

SEAT BELTS IN NEW SCHOOL BUSES

- Whereas, There were at least 62,000 school bus passenger injuries and 51 fatalities during the period 1991-1996, and
- Whereas, Research has concluded that high backed padded seats and seat belts together improve overall bus passenger safety by providing true compartmentalization in accidents, especially side impacts and rollovers, and
- Whereas, School buses manufactured after 1977 may be safely and effectively equipped with seat belts, as has been done in New York, New Jersey, and many school districts across the nation, and
- Whereas, A large Type I school bus (66 passengers) can be equipped with seat belts for an additional \$1,100 to \$1,600; and
- Whereas, The use of seat belts does not significantly increase evacuation time, and current seat belt buckle design coupled with education on evacuation helps ensure that no child of school age will be trapped in a bus by their seat belt; and
- Whereas, Seat belts in school buses are endorsed by the American Medical Association, Physicians for Automotive Safety, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the College of Preventive Medicine, the American Association of Oral and Maxillo Facial Surgery, the American Society for Adolescent Medicine, and the American College of Emergency Physicians, and
- Whereas, Availability and use of seat belts on school buses will reinforce the important safety habit of buckling up, and
- Whereas, Students who are properly belted in are less distracting to the school bus driver, and
- Whereas, Districts with strong seat belt use, education, and enforcement policies report significant compliance at all grade levels, and
- Whereas, A strong seat belt use policy will significantly reduce fatal actions such as putting one's head or arm out of a school bus window, or falling out of a school bus door, by school bus passengers, now, therefore be it
- Resolved, That the National PTA shall support legislation or regulation requiring any new bus purchased for the purpose of transporting school children to be equipped with seat belts, and further be it

Resolved, That National PTA shall encourage all school districts to implement strong seat belt use, education, and enforcement policies.

Adopted: by the 1998 Convention Delegates