendars should be collaboratively designed by the bargaining unit and the school district or designated committee. Professional bargaining unit members must have input into the complete structure of the school day and calendar.

The Association also believes that any plan to recover state mandated school days lost due to weather emergencies, natural disasters, or other unforeseen circumstances must be negotiated and agreed to by all affected bargaining units.

The Association further believes that any increase in the length of school calendar/year beyond the mandated 180-day school year must be accompanied by proportional increases in salaries and fringe benefits for all employees. (90,95,97,05,12,14)

A-26 CONSOLIDATION/DE-CONSOLIDATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The Association believes that any proposal advocating for consolidation or de-consolidation of school districts must originate with and be executed by all local stakeholders as well as adhere to democratic processes.

The Association also believes that if any proposal comes to fruition, all education employees must be maintained and treated equitably, and suffer no demotion in position, salary, benefits, protections, or bargaining and due process rights.

The Association further believes that there must be no reduction in educational programs or offerings.

The Association asserts that employees of newly consolidated or de-consolidated districts must maintain membership in local, state and national affiliates. (11,12)

II. TO PROTECT AND ADVANCE THE INTEREST OF ITS MEMBERS

II.1 Basic Rights of Members

B-01 DIGNITY AND RESPECT

The Association believes that all education employees must be treated with dignity and respect. (09,11)

B-02 ACADEMIC, PERSONAL, AND PROFESSIONAL FREEDOM

The Association believes that academic, personal, and professional freedom is essential to the well-being of the teaching profession.

Academic freedom includes the right of the teacher and learner to present, discuss, and explore controversial and divergent points of view in an atmosphere conducive to the quest for knowledge and truth. In order to achieve this, procedures must be established which guarantee that the professional staff has the right to select materials, methods, and strategies that it believes to be most appropriate to the curriculum and to the maturity level of the students without censorship or legislative interference. The professional staff must be free to exercise this judgment without fear of institutional pressure of reprisal.

Challenges on the choice of instructional materials must be orderly and objective, under procedures mutually adopted by professional associations and school boards.

Personal freedom includes all of those rights that American citizens enjoy under the U.S. Constitution, regardless of occupation. Educators should not be penalized personally or professionally for exercising their constitutional rights.

Professional freedom includes the right of educators to advocate their professional points of view and to evaluate and criticize the policies and actions of the local school entity in which they are employed without fear of reprisal.

Educators have the right and obligation to assist colleagues when their academic, personal, or professional freedom is threatened or violated. (80,88,90,91)

B-03 COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The Association believes that local associations and policymaking boards must negotiate written master contracts. Such contracts shall result from negotiation in good faith between associations and such boards, through representatives of their choosing, to establish, maintain, protect, and improve terms and conditions for educational service and other matters of mutual concern including a provision for financial responsibility.

The Association encourages local associations to see that all education employees are guaranteed a realistic opportunity for decisive participation in the establishment of instructional policies. Local associations are encouraged to become familiar with and work to attain contracts consistent with PSEA Collective Bargaining Goals. Procedures for the resolution of impasse must be provided in the master contract with definite steps to appeal the application of interpretation of board policies and agreements. Binding arbitration shall be a part of the grievance procedure.

Those representing local associations in the negotiation process shall be granted released time without loss of pay.

The Association believes that the employment of non-PSEA negotiators is not in the best interest of PSEA members organizationally, financially, or professionally and is, therefore, not encouraged.

Faculty and first-level supervisors, in order to preserve professional relationships within school staffs, should not be negotiators for boards.

The Association encourages new education employees to accept initial employment with those areas or districts where master contracts have been negotiated.

Members of the Association should be involved in the development of guidelines for recruitment, appointment, orientation, evaluation, transfer, promotion, and dismissal of all professional personnel.

The rights and privileges of all education employees should always be respected regardless of what organization has sole negotiation rights. (80,90,95,97,02)

B-04 PROFESSIONAL SANCTIONS

The Association supports the use of professional sanctions in the form of public censure of any school entity that fosters educational or professional conditions which deter quality teaching or learning. The Association will also discourage prospective employees from applying to work in such entities. (87,03)

B-05 PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RELATIONS ACTS

The Association believes in a strong public sector collective bargaining law. The Association believes that all education employees need to be aware of the principles, concepts, and implications of Acts 195 and 88. The collective bargaining process should be a part of all teacher education and continuing education programs.

It also believes that legislation is needed to: (1) expand items mandated as negotiable to include educational matters relating to curriculum and school programs and (2) give all education employees, other than the chief educational administrator and other commissioned officers, but specifically including all other administrators, supervisors, and special service personnel, the right to collective negotiations with the board of school directors or of trustees in bargaining units whose inclusiveness is determined by the total education employees involved.

The Association supports passage of a strong federal collective bargaining law for education employees. (80,81,93,95,96,04,08)

B-06 POLITICAL ACTION

The Association reaffirms the constitutional right and obligation of all education employees, individually and/or collectively, to participate in all aspects of the democratic political process and encourages all education employees, to actively do so. The Association must resist any efforts to deny or suppress the exercise of those rights. The Association should assist local associations in bringing action against any policymaking board which abrogates the political rights of education employees. Provisions should be made to enable education employees to serve in any public office without personal loss and/or curtailment of annual increments, tenure, retirement, fringe benefits, or seniority rights.

The Association endorses PSEA-PACE, the PSEA political action committee, and strongly urges members and friends of education to support it through individual involvement and contributions.

The Association opposes legislation that would uniformly impose expenditure limits without regard to PAC size. (80,87,95,07,09)

B-07 PSEA - POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION (PACE)

The Association encourages its members to participate in the process of reviewing and recommending candidates for political office and strongly encourages all members and friends of education to support all recommended candidates.

The Association also believes that members should be allowed to contribute to PACE through payroll deduction.

The Association opposes legislation that would uniformly impose expenditure limits without regard to the size of a political action committee (PAC). (11,12)

B-08 PAYROLL DEDUCTION

The Association believes that payroll deduction is an essential right of all public employees that should be guaranteed by law. The Association also believes that all local associations should adopt contract language that guarantees the right to have payroll deduction. The Association opposes any effort to limit the right to payroll deduction for professional association dues, fair share contributions, and PSEA/NEA Political Action Committee contributions.

The Association also opposes all attempts to limit this right through the imposition of fees or surcharges. (12,13)

B-09 EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLANS

The Association believes that state and federal programs, such as the Pennsylvania 529 Guaranteed Savings Plan, should be made available to school employees through payroll deduction. (10)

B-10 FAIR SHARE

The Association believes that Fair Share must be instituted in all PSEA locals. Those who do not join the association will be required to pay their fair share of legal and other necessary expenses that are involved in the negotiations process and grievance procedures. The Association opposes legislation that eliminates or limits the collection of Fair Share. (80,81,93,95, 17)

B-11 PROFESSIONAL COMPENSATION

The Association believes that all professional education employees should be fairly and reasonably compensated. Salary schedules, as well as hourly wage tables, should be based on certification, degrees, professional development, experience, responsibility, and length of contract year.

Professional employees should have mandated salary schedules and/or hourly wage tables with automatic annual increments.

All educators must be paid on a pro rata salary for service beyond the mandated 180-day school term.

All educators transferring between school districts and intermediate units or career and technical centers should be granted full credit for professional experience in the matter of salaries and fringe benefits in accordance with the employing school entity's contract.

The Association believes that all credits beyond the baccalaureate degree including graduate, undergraduate, inservice classes, and related experiences outside of the classroom should be used to determine master's equivalency and/or placement on the salary schedule.

In addition to collectively bargained wages, the Association believes that hourly education employees should receive increases proportional to any increases in the minimum wage. (81,90,00,06,11,15)

B-12 MERIT PAY

The Association opposes merit pay in any form and by any name. (84,00)

B-13 CLEARANCES

The Association believes that all mandated criminal background clearances should be funded by government sources. (15)

B-14 WORKERS COMPENSATION

The Association believes that all education employees who are injured in the workplace or while performing their contractual duties should maintain all legal and contractual rights and benefits until medically cleared to return to work.

Furthermore, the Association believes that all education employees shall be informed of the available entitlements under workers compensation insurance as required by law. (07)

B-15 HEALTH CARE

The Association believes that a comprehensive health insurance program must be an essential part of the total compensation for all education employees. Each local association should actively participate in any negotiations between the employer and health care providers or third-party insurers. (85,91,97)

B-16 EXTENSION OF BENEFIT

The Association believes that all spousal benefits should be fully extended to all domestic partners. (13)

B-17 STATEWIDE HEALTH CARE PLAN

The Association supports a voluntary statewide health care plan for all active and retired public school employees consisting of medical, prescription, dental and vision coverage that is identical or better than benefits provided in existing collective bargaining agreements and/or retirement plans; that is fully funded by the state and local school entities; and has local Trusts/Consortia including Taft/Hartley Trusts as part of the delivery system. (07,15)

B-18 STRIKES IN SCHOOL ENTITIES

The Association believes that the right to strike is a fundamental right of all education employees which must be preserved by law. The Association further believes that a strike is an appropriate method of facilitating the resolution of an impasse.

The Association believes that the method of striking used by the local association shall be decided at the local level.

The Association believes that in the event of a strike by employees of a school district, all activities, including extracurricular and cocurricular, should cease.

The Association believes that substitutes and personnel outside the bargaining unit should not be used to take the place of bargaining unit members during a work stoppage. It further believes that videos, computer programs and other technical devices should not be used to replace any education employee during a strike.

The Association believes that strikebreaking is an unprofessional act which jeopardizes the bargaining process, and therefore, strikebreakers will be subject to member discipline.

The Association believes that vocational-technical and special education students should not be returned to sending school districts during vocational-technical or intermediate unit association strikes.

The Association believes that no education employees should be compelled to cross the picket lines of bargaining units in other districts.

The Association believes that binding arbitration is only acceptable when mutually agreed to by both parties in the negotiating process. (80,86,90,94,96,97,00,07,08)

B-19 TENURE

The Association believes that all certificated educators must be guaranteed the right to tenure and opposes any attempt to seek detrimental changes to that right. It further believes that no professional employee may be demoted, suspended, or dismissed without being afforded full due process as guaranteed by law. (80,93)

B-20 SENIORITY: REDUCTION IN FORCE AND RECALL

The Association believes that in the event of reduction in force, seniority within the area(s) of certification or job classification in the local school entity should be the sole criterion in determining the order in which layoffs and demotions occur. The Association believes that all employees shall have realignment and recall rights based solely on seniority. (99,12)

B-21 JUST CAUSE

The Association believes that all education employees must be guaranteed Just Cause. It further believes that no employee may be demoted, suspended, or dismissed without being afforded full due process. (97)

B-22 LEAVES OF ABSENCE

The Association supports legislation designed to (1) provide each education employee with at least three days leave each year for personal reasons without loss of pay, (2) provide for transfer of all accumulated unused sick leave from one district or institution to another, (3) provide that sabbatical leave in the school code be considered as minimum and allow for split sabbaticals, (4) provide child bearing and child care leaves of sufficient length, and (5) provide that education employees have the right to leave with or without pay when such persons do not qualify for sabbatical leave.

