



Position Paper: NYS LEARNING STANDARDS

New York State PTA supports the ongoing efforts of the New York State Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department in establishing and maintaining high academic standards. To date, improvement in student achievement has not only been impressive but has extended across racial and ethnic lines and also across income levels. The alignment of high academic standards with curriculum and assessments gives students the education necessary for today's world and creates a high school diploma that has meaning.

The following statements represent comments and concerns based on the New York State PTA's *Basic Policy, Education Emphasis*. New York State PTA, its units, councils and regions, will advocate to:

- Guarantee for all children and youth an equal opportunity to develop to their fullest potential
 - 1) Consistent standards are necessary to assure equal access to a quality curriculum for all children;
 - 2) Parents, teachers, and administrators should urge every child to achieve the highest level of academic performance possible;
 - 3) Every school district must be held accountable for its delivery of services to all students at all levels;
 - 4) Continued emphasis on parent involvement is an integral part of the success of the Learning Standards Initiative;
 - 5) Parents and guardians of students should be provided with comprehensive academic data that empowers them to make informed choices on behalf of their children;
 - 6) School district and state compliance to close the academic equity gap among races and income differences must be monitored;
 - 7) Individual student academic skills must be evaluated for the purpose of targeting effective, skills-appropriate instructional programs.

- Promote implementation of higher standards for all levels of public education
 - 1) New York State PTA continues to support the Learning Standards Initiative as criteria for graduation;
 - 2) All students must continue to have access to Regents level courses and high school level curriculum;
 - 3) Curriculum and assessments must be constantly reviewed to ensure their alignment with the Learning Standards and each other;
 - 4) All school districts must be accountable for the opportunities available to students, e.g. offering many alternative instructional methods and materials including Academic Intervention Services.

- Provide opportunities for academic, vocational, and technical education through and beyond the secondary level
 - 1) New York State PTA again expresses its support and appreciation of the NYS Board of Regents Standards Initiative and in no way would support the dilution of high school graduation criteria for any student;
 - 2) New York State PTA supports meaningful component retesting and alternative assessments that provide valuable information on academic achievement and are based on the NYS Learning Standards. We also support, until all other components are in place, the continuation of the 55-passing grade;
 - 3) New York State PTA asks the New York State Board of Regents to consider alternatives to five specific Regents examinations as the only possible criteria for graduation;
 - 4) New York State PTA recognizes that governance of graduation criteria is a state rather than local responsibility and any alternative forms of diplomas must be consistent throughout the state;
 - 5) Institutions of higher learning should be encouraged to work with students in areas of need identified during high school to help ensure post secondary academic success, e.g. remediation courses, GED programs, etc.

Adopted 08/03
Reaffirmed 8/06