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| **Illinois Legislation Monitor 1/11/10** |
| Dear PTA Advocate, The new year begins and the state legislature resumes on Tuesday, January 12.  On January 1st, a number of new laws became effective.  Of special interest to the Illinois PTA are those which relate to the use of electronic communication devices while driving.   The Illinois PTA will closely follow the activities taking place in Springfield.  Numerous bills are languishing in Assignments, Committee or Rules. Since our last edition, the Illinois PTA has written to Governor Quinn regarding HB806 expressing our concerns over portions of the bill that would allow students who have attended non-public preschool and kindergarten to enter first grade if they attain age six on or before December 31st, while students attending public kindergarten must attain age six on or before September 1st.  We will continue to monitor bills that impact children and families, paying particular attention to education, health and safety, and juvenile justice issues.  Of particular interest are: **SB 2494** creates the Illinois School Choice Program--a voucher program to be administered by the Illinois State Board of Education.  The Illinois PTA will continue to oppose this bill as it directly conflicts with our position regarding "public money for public schools." **SB 2495** amends the Charter Schools Law of the School Code by deleting the specific number of charter schools that may be operated in Illinois.  While we have no position how many on charter schools should be established, we will continue monitoring this bill. **SB 2496** amends the School Code providing a school district must allow non-resident pupils of the school district to attend the schools of the district without tuition as long as they are state residents but not requiring the district to provide transportation.  Currently, a school board has the power to charge non-resident pupils tuition. At this time, we have an Information position on this bill. **HB4583** offers amendments to the criminal code regarding the dissemination of sexual materials electronically by a minor, addressing both images of self or others.  Presently we have an Information position on this bill, and will talk to the sponsor about its provisions. **HB4711** amends the School Code providing that no school district is obligated to comply with any statutory or regulatory mandate or requirement unless an corresponding appropriation is enacted for the school year during which the mandate is required, excluding special education, transportation, lunch programs or courses required for high school graduation.  Presently, we have an Information position on this bill. Primary elections will be held on Tuesday, February 2, 2010.  Please remember that PTAs are designated by the Internal Revenue Service as 501 c 3 entities and therefore are prohibited from supporting or opposing candidates for any public office.  What exactly does that mean for your PTA?  You can:  host a candidates forum (see the Illinois PTA Answer Book for step-by-step instructions), you can encourage members to know the issues, you can encourage members to vote.  You cannot endorse a candidate, oppose a candidate, or provide an opportunity for only one candidate to speak to you unless all other candidates have been invited to a forum. Questions?  Check with a representative of the Illinois PTA for further information.                Should you have questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me. Barb Quinn, Legislation ChairIllinois PTAbquinnpta@aol.com(847) 985-9078  Illinois PTAP O Box 907Springfield, IL  62705 800/877-9617 (in Illinois)217/528-9617 |

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| **Legislative Update from State Rep. Darlene Senger** |
| Dear Friends,As we look forward to the new year, I wanted to briefly update you on some steps I am taking to address several ongoing problems that our community faces.**Push for Passage of "Sexing" Legislation**This past year, I introduced legislation to protect teenagers from a harmful trend in which they exchange inappropriate material of themselves via text messaging.   The practice, which has been dubbed "sexting," has become commonplace; and to many teens the dangers do not become apparent until it is too late.  Because of this I felt it was necessary to create legislation that would update the law to make it appropriate and applicable towards this unfortunate teen trend.   In addition to merely defining this crime into law, the legislation seeks to protect that those under the age of 17, by giving a juvenile court the discretion to spare them the lifelong pain of having to register as a sex offender.  This legislation was drafted with youth in mind, where current law has been strictly interpreted to prosecute juveniles who engage in "sexting" as manufacturers of their own child pornography, which brings with it mandatory sex offender registration if convicted.    Despite the need for this important measure, the legislation became entangled in the legislative process last year and has yet to be called for a committee hearing; however, as we begin a new year I will work to see that this necessary change in state law comes to fruition.   As it progress, I will keep you up to date on this and other legislative proposals that we will face in the upcoming new year.         **Cell Phone Use Safety for Parents and Teens Event**Rich Wistocki of the Naperville Police Department Computer Crimes Unit in conjunction with my office will be hosting a cell phone use safety for parents and teens seminar to better inform parents of the plusses and pitfalls of cell phone use and technology in the life of today's teens.   All parents are welcome to attend to hear about the powerful impact technology is having on their children, and learn about how to recognize and counteract forms of cyber bullying, sexting and a myrad of other pitfalls that has manifested in recent years. The event will be held on January 20th, from 6:30 to 8:00pm at the Still Middle School in Naperville. In closing, I would like to wish everyone a happy holidays and as always please do not hesitate to contact my office at (630) 219-3090 if I can be of further assistance to you.  It is a pleasure to serve you in Springfield. Sincerely,Darlene Senger State Representative - 96th District  |