Education employees who receive leaves shall retain their rights to their positions and seniority.

Sick leave must be based proportionally on the number of days employed per year. (80,89,96,97)

B-23 SABBATICAL LEAVES

The Association believes that sabbatical leaves for professional employees are an important and necessary means for improving and maintaining educational skills, experiences, and health.

The Association further believes sabbatical leaves for study, travel, and health fulfill these goals; and should be provided.

The Association believes that a local school board must not impose any specific or minimum requirements for sabbatical leaves. (96,97)

B-24 BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

The Association believes that all education employees are entitled to bereavement leave without loss of pay. The Association also believes that bereavement leave should be extended to include death of an immediate family member or near relative of a member of the employee's household. (10)

B-25 MILITARY LEAVE

The Association believes that all education employees who serve in the military should maintain all legal and contractual rights and benefits, including insurance coverages and the difference between their school district salary and their military pay, while on active duty. (07,08)

B-26 RELEASED TIME FOR RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

The Association believes that when a day of major religious observance of an education employee falls on a school day, released time, other than a personal day, should be granted for the purpose of religious observance. (81,97)

B-27 DEFINED BENEFIT PLAN

The Association believes a defined benefit pension plan must be maintained. The Association opposes any effort to convert to a defined contribution pension plan. The Association also opposes the creation of a two-tiered retirement benefit plan.

The Association further believes that all rights and benefits of retirees participating in Pennsylvania public employees' retirement systems must be maintained and guaranteed.

The Association opposes any efforts to reduce or eliminate existing retirement benefits for active and future participants in Pennsylvania public employees' retirement systems, including, but not limited to, the 2.5 multiplier, lump sum withdrawal of employee contributions and interest, and the Health Options Premium Assistance. (09,10,12)

B-28 HEALTH ASSISTANTS/HEALTH AIDES

The Association believes that it is the role of health assistants/health aides to assist certificated school nurses to accomplish health-related tasks. Health assistants/health aides should not replace and must be directed by certificated school nurses. Health assistants/health aides must not be asked to perform the duties of certificated school nurses and must be provided with appropriate orientation and training.

The Association vigorously opposes the use of any unlicensed personnel to be included in the administration of medication or other medical services. (00)

II.2 Protection of the Members

B-28 RETIREMENT

The Association believes that public school employees should have the option of full retirement after 25 years of service at any age without penalty. The Association also urges its local affiliates to negotiate early retirement incentives in their local school entities in order to secure benefits that would make full retirement with 25 years of service a viable option. Until this goal is met, the Association should work to make the 30 and out retirement option permanent.

The Association believes that benefits paid to retired public school employees must automatically increase annually in proportion to the cost of living and recommends substantially increasing the supplemental state annuity minimum. The Association further recommends that any future supplemental annuity reflect the actual cost of living and should include an additional graduated increase for pre-ACT 9 retirees. The Association also believes that future cost-of-living increases should be applicable to the beneficiaries of the annuitants.

The Association recommends legislation which would allow vesting after five years of service.

The Association believes the members of the retirement system should be permitted to change the chosen retirement option at any time within one year after the original choice of option.

The Association recommends that members of the retirement system be permitted to use all earned sick leave accumulated prior to the effective date of retirement or to use such earned sick leave for additional retirement credit, and to use any and all income earned from a school entity for the computation of retirement benefits.

The Association believes that paid family health insurance should be provided for all retirees.

The Association believes that public school employees should have the right to purchase private or Pennsylvania non-public school service retirement credit in accordance with the existing provisions for purchasing out-of-state service.

The Association supports safeguards for the retirement system that prevent misuse of assets and guarantees full funding.

The Association believes that vocational-technical educators should have the right to purchase retirement credit for certain prior work experience in their area of specialization.

The Association believes that school nurses should have the right to purchase for retirement purposes the one-year general nursing experience prerequisite for certification.

The Association supports the elimination of fractional years of credited service which have resulted from a work stoppage by utilizing any days worked beyond 180 in subsequent years to offset lost days.

The Association believes that age should not be a factor in determining the continued employment of public school employees.

The Association recommends that the office practice of the Public-School Employees' Retirement System be improved regularly to guarantee the most efficient and timely service to all members.

The Association believes the PSERS Board of Trustees should have the right of access to independent counsel.

The Association believes that an annual statement of the status of experience of the retirement fund should be prepared at the conclusion of each fiscal year and made available upon request to any member of the retirement system. (80,81,82,83,86,87,88,90,94,97,98,09, 17)

B-29 RETIREMENT SYSTEM FUNDING

The Association supports safeguards that (1) prevent any misuse of assets and (2) guarantee full funding for the retirement system.

The Association believes the Commonwealth as well as other contributors of the Public-School Employees' Retirement System should be required to submit payments on a current basis and that a penalty and legal means should be used to ensure compliance.

The Association believes that the employee contribution to the Public-School Employees' Retirement System should never exceed the percentage paid by the employer or the state.

The Association supports federal legislation providing for the deduction of mandatory employee contributions from taxable income with the tax on such contributions deferred until after retirement. (98,02,05,07,09,17)

B-30 NONDISCRIMINATORY PERSONNEL POLICIES/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The Association believes that personnel policies and practices must guarantee that no person be employed, retained, paid, dismissed, suspended, demoted, transferred, or retired because of race, color, national origin, religious beliefs, residence, disability, political activities, professional association activity, age, marital status, family relationship, gender, or sexual orientation.

The Association urges the development and implementation of affirmative action plans and procedures that will encourage active recruitment and employment of women, minorities, and men in underrepresented education categories. (80,84,93,99)

B-31 CRIMINAL CHARGES

The Association believes that if any employee has been dismissed/suspended because of criminal charges, the employee shall be reinstated to his/her former position in the school entity upon exoneration or dismissal of charges.

The school entity should compensate the employee for legal expenses for school related charges, loss of pay, incidentals, benefits, and privileges as if continuously employed.

The Association further believes that no employee should be compelled to disclose any prior arrest for any crime of which the employee has been acquitted, for which sufficient time has passed for such records to be expunged, or for which charges have been dismissed. (83,12)

B-32 EMPLOYEE PERSONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS (EPAP)

The Association supports the establishment of Employee Personal Assistance Programs (EPAP) to provide assistance to employees in stressful situations. Procedures to implement an EPAP should be established by cooperative efforts among the Association, the school entity, the individual, and existing community services. Information pertaining to persons utilizing EPAP should be held in strictest confidence. (85)

B-33 DRUG TESTING

The Association is opposed to mandatory drug testing of its members. (87)

B-34 DRUG TESTING OF STUDENTS

The Association opposes requiring school employees to perform or participate in student drug testing. The Association believes that any school employee required to perform such duties must be absolved from all liability. (13,17)

B-35 HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (HIV)/ACQUIRED IMMUNODEFICIENCY SYNDROME (AIDS)

The Association is opposed to mandatory screening of blood to detect the presence of HIV/AIDS antibodies. The Association supports the protection of the rights of those employees who have contracted HIV/AIDS and is opposed to discrimination against such employees. (86,87,95,96)

B-36 RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

The Association and its locals should work actively to combat attempts to include residency requirements as conditions of employment by negotiating non-residency clauses into local contracts. (81,95,02)

B-37 PROTECTION OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES

The safety of all school employees must be guaranteed by procedures that eliminate from all schools firearms and other weapons carried by unauthorized persons. The Association insists upon the enactment and enforcement of laws and the development of policies and procedures to guarantee the safety of education employees from physical attacks on their persons or property.

The Association believes any form of verbal, electronic, or written abuse of education employees is inappropriate. Therefore, guidelines for dealing with verbal abuse must be developed and appropriate action must be taken for all cases of abuse. The Association further believes that all education employees should receive adequate training in order to deal with any form of abuse as well as physical assaults, and crisis management.

The Association believes that proper procedures, based on medical and scientific research and recommendations, must be adopted and enforced to protect education employees from infectious diseases in the school setting. (81,87,93,95,97,99,02)

B-38 SCHOOL SECURITY

The Association strongly opposes the arming of any education professional or education support personnel.

The Association believes that school entities have a responsibility to hire trained security personnel to perform all duties related to screening, search, and seizure of firearms, other weapons, and contraband upon student or public entry into a school building.

Furthermore, the Association believes that such duties present a potential hazard to the health and well-being of students and education employees, and must not be required of anyone not specifically hired and trained to perform these duties. (13,18)

B-39 HEALTHFUL SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The Association believes that the school environment must be maintained to guarantee optimal health of students and staff. The Association also believes clean air, proper ventilation, appropriate climate control within the building, and clean water are essential to a healthful learning environment.

The Association believes that students and staff must be protected from all potentially hazardous substances. The Association urges that standards and safeguards be established and programs for the prevention and elimination of health hazards be enacted by the appropriate school governing body after input from the local association.

It further urges its affiliates to support state and federal legislation that would set health and safety standards, provide for required inspections to ensure that standards are met, and prescribe penalties for noncompliance by school governing bodies.

The Association further believes that if contact with hazardous materials is necessary to fulfill an education employee's responsibilities, the employer must provide proper instruction in and assistance with the identification, correct labeling, proper storage, and safe disposal of potentially hazardous substances. Material Safety Data Sheets, MSDS, must be readily available. (80,85,88,90,95,08)

B-40 PERSONNEL FILES

The Association insists that each education employee must have immediate access to and copies of all items in his/her personnel file (except privileged communications related to his/her initial employment) and shall have the right to attach a written response to any item. A procedure shall be established to remove inappropriate or unfounded material from personnel files. A copy of any evaluation report placed in the education employee's file must be given to the employee.

The Association asserts that an education employee may at any time review the contents of his/her personnel file and receive copies of any documents contained therein at his/her request. In examining his/her file, an employee shall be entitled to be accompanied by an Association representative or may authorize an Association representative to examine his/her file in his/her behalf. An employee shall be notified in writing of any document placed in his/her personnel file on the date of its placement with the right to annotate such documents. All personnel files shall be kept in one location and be available only to the superintendent and the employee.

