

TEACHING ABOUT RELIGION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Whereas, The National Congress of Parents and Teachers declares in its Statement on Principles: "We believe religion is fundamental in our American tradition as a basic factor in personal and social behavior and that every child is entitled to the opportunity to develop a religious faith;" and
- Whereas, Thousands of homes provide neither religious experiences for the young for whom they are responsible nor opportunity for religious experience in church; and
- Whereas, The public schools share with the home the responsibility to provide each child the opportunity to achieve the finest possible preparation for living; and
- Whereas, The decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States permit the study of religion and of the Bible from a literary and historic viewpoint, presented objectively as part of a secular program of education; and
- Whereas, Misinterpretation of the Supreme Court decisions has caused confusion and even rebellion in many communities and school; and
- Whereas, Many educators have felt it advisable to minimize or omit religious content in the school curriculum because of general misunderstanding of the purpose of such study; therefore be it
- Resolved, That the National PTA, its state branches, and local units develop educational programs designed to promote understanding of the U.S. Supreme Court decisions regarding the reading of the Bible and the use of prayer in the public schools; and be it further
- Resolved, That the National PTA help its state branches and local units to implement such programs by supplying them information about investigated educational materials and legal programs on teaching ABOUT religion being used presently in many school systems; and be it further
- Resolved, That the National PTA, its state branches, and local units initiate conference and cooperation between religious and secular groups to produce intelligent action in order that every child may experience the highest advantages in character and spiritual education.
- Adopted: by the 1970 Convention Delegates
Reviewed: by the 1981, 1993 and 1998 Convention Resolutions Committee