

2010 PTA NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

MARCH 9-11, WASHINGTON, D.C.

REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY AT THE NATIONAL PTA CONFERENCE

To watch the video of her remarks, please go to <http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/5335937>

To see the PTA's Health and Wellness Handout, please go to http://www.pta.org/Health-Wellness_030810-re.pdf

Mrs. Obama is speaking on the epidemic of childhood obesity in America. Over the past three decades, childhood obesity rates in America have tripled. She has launched the nationwide Let's Move campaign, to help kids lead active, healthy lives. The goal is to end childhood obesity in a generation. Mrs. Obama is meeting with the food manufacturers asking them to create healthier options. But healthier habits start at home and she is asking parents to do their part.

Let's Move has 4 parts. Let's Move will give parents the support they need, provide healthier food in schools, help our kids to be more physically active, and make healthy, affordable food available in every part of our country.

The first part is to help parents gain the skills and knowledge to make healthier choices for their kids. Asking doctors to write out prescriptions with details to help kids be healthy and fit. Working with the FDA to try to change food labels making them easier to read. LetsMove.gov has tips and strategies to help parents plan meals and activities. Apps for Healthy Kids challenge is challenging game makers to create games that incorporate nutritional information and make healthy living fun.

The second part is to access to healthy and affordable foods. The goal is to eliminate food deserts. Healthy Food Financing Initiative is going to help bring grocery stores to underserved areas and put healthier options in convenience stores.

The third part is to make our schools a healthy place for kids to learn and grow. This will be started with an updated and strengthened Child Nutrition Act. She is asking for an additional \$10 billion over 10 years to fund that legislation, to improve the quality of school food.

66 retired generals, admirals, and other senior military leaders sent a letter to Congress supporting these efforts because they said this was a matter of national security. National School Lunch Program was started after WWII because the most common disqualifying condition for military service was malnourishment. And now the pendulum has is on the other side, obesity.

More schools need to meet the Healthier US School Challenge. These schools will be a model for all schools, providing healthy meals, PE, nutritional education, and free and reduced priced meals for qualifying students. She is expanding the President's Physical Fitness Challenge.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

Panel:

Thelma Melendez de Santa Ana, Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary education, U.S. Department of Education

For more information, please see <http://corestandards.org/>

To watch the webcast of the panel discussion, please go to <http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/5336917>

48 states, 2 territories, and the District of Columbia committed to developing the common core standards.

She believes in family community support and parental involvement, and that improved standards will help this. She feels that parent concerns are involvement, communication, and child achievement.

Standards and assessments should be meaningful. Arne Duncan wants to "Raise the bar and close the gap". Bar will be college readiness. Any standards we use must be internationally benched marked. States can adopt these standards presented or have their universities approve their standards.

Better standard are expected to make your interactions with schools clear, meaningful, and richer. One of the goals of these standards is to make them clear and make them fewer, making them easier to teach to.

Beyond these new standards it is expected that they will lead to new improved assessments. New assessments designed to focus more on critical thinking. Assessments that take into account all learners. With less lengthy standards there will be more time to let children explore the world and uncover their passion.

The Obama administration is proposing a \$3 billion increase for ESEA, and \$1 billion more for Title 1. Title 1 schools will be required to adopt higher math and reading standards to receive Title 1 funding.

Gene Wilhoit, Executive Director, Council of Chief State School Officers.

Common core standards, US standards was released for public comment March 10th. The public may submit comments until April 2nd. These comments will be summarized and made available.

This is the first attempt to have the same expectations for all children in public education.

This is a civil rights issue & economic issue. They want to eliminate the expectations of children varying because of where they live. It does not make sense that where I reside determines what is expected for my child.

Right now too many standards are poorly written and do not allow for in depth coverage of subjects. Worthy standards are needed. After high school, students should be college or career ready (technical

schools). The standards must reflect the world's standards. Finally, the standards should show evidence why works for future success.

These standards have high expectations for students, and therefore high expectations for parents. How clear are California standards? How do they compare to these new standards?

Dane Linn, Director of the Education division, National Governors Association Center for Best Practices

Standards need to be clear for teachers and parents. The Common Core Standards are more coherent. They are designed so that topics covered one year are not repeated in the following year. It is about equity. Every student should have the same expectations.

A future issue to be tackled to help children learn is school finance. Other things to focus on to fix education are high quality curriculum, teacher's professional development, have richer set of instruction tools (use technology), and better tests. Test will be used to change behavior of students & teachers. New standards will attempt to be more honest to students and teachers. If they are implemented new educational gaps will be apparent between states.

Sandra Boyd, Vice President of Strategic Communications and Outreach, Achieve

Standards set the bar. Historically, this bar has been too low. This year, 2010, 31 states have college and career ready standards, which is way up from several years ago. We need a grade by grade analysis of how to get to 12th students ready for college. These need to be internationally bench marked.