Every effort will be made to ensure that these guarantees become a part of negotiated agreements between local associations and school entities. (81,95,07)

B-41 CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

The Association believes personal information given to any education employee by students in confidence should be legally privileged, except in circumstances where maintaining confidence may jeopardize the health, safety, or welfare of that student or any other individual. (80,97,11)

B-42 MEDICATION AND MEDICAL SERVICES IN SCHOOLS

The Association believes that it is the responsibility of the school district to have a written medication policy and to employ certificated school nurses to administer medication and to render medical services. While medication administration at school may facilitate the education of students, school personnel must be aware that medication must be administered only by licensed medical personnel.

The physician, parent, legal guardian, or the emancipated minor are responsible for the medication, including the dosage and administration. A written medication policy shall be supplied to the school nurse, physician, parent, student and all other school personnel. The written medication policy must be included in the job description of the school nurse. Procedures for administration of medication and medical services are necessary and must provide that:

- a) Only certificated school nurses be required to administer medication or provide medical services.
- b) A physician's written verification of need for medication is required.
- c) Written permission of the parent or guardian is required.
- d) The medication must be delivered to school by the parent or other responsible adult in the original container, properly labeled with name and strength of the medication, name of patient, name of physician, date of original prescription, and direction for usage.
- e) The initial dose of medication shall not be given at school except in life-threatening situations.
- f) Medication dispensed must be recorded on a medication log, which includes date, time, and identification of the person giving the medication.
- g) Safe storage for medication must be provided.
- h) The policy must permit the school nurse to refuse to administer medication based on medical judgment and protection of liability.

i) The individual education plan (IEP) of the special education student and the individual health plan (IHP) of the protected challenged student must provide for the administration of prescribed medication by the certificated school nurse.

The Association supports legislation that would protect school personnel from all liability when the adopted procedure is followed. In addition, school personnel have the right to refuse without fear of disciplinary repercussions to administer medication and/or medical services for which they believe they are unqualified to administer or when proper equipment has not been provided. Medical personnel must be properly trained prior to performing the medical services in question. (80,84,99)

B-43 STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES/STUDENT USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The Association believes that education employees must not be subject to discipline for student violations of any acceptable use policies including, but not limited to internet policies.

The Association further believes that education employees must not be held responsible for student owned electronic devices. (14)

B-44 COMPETENCY-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION

The Association believes that teachers employ the most appropriate processes known for the promotion of learning. The Association also believes competency-based programs for pre- and inservice teacher education and teacher evaluation must be based on many factors, some of which the teacher cannot control. It opposes models of teacher education that prescribe single, limited definitions of competence that reduce the process of teaching to mechanical, nonprofessional acts, or that seek to measure teacher competence on the basis of student achievement.

The Association believes that competency-based programs should not be implemented that do not first provide for carefully controlled research and development to assure validity and reliability which indicate that such programs are an improvement over present programs. Teachers must be involved in such research and development. (81)

B-45 STANDARD APPLICATION FORMS

The Association believes that a standard application form must relate only to the professional certification and competence of the individual. Employers must be prohibited from inquiring into activities and beliefs not directly related to professional responsibilities. (80,02)

B-46 TRANSFERS WITHIN AND BETWEEN ENTITIES

The Association believes that when a group of students is transferred between a school district and an intermediate unit or area vocational-technical school, the education employee presently employed with that group should be guaranteed the option to retain the position in the sending school in an area of certification or job classification. In each case the education employee's salary and fringe benefits should be maintained or increased as the situation warrants.

The Association also supports the concept that it is the inherent prerogative of all education employees to exercise their rights of seniority and transfer within the school entity. (81,98,99)

B-47 THE ECONOMY

The Association is opposed to the imposition of any wage controls which freeze public employees in an inferior economic position, the elimination of programs that guarantee social and economic justice for the American people, and any anti-inflation program that contemplates increasing unemployment as a remedy. (81,86,90)

B-48 TAXATION OF BENEFITS

The Association opposes any effort to tax non-salary benefits. (10)

B-49 TAX DEDUCTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES

The Association believes that all education employees must be recognized as professional persons engaged continuously in professional development and that professionally related expenses must be uniformly deductible from gross income in the computation of federal, state, and local income taxes. (81,04)

II.3 Privacy of its Members

B-50 ACCESS TO PERSONAL INFORMATION

The Association supports legislation that would restrict access to personal information of all current and retired public employees. (10)

B-51 INVASION OF PRIVACY

The Association believes that every individual has a right to privacy. The Association opposes indiscriminate or monitoring of citizens or groups or their communication by private and public agencies including school authorities.

The Association condemns the use of personal information gathered and stored and the exchange of such information without explicit release from the person or persons involved.

The Association believes that electronic surveillance should not be used as a method of monitoring or evaluating job performance. Furthermore, the Association believes that when in operation all surveillance equipment should be clearly visible in order to maintain a reasonable expectation of privacy. (98,06)

B-52 E-MAIL COMMUNICATIONS

The Association believes that when school entities are archiving e-mail communications, Association members must be notified in writing and provided access to those communications to which they are a party. (08)

B-53 SOCIAL NETWORKING

The Association recognizes the value of social networking. Adequate training in social networking should be provided to all education employees.

The Association believes that members must be made aware of potential consequences related to social networking. (10)

II.4 Exclusivity of the Bargaining Unit

B-54 USE OF RECORDING DEVICES

The Association believes that the recording of the work of any education employee by any means without his/her permission for any purpose must be forbidden. The use of recordings for evaluation and/or rating purposes must be prohibited.

The Association also believes that any electronic surveillance of employees/students should be viewable only by school employees in a supervisory role or law enforcement officers in the performance of their duties. (85,96,12)

B-55 SUBSTITUTES FOR PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS

The Association believes that school entities should provide their Local Education Associations with a list of district-approved, certified substitutes for all professional positions.

The Association believes that certified substitutes must be contacted in the absence of all certified professional employees.

Furthermore, the Association believes that professionals should be permitted to designate desired substitutes to serve in their absence. (11)

B-56 PART-TIME, SUBSTITUTE, AND UNEMPLOYED EDUCATORS

The Association believes that all certified professional educators are a part of the teaching profession regardless of their employment status. All certified educators must be encouraged to maintain membership in all unified professional organizations.

The Association recommends that all substitute teachers be encouraged to attend inservice workshops and be compensated on a per diem basis.

Part-time and summer school employees should be paid proportionate salaries and fringe benefits.

Substitute employees should be paid at least a per diem rate based on the minimum salary of the school entity in which they are employed and receive proportionate fringe benefits.

Substitute teachers who are employed for at least a semester should have the same legal and contractual rights and status as other professional employees in a bargaining unit. The Association

believes that long-term substitute teachers who receive a satisfactory rating should be given preference for teaching positions in the district.

Substitutes should refrain from taking the place of bargaining unit members during a work stoppage. (80,86,01,09,11)

B-57 SUBSTITUTE EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

The Association believes that school entities should maintain a list of qualified substitutes that must be contacted in the absence of a permanent education support professional so that a full educational support staff operates daily. The Association believes substitute education support professionals should be encouraged to attend school sponsored inservices and workshops and should be compensated on a per diem basis. Pay rates should be consistent for all substitutes within a job classification. Substitutes should not take the place of bargaining unit members.

Substitute education support professionals who are employed long-term for at least a semester should have the same benefits as other support personnel in the same job classification within the bargaining unit.

The Association further believes that long-term substitutes who receive a satisfactory rating should be given preference for permanent vacancies. (02,09,11)

B-59 JOB SHARING

The Association believes that voluntary job sharing has potential benefits in certain circumstances provided that it is not used to eliminate permanent full-time positions, and that proper safeguards, procedures, and benefits are negotiated in the local contract. (84)

B-60 PRIVATIZATION/OUTSOURCING/SUBCONTRACTING

The Association opposes the privatization of Pennsylvania public schools and the subcontracting of any public-school program or service.

The Association also opposes outsourcing, sub-contracting or any attempt to replace, interfere with, or perform the duties of public school employees.

Furthermore, the Association believes that any employee who performs work through a private entity has a right to union representation, pension, and negotiated benefits. (95,13)

B-61 INTERN CERTIFICATES

The Association opposes the Department of Education's issuing intern certificates which bypass established certification requirements. (86)

B-62 INTERMEDIATE UNITS

The Association believes that Intermediate Units should be utilized to provide specialized services to meet the needs of local entities. However, these services should not be used by local school entities to replace existing school programs or staff. These services shall not include legislative liaison or negotiations support to participating districts.

The Association believes that negotiated contracts in these intermediate units should provide the same rights and privileges for education employees as those available in the local school districts.

The Association believes that candidates for intermediate unit boards should be familiar with the programs offered and that they should show expressed interest in the education of the exceptional child and/or career and technical education. (80,89,97,09,11)

B-63 CAREER AND TECHNICAL CENTERS

The Association believes that in order for equal educational opportunity to be available for each student of the Commonwealth, vocational-technical education should be provided for students of every education community.

The Association should become more involved in the career and technical centers of the Commonwealth.

The Association believes that local community advisory committees for career and technical education must be given greater responsibilities for program development.

The Association further believes that teachers, support personnel, administrators, students, and representatives of the community should be included on advisory committees at the local level to

coordinate the planning and developing of regulations, standards, policies, programs for career and technical education. (80,99,11)

B-64 DUAL ENROLLMENT

The Association believes that Dual Enrollment can be beneficial to students but should not detract from the secondary school experience or be used to replace or reduce courses offered by the student's home district.

Students participating in dual enrollment should only be taking college courses that are beyond those offered at their home school or in addition to a full roster of credits.

Dual enrollment programs must be collectively bargained and must not subcontract bargaining unit work. (16)

II.5 Representation in Process

B-65 PROFESSIONAL CONDITIONS

The Association believes that to be an effective educator each professional person must have (1) the right to participate in determining and carrying out school policies, (2) the right to adequate time to plan to teach unhindered by nonprofessional duties, (3) the right to paid released time to participate in professional improvement through conventions, conferences, workshops, inservice programs, and study, (4) the right to paid released time to present testimony before local, state, or national bodies which establish educational policy, and (5) the right to paid released time to serve on local, state, or national educational committees. (87)

B-66 EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS CONDITIONS

The Association believes that each education support professional must have (1) the right to participate in determining and implementing school policies, (2) the right to paid released time to participate in in-service activities for skill upgrades, (3) the right to paid released time for presentations to advance the educational process and (4) the right to paid released time to serve on local, state, or national educational committees. (02)

B-67 SCHOOL FACILITIES, DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND FUNCTION

The Association believes that school facilities must be conducive to teaching and learning. The physical plant must allow for all educational needs.

