

WISCONSIN PTA

RESOLUTIONS HANDBOOK

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

BACKGROUND MATERIAL: Material that documents each whereas and resolved clause of the resolution. This material indicates that the subject was well researched by the submitting group and gives the reader sufficient information to understand the intent of the resolution. It is suggested that the pages be numbered consecutively to assist the Resolutions Committee with identifying the background material.. The material may include PTA-related information such as statements or policies; copies of documented research, pertinent laws, surveys or statistics (if applicable); and copies of relevant articles from publication. Newspaper articles and editorials alone are not sufficient background material.

CONVENTION ACTION COVER SHEET: The form that must be completed and submitted by the submitting group with the resolution and accompanying materials to the Wisconsin PTA.

CRITERIA: Standards that must be met in order for resolutions to be accepted by the Convention Resolution Committee.

EMERGENCY RESOLUTION: A resolution for which the need has risen between the January 15th deadline and the time of the convention.

NATIONAL INTENT: The resolution concerns a matter that is national in scope and requires nationwide action.

RATIONALE: There are two (2) types of rationale; written, which must address each whereas/resolved and verbal; to be presented at the microphone on the convention floor highlighting important points of your written rationale.

RESOLUTION: A formal expression of the opinion or will of a group adopted by a vote.

A resolution is a main motion that because of its importance and length of complexity is submitted in writing. A resolution usually consists of two main parts; the whereas section and the resolve.

RESOLVE: This is the main motion. The resolved clauses constitute the request for action and express the opinion or will of the group.

STATEWIDE IN SCOPE: The resolutions concern is not limited to one unit or one school district but is a concern for all/many units in the state.

WHEREAS: The preamble part of the resolution consisting of a statement(s) providing information on the resolution, reasons for the resolution and why it should be adopted.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Glossary of Terms	Inside of Front Cover
What is a Resolution.....	1
What are the two parts of a Resolution?	1
Mini Example	1
Why submit a resolution to Wisconsin PTA?	1
Who can submit a resolution?	1
How do we write a resolution?	2
What do we need to know about background information?	3
What criteria must each resolution meet?	3
Submission Procedure	4
What happens after submission of a Resolution to Wisconsin PTA?	4
When will my PTA know if its Resolution has been accepted?	4
What happens when our PTA's Resolution is accepted?	4
What is an Emergency Resolution?	5
How do we get help?	5
Resolution Timeline	6
Sample Announcement	7
Sample Resolution	8
Convention Cover Action Sheet	9

What is a Resolution?

A resolution is an original main motion that, because of its complexity, importance or length, is submitted in writing. It addresses topics of concern to PTAs across the state. It is presented at the annual convention. A resolution consists of two main parts: a preamble and a request for action.

What are the two parts of a resolution?

A resolution usually consists of two main parts:

1. **Whereas:** The preamble (the “because”) part of the resolution contains the background information on the resolution, the reasons for the resolution, and why it should be adopted.
2. **Resolved:** The resolved portion of the resolution is the request for action. It is the action you want the Wisconsin PTA to take to assist in rectifying the problem, situation, or concern.

Mini Example

Whereas, "blank" is occurring in our schools; and
Whereas, "blank" is also occurring, and
Whereas, Wisconsin PTA (WCPT) is committed to "blank", now therefore be it
Resolved, that the WCPT do "blank", and be it further
Resolved, that the WCPT do "blank".

Why submit a resolution to Wisconsin PTA?

Frequently a local PTA or PTSA unit or council identifies a problem, a situation, or a concern which affects children and youth statewide, and which requires statewide action for solutions. To bring the issue to the attention of other PTAs and to affect a change, a resolution may be submitted to the Wisconsin PTA.

Who can submit a resolution?

A resolution may be submitted by a local PTA or PTSA unit or council in good standing, or by the Wisconsin PTA Board of Directors.

How do we write a resolution?

