



LEGISLATIVE BRIEFS...

November 2010

School Suspensions Could be Tempered by Court Ruling

In an effort to enhance student safety and the application of school disciplinary codes, strict “zero tolerance” policies have been implemented in many schools. A North Carolina Supreme Court ruling determined that schools must provide strong reasons for denying alternative schooling or tutoring to suspended students.

The case provides an important precedent for other states where school officials have had wide latitude to impose discipline. Now, “school administrators must articulate an important or significant reason for denying students access to alternative education,” the court decision states.

However, the court did not endorse a proposal to establish a constitutional right of alternate schooling for suspended students.

For further information go to:

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/09/us/09suspend.html?_r=1&th&emc=th

Congress Delays Vote on Child Nutrition Bill

The U.S. House of Representatives delayed a vote on the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Bill. This legislation, which was passed unanimously by the Senate, would update and improve several of our nation’s food programs for children, including school lunches and breakfasts.

Known as the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, the bill aims to improve the nutrition quality of foods served in schools and provides support for school food service workers to meet the needs of children.

At a time when both child hunger and childhood obesity are at alarming levels, the proposed \$4.5 billion increase in child nutrition funding over the next 10 years would help to improve current programs. The bill would update nutrition standards for foods served in schools, increase access to local produce and

school gardens, and engage parents in matters that affect the health and well-being of students.

PTA has long supported nutritious school food programs that help to enable students to reach their physical and academic potential. PTA is “resolved to make the 2010 Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization an opportunity to comprehensively address the conditions contributing to childhood obesity, hunger, and other child health issues, rather than taking a piecemeal approach.”

For further information, go to:

<http://www.pta.org/PPA10.pdf>
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/09/30/AR2010093003989.html>

Federal Government Strives to Increase Prevention and Care of Concussions

New York Congressman Tim Bishop introduced the “Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act” (HR 6172) which will require school districts to develop and implement a plan for concussion safety and management. The legislation will provide students who suffer concussions and do not show signs of improvement access to special education services.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention developed a poster about concussions for students, parents and educators. It can be found at: www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/Concussion_A-Must_Read_for_Young_Athletes-a.pdf. Publications about concussions and other topics can be ordered on-line at www.cdc.gov.

For further information go to:

www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h111-6172.