The Association believes that all school facilities must be well constructed, energy-efficient, aesthetically pleasing, accessible, functional, and adaptable to persons with disabilities.

The Association further believes all stakeholders should share in making recommendations as to design and function.

The Association believes sufficient funding must be provided for the design, construction, maintenance, and operation of all school facilities. (01,07)

B-68 SCHOOL BOARDS

The Association believes that local bargaining units should have a non-voting representative on local school boards.

The Association believes that the term of school board members should remain at four years.

The Association believes that school board members must be advocates for all children and be unencumbered by partisan principles.

The Association believes that members of school boards and educational boards of trustees, as well as candidates for each, should be held to the same criminal background clearance requirements as public-school employees. Any offense that would bar a person from public school employment should also prevent a person from serving on a school board or as an educational trustee. (81,87,07,12)

B-69 HIGHER EDUCATION FACULTIES

The Association believes the professional employees of institutions of higher education should be represented on all boards, committees, and commissions, dealing with the concerns of higher education teaching personnel. Representatives of the higher education association should be on the State Board of Education, its council on higher education, and advisory committees. (81)

B-70 APPOINTMENTS TO EDUCATIONAL POSITIONS

The Association believes that the goal of a quality education for all demands that the criteria for all appointments in the field of education by the governor, secretary of education, state board of education, and boards of local school entities should be based solely on significant accomplishments in the educational community.

The Association requests that all such appointments of education officials be made only after screening and approval by a panel of professional educators established by the state or local association.

The Association recognizes the policymaking powers of the state board of education, intermediate unit boards, and local boards of education. Such groups must recognize the professional expertise of teachers and provide for meet and discuss sessions on all educational concerns of the Association members.

All advisory boards of the policymaking bodies must include teacher representatives directly related to the areas of concern. Representatives should be chosen by the Association from those who are members currently engaged in teaching and active in their professional association.

Local meet and discuss units, as mandated by Act 195, must be recognized as a vehicle for members to bring about educational changes at the local level. (81,89,11)

B-71 STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Association supports strategic planning. All school entity strategic planning committees must be constituted with a majority of educators elected by the members of the bargaining unit and must provide a variety of opportunities for the entire education community to take part in the process. (93,09)

B-72 SCHOOL ENTITY BUDGETS

The Association believes that local association representatives should become involved at all levels of the budget preparation process.

The Association further believes that local associations should become monitors of local school entity budgets. (81)

III. TO FOSTER PROFESSIONAL ZEAL

C-1 PROFESSIONAL ZEAL

The Association believes that all education employees should foster pride in their profession through promoting a positive image and igniting zeal among members.

The Association also believes that all members should be made aware of the importance of actively participating in PSEA. (05,12)

C-2 MEMBER INPUT

The Association believes in the importance of the voice of each member and their opinions with regard to issues, policies, and political actions that are integral to the success of public education. Any statements of opinion expressed by a member shall be accepted, without judgment, and used only to promote the best interests of the Association and public education. (16)

C-3 PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY

The Association believes that educational employees must govern themselves and must establish and enforce standards of certification, practice, ethics, and competence. (81,11)

C-4 PROFESSIONAL DEMEANOR

The Association believes education employees shall maintain a professional demeanor with all students. (08)

C-5 PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Association believes that in order for members of the education profession to practice effectively, competently, and securely, each local association should (1) inform the public and its members about the rights and responsibilities of education employees, (2) promote professional attitudes and

understandings by interpreting and implementing an enforceable code of ethics controlled by its members, and (3) protect professional rights by providing a grievance process cooperatively developed by members of the education profession and boards which provide for speedy resolution of grievances.

The Association shall work to ensure that no member of the Association may be censured, suspended, or expelled and that none of its local associations or affiliates may be censured, suspended, or disaffiliated without a due process hearing which shall include an appropriate appellate procedure. (80,81,12)

C-6 ETHICS

The Association believes in an enforceable code of ethics solely within the internal structure of PSEA. All educators should be made aware of and understand the Code of Ethics.

The Association believes that pre-service education instruction should include (1) a broad concept of ethics related to various professions, (2) an understanding of the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession adopted by PSEA, (3) a study of problems common to the teaching profession together with their implication for ethics.

The Association urges its affiliates and local associations (1) not to include in any collective bargaining agreement any provision requiring adherence to the code of ethics, (2) to resist efforts to incorporate any provision of the code of ethics in individual teaching contracts or certification laws or regulations, and (3) to otherwise avoid application of the code against their members outside of the Association's disciplinary procedures.

PSEA will update local associations and affiliates as to the Association's approved procedure for local associations to initiate enforcement and adherence to the code of ethics, constitution, bylaws, and policies of the profession as a means to address membership discipline problems. (80,81,90,13)

C-7 PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND PRACTICES

The Association believes that a professional practice is any act in which an educator engages while performing professional duties. It believes a standard is any factor which enables an educator to practice. The Association believes the standards and practices of the teaching profession should be established by practicing teachers.

The Association opposes any listing of professional standards and practices for use as an evaluation tool. (81,87)

C-8 PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION

The Association believes that a legally constituted Professional Standards and Practices Commission should be autonomous and have a majority membership of practicing teachers. Standards and practices of the teaching profession should be established by the Commission. PSEA members who serve on the commission must represent the philosophies and established positions of the Association.

The Association believes the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania must provide the necessary funding for the effective operation and staffing of the Professional Standards and Practices Commission. (80,87,88,90,91)

C-9 PEER ASSISTANCE

The Association recognizes that peer assistance can be useful in maintaining and enhancing skills and proficiencies of education employees. A peer assistance program must be supportive in nature and developed through the collective bargaining process. The Association believes that the job security and due process rights of all members must be protected. (98,08)

C-10 PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

The Association believes that standards for entry and practice for the profession should be based upon relevant criteria and must be set by the Professional Standards and Practices Commission. This Commission, in the name of the State, should issue certificates to those who meet the standards set and revoke the certificates of those who do not maintain standards.

The Association believes that professional education programs must prepare professional teachers who demonstrate competence in the art and science of teaching.

The Association believes that teacher education must be identified as a separate college or school within higher education institutions.

The Association believes that Pennsylvania colleges and universities must require labor history and teacher unionism in their teacher preparation programs.

The Association believes that education preparation programs must incorporate instruction related to all relevant laws influencing education.

The Association supports the assignment of basic education classroom teachers and pupil services personnel as full members of NCATE and Department of Education Programs approval teams. Prospective team members should be provided with an effective training program by the Association. (80,82,83,97,02,04,09,12)

C-11 CERTIFICATION

The Association believes that all professional employees must be properly certificated. The use of non-certificated personnel must be prohibited.

The Association believes that all laws, regulations, standards, guidelines, and basic education circulars concerning certification must be uniformly and promptly enforced by appropriate legal and professional bodies.

The Association believes that the professional certification of all educators, as agreed to by the profession, must be the minimum basis required of all professional employees. The Association believes that only persons with legal certificates should be employed in professional education positions or be employed as daily and/or long-term substitutes.

Professional employees who are being considered for furlough or who have been furloughed should be granted a waiver of certification upon request.

Teachers in early childhood education, adult education, extension education, part-time, and substitute teaching positions must meet the same professional certification requirements as mandated by the school code.

Local associations should maintain a certification data file of their members.

An emergency certificate should be granted only for a position where the local association verifies no certificated educator is available in the local school entity.

All educators in charter schools, cyber-charter schools, and non-public schools must meet and maintain all certification requirements consistent with those set forth for public school employees.

The Association urges teacher education institutions to assure that readily accessible programs in all areas of certification be offered throughout the state. (80,83,97,00,15)

C-12 CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATION

The Association believes that beginning career and technical teachers should have the opportunity of learning teaching competencies through any recognized teacher education institution. Career and technical teachers should have the same rights as academic teachers to use inservice credits, including related experiences outside the classroom, to gain permanent certification. Special efforts should be made to recruit adequate numbers of qualified, certified career and technical education teachers of both sexes in each needed area of study and to provide qualified career and technical guidance counselors and administrators.

The Association believes that the trade competencies of career and technical teachers are related to their trade experiences. It recommends that beginning teachers in trade and industrial education shall have two years of journeyman work experience after the completion of the appropriate number of years of apprenticeship training for a specified trade or industrial area and have satisfactorily completed their trade competency tests before beginning teaching duties.

The Association believes that students enrolled in cooperative work experience programs in the various vocational fields should be supervised by teachers certified in those specialized vocational areas. (80,90,01,11,17)

C-13 PER-DIEM EDUCATION EMPLOYEES

The Association opposes the employment of per-diem education employees in lieu of hiring contracted bargaining unit members. (14)

C-14 EVALUATION AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

The Association believes that all education employees have a right to participate in the evaluation of their service. Further, all education employee evaluations must be confidential and be directed toward

encouraging professional growth and conducted by properly assigned and certificated administrators or appropriate supervisors.

The Association opposes student evaluations of education employees. Furthermore, the Association opposes peer evaluation that would allow an education employee to assume supervisory status over another.

The Association opposes the monitoring and/or evaluation of any education employees in their area of employment by anyone other than the appropriate evaluator. Administrators, in order to maintain quality performance, should be evaluated on their effectiveness by their supervising administrator based on a review of observation and practice. (81,82,84,93,94,02,16)

C-15 RATING OF PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES

The Association believes that the process of selecting the professional employee publicly affirms his/her competence, and the rating of performance must begin with this assumption. A state-mandated form for the rating of professional employees exists. When utilizing the state-mandated form, local associations should establish rigid standards for the use of that form. Should local associations choose to negotiate an alternate rating system which meets the needs of their constituent members, the rating should be only "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory." Local associations should monitor the use and implementation of rating forms to ensure uniformity and consistency. While there is legal authority to establish and implement a rating system, the legitimacy of any rating process must rest upon the demonstrated competence of the observer/rater.

The Association also believes standardized test results should not be used to rate or evaluate the performance of any professional employee or be used to influence any employment action or compensation.

The Association opposes the use of subjective methods of rating professional performance for the purpose of setting salaries. (80,81,82,16)

C-16 ACCOUNTABILITY

The Association believes that educators can be held accountable only for that portion of the teaching-learning process over which they have complete control. Educator competence cannot be evaluated on the basis of student achievement because of the multiple economic, social, political, psychological, and cultural factors and the limitations of standardized achievement tests.

