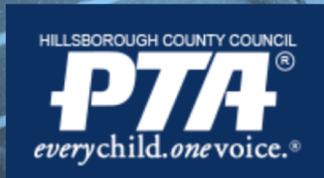


Advocacy 101



Veronica McDonald, Legislative Chair



**PTA is the Oldest & Largest
Volunteer Child Advocacy Organization
in the Country.**

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY COUNCIL

PTA[®]
everychild.one voice.[®]

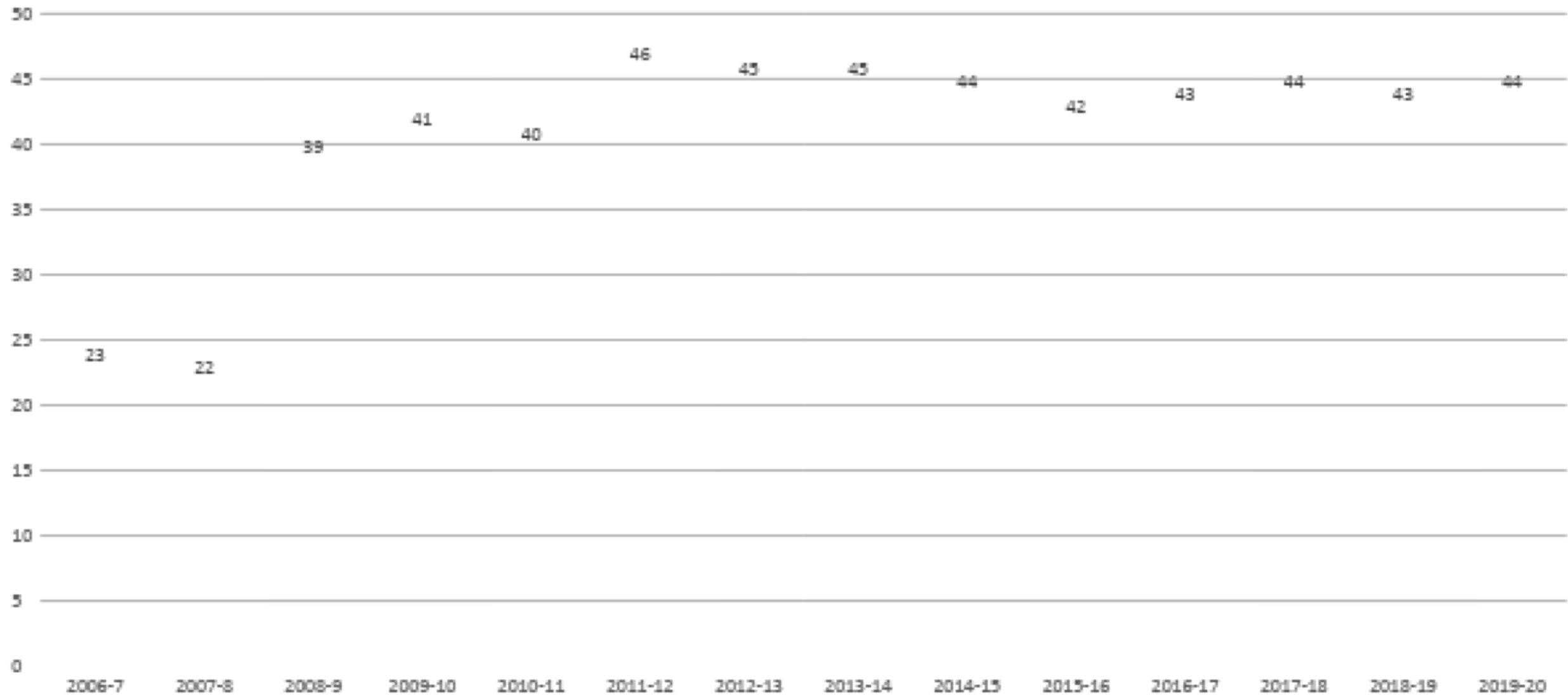
PTA is First About Inclusion

- How do we make our PTA inclusive?
- What can we do to ask all parents for input?
- How do we make PTA appealing and get people on board with our mission?

Including Parents and Obtaining Buy In:

- **Share all information**
- **Ask for opinions, select forum where people feel comfortable sharing opinions (social media is not the place to ask for opinions, don't ask people to state opinions publicly)**
- **Actively listen to remember, not to respond**
- **Find common ground if possible**
- **Encourage others to take responsibility to handle their challenges**

National Ranking - Florida Per Student Funding 2006 - 2020



Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) = Per Pupil Funding

- In Florida, all students receive the same amount of funding
- Students are counted on specific days in the school year and that student count determines the funding paid to that school.
- The covid pandemic has not changed how per student funding is allocated except for the fact that student counts were not done in 2020-21, funding payouts were based on 2019-20 numbers.
- There is no protection from the same issue this year.
- This year's FEFP is \$7,817 per FTE (full time equivalent student)
- The Florida legislature sets the amount of tax that a school district can levy to cover expenses – the per pupil funding amount – and a school district may not increase the millage beyond this amount. This limits and has decreased funding over the years.
- However, school districts may place referendums on the ballot for additional sales tax or millage tax revenue for schools.

