As I look ahead to the New Year, I promise myself to be a better wife and mother, be more organized, work out more often, eat better, clean out my closets, take more pictures, and not to over-commit myself! I begin to fill out my new calendar, set my due dates, appointments, meetings and commitments, add in everyone else’s schedules, and before I know it, my next few months are laid out for me in color-coded perfection. If only it would stay that way!

Whatever your role in PTA, you may find yourself going through the same process of reflection and goal setting. I hope that you do. It is important to look back at what was successful, remember the children you spoke up for, and recognize how PTA improved the health, safety and education of the children in your community. We improve ourselves by setting goals for what is to come next, and use what we have learned to our benefit.

My suggestion to you, as you look ahead to the next six months of PTA, is to plan with purpose. Do not just do what has always been done. ASK what is needed! Make an effort to communicate with children, parents, teachers and administration to truly ask what they need. Children may tell you they need a safer walking route to school or a better system to deal with bullying. Parents may tell you they need a better understanding of the latest social media apps their kids are using. Teachers may tell you they need ideas on how to build a relationship with parents that are not involved. Administration may tell you they need help with family engagement programs. Whatever it is, as PTA leaders, we need to ask, listen and then work at how to implement those needs and ideas.

As needs change within our school communities, PTA has always worked to recognize and meet those needs to the benefit of our children. Grow your membership and engage your members with purpose. Communicate with your members what PTA has accomplished and what your next steps are. Show your school and community that PTA is a strong and relevant voice for children. What will your PTA goals be for 2015?

Send us pictures and stories! We want to hear from you. Send your information to andreab@mopta.org.
January Update

Advocacy is what PTA was founded on 117 years ago and is just as important today as it was for our founding members. January 7, 2015 began our state legislative year and the number of bills that have been filed is long and range from topics of early childhood education, to school funding, to health and safety.

As parents we need to make sure we are understand what is being negotiated and discussed in our legislatures; and we need to contact our legislators and let them know where we stand as their constituents. This is ADVOCACY!! And we can all do it!

The link to the bill watch list can be found at http://mopta.org/advocacy/capitol-chatter/bill-watch-list-2015-legislative-session-as-of-january-1st/

15 minutes for 2015

By Rebecca Cahill, MoPTA Vice President of Membership

Goals, goals and more goals; if only the follow through was as easy as writing them down! While this may not work with every goal you have, I have a solution that will work for many of them.

1. **Write out your goal.** Make it a real goal by giving it importance and write it down! Place your written goal(s) in a place you will see every day so that you are reminded of your intentions.

2. **Spend 15 minutes a day on your goal.** Set a timer.

3. **Your goal is to be more organized.** Spend 15 minutes a day doing something that helps you to be more organized. One day it may be cleaning out the fridge. Another day it may be throwing out junk mail. Two days may be needed to work on a section of your closet.

4. **Your goal is to spend more time with your kids** or do a better job connecting with them. Spend 15 minutes a day without the TV on, without distractions and sit down with them. LISTEN to them and let them do the sharing. Be the person they can come to with anything.

5. **Your goal is to begin working out.** Set a timer for 15 minutes and get busy! Many people jump into work out programs that are just too hard, too long or not even fun. Sore and unmotivated, we give up and won’t start again for another 365 days. Easing into a workout routine is the way to go. Before you know it, your walk is a routine, a habit that you (and your dog) will miss when skipped. Don’t have a dog? Find a friend!

The point is, in order for a goal to become a reality, there has to be commitment. Make that commitment by starting small and building on it. Once your goal has become a habit, it will be easier to devote more time to it if needed.

**Legislative Report**

**January Update**

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Did you have an amazing membership drive? Units in good standing for the 2014-2015 school year are encouraged to apply for the Outstanding Membership Campaign Award before April 1, 2015. Find the application online at http://mopta.org/forms-awards-applications/ and scroll down to Membership Awards
Raytown PTA Council’s S.T.E.M. in the Gym: a fun night of Science and Discovery

By Kenya M. Pieters, Raytown PTA Council, VP

Two years ago the Raytown PTA Council set out to coordinate an event that would elevate awareness of and develop interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. The event also had to have a fun factor. The vision was an event filled with hands on activities in which kids could solve problems, test ideas and just have fun discovering.

Last November this vision became reality. It was such a huge success that this year the Raytown PTA Council hosted the 2nd annual STEM In The Gym for all Raytown elementary school children and their families.

The Council wanted the event to be as much about community as it was about Science. Early in the planning stages, the Council sought buy in from district administration which was key to selling the event to the teachers and staff. With the support of the district, many teachers volunteered to be a part of the event. High School students volunteered to lead science experiments and were able to receive volunteer hours for their service. The Raytown business community was involved