1. Begin with a problem, situation, concern, or issue that needs to be addressed.
2. Determine the level of the issue. Ask yourselves if this is an issue concerning an individual school, an entire school district, the entire state of Wisconsin, or the entire nation.
3. Determine what action needs to be taken. **If the issue concerns an individual school or an individual school district, the action taken needs to be local and does not warrant a resolution.** If the issue affects the entire state or entire nation, a resolution is warranted.
4. **Find out if Wisconsin PTA or National PTA already has a position on the issue.** Call the Resolutions Chairperson for information on existing resolutions and positions.
5. Begin the research to create the “whereas” and “resolved” parts of the resolution. **Search for three (3) current background sources to support each whereas.** Make copies of the background material and highlight the parts that support the “whereas” portions. Make sure background material has the date, the author, and the title written on it. Review the information in this handbook about background sources.
6. Write the “whereas” portion of the resolution. Usually, but not always, each whereas has a resolved. Keep these suggestions in mind. Avoid using exact numbers. Those numbers become outdated and your resolution loses its validity. Finding three (3) background sources for a specific set of statistics is very difficult. Try to use general terms instead of exact dates or statistics. Use the exact dates and statistics in your rationale when you present the resolution, if it is accepted, to the convention delegates.
7. Write the resolved portion of the resolution. Resolves should not use the word “seek” in respect to legislation because “seek” requires that Wisconsin PTA or National PTA draft legislation and find a sponsor. Instead use the words like “promote”, “educate”, “encourage”.
8. Decide on a title for the resolution.
9. Double check that the “whereas” portions, the resolved portions, and the title are unified and consistent.
10. Present the resolution to your local unit or council for approval.
11. Follow the submission procedure that is described in this handbook.
12. Present the resolution to the convention delegates if the resolution is accepted.

What do we need to know about background information?

The background information presented with your resolution should be sufficient to give a person with no previous knowledge of the subject enough information to make an intelligent decision.

Focus on primary sources of information rather than secondary sources of information. Consider this example. A journal article discussing a research study written by the person who conducted the research study is a primary source. An article commenting about another person's research study is a secondary source. The most effective background information is from primary sources.

Newspaper articles, abstracts and editorials are not sufficient background material. Look for background information written by recognized experts in their field. You can include related information such as educational, health, safety and welfare articles or updates, copies of documented research, copies of pertinent laws, and copies of articles from publications.

Evaluate the background information carefully. Search for material that is less than five (5) years old. Avoid using material from a lobbying organization. Make sure that the background reflects a statewide and/or nationwide scope. Your goal is to find objective, fact-based information.

What criteria must each resolution meet?

Each resolution submitted to the Wisconsin PTA is reviewed by the Resolutions Committee prior to acceptance for presentation at the annual convention. It must meet the following criteria.

- * Concern a field of interest of Wisconsin PTA and/or National PTA.
- * Be in harmony with the Objects and Basic Policies of National PTA, as stated in the National PTA Handbook. It is not necessary to cite PTA Objects or positions in any Whereas, because these are already known and available to PTA. If you wish to refer to Objects or positions, you can include them in your rationale.
- * Concern a matter that is statewide or nationwide in scope with potential national intent and requires state and/or national action.
- * State a position not previously adopted by the Wisconsin PTA (call the Resolutions Chairman for information on existing resolutions and positions).
- * Be accompanied by background material that substantiates the concern. (for example surveys, statistics, research studies, journal articles).
- * The background material must be summarized in a written rationale that allows a person with no prior knowledge of the issue to make an informed decision.

SUBMISSION PROCEDURE:

The procedure for submitting a resolution is as follows:

1. A completed Convention Cover Action Sheet.
2. Be typed, double spaced and titled. The submitting units name and city must be typed on the bottom of the Resolution.
3. Must be submitted with seven (7) copies of the proposed Resolution.
4. Contain the background information mentioned above and a written rationale.
5. Be received by the Wisconsin PTA office by January 15. Resolutions received after January 15 will be returned (unless it is an Emergency Resolution).

What happens after submission of a Resolution to Wisconsin PTA?

Each Resolution Committee member will receive a copy of the Resolution and background data to review. Each member formulates questions and decides upon possible editorial changes. Upon meeting as a committee, the committee may combine your PTA's resolution with another submitted to them which deals with the same or a similar topic. It may edit or adapt your resolution, if necessary, to make it more appropriate for convention action. If clarification or changes in substance are felt to be necessary, the Resolutions Committee will contact your PTA. Your consent is necessary before any changes can be made regarding the substance of your resolution.

When will my PTA know if its Resolution has been accepted?

Immediately after the Resolution Committee has met, it will send letters to the submitting PTAs to inform them of the decisions made regarding their resolution.

What happens when our PTA's Resolution is accepted?

When a PTA's resolution is accepted for presentation to the convention delegates, a copy of the final draft of the resolution will be printed in the Wisconsin Parent Teacher and it also will be included in the convention delegate packet.

