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Washington State PTA Receives 2024 Outstanding Advocacy Award

Tacoma, WA (February 8, 2024): The Washington State Parent Teacher Association (WSPTA) received the 2024 Outstanding State PTA Advocacy Award for their gun violence prevention work. This is awarded to one state PTA that through their dedication, leadership, and efforts positively affected legislative and/or regulatory policy aligned with National PTA’s current public policy platform, such as family engagement, school safety, welcoming/inclusive schools, and digital safety.

For multiple legislative sessions, Washington State PTA has focused their advocacy efforts on supporting legislation and policies that will help prevent and reduce gun violence and suicide, including: (1) addressing the disproportionate impact on BIPOC and LGBTQ+ youth; (2) funding community-based prevention and intervention programs; (3) promoting safe storage of medication and firearms; and (4) prohibiting the sale or transfer of military-style assault weapons.

As part of their efforts, Washington State PTA Advocacy and Resolutions Committee members have been meeting and discussing bills with legislators and offering improvements and feedback; preparing and delivering testimony; and using methods and communication vehicles including events, action alerts, their website, newsletters, blog posts, and social media to impact change.

Thanks to their efforts, legislation was passed and signed into law during the 2023 legislative session to prohibit assault weapons (with a few exceptions), promote safe storage of firearms and medication, provide funding for community prevention programs and more. So much progress was made during the 2023 legislative session that Washington State PTA has added new goals for the 2024 legislative session, including expanding existing law to prohibit firearms where families and youth congregate in public places and restoring local government authority to enhance state firearm regulations to protect children and youth.

About Washington State PTA: Washington State PTA is the state’s oldest and largest child advocacy organization, founded in 1905 by Abby Williams Hill of Tacoma, an artist who saw the need for an organization to support Washington’s children. Thanks to her leadership and vision—and current members who continue to carry her vision forward—Washington State PTA has been a leading voice for children in Washington for more than 110 years. To learn more about Washington State PTA, please visit www.wastatepta.org.

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