In 1960, 60% of jobs were unskilled. Today, 83% of jobs require post-secondary education. Where will business find a good quality work force? Where is this work force going to come from if students do not meet the expectations? These standards are only the beginning. Only 20 states have college and career ready standards that approach these standards.

One kid said what's the worst thing that could happen, I'll learn too much.

Funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Sponsored by the National Governors Association and Council of Chief State School Officers.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE ESEA

The goal of K-12 has to be college/career ready.

3 main goals for changing ESEA

- Raise standards
- Reward excellence and growth
- Increase local control and flexibility while maintaining the focus on equity and closing the achievement gap.

Ask states to adopt new standards by either working with other states or the state's high educational institutions to certify their standards. Then develop new assessments to determine if students are on track, giving teachers the information they need to improve student achievement. They want assessments that evaluate deep learning not just test taking skills. Assessments should provide engagement and encouragement, and help teachers with feedback.

They are requesting \$3.9 billion for strengthening the teaching profession. This is \$350 million more than is currently being allocated. This should help make sure teachers are prepared for the class room instead of learning on the job. There is a need to make the teaching profession one where a teacher can grow throughout the entire career. Teachers need a fair honest and useful evaluation system. They want to reward teachers for excellence and working in high-need schools. Use student academic growth as the most important measure. Teachers who raise the proficiency of their students should get rewarded even when the students are still not up to their grade level. An important result of this would be to retain great teachers. Principals need to be good leaders. Not only are they going to hold teachers and principals accountable, but also districts and states.

They're calling for over \$1 billion to fund a complete education. We want schools investing in the arts, history, science, languages and all of the learning experiences that contribute to a well-rounded education. They are seeking 1.8 billion to encourage students with other positive adult. Teachers can't do it alone. They need parents, community leaders, social service agencies and others to reinforce a culture of learning and respect. A parent is a child's first teacher.

They want the government to move from a monitoring agency to an engine of innovation.

TAKING IT TO THE HILL: PTA'S 2010 PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA

This workshop was designed to get us familiar with the 2010 National PTA Federal Public Policy Agenda (<http://www.pta.org/PPA10.pdf>). It also prepared us for our talking points when we met with Congress.

A survey of state PTA's was used to help share the policy agenda. 65% of states mention funding as a top of their advocacy priority. This was followed by health and safety, and parental involvement.

PTA's 2010 Federal Policy Agenda has three areas.

- Family engagement
 - ESEA-NCLB & IDEA
- Equity and opportunity for all children
 - Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDA) & Budget/Appropriations
- Child health and wellness
 - Child Nutrition Act

Parental Involvement & Family Engagement

The PTA is using the phrase "Cradle to Career".

ESEA Recommendations

- Retain and strengthen Section 1118, Title 1.
- Add statutory definition and framework for effective family engagement to provide guidance to SEA's, LEA's and schools.
- Increase Parent Involvement allocation from 1% to 2% and establish allowable uses of funding.
- Safeguard and strengthen PIRCs by tightening their role to scale –up research based practices and reach more families.
- Make family engagement a critical component of ESEA by incentivizing schools & Districts to engage parents.
- Provide professional development for teachers and school leaders on effectively partnering with parents.
- Engage parent leaders in integrating and coordinating family engagement initiatives in schools, districts and states.
- Pilot local family engagement demonstration programs.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

- Add a statutory definition family engagement
- Codify PTA's National Standards for Family Engagement.
- Provide professional development for special education teachers and administrators on family engagement.

- Require transition planning services to begin before age 14
- Require data collection from:
 - Dept ED on family engagement
 - GAO on student disciplinary actions (suspensions).
- Individualized Education Programs (IEP)
 - Require classroom-based behavioral management plans
 - Include short-term goals and benchmarks and specify indicators of success

Federal Funding for Education

- Increase funding level of PRCS by \$3.9 million or 10% for FY 11
- Increase funding for Title 1, IDEA, and Teacher Quality State Grants
 - PTA wants to double Title 1 funding
 - PTA is asking for IDEA funding to increase to 20% (2.3 billion)
- Restore funding for Teacher Quality Enhancement grants

Child Health

Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Recommendations

- Require policies for the provision of recess, physical education and regulation of food marketing in schools to be included in school wellness policies
- Require monitoring and review of school wellness policies
- Provide competitive grant funding through the USDA Team Nutrition Network for effective implementation of school wellness policies
- Update the national nutrition standards for school foods sold outside of the school meals program
- Increase reimbursement rate for school meals
- Authorize non-food assistance grants to allow schools to purchase food preparation equipment
- Require qualified nutrition professionals to approve school food services
- Increase funding for Dept. of Defense Fresh Program