Advocacy Success 2017 - 2020

Success in 2017

Wellbeing of Children: At least 20 minutes of daily unstructured free play in elementary school

Elimination of Algebra II EOC

Pencil & Paper Testing allowed for Grades 3-6

Removal of VAM Score/Teacher Evaluation tied to Test Scores

Advocacy Success 2017 - 2020

Success in 2018

2017-18 School Year: Hillsborough Superintendent begins to share state funding national rankings and impact on the district

Spring 2018: Bay area Superintendents ask Governor to veto Education budget with only 47 cent increase in funding

Hillsborough School Board & Superintendent Support Local

Sales Tax Referendum: Town Hall Meetings across the District

PTA Volunteers & Teacher Volunteers Support the Referendum

Fall 2018: Hillsborough ½ penny sales tax Referendum Passes

Advocacy Success 2017 - 2020

Success in 2019

Passage of No Texting while Driving

Increased access to Mental Health Services

Criminal justice reform (help prevent juveniles being charged with felonies & help prevent children being charged as adults)

Advocacy Success 2017 - 2020

Success in 2020

Changes to Baker Act adopted through Mental Health Bill

Some positive progress on other issues stall in session as pandemic begins

e.g. Florida Senate passed language to allow for a reduction in the number of active shooter drills, but died in the House

Advocacy Success 2017 - 2020

Success in 2021

FSA Testing Hold Harmless

Purple Star Bill to Support students of Military families

U.S. House of Representatives passes Amendment to Education funding bill that requires charter schools with for profit management companies to meet further oversight requirements

IMPORTANT!

PTA is a non-partisan organization

- As PTA we focus on issues that have been voted on by our membership at a national, state, county council or school level
- It can be quite challenging to not focus on individuals, especially with representatives that clearly do not support public education.

Legislative Priorities and Resolutions

- Hillsborough 2020-Legislative Priorities
- Florida 2021 Legislative Priorities

- **Resolutions Passed at Leadership Convention 2021**
 - Learning Loss
 - Eradicating the School to Prison Pipeline
 - Infant and Maternal Mortality and the Connection to Racism

We Need To Do Better

- Florida ranks as one of the lowest among states for their education spending – 44th.
- Florida is ranked as 49th for teacher pay

Advocacy – Gain Knowledge on Issues

- Attend County PTA Advocacy Trainings
- Attend PTA Leg Con during Legislative Session in Tallahassee
- Sign up for Florida PTA Action alerts
- Sign up for National PTA Action alerts

Advocacy – Bring Attention to Issues

- Hold Advocacy meetings at your school
- Develop relationships with your state legislators and/or their aides
- Invite PTA Members & teachers to meet with Legislators and/or attend Leg Con
- Use MemberHub or other communication tools to share important issues and action items with members
- Plan Candidate Q&As during election years – know if you are voting for pro-public education candidates, share voting records (e.g. Coffee with the Candidates)
- Follow or create FB groups for specific issues (e.g. Bright Futures)
- Use Sign-ups for calling legislators (e.g. Recess)

How do I stay up on what's happening?

- Join HCC PTA/PTSA Advocacy Group Facebook group
- Join Hillsborough County Council PTA/PTSA Facebook group
- HCC PTA/PTSA website
 - <http://hccptapta.org/>
- Join the Florida PTA Facebook group and Advocacy group
- Florida PTA website
 - <https://floridapta.org/>
- Florida PTA Voter Voice
 - <https://floridapta.org/voter-voice-legislative/>
- National PTA Take Action Network
 - <http://www.pta.org/advocacy/takesaction.cfm?navItemNumber=3451>

How to stay informed?

- Join the FB Group & Turn on Notifications for:
 - HCC PTA Advocacy Group
 - Hillsborough County Council PTA/PTSA
- Twitter @hccpta

Florida PTA Takes Action Alerts – FloridaPTA.ORG

The screenshot displays the Florida PTA website interface. At the top, the navigation menu includes 'ABOUT US', 'PTA LEADERS', 'PTA EN ESPAÑOL', 'PROGRAMS + EVENTS', 'FOCUS AREAS' (circled in red), and 'COVID-19'. The 'FOCUS AREAS' dropdown menu is open, listing various topics: 'ADVOCACY', 'CHILDHOOD ISSUES', 'DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION', 'EDUCATION', 'FAMILY ENGAGEMENT', 'FROM REPORT TO RESULTS', 'HEALTH AND WELLNESS', and 'REALTALK'. A secondary dropdown menu is also visible, listing 'ADVOCACY', 'TAKE ACTION SIGN UP (VOTERS VOICE)' (circled in red), 'LEGISLATION', and 'RESOLUTIONS'. The main content area features the 'VoterVoice' logo and the text 'VoterVoice – Legislative Alerts'. Below this, a sign-up prompt reads: 'Sign up for Florida PTA's Take Action Network to learn more about legislative issues affecting families,'. The Florida PTA logo is visible in the top left corner, and the Hillsborough County Council PTA logo is in the bottom left corner.

How Can I Help?

- Share the message with your members
 - Hillsborough PTA and Florida PTA Calls to Action
 - Distribute legislative information to your PTA/PTSA board and general membership.
 - Initiate action when needed such as letter writing and telephone calls
 - School Board Meetings and Updates
 - Attend Leg Con with HCC PTA

Email me:

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Legislative@hccptapta.org