The Association also believes accountability is a shared responsibility by all of the parties involved in the educational community. Legislators, executives, school boards, state commissions, educators, practitioners, parents, and the students all have responsibility for different aspects of the educational system. It is not possible for an effective system of accountability to operate if any of the parties do not meet their responsibilities.

The Association believes that performance standards and assessments must not be used as a basis for determining teacher accountability.

The Association further believes that there should be no single or statewide accountability system. The Association will resist any attempt to transform assessment results into a national or state testing program that would seek to measure all students, teachers, or school systems by a single standard and thereby impose upon them a single program rather than provide opportunities for multiple programs and objectives. The Association believes that specific behavioral objectives should not be used as course objectives, nor as a basis for determining teacher accountability. (81,01,03,05)

C-17 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Association encourages the continuing professional development of all educators, including certificated substitutes.

The Association believes that educators must have a majority voice in determining professional development needs through Association representation on appropriate committees. Educators must have released time to participate in professional self-improvement programs. It must be the responsibility of the school entity and the state to provide for and finance these programs. The Association further believes that these programs must not be required for continuous employment. Professional development must become a part of the local collective bargaining agreement and/or the Act 48 plan. Furthermore, the Association believes that retired educators should be exempt from Act 48 requirements to maintain their certification. (80,82,83,93,99,01,02,04)

C-18 CONTINUING EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

The Association encourages the continuing educational development of all education support professionals.

The Association believes that education support professionals must have a voice in determining educational development programs which will benefit the school entity. Released time must be granted for participation in such developmental activities.

It must be the responsibility of the school entity and the state to finance accredited coursework, workshops or seminars. The Association further believes these programs must not be required for continuous employment and must become a part of the local collective bargaining agreement. (01,03)

C-19 PROGRAM SPECIALIST CERTIFICATES

The Association opposes the misuse of program specialist certificates. Local associations should monitor the use of program specialist certificates and should bargain contract language so that legally certificated educators are not replaced, and seniority rights are not circumvented. (85)

C-20 INSERVICE COURSES FOR CREDIT

The Association believes that all courses for inservice credits beyond the baccalaureate degree for academic teachers, including related experiences outside the classroom, should be credited towards requirements for an Instructional II/Education Specialist II certificate, Master's Equivalency certificate and/or Act 48. (80,82,96,01,02)

C-21 INDUCTION PROGRAM

The Association believes that the local association must take an integral part in the planning, writing, and implementation of the teacher induction program. Mentors should be selected from a voluntary pool of the membership and should be given adequate compensation and released time for their services.

The induction program must include the importance of belonging to and actively participating in PSEA. (87,96,12)

C-22 MENTOR PROGRAMS

The Association believes that mentor programs are a means of enhancing the professional expertise of employees and retaining quality educators. The Association also believes that the planning, implementation, and evaluation of such programs must be negotiated and maintained by the school district and the local association.

The Association further believes that the duties and responsibilities of all parties must be clearly defined and uniformly administered. Mentors must be selected through a defined process with articulated criteria, be properly educated, compensated, and provided with adequate time to fulfill their responsibilities.

The Association believes that any documentation that results from the mentoring process must be confidential and must not be included in the participant's personnel file. The Association also believes that any verbal conversations that result from the mentoring process must also remain confidential. (13)

C-23 STUDENT TEACHING

The Association believes that the student teaching experience must be a practical application of the teacher education program with statewide minimum standards. To promote the best candidates, authentic field experience should begin early in the teacher education program.

The Association also believes responsibility for the student teaching experience must be shared by schools, teacher preparation institutions, and professional associations, and include the fundamentals of unionism and current issues affecting education professionals.

The Association believes that student teachers shall have liability protection through PSEA membership and should be invited to participate in Local, Region, State, and National Association activities.

The Association believes that student teachers must comply with all applicable laws and rules and must be under the supervision of an Instructional II certified professional employee. Student teachers must not be used as substitute teachers.

The Association also believes certified professional employees supervising student teachers should receive a per diem rate based on a percentage of the previous year's average teacher salary in Pennsylvania.

The Association further believes that no student teacher should be coerced to cross a picket line during a labor dispute and should be provided the opportunity to complete their student teaching through reassignment.

The Association believes that student teacher observation, by means of media recording, shall only be used as a resource for the student teacher. The Association also believes that ownership of any such recording resides solely with the student teacher. The Association further believes that any recording may only be viewed by the student teacher, the university liaison, and the supervising teacher upon the receipt of appropriate permissions from all parties involved prior to the media recording.

The Association opposes the use of standardized test score results as a means of evaluating student teachers and/or teacher training programs. (80,84,86,88,90,95,12,14,15)

C-24 TEACHER CENTERS

The Association recognizes the need for the establishment, organization, development, and operation of teacher centers. The Association believes that there should be at least one federally funded center in each intermediate unit.

The Association supports the concept of teacher centers to develop and produce curricula, utilize research findings, and provide training. The Association, therefore, will work closely with the U.S. and Pennsylvania Departments of Education to (1) provide full funding, (2) assist in the use of evaluative criteria to judge grant applications, (3) provide statewide service to all interested education employees for professional development, and (4) implement programs designed to help inservice teachers to become more effective in the educational process. (81,84,92,04)

C-25 SITE-BASED DECISION MAKING

The Association recognizes the value of site-based decision making which seeks to improve the quality of education and the work environment. Site-based decision making must be a problem-solving process which involves the voluntary participation of those affected. The scope of site-based decision making shall be determined by contractual agreements reached through the collective bargaining process. (91)

C-26 TEACHER PARAPROFESSIONALS

The Association believes that professionals should be provided with paraprofessionals to accomplish nonprofessional duties. Appropriate orientation and training programs should be provided.

Paraprofessional staff must not be permitted to perform the duties of professional employees.

The Association calls upon its local affiliates to resist efforts by school boards to use employment of such personnel to increase class size. The assignment of such personnel to classroom duty should assure increased opportunities for the teacher to know and to work with students.

If it is necessary to supplement pupil services with paraprofessionals, local associations are urged to help in establishing guidelines for employment and in placing these ancillary people under the direct supervision of a certified pupil personnel worker. (81,83,84,85,97,04,14)

C-27 USE OF VOLUNTEERS

The Association recognizes the value of volunteers to enhance public education; however, the Association vigorously opposes the use of volunteers to provide services that are traditionally performed by education employees in school entities. (14)

C-28 PARAPROFESSIONALS IN EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The Association believes that paraprofessionals should be required on a full-time basis in each exceptional education class. The Association also supports the utilization of paraprofessionals as a vital nonteaching part of the instructional program in the education of exceptional students in all

placement options, including remedial programs. Appropriate orientation and training programs should be provided. (81,83,84,93,97,04)

C-29 COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICE PROVIDERS

The Association believes that the school entity must provide inservice training for public school employees regarding the role of community-based service providers including, but not limited to therapeutic support staff.

The Association further believes that community-based service providers should not replace, perform, or interfere with the duties of public school employees. (01,07)

C-30 SUPPLY AND DEMAND OF EDUCATORS

The Association believes that the Department of Education should make available current statistics of employed professional personnel and vacancies in relation to geographic and instructional areas. (80,82)

C-31 ADMINISTRATORS AND SUPERVISORS

The Association believes that appropriate preparation programs should be established for all educators in pupil services, supervision, and administration. Such programs should supply the basic and practical educational experience to blend professional skills with the school setting. Areas of instructional content and experience should include participatory decision making, interpersonal skills, personnel selection, staff evaluation, curriculum, school management techniques, and cultural diversity training.

Supervision of candidates should be the joint responsibility of the certified school personnel and the preparing institution.

The Association believes that prior to credentialing, all administrators shall have served at least five years in a full-time teaching position and periodically return to the classroom for authentic teaching experiences. Areas of instructional content and experience in the credentialing process should include participatory decision making, interpersonal skills, personnel selection, staff evaluation, curriculum, school management techniques, and cultural diversity training.

Administrators must be legally certified. Uncertified personnel shall not rate professional employees.

The Association believes that job descriptions of administrators shall be available to all professional employees.

The Association and the Department of Education should cooperate to develop relevant certification programs for supervisors and ban the use of nonprescribed and noncertificated administrative titles.

A certified principal must be employed full time for each 500 elementary school students. A certified assistant should be added when enrollment exceeds 700 students. (84,95,13)

C-32 PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES

The Association supports a comprehensive mandated program of pupil personnel services under the supervision and administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Education with ratios of not more than 1:250 for certified counselors, 1:750 for certified school nurses in general school populations with adjustments to safely accommodate students with special health needs and chronic illnesses, 1:125 in student populations with complex health care needs; 1:750 for certified home and school visitors, 1:250 for social workers, 1:500-700 for certified psychologists depending on the level of need within the student population, and 1:1800 for certified dental hygienists in each school entity at all instructional levels.

The Association believes that career and technical centers should be mandated to have a full-time certificated school nurse on the premises.

The Association believes that there should be separate certification for elementary and secondary school counselors.

Other supportive services, i.e., attendance, occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech, visual and hearing services should be available to each student who has these special needs. (80,81,82,84,98,00,11)

C-33 HEALTH SERVICES

The Association believes that any duplication of health services involving federal and state health

programs is unnecessary and an inefficient use of public monies.

The Association believes that health services provided by a school entity should not be billed to any health insurance carrier through a third party.

School health personnel should decide when examinations for the control of health-related problems are necessary. (80,82,88,89,90)

C-34 STATE-OWNED, STATE-CONTROLLED, AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

The Association believes that only certified/licensed education professionals should be employed in educational programs within institutions including, but not limited to hospitals and prisons. (81,15)

C-35 ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

The Association believes that all eligible education employees and retirees must be enrolled as members. Non-practicing educators and former employees must be encouraged to maintain their membership.

The Association also believes that all students enrolled in a teacher preparation program must be encouraged to join Student PSEA. (80,84,97,11,13)

C-36 SUPPORT OF UNIONS

The Association believes in strong unions. The Association supports legislation that:

- a. Allows employees to form unions by signing cards that would authorize union representation;
- b. Provides for impasse resolutions; and
- c. Establishes penalties for violation of employee rights.

