



## A Century of Advocacy for Children, Families and Public Education

1906 – Georgia Congress of Mothers officially chartered.

1907 – Became Congress of Mothers and Parent-Teacher Associations (GPTA).

1912 – Carried out summer **Milk Campaigns** in Atlanta to provide fresh milk to poor, sick babies.

1913 – Began working for **Free Kindergarten Bill, Birth Registration Bill** and establishment of a **school for “defective” children** in Georgia with the argument: “Shall we leave the state of Georgia money and citizens, or shall we be forced year after year to appropriate large sums for the maintenance of asylums and reformatories?” – GPTA President Mrs. James R. Little to state convention

1914 – Supported **Child Labor Law, health inspection** of public schools.

1915 – Established the Baby Saving Campaign, a **parent education** program, and a Home Economics Committee to visit **rural schools**. First appointment of Legislative Chairman; actively promoted **Mother’s Pension Law; Compulsory Education**

1919 – **Georgia Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers (GCCPT)** established.

1923 – GPTA established a **Child Health Center** in Athens with American Child Health Association, focused on **erasing rural illiteracy**.

1924 – GPTA endorsed state-funded **training schools** for girls and boys. Advocated for creating a department of **physical education** in the State Department of Education. Endorsed the **Child Welfare Code** to improve state laws affecting delinquent, dependent, defective and neglected children. Insisted on the **rights of the rural child** to receive as adequate educational provision as the city child receives. Established a permanent PTA committee to create **parenthood education** program that could be delivered to the parents in the home.

1925 – Georgia PTA recognized by the National PTA as the first in the nation to take up **fire prevention in schools**. Local units’ projects included “Summer Roundup” **health screening** and care; funding school nurse; dental screening and care; establishing **school lunch** programs and providing free lunches; clothes distribution; textbook purchases.

1926 – GPTA endorsed **narcotic education** to combat drug menace; urged enforcement of “**Fire or Stampede Hazard in Public Schools**”; urged the **lifting bans against Jewish** boys entering college; recommended **school bus drivers** be of mature age and reliable nature and required to come to a full stop at crossings; recommended the study of **music**.

Recommended the Legislative Chairman work for the adoption by all women’s organizations of a **uniform plan for presenting legislation** by engaging someone to be at the Capitol to give out information as to progress of the bills in order that pressure may be brought to bear from local communities and thus “discourage lobbying at the Capitol.”

1926-32 – GCCPT advocated for better **transportation for African-American children**, many of whom had no way to get to school other than walk. GCCPT advocated for increased **salaries for African-American teachers**.

1927– GPTA and the State Medical Association administered free **diphtheria vaccines** to preschool children. Better Films committee members rate movies for appropriate material.

“Today, when the public is so concerned about what comes out of the public school, it behooves parent-teacher associations to concern themselves with what goes into the school. Child training is the biggest business in the world, and parents cannot expect teachers who have the children for only five hours of the twenty-four, five days a week, to do all the bringing up... Health is the duty of the parents, but parents cannot teach what they do not know; and parents today are paying a high price for their ignorance or indifference. Sixty-Eight percent of first graders, who are “repeaters”, are so because of physical defects, which might have been remedied in the preschool age—if they had been found. When parents wait until children are six years of age to check on their physical condition they are putting a burden upon the school which does not rightfully belong there. Such children are being denied of their fundamental right—the right to health.” – GPTA President Floy Oliver Jeter to state convention

1928 – GPTA cooperated with Dixie Highway Auxiliary to **beautify highways** by planting trees in honor of beloved teachers. Embarked on a concerted drive for **prompt enrollment and regular attendance** at school. Continued to demand **nine months of school**; worked to increase **state funding for public health**.

**1929** –GPTA encouraged all PTAs to offer **voter registration** at their meetings throughout the year; supported enabling counties to use money for **public libraries**; urged **medical examinations** for all children, especially for those entering competitive athletics, as part of school-sponsored physical activity.