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| **Illinois Legislation Monitor 10/12/09** |
| Dear PTA Advocate,Since many of our members have shared growing concerns about things like increasing class size, shrinking arts programs, and growing budget deficits, the Illinois PTA is providing you with some tips on "How YOU can use our Statement to the State Board of Education to make a difference for your child and your school."   Here are some things that YOU can do:* Read the statement, focusing your attention on the questions for Local Units;{the complete statement can be found on the Illinois PTA website, [www.illinoispta.org](http://www.illinoispta.org/)}
* Make an appointment to speak to someone in your school district about those questions;
* Choose a question that you feel comfortable with;
* Share the answer to the question you choose with your membership--it is vital that your members know HOW these issues impact your children;
* Share the answer to the question you choose with your state representative--it is imperative that legislators know that the funding issue has a direct impact on your child, your child's school and school district.
* Call me if you need assistance in making sense of the Illinois PTA Statement to the State Board of Education.

 Here's an example:  Goal 3 of the State Board of Education addresses safe school environments.  At our annual convention last March, the delegates adopted a Resolution on Social Emotional Learning that would increase awareness of the role social and emotional learning plays in our schools. The Illinois PTA supports funding for programs that support the social and emotional learning of students, such as the Children's Mental Health Partnership.  Ask your school district what the cost of implementing the social and emotional learning standards, adopted by the SBE, is for FY2010 and what the state is providing.  Then, ask the SBE to fully fund those programs for F/Y 2011 either by testifying at a budget hearing (see hearing schedule at:  [www.isbe.net](http://www.isbe.net/)) or by writing to the State Board of Education, 100 N. First Street, Springfield, IL 62777.Fiscal Year 2011 promises to bring more financial challenges to school districts across Illinois.  The Illinois PTA continues  to support legislative action that is designed to provide long-term, sustainable funding which fosters equity, respects local control, encourages improved teaching and learning, provides property tax relief, and addresses both the structural deficit and under-funded pension issues.   We believe HB174 as amended by the Senate will move Illinois in that direction.Highlights of HB174 as amended by the Senate:Increase both the individual and corporate tax rate to 5%;Increase the individual standard exemption from $2,000 to $3,000;Increase the property tax exemption for homeowners from 5% to 10%;Increase the Earned Income Tax Credit  for low income working families; andExpand the sales tax base to include 39 consumer services. Make a difference for your child, make a difference for every child using the "Cliff Notes" of the Illinois PTA statement to create an essential conversation with your members and your school district.Barb Quinn, Legislation ChairIllinois PTAbquinnpta@aol.com(847) 985-9078 |

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| **Illinois State Board of Education Budget Hearings** |
| * [Statement to Illinois State Board of Education Regarding Fiscal Year 2011 Budget](http://www.illinoispta.org/Legislation/SBE.2011%20Budget.Illinois%20PTA.pdf)
* [Schedule of Hearings for the 2011 State Board of Education Budget](http://www.illinoispta.org/Legislation/budget_hearings11.pdf)
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