The Association opposes any attempts to privatize state run entities such as, but not limited to, correctional facilities and wine and spirits stores. (09,16)

C-37 RETIRING/RETIRED MEMBERS

The Association believes that retiring/retired members should be encouraged to support and participate in Association activities at state, region, and local levels through membership in PSEA-Retired. (83,95,04)

C-38 USE OF PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

The Association, in implementing programs, shall stress effective and efficient use of its resources and personnel. (80,95)

IV. TO ADVANCE EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

IV.1 Curriculum and Instruction

D-01 TEACHERS AND THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

The Association believes that the individual teacher or teams of teachers communicating directly with students have the most worthwhile and profound effects upon what and how children learn.

The planning of lessons, the defining of specific learning objectives, the selection of materials used to teach those lessons and the techniques of evaluation should be at the discretion of the individual teacher.

The Association regards endeavors by those outside the classroom to dictate or establish specific techniques, lesson formats, learning objectives, teaching styles, evaluation techniques, or materials as presumptuous.

The Association believes that there is no one organizational system of schools, classes, or teaching techniques that is best for all schools, classes, or children. Teachers who use different techniques should not be forced to change their styles for the sake of uniformity.

The Association opposes any action which seeks to evaluate the competence of educators on the basis of student achievement. (80,81,83,99,00)

D-02 SPECIALIST TEACHERS

The Association believes that all special subject areas must be mandated for all levels of public education, including special education, and must be taught only by certified specialists in each respective area.

The Association also opposes any plans to weaken the curriculum requirements. The Association believes a regular education teacher should not be required to undertake the duties of specialists, educational specialists, and/or itinerant teachers. In addition, specialists, education specialists, and/or itinerants should not be required to undertake the teaching duties of a regular education teacher. A substitute certified in the respective subject area should be employed in the event of the absence of a specialist teacher of any level of education.

The Association further believes that the local school entity must provide the additional professional and paraprofessional staff to effectively meet the needs of all students. Supportive services must be made available to assist teachers in designing and implementing programs for all students. Preservice and inservice education must be provided to facilitate the implementation of these programs. (81,92,97,02,03)

D-03 INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEACHERS

The Association believes that the instructional support teachers shall: have a proper teaching certificate, have teaching experience, have membership in the bargaining unit, and have instructional support training. The instructional support program shall have full necessary funding. (93)

D-04 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The Association believes that education employees and students should own the copyrights and patents to intellectual property created in the course of their employment or studies. Education employees and students should have all the legal rights that come with such ownership.

The Association also believes that any intellectual property created by education employees should not replace or serve as a substitute for the teacher in the delivery of instruction. (12)

D-05 IMPROVEMENT OF CURRICULUM

The Association believes that each school entity, in shared responsibility with all educators and the members of the community, including youth, must continuously evaluate its curriculum keeping it ever sensitive to the development of basic skills and to the current and future needs of students.

The Association believes that all curriculum development must be designed in collaboration with the classroom teacher and should include concepts deemed important and/or appropriate by practicing educators. Each school entity should have a basic program of curriculum research and development. At least one percent of each school entity budget should be designated for curriculum and instructional improvement.

The Association further believes that any decisions relating to the development and/or curtailment of programs should be made with the direct involvement of the profession and enforced by the state department of education.

Professional employees involved in curriculum improvement must be granted release time and/or be granted supplemental contracts to do the study, research, and planning to bring about needed improvements. (80,81,90,91,92,97,05)

D-06 IMPROVEMENT OF INSTRUCTION

The Association believes that teachers through their local education association must take a primary role in designing, implementing, and assessing all instruction.

The Association also believes that teachers are best suited to develop and deliver appropriate instructional programs that are consistent with state curriculum standards. The Association further believes that direct observation of students and analysis of data by the teachers who work with the student must guide instructional decisions without fear of reprisal.

The Association believes that, while programs such as focusing on scripted learning or pacing charts can serve as viable frames of reference, it is still incumbent on the teachers who work with the student to evaluate the efficacy of all instructional programs and to modify them when necessary in order to address the needs and facilitate the success of each student. (80,84,92,96,97,98,99,07)

D-07 ENDORSEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND SERVICES

The role of the Association in the selection of instructional materials should be to provide, upon request, information concerning recommended criteria, standards, and methods of selection of instructional materials. (81,99)

D-08 INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The Association believes that materials must be provided to teach students with all exceptionalities and from diverse cultural backgrounds and to achieve the strategic planning goals of each school entity.

The Association further believes that instructional materials and equipment must be provided in sufficient variety and quantity to serve all students.

The Association urges its members and staff to serve as a resource to publishers in developing relevant materials for all students. (81,92,95,04)

D-09 SCHOOL LIBRARIES/MEDIA CENTERS

The Association believes that a comprehensive library/media program, shall include an integrated instructional curriculum, printed and nonprinted resource materials, and at least one librarian who holds a valid Pennsylvania Library/Media Specialist teaching certificate. This program shall be provided in each elementary and secondary building. Students and classroom teachers must be guaranteed continuous access to library media centers, library media specialists, and information resources. (81,91,17)

D-10 TECHNOLOGICAL TEACHING TOOLS AND THE MEDIA

The Association believes that technology and media tools have great potential for assisting and improving classroom instruction and learning. The Association encourages the creative and innovative use of the media and new technologies to improve instruction.

The Association believes that all students must become technologically literate from experiences in all curricular areas.

The Association believes that these technologies should be utilized only when certificated educators are present to plan, review, monitor, and supplement the instruction.

The Association believes that terms and conditions for the creation, ownership, and use of the media and technological tools must be included in local school entity collective bargaining agreements. The Association further believes that no reduction of positions, hours, or compensation should occur as a direct or indirect result of any technology. (98,11)

D-11 STANDARDIZED TESTING

The Association believes that standardized assessments must only be used to identify students' educational needs and to improve curriculum.

The Association recognizes that reliable and valid standardized tests are only one way to assess a student's level of achievement. These tests shall not be used to compare the educational quality of one school entity or educator to another. No education employee shall be evaluated and/or compensated on the basis of standardized test results.

The Association believes that standardized test results must be provided to the local association immediately upon receipt by the school entity, and prior to the release to the general public. (14)

D-12 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The Association believes that each child should have the opportunity to participate in pre-kindergarten and/or day care programs having objectives designed for the age and needs of the children enrolled.

The Association believes that the responsibility for structured educational offerings should be assigned to the Department of Education and through it to local school entities. Teachers certified in early childhood education, together with necessary paraprofessionals should be employed to conduct such programs. The Association urges the use of state and federal funds in establishing these programs.

The Association believes that each school entity be mandated to have a kindergarten program and that each child be required to complete such a program before being enrolled in first grade. No children shall enter kindergarten or first grade unless they are five or six years of age as of September 1, respectively. (80,89,04)

D-13 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL) AND STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP)

The Association believes there should be English as a Second Language (ESL) and bilingual education according to educational need. The main goal of these programs should be to achieve English proficiency, as well as provide support in content areas and other disciplines for English Language Learners (ELL) and students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

The Association believes that educators must be involved in the development and implementation of programs to ensure the successful pursuit of the education of students, regardless of their native language.

The Association believes that legislation must provide funds to support English as a Second Language (ESL) and bilingual education programs throughout all levels of the education system.

The Association further believes that certified ESL programs should be supported, financially and ideologically, at the state and local levels. (80,87,98,99,04)

D-14 TEACHING OF READING

The Association believes that all candidates for certification in elementary education should be adequately trained in the teaching of reading. All subject matter teachers should be trained in and incorporate the strategies of reading in their fields of specialization. (81,97,07)

D-15 SCIENCE EDUCATION

The Association believes that the content in science education must be based on scientific theory that incorporates empirically collected evidence, scientific methodology, and other accepted scientific processes. The Association also believes that Pennsylvania science content and curriculum should coordinate with national science standards. (06,17)

D-16 ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

The Association believes that the nation's priorities must include the protection of our environment. It urges the development and improvement of federal legislation, programs, and appropriations that provide education (a) for use, stewardship, and preservation of a viable environment; (b) to minimize pollution; and (c) to promote an understanding of the effects of population change.

The Association urges its locals to support appropriate programs in their school systems for grades K through adult education. (81)

D-17 THE METRIC SYSTEM

The Association advocates the International System of Units (SI metric system) be taught at all educational levels. (81,01)

D-18 COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Association believes that health, physical education, family and consumer science teachers, certificated school nurses, counselors, dental hygienists, psychologists, social workers, home and school visitors, and other pertinent support professionals be directly involved at the state and local levels in the development and implementation of a comprehensive program of health instruction to address students' physical, mental, and social well-being (81,88,93,95,97,04,07,16)

D-19 WORLD LANGUAGES EDUCATION

The Association supports academic standards on a state level for world languages.

The Association believes that world language programs:

- a. are a vital part of the pre-K through higher educational experience;
- b. should include age-appropriate communicative activities;
- c. allow students to be more competitive in the global market place; and
- d. lead to an understanding of cultural differences.

The Association recognizes the need for preparation programs for world language teachers and supports teacher and student exchange programs. (08)

D-20 FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE EDUCATION

The Association believes that family and consumer sciences education programs prepare students

to manage, with reason and creativity, the challenges of living and working in a global society and should be made available to all students.

The Association also believes that family and consumer sciences education programs should

- a. Follow standards as set forth by the appropriate professional organization(s).
- b. Be developmentally appropriate.
- c. Be cooperative with other disciplines and culturally sensitive.
- d. Be taught only by properly certificated family and consumer science educators.

(06,15)

D-21 DRIVER EDUCATION

The Association urges that a comprehensive driver education program, K-12, be established in each school district.

The Association insists that only properly certificated teachers of driver education be employed to conduct driver education programs.

The Association opposes the practice of school districts contracting with private firms for the services of non-certificated instructors for simulator or on-the-road training. (81,10)

D-22 FINANCIAL LITERACY

The Association believes that financial literacy is an essential cornerstone of creating fiscally responsible citizens and financial education should be made available to all students. (15)

D-23 CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The Association believes that preparation of students for career and technical occupations should be the responsibility of public education in collaboration with labor and business. Education that ensures opportunity for occupational development and encourages students to consider career and technical programs should be available for and promoted to all students at all levels. Career and technical education should promote a comprehensive program of lifelong learning for the training, advancement, and promotion of all students. These career and technical education courses should be coordinated and integrated with traditional academic courses. (80,84,00,16)

D-24 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR SCHOOL AGE PARENTS

The Association believes that the education of school age parents should not be interrupted and that it is the responsibility of local school boards to ensure that appropriate flexible educational programs are provided. (81,84)

D-25 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION COMPETENCY

The Association opposes state-mandated graduation assessments. The Association believes that graduation standards, when determined to be appropriate, should be designed by individual school entities. (09)

D-26 COMMUNITY EDUCATION

The Association encourages utilization of school facilities for additional services to children and the community outside the regular school day, week, or year.

