

## **RECOGNITION OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, AND QUEER/QUESTIONING (LGBTQ) INDIVIDUALS AS A PROTECTED CLASS**

- Whereas, All children and youth should be able to attend school in a safe and inclusive environment free from discrimination, and that history has shown that civil rights laws are effective in contributing to such environments; and
- Whereas, Explicit federal statutory protections currently address discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, but not sexual orientation or gender identity; and
- Whereas, The lack of awareness and understanding of issues facing LGBTQ children and youth has contributed to a higher rate of isolation, depression, and suicidal ideations or attempts; and
- Whereas, Education regarding LGBTQ issues increases understanding and cultivates acceptance of and respect for LGBTQ children and youth; and
- Whereas, Harassment and bullying policies that specifically mention sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression are associated with: students feeling more safe; lower levels of bullying; decreased incidents of harassment related to sexual orientation; increased teacher/staff intervention; and a greater reporting of incidents; now therefore be it
- Resolved, That National PTA support current civil rights legislation[1], Department of Education guidance[2], and Department of Justice guidance[3] regarding guidance and protecting all children and youth, and ensuring their equal access to education; and be it further
- Resolved, That National PTA seek and support legislation that specifically recognizes LGBTQ as a protected group and addresses discrimination based upon sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression; and be it further
- Resolved, That National PTA encourage state, local units, and councils to review school policies in regard to bullying and support revisions and amendments to those policies that specifically address the topics of sexual orientation and gender identification/expression as they relate to harassment and bullying; and be it further
- Resolved, That National PTA and its constituent associations seek and support legislation that creates a safe, supportive and accepting environment in schools, specifically with training for educators and other school related professionals to support all

students, updated health education standards that deal with the issues of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression; and be it further

Resolved, That National PTA work with the Department of Education to encourage states to incorporate standards regarding age-appropriate, medically accurate and culturally sensitive information on LGBTQ issues into existing health and other appropriate curricula.

Adopted: by the 2016 Convention Delegates

[1] The Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Pub.L. 88–352, 78 Stat. 241, enacted July 2, 1964)

[2] Dear Colleague Letter: Harassment and Bullying, Oct. 2010; Dear Colleague Letter: Key Policy Letters from the Education Secretary and Deputy Secretary, June 2011; and Question and Answer update to 2011 Dear Colleague Letter, April 2014.

[3] U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division: Defending the Rights of LGBT Americans, June 2014.