

Texas PTA Legislative Successes 2009

This session Texas PTA secured the passage of:

- **BOOSTER SEAT BILL** - Texas becomes the 46th state to enact legislation that updates Texas passenger safety statutes.
- **SALES TAX HOLIDAY EXPANSION** - The sales tax holiday expansion to include basic school supplies.
- **CELL PHONE PROHIBITION FOR DRIVING TEENS** - The driver education bill that contains PTA's cell phone ban for driving teens.
- **VOUCHERS** - This session no voucher bill was voted favorably from any committee.
- **HEALTHY LIFESTYLES** - several bills including, one creating a standard definition of physical education that applies to all public school physical education curriculum and addresses student-to-teacher ratios in physical education classes, one that requires the inclusion in public school campus improvement plans of an evaluation of the campus coordinated health program, creating an Obesity Prevention Pilot Program, developing an early childhood nutrition and physical activity plan with a recommended timeline for implementation over a six-year period, and many, many more!
- **SCHOOL FINANCE** - to return to the extent possible to a formula driven public school finance system that improves equity and reduces recapture, to seek to reduce unfunded mandates on schools by:
 - Allowing a school district to choose between two methods for posting job vacancies rather than requiring a district to use both methods;
 - Extending the expiration date of a district-level class size exception from the end of the semester for which it is granted to the end of the school year for which it is granted and removes a prohibition against the commissioner of education's granting an exception for more than one semester at a time;
 - Authorizing, rather than requiring, a school district to conduct school bus evacuation training once a year;
 - Requiring a school district to establish a long-range energy plan to reduce the consumption of electric energy;
 - Repealing a requirement begun in 2007 that a school district board of trustees establish a goal to reduce the annual electric consumption by five percent each year for six years.
- **SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY** - The school accountability system remake bill passed with several components sought by Texas PTA:
 - A requirement for high school students to take 1 credit of PE and 1 credit of Fine Arts;
 - Areas of Distinction for Campuses that include fine arts, physical education, 21st Century Workforce Development, in addition to academic achievement;
 - The addition of a broader array of applied courses and career and technology courses to be eligible for the 3rd and 4th year of math and science;
 - Allowing student growth to count toward passing and college-readiness standards;
 - Allowing a waiver so that performance of one sub-population will no longer "fail" a district;
 - Requiring multiple measures to be used for awards of distinction;
 - Ending the 65% rule

**Texas
PTA**
every child, every voice.

For more information on Texas PTA's legislative priorities, please visit www.txpta.org/legislative

