

# PTA Legislation & Advocacy for the Upcoming State Legislature Session

By Abby Shiffman, East Cobb County PTA Legislative Chair  
and Georgia PTA Legislative Committee Member

The 2012 Georgia's Legislative Session begins January 9 under the "Gold Dome." For some in East Cobb you will have a new Representative who will be sworn in. John Carson will represent House District 43, replacing the deceased Bobby Franklin. If you are unsure who your Legislators are, you can go to [www.georgiapta.org](http://www.georgiapta.org), click on Capitol Watch in the left column, go to Officials in the top section, click on District Lookup. Put in your address and it will come back with all of your Legislators at both the Federal and State Levels.

Each year Georgia PTA surveys its membership to come up with what our Legislative Priorities will be for the coming year. Here is what our membership considers top issues for our Georgia state legislators:

## Legislative Priorities 2011-12

### Support Student Achievement:

- Support multiple criteria be used to determine promotion and retention and not rely on the results of a single test.
- Support efforts to increase the graduation rate in Georgia.
- Support efforts to increase the age a student can drop out of school.
- Support a full-time school nurse in every school and other health initiatives because healthy children learn better.

### Support Family Engagement:

- Support multiple opportunities for parent/caregiver involvement in decisions regarding school policies and curriculum.

### Support Adequate Funding for Education:

- Support public K-12 schools with adequate state funding, reflective of the actual costs of providing the state-defined services.
- Support equitable distribution of state funding to K-12 schools.
- Support public funding for K-12 education in public schools exclusively .
- Oppose any efforts to use public funds for private schools.

### Support Local Control/Local Decision Making:

- Support local property tax and education SPLOST sources of tax revenue be under the control of the local Board of Education.
- Support the right of local Boards of Education to manage and control local public schools.

### Support Health and Safety:

- Support efforts to reduce bullying.
- Support efforts to reduce to childhood obesity.

## Be an advocate for every child!

Two very important dates upcoming for you to consider participating in are:

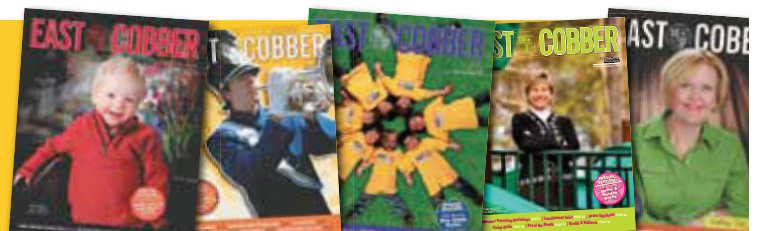
PTSA Day at the Capitol, also known as Youth Advocacy Day, Thursday, February 9, 10am-noon, and is geared toward middle and high school students. This day is specifically designed for students to gain a better understanding of legislative issues affecting schools and how state and local decisions affect their daily lives as young adults. It will be a limited number of participants so register early. Registration opens soon at [www.georgiapta.org](http://www.georgiapta.org) and is only \$5 per student, no charge for chaperones.

PTA Day at the Capitol, Tuesday, February 28, provides PTA members, leaders and supporters an opportunity to become more familiar with the legislative process and to actively speak with legislators about education and children's issues. Develop and put your advocacy skills to work under the Gold Dome and over lunch with your state legislators. Bring a van full of PTA members—all wearing red—and let your voice for children be seen and heard. Register today by contacting your local PTA/PTSA or go to [www.georgiapta.org](http://www.georgiapta.org) . If you have any questions, please contact Abby at [legislation@ecccpta.org](mailto:legislation@ecccpta.org). ☺



Abby has lived in Cobb County for 21 years. She is married to Ken and is the mother of Rachel who attends Pebblebrook High School and Aaron who attends East Cobb Middle School. She was ECCC co-president for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years.

# THANKS, ADVERTISERS!



You make the EAST COBBER available FREE to 40,000 affluent, well educated East Cobb residents every month!