



2015 WASB LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY CONFERENCE



Reasons to Support Public Education

A number of years ago, the California PTA developed a Top Ten list of reasons to support public education. In the face of growing momentum for privatization of education through private school vouchers and attempts by some to demonize public schools by calling them “government schools,” we thought this this would be a good time to share the Top Ten list with you. Please decide which of these Top Ten Reasons apply strictly to public education and which apply more broadly. How do you think you could use items on the Top Ten List in your own district? If you have additional thoughts or reasons to support public education to add to the list, we’d love to hear them.

1. An educated populace is the cornerstone of democracy. In a democratic society, the well-being of the nation depends on the decisions of an educated, informed populace.
2. Education reduces costs to taxpayers. Every dollar spent to keep a child in school reduces the future costs of welfare, prison, and intervention services that correlate so highly with school dropouts. It costs far less to educate a child now than to support a teen parent or a repeat offender in the future.
3. Public schools are the only schools that legally must meet the needs of all students.
4. Public schools foster interaction and understanding among people of different ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds. They are a true melting pot.
5. The future support of our aging population depends on strong public schools.
6. More than 95% of our future jobs will require at least a high school education. An educated workforce will be essential.
7. The nation pays a high price for poorly educated workers. The cost of retraining and remediation to prepare a worker for his or her tasks is paid by both employers and consumers. The process raises the price of American products and makes it more difficult for our nation to compete in the world marketplace.
8. The cost of school dropouts affects us all. Our nation loses more than \$240 billion per year in earnings and taxes that dropouts would have generated over their lifetimes. Well-supported public schools can engage all students in learning and graduate productive and competent tax-paying citizens.
9. Children are our nation’s future. Their development affects all of us. Good education is not cheap, but ignorance costs far more.
10. Public education is a worthy investment of public funds. We can invest now, or we can pay later. This is the simple fact of the matter.