The Association urges its locals to become involved in the promotion, expansion, and implementation of community education programs and provide leadership to deal with community concerns. (81,95)

IV.2 Educational Environment

D-27 EDUCATIONAL LEGISLATION

The Association believes that professional educators must be involved in the development and implementation of legislation, regulations, standards and guidelines that define educational policies, and such development and implementation must rely on the expertise of the Association and its members. (80,01,15)

D-28 LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT/INCLUSION

The Association believes the prime consideration in the placement of all students should be the welfare of each student. The Association opposes the exclusive use of any full inclusion model. Given the full continuum of placement options, care must be taken to ensure that no students are adversely

affected by the placement of any individual student. Any decision concerning the placement of a student with exceptionalities must be a majority opinion of those participating in the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) and/or 504 Plan team meeting. Furthermore, the education professionals associated with IEP and 504 Plan decisions should be fully informed of necessary accommodations in a timely fashion and provided with appropriate training as necessary.

The Association believes that adequate safeguards must be provided for the classroom teacher to ensure that a proper classroom atmosphere be maintained at all times. (80,89,94,12)

D-29 INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

The Association agrees with the intent of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. All school employees and related service providers who work with the student with special needs should have input in the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP), must have access to the IEP, and must share in the implementation of the IEP. Prior to implementation, all necessary education materials, professional development, and supportive services must be provided. All impacted staff members must have an appeal procedure regarding the implementation of the IEP, especially in terms of student placement. The procedure must include the right to have the dissenting opinion recorded and attached to the IEP. Safeguards must be provided to assure that the Individualized Education Plans will not be used in the evaluation or rating process of any school employee or related service provider. Release time must be provided for IEP in-service education, for writing and maintenance of IEP's, and for conference time. The teacher-pupil ratio must be adjusted to take into consideration the additional time and work necessary to write and implement IEP's.

The Association also believes that its members must continually monitor the impact of the IEP process on contract provisions such as preparation time, workday, release time, and other working conditions. Close monitoring of all funds for the development and maintenance of IEP's is essential. (97,98,09)

D-30 STANDARDIZED HEALTH RECORDS

The Association supports the use of a standardized health record that provides complete and accurate immunization and other vital health information for each child. (80,83,86,97)

D-31 CLASS SIZE FOR REGULAR EDUCATION STUDENTS

The Association believes that class size maximums should be established based on the needs of students, subject area content, physical facilities, and other criteria deemed important. Weighted class size formulas should be implemented to reflect the inclusion of exceptional students.

The Association believes that class size maximums must be established through the bargaining process.

The Association further believes that class size should not increase as a result of a school entity's attempt to reduce the number of teaching positions through reduction in force and/or attrition.

The Association also believes existing rules and regulations concerning reductions of staff and programs must be enforced. (04)

D-32 CLASS SIZE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

The Association believes that class size maximums should be established based on the needs of students, subject area content, physical facilities, and other criteria as deemed important to the IEP team.

The Association believes that class size maximums should be established through the bargaining process.

The Association further believes that class size should not increase as the result of a school entity's attempt to reduce the number of teaching positions through reduction in force and/or attrition.

The Association also believes existing rules and regulations concerning reductions of staff and programs must be enforced.

The Association further believes in the following special education caseloads and class size maximums:

Caseloads, the number of students on a teacher's roster, shall be determined on the basis of maximums allowed and the amount of time required to fulfill the specific individualized programs. However, caseloads shall not exceed the established maximums.

The duties assumed as a part of caseload include:

Consulting with regular class teachers of exceptional students;

Observing exceptional students;

Assisting in teaching exceptional students regardless of service delivery location;

Assisting in the MDT evaluation;

Participating as a member of the IEP team.

Individual caseloads shall be determined by the accumulated time allowed for providing the special education services and programs specified on the IEPs of students with exceptionalities. In consideration of time available, a teacher's caseload shall allow for necessary travel time between service delivery locations.

For supplemental levels of intervention, in any location other than the regular classroom, the Association believes caseload maximums should be capped at:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| a. Speech and Language Support | 65 |
| b. Gifted Support | 40 |
| c. Learning Support | 20 |
| d. Life Skills Support | 15 |
| e. Emotional Support | 15 |
| f. Deaf/Hearing Impaired Support | 15 |
| g. Blind/Visually Impaired Support | 15 |
| h. Physical Support | 15 |
| i. Autistic Support | 10 |
| j. Multiple Disabilities Support | 10 |

For replacement levels of intervention, in any location other than the regular classroom, the Association believes caseloads maximums should be capped at:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| a. Speech and Language Support | 8 |
| b. Gifted Support | 20 |
| c. Learning Support | 15 |
| d. Life Skills Support | 12 |
| e. Emotional Support | 10 |
| f. Deaf/Hearing Impaired Support | 8 |
| g. Blind/Visually Impaired Support | 8 |
| h. Physical Support | 8 |
| i. Autistic Support | 6 |
| j. Multiple Disabilities Support | 6 |

Caseload for services to students included in the regular education classroom should be capped at a ratio of 1 special education teacher per 12 students.

Caseload for early intervention occupational, physical, and speech therapy, should be limited to 40 students.

The Association believes class sizes, the number of students receiving special education services in a room at any one time, should be capped at:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| a. Gifted Support | 20 |
| b. Learning Support | 10 |
| c. Life Skills Support | 8 |
| d. Emotional Support | 8 |
| e. Deaf/Hearing Impaired Support | 8 |
| f. Blind/Visually Impaired Support | 8 |
| g. Physical Support | 5 |
| h. Autistic Support | 5 |
| i. Multiple Disabilities Support | 5 |
| j. Speech and Language Support | 4 |

The Association believes that deviation by less than 25 percent at any one time in any one class is permitted as long as overall compliance throughout the year deviates by no more than ten percent. Deviation must require a written request for a waiver justified on educational grounds with notice to affected parents and teachers noting their right to respond to PDE prior to any decision on waiver.

The Association further believes that paraprofessionals must be mandated for all inclusion and special education classes. (81,82,00,01)

D-33 SOCIAL PROMOTION

The Association urges the total school community to end the abuse of social promotion and to work toward the development of appropriate programs to ensure the proper placement and education of all students. (09)

D-34 SAFETY IN SCHOOLS

The Association believes that a primary responsibility of school districts is to provide for the safety of all students and staff. Policies should be developed, with staff input, that require volunteers and outside agencies to obtain appropriate clearances for the roles and positions they fill that are comparable to those required by school employees.

The Association further believes that school districts provide volunteers and outside agencies with the information necessary to obtain mandated clearances. (13,15)

D-35 SCHOOL VIOLENCE

The Association supports efforts to identify causes of school violence at all levels. The Association further supports the planning and implementation of activities to prevent and/or eliminate violence in schools.

The Association supports educational programs that emphasize gun safety and increased awareness of the need to keep firearms secured.

The Association believes that all school entities must have an emergency plan that can be implemented should a violent act occur.

The Association believes that all public-school personnel must be educated in effective options to utilize when faced with a violent or potentially violent situation.

The Association believes that the public must be informed about the issue of violence in local school entities. The Association believes every community must support local school boards in developing and implementing alternative programs, providing facilities and appropriate personnel, reducing class size in order to promote a healthy climate for the educational process and to reduce the potential for violence in the schools.

The Association believes all school entities should utilize educational employees' input to create clear, enforceable discipline codes. (80,84,86,98,99,01,13)

D-36 SUBSTANCE ABUSE/CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY

The Association encourages local school entities to establish drug education programs at the primary, intermediate, secondary, and college levels.

The Association also encourages the appropriate training of educational professionals to recognize chemical dependent and at-risk students.

The Association further advocates the use of intervention and rehabilitation programs to develop and maintain a dependency-free life. (90,97,15)

D-37 FLUORIDATION

The Association supports community water fluoridation, school water fluoridators and fluoride supplements as safe and effective procedures for reducing the incidence of dental cavities. It further supports education of the public and other health professionals concerning the importance of the use and benefits of fluoride supplements, including school-based topical fluoride treatments and fluoride mouth rinse and tablet programs. (85)

D-38 SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTIFICATION

The Association believes that all persons, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identification, should be afforded equal opportunity and guaranteed a safe and inclusive environment within the public education system. The Association also believes that every school entity should provide voluntary counseling services and programs that are staffed by personnel trained to address issues related to sexual orientation or gender identity. (16)

D-39 EXTRA DUTIES

The Association believes that the quality and continuity of instruction of all students should be a priority and, therefore, teachers should not be assigned to non-instructional duties or class coverages during instructional time. (86)

D-40 CELL PHONES/PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES

The Association believes that schools should develop staff and student guidelines for the appropriate use of cell phones and personal communication devices during the school day. Such guidelines should be age-appropriate and promote respect for privacy, intellectual integrity, and a positive learning environment. (10)

D-41 CONSERVATION

The Association supports a serious and continuing societal commitment to the conservation of resources.

The Association encourages recycling. It also advocates the use of recyclable, biodegradable, and/or disposable materials which are not environmentally damaging.

The Association urges that school officials and resource management officials develop energy distribution plans that would ensure uninterrupted operation.

The Association believes the provisions for school construction should be amended to require the incorporation of ecologically conservative climate control systems. (80,90,97)

D-42 ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

The Association believes that every student, regardless of gender, should be given an equal opportunity to participate in intramural and/or interscholastic sports.

The Association urges that athletic funds for facilities, equipment, and remuneration of staff be equally allocated between female and male programs.

The Association urges local school entities to promote healthful attitudes and practices in all athletic programs.

The Association believes the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) must be accountable to the State Board of Education, but the PIAA should continue to coordinate and direct interscholastic athletics within State Board of Education policies.

The Association opposes any "pay for play" program that does not incorporate provisions for economically disadvantaged participants. (81,91,11)

V. TO PROMOTE A POSITIVE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT THAT ADDRESSES THE NEEDS OF THE WHOLE CHILD

V.1 Health and Welfare

E-01 NATIONAL HEALTH CARE

The Association believes that access to an affordable comprehensive, national health care program is a right of every citizen.