It is expected that the submitting PTA will send a representative to the Wisconsin PTA Convention in order to give rationale. After the resolution is presented to the delegates, this person will be allowed to "speak to the resolution" (talk to the delegates about it at one of the floor microphones). If your PTA has written its rationale convincingly, it can be read or the PTA representative may speak from a specially prepared statement or notes or may speak without notes about the resolution. According to current convention rules, the maker of a motion shall not speak more than three (3) minutes to give rationale for the motion. Please consider this when preparing your rationale.

What is an Emergency Resolution?

Occasionally an issue or concern arises after the January 15th deadline. When this occurs, a unit can address the situation with an emergency resolution. It must follow the same criteria as a regular resolution but must be submitted to the Resolution Committee at the convention. The Emergency Resolution and a petition signed at the convention by 25 voting convention delegates from at least three (3) WCPT regions must be submitted to the WI PTA Resolutions committee at the convention. The time and place of submission will be printed in the Wisconsin Parent Teacher. It is your responsibility to furnish **200 copies** of the Emergency Resolution for distribution to the delegates.

How do we get help?

At any time during any stage of the resolutions process the Resolutions Chairman will assist you. For assistance, contact the Resolutions Committee.

Wisconsin PTA
Attn: Resolutions
(608)244-1455
info@wisconsinpta.org

RESOLUTION TIMELINE

AUGUST	President receives the <u>Resolutions Handbook</u> from Wisconsin PTA and makes copies for distribution to all board members.
AUGUST- SEPTEMBER	President or other board member reads sample announcement at a PTA meeting. This is the time to begin topic formulation and discussion. It is also the time to budget for sending a delegate or delegates to convention.
OCTOBER - NOVEMBER	Unit or council members formally identifies a concern of your PTA. Form a Resolutions Committee to research background material and write the resolution.
DECEMBER	Your Resolutions Committee presents the Resolution to your unit or council for adoption. The proper signatures must be on the Convention Action Cover Sheet.
PRIOR TO JANUARY 15	Submit the seven (7) copies to: Wisconsin PTA 4797 Hayes Road, Suite 102 Madison, WI 53704-3256 FAX: 608-244-4785
FEBRUARY	Units or councils will be notified of the status of their resolution. If accepted, finalize plans to send a delegate to convention to present the rationale.
JANUARY 15 to CONVENTION	Emergency Resolutions are prepared for presentation to the Resolutions Committee. The need for the resolution must have arisen between January 15 and the annual convention.

SAMPLE ANNOUNCEMENT

In order to best serve the needs of the children of our school and of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin PTA Board of Directors and the Resolutions Committee have asked that I inform you of the Resolutions process.

Resolutions are a formal way of responding to an issue. Through Resolutions you instruct **your** State Board what action to take on an issue, problem, situation or concern. It is your voice to the State PTA and to other PTAs in Wisconsin. If the issue is more than statewide in scope, it may be your voice to National PTA and the almost 8 million members.

Resolutions consist of two parts, "whereas" clauses and "resolved" clauses. For example "whereas" blank is happening to our children and "whereas" PTA supports and defends the blank, therefore be it resolved that Wisconsin PTA take blank action on this issue.

For more information on already existing Resolutions or how to prepare a Resolution contact the Wisconsin PTA Resolution Chairperson at (414) 442-7396 or pick up a copy of the Resolutions Handbook by Wisconsin PTA from me after the meeting.

Thank you,

Your name & PTA position and
The Wisconsin PTA Board of Directors

SAMPLE RESOLUTION

RESOLUTIONS HANDBOOK

- WHEREAS, Resolutions provide the Wisconsin Congress of Parents and Teachers (WCPT) with direction and serve as the framework for its Basic Policies and/or Legislative Program; and
- WHEREAS, Resolutions are the means by which local units and councils may communicate their concerns to the WCPT for consideration by the convention body; and
- WHEREAS, In order to prepare and present resolutions, local units and councils must understand the processes and procedures that are involved; and
- WHEREAS, Guidelines and procedures for resolution preparation and presentation should be in the possession of local units and councils at the beginning of the school year to allow adequate time for resolutions preparation; THEREFORE BE IT
- RESOLVED, That the WCPT Resolutions Committee shall develop a handbook explaining resolutions, their purposes, preparation and presentation; and BE IT FURTHER
- RESOLVED, That the WCPT distribute this Resolutions Handbook to the local units and councils at the beginning of the school year.

Submitted by:
Everactive PTA
Any City, Wisconsin