

MEMO

To: National PTA Officers, Board of Directors, State Presidents, Legislation Committee and Federal Legislative Chairs

From: National PTA's Government Affairs Department

Date: November 21, 2016

Re: Presidential Transition and Working with Trump Administration and the 115th Congress

Introduction

As one of the most contentious general election cycles in recent history has ended, National PTA remains steadfast to our longstanding tradition and commitment of being a nonpartisan association that advocates to improve the education, health and well-being of all children. Our legislative priorities, outreach and engagement with a new presidential administration and Congress remain the same, regardless of the party in power.

As this transition of power occurs, it is imperative as an association that we continue to proudly express and model PTA's values of collaboration, commitment, diversity, respect and accountability. We look forward to collaborating with President-Elect Donald Trump, his administration and the 115th Congress to fulfill PTA's mission—to ensure every child can reach their full potential.

For over a century, PTA members have worked with all members of Congress and every administration to implement our public policy priorities and invest in our nation's future. This memorandum provides an overview of National PTA's strategy during the transition process and what PTA Leaders can expect during the next few months.

Presidential Transition Process

Historically, the President-Elect creates a transition team of advisors and staff to develop transition plans, formulate policy agendas, create detailed proposals, and appoint fifteen cabinet secretaries and fill thousands of jobs within each federal agency and the White House. President-Elect Trump recently appointed Vice President-Elect Mike Pence to oversee his transition team culminating in his inauguration on January 20, 2017.

All agencies in the U.S. government have a specific number of career staff that will remain at each agency to run the federal programs and the day-to-day operations so that the federal government continues to function through the transition. Each agency also has a specific number of political appointees that the presidential-elect's transition team will select and those individuals will work at the will of the president.

National PTA's Government Affairs team has cultivated relationships with many career staff members at the U.S. Department of Education (ED) that will continue to serve through the remainder of the Obama Administration and into the Trump Administration. It is still too early to speculate on who the political appointees may be at ED, including the U.S. Secretary of Education.

Education Policy Under President-Elect Trump

President-Elect Trump has not announced his complete education policy agenda yet, but has provided some insight into possible education policy proposals that his administration may pursue upon taking office. Through public statements, President-Elect Trump has mentioned the need for more [child care opportunities](#), downsizing or [eliminating ED](#) and promoting more opportunities for [private school choice and vouchers](#). National PTA is concerned about President-Elect Trump's public support of private school choice and vouchers since our association has a long-standing position against any private school choice proposal and/or voucher system that diverts public funds to private or sectarian schools. National PTA looks forward to learning more about President-Elect Trump's education policy goals as they become public in the coming months and working with his transition team to include PTA's priorities in his education agenda.

How National PTA Will Engage with President-Elect Trump and his Administration

- Send transition memorandums to President-Elect Trump that outline the importance of family engagement in education and other PTA policy priorities
- Request to meet with key education advisors within President-Elect Trump's transition team to discuss National PTA's public policy priorities
- Schedule introductory meetings with political appointees in the White House Domestic Policy Council, ED and other agencies
- Invite Trump Administration officials to National PTA's Legislative Conference in March
- Distribute National PTA's Public Policy Agenda to key figures in the Trump Administration
- Schedule a meeting with the new U.S. Secretary of Education
- Collaborate with policy coalitions to advance our public policy priorities and assist in furthering advocacy efforts on federal policy and issues

115th Congress

After many close Congressional races in the House and Senate, the Republican Party will maintain control of both the House and Senate for the 115th Congress which convenes January 2017 and adjourns in December 2018. The House will consist of 239 Republicans and 193 Democrats, while the Senate will consist of 51 Republicans and 48 Democrats—with a runoff election expected in the state of Louisiana.

The 115th Congress will begin the first week of January 2017 and all legislation not signed into law by the President before the start of the 115th Congress must begin the legislative process again with the new Congress. Additionally, at the beginning of the 115th Congress, party leaders

in the House and Senate will assign new members of Congress to sit on certain committees and appoint more senior members of Congress to take leadership roles on committees.