The Association also believes that any national health care program should allow citizens the option to maintain their current health care plan. (91,95,09)

E-02 STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

Health service programs for school-age students should be effectively and efficiently coordinated by properly certificated personnel within the existing school health programs. The school district shall be reimbursed for these services. (16)

E-03 NUTRITION

The Association believes that proper nutrition is essential to student success. School food service programs should be supported by public funds and shall be nutritionally balanced, appealing, and affordable.

The Association further believes that only nutritionally wholesome foods should be available for students at school. (90,13)

E-04 STUDENT IMMUNIZATIONS

The Association believes that immunizations are necessary to control and eradicate infectious diseases.

The Association further believes that all students must have the required immunizations in order to attend school.

The Association recognizes that students may be exempted from these immunizations only for religious or documented medical reasons. (15)

E-05 PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

The services of a psychiatrist should be available for psychiatric evaluations of students and for consultations with parents and teachers of children with adjustment difficulties. (16)

E-06 CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The Association believes that all children must be protected from physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect committed by adults or children. Policies must be adopted to end abuse and neglect in all school programs.

The Association also believes that education employees must be informed of their legal rights and responsibilities related to reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect.

The Association further believes that districts should provide on-going professional development on the topic of child abuse. (80,81,85,93,95,02,14,15)

V.2 Educational Content

E-07 STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Association believes that basic student rights include the right to free inquiry and expression; the right to freedom of association; the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and petition; the right to participate in the governance of the school, college, and university; the right to freedom from discrimination; the right to freedom from commercial exploitation; and the right to equal educational opportunity.

The Association believes that each of these rights carries with it a comparable responsibility. Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work, and conformance to school rules and regulations. No student has the right to interfere with the education of other students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of everyone involved in the educational process.

Students have the responsibility to cooperate with all education employees in developing a climate within the school that is conducive to learning. (80,84,98,10,12)

E-08 CHARTER SCHOOLS/CYBER-CHARTER SCHOOLS

The Association believes that any charter/cyber-charter school proposal must directly involve public school employees in the design, implementation, and governance of these schools and programs. Charter/cyber-charter schools must not divert current funds from any public-school programs. Procedures must be in place to adequately safeguard: local association contracts and other employment provisions for all employees; non-discriminatory and equal educational opportunities; staffing and financial responsibilities; compliance with laws, regulations and standards that govern public schools.

The Association believes that all public-school students, including charter/cyber-charter school students, must be required to meet the same proficiency requirements on the same state-mandated assessments.

The Association also believes that any scores from mandated tests should be attributed only to that charter or cyber-charter school in which the student is enrolled.

The Association further believes that charters should be granted for a limited period of time and should serve as labs for field testing and curricular innovations.

Renewal of charters should be contingent upon achievement of objectives, missions, goals, and standards required by the Department of Education.

The Association believes that charters should be monitored on a continuing basis and be subject to modification or revocation at any time if the students' or the public's interest is at stake.

The Association also believes that charter/cyber-charter schools must provide equal access to all

students with exceptionalities.

The Association believes that legislation pertaining to employment qualifications and evaluations should be uniform for employees of public and charter/cyber-charter schools. (95,02,07,10,11,12,13)

E-09 HOME SCHOOLING

The Association believes that home schooling programs based on parental choice do not provide the student with a comprehensive educational experience. When home schooling occurs, students enrolled must meet all state curricular requirements, including the taking and passing of assessments to ensure adequate academic progress.

The Association believes that all public-school students, including home schooled students, must be required to meet the same proficiency requirements on the same state-mandated assessments.

The Association also believes that any mandated testing scores of home schooled students should not be attributed to any school district.

The Association further believes that when home schooling is a matter of parental preference, all expenses should be borne by the parents. (08,11)

E-10 CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The Association believes that Career and Technical Education programs are integral components of public education. The Association also believes that in order for equal educational opportunity to be available for each student of the Commonwealth, career and technical education should be provided for students of every education community. (17)

E-10 STUDENT TRANSFERS

The Association opposes all transfers that cause funding disparity, segregation, and/or scholastic or extracurricular elitism. (92,14)

E-11 TRANSFER OF STUDENT RECORDS/PORTFOLIOS

The Association believes that to assure proper student placement in any educational system, immediate transfer of the student and his/her records/portfolios is essential.

School entities shall ensure proper placement through the use of records/portfolios, placement test and other appropriate information before admission of the student to class. (80,83,95,13)

E-12 REDUCTION IN STUDENT NUMBERS

The Association believes that when enrollment declines, school entities should use this opportunity to reduce class size, expand individualized instruction, introduce new courses, increase adult education during the school day, and incorporate day care centers as part of the school program. The Association believes that a reduction in student numbers should not be the reason for curtailment of programs.

The Association urges legislation, adoption of school board policies, and development of master contracts which would reduce class size and/or teacher-student ratios.

The Association believes that local associations must refrain from negotiating reduction of the number of instructional staff members or program eliminations or sacrificing pupil personnel services in order to settle a contract. (81,83,84,90,01)

E-13 CLASS SIZE

The Association believes that small class size will improve student achievement.

The Association believes that a maximum class of 15 students is appropriate for kindergarten through grade three; a maximum class size of 18 students in grades four and five; and a maximum of 20 students in grades six through twelve.

The Association believes that resources must be provided to schools and districts serving low-income students to restrict class sizes in the primary grades. (16)

E-14 MANDATORY ATTENDANCE LAWS

The Association believes that the current laws and practices relating to pupils' mandatory attendance, especially as it relates to students in secondary schools, are in need of review and possible revision.

Flexible student schedules should be available to afford opportunities for students to attend classes and to be employed part-time in relevant work.

Pupils who have difficulty in the prescribed educational programs should be provided alternative supervised offerings. (81,11)

E-15 STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

The Association believes that the primary responsibility of school age students is to obtain an education. The Association further believes that student employment should enhance the academic experience and recommends that school entities, in cooperation with the community, ensure compliance with the existing laws and regulations which govern employed students. (93,13)

E-16 SAFETY EDUCATION

The Association believes that safety education for all students should be a joint endeavor involving students, parents/guardians, school employees, and the community at large. Comprehensive safety education programs addressing safety issues and concerns should be made available to everyone involved so they may contribute to the protection and well-being of all students. (10)

E-17 ADMINISTRATION OF STANDARDIZED TESTS

The Association believes that the method and timing of assessment of students should be determined by each school entity and that at least 160 days of instruction must occur prior to the administration of any high stakes testing. (16)

V.3 Discipline and Behavior

E-18 BULLYING

The Association believes the school environment must be free from all forms of bullying, including but not limited to, physical and psychological bullying and cyber bullying. Bullying is the systemic and chronic infliction of physical hurt and/or psychological distress on one or more individuals.

The Association recognizes that bullying can involve and affect all members of the school community.

School districts should develop and implement educational programs designed to help all stakeholders recognize, understand, and prevent all forms of bullying. School districts and higher education entities should provide ongoing training, resources and support to all staff regarding the recognition of, prevention of, and responses to bullying. (08,10,12,17)

E-19 DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

The Association acknowledges the importance of recognizing individual differences among students that impose unusual stress on the present structure of American education. We believe that this burden must be shared equally by all levels responsible for public education, including education employees, parents, and directors of school districts.

The Association urges school districts to employ qualified professional staff to teach and work with disruptive and socially maladjusted students using flexible but appropriate programs and facilities. Guidelines must be established by the profession to identify students who need special approaches or programs. Inservice and/or training programs on various approaches to problems of discipline and violence should be made available.

The Association recognizes that there are extreme cases of disruptive students who exceed the standard disciplinary capabilities of public schools. The Association recommends an integrated approach that involves the school entity, social agencies, and families to select alternative school programs and facilities that will best meet student needs.

The Association believes that the local bargaining unit should have the right to reflect the concerns of the profession at a student suspension or expulsion hearing. (80,90,04,13)

E-20 RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONDUCT OF STUDENTS TRAVELING TO AND FROM SCHOOL

The Association believes that the conduct of students traveling to or from school should be made the legal responsibility of parents/guardians of the students.

The school should be required to assume responsibility only during the school day when the student is on school property, utilizing school transportation, and/or participating in a school-sponsored activity. (81,07)

V.4 School

E-21 CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

The Association supports the use of non-violent strategies to promote appropriate student behavior. The Association further believes that corporal punishment, or the threat of it, should not be used as a means of disciplining students. (05,14)

E-22 JUVENILE OFFENDERS

The Association believes that juvenile offenders adjudicated delinquent by the juvenile justice system and /or placed in detention centers or residential treatment programs should be provided with education programs and other support services that will enable them to become contributing members of society.

Juvenile offenders who pose a threat to the health and safety of others and who are not placed in these centers should be provided educational services in an appropriate alternative setting.

The Association also supports adequate funding for programs that provide alternatives to incarceration, discourage recidivism, and engage juveniles in positive behavior management activities and community-based rehabilitation that include counseling and community services. (18)

V.5 Special Circumstances

E-23 EDUCATION FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES

The Association supports a free and appropriate public education for all individuals with exceptionalities. The Association believes that the educational needs of individuals with exceptionalities should be met to the greatest degree possible, but not to the detriment of others.

The Association also believes these individuals must be placed in an environment which best suits their educational needs. Teachers must have control over the development and implementation of these programs.

Additionally, the Association believes that school personnel working with individuals with exceptionalities must be provided with ongoing professional development to stay current with legislation and best practices relating to the education of individuals with exceptionalities.

The Association further believes that intermediate units must be utilized to provide special services for pre-school children with exceptionalities when these services are not available in a local school entity. (81,15)

E-24 REQUIRED STATE AND LOCAL ASSESSMENTS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH IEPS

The Association believes that the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) team should dictate which required state and local assessments are deemed appropriate for students with exceptionalities and allow for exclusions and/or alternative forms of assessment. (05,06)

E-25 CHILDREN OF MIGRANT AND MOBILE FAMILIES

The Association supports state and federal legislation guaranteeing equal educational opportunities for the children of displaced, migrant, and mobile families. (81,84,17)

E-26 PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

The Association believes that parents/guardians of school age children have a responsibility to attend parent-teacher conferences. The Association also believes that individual school districts should strongly encourage parents/guardians to attend these conferences. (10)

E-27 SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND DISCIPLINE

The Association believes that a safe and supportive environment in which students are treated with dignity is the right of every student. The Association also believes that school entities should promote the study, development and funding of a variety of effective disciplinary procedures.

The Association further believes that policies promoting educational processes, which emphasize prevention, effective interventions, and rehabilitation, will decrease the need for out of school suspensions, expulsions, in school arrests, and the practice that is commonly called the school-to-prison pipeline. (17)

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