**1930** – GPTA worked to establish the **Safety Patrol** program.

**1932** – GPTA **opposed reducing salaries** of trained teachers to the level of unskilled labor and under funding school facilities to deny adequate educational opportunity. Established a **Juvenile Protection Committee** to develop and promote codes to protect both citizens and child.

**1934** – GPTA recommended a **tax on toy firearms**, endorsed federal Child Labor Law, supported compulsory examination for **tuberculosis** and stressed prevention and early treatment.

**1935** – GPTA **opposed 15 Mil Tax Limitation Bill** for usurping local control of schools. The state's income would be reduced by \$13 to \$16 million, half of which would have been allocated for education, without a plan to replace the lost revenues. Non-residents, who would be tax-exempt under the amendment, owned approximately half of the property in Georgia at the time. "The man who needs it least is the man who will profit by the bill if it is allowed to pass. And once it is put on the statute books it will be almost impossible to remove because of the powerful lobbyists that are backing it." – Georgia Association of Educators Secretary Kyle T. Alfriend in an address to the 1935 GPTA convention.

**1937** – GPTA worked to **raise the compulsory school age** to 16; assist in the fight against **venereal diseases**; protect children from the sale of salacious literature; build **closer relations between rural and urban citizens**.

Paul Munro, Columbus Superintendent of Schools, asserted that "**our society will never achieve culturally or educationally if the Negroes are left out of the equation.**"

Hattie Reese, President of the Georgia Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers, a daily visitor in the balcony throughout the GPTA convention, expressed appreciation for the privilege of attending the convention.

**1942-46** – GCCPT conducted **Summer [healthcare] Roundup of African-American** children.

**1946-52** – GCCPT called for **adequate facilities** for recreation, playgrounds, gymnasiums, community centers, public libraries, desirable movie theaters and effective schools for African-American children and families. GCCPT stressed importance of **voter registration** at every meeting. GCCPT insisted that rural students should be exposed to good books, magazines, music, art, and recreational facilities. The **rural youth** faced health hazards because in many counties there were inadequate facilities for the African-American population.

Both GPTA and GCCPT urged the passage of the **Minimum Foundation Program for Education (MFPE)**. Both GPTA and

GCCPT demanded that all schools have proper ventilation, be well lighted, and include basic adequate facilities. The Georgia Legislature did pass the MFPE and began facing the issue of equitable resources for education.

**1950** – Atlanta Author, Miss Lillian Smith gave the shortest speech of the Mid-Century White House Conference: "**We speak of dropping the atomic bomb. Why not substitute by dropping segregation.**"

**1957** – When the Georgia Legislature closed schools rather than comply with the US Supreme Court's decision declaring "separate but equal" school systems unconstitutional, both GCCPT and GPTA **lobbied the governor and legislature to keep Georgia's public schools open**.

**1963** – GCCPT instituted a **PTA adult education program**.

**1970** – GPTA and GCCPT merged.

**1973** – Successfully advocated for **state funded kindergarten**.

**1992** – Advocated for **election of local Boards of Education**, ensuring Georgia **Lottery proceeds would fund public education** from age 4 through college.

**1996** – Worked to enable local Boards of Education to raise capital outlay funds through **Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax**.

**2000** – Supported a majority of the **tobacco settlement money be used for health programs** and be focused on Georgia's youth; supported **paid nurses for public schools**.

**2001** – Supported action to **stop illegal sales of alcohol** to underage youth; **graduated driver licensing**.

**2002** – Lobbied to maintain the **K-3 classroom size reduction**.

**2003** – Negotiated a compromise to keep K-3 out of the classroom reduction freeze; advocated to restore **staff development** money to support student achievement.

**2004** – Actively supported **seat belts for children up to age 6**.

**2005** – Supported the **Smokefree Georgia Act**. Asthma is the cause of the greatest number of school absences.