Representative Paul Ryan (R-WI-1) will remain Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives in the 115th Congress with Representative Nancy Pelosi (D-CA-12) presumptively remaining the Democratic Leader. Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY) will remain Majority Leader in the U.S. Senate with Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY) becoming the new Democratic Leader.

National PTA has and will continue to work closely with these party leaders and the following committees in the 115th Congress to improve the education, health and well-being of every child through our public policy agenda:

- Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP)
- Senate Appropriation Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (L-HHS-ED)
- House Committee on Education and the Workforce
- House Appropriation Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (L-HHS-ED)

The membership of these committees are expected to consist of mainly the same members from the 114th Congress. Additionally, it is likely that the leaders of each committee—the chair and ranking member—will also remain the same, except for the House Committee on Education and the Workforce which will be seeking a new Chair. Representative Virginia Foxx (R-NC-5) has expressed her ambition to be Chair of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce in the 115th Congress.

The announcement of committee leadership and members is expected over the next several weeks. National PTA has built strong relationships with the leaders and members of each committee over the years which will continue to facilitate PTA advocacy and legislative priorities in the 115th Congress.

How National PTA Will Engage with the 115th Congress

- Send a welcome letter to all members of the 115th Congress
- Schedule meetings with selected new members of Congress to discuss National PTA's policy priorities
- Meet with the new Chair of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce
- Continue to engage with members and staff of education and appropriations committees, and other key federal legislators to reiterate National PTA's federal policy priorities
- Share National PTA's legislative priorities with all members of the 115th Congress
- Collaborate with policy coalitions to advance our public policy priorities and assist in furthering advocacy efforts on legislation

- Ensure PTA advocates conduct outreach and meet with their members of Congress, paying specific attention to members of key committees that have jurisdiction over National PTA legislative priorities
- Facilitate National PTA’s LegCon Hill Day to connect PTA advocates with their federal representatives to advocate on National PTA’s public policy agenda

National PTA Resources for Advocates to Stay Informed and Engage with Policymakers:

- [PTA Takes Action Center](#): National PTA’s Takes Action Center contains the following sections to keep PTA members informed of federal policy activities:
 - [Key Legislation](#)
 - [Action Alerts](#)
 - [Letters to Policymakers from National PTA](#)
 - [National PTA’s Public Policy Agenda](#)
- [Advocacy Toolkit](#): National PTA’s Advocacy Toolkit provides members effective ways to advocate for every child including information on:
 - [How a Bill Becomes a Law](#)
 - [Corresponding with Members of Congress](#)
 - [Conducting Visits with Members of Congress](#)
- Participate in upcoming webinars and other online advocacy trainings, including a co-hosted National PTA-Congressional Management Foundation webinar in December on “How Elections Shift Power in Congress: Identifying and Building Relations in a New Congress.” This online advocacy training will identify best practices for building relationships with new Members of Congress and key committee chairs. Stay tuned for additional online advocacy events in the coming months.
- Stay connected with National PTA advocacy efforts through the [One Voice blog](#) and our social media platforms.

Conclusion

National PTA’s Government Affairs Department is ready to engage with the Trump Administration and members of Congress to promote PTA’s public policy agenda. Just as National PTA dedicated a webpage ([PTA.org/ESSA](https://pta.org/ESSA)) and resources to encourage all families to be active participants in the state and local implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), staff will also continue to provide resources and materials to empower PTA advocates across the country to work with their elected officials to ensure all children can reach their full potential.

As we move closer to celebrating our 120th year of advocacy, staff looks forward to building on this legacy of collaboration, respect and equality to further enhance the lives of our nation’s children. We are committed that with your powerful voice, we will work with the Trump Administration and 115th Congress to continue to make progress in our mission to make every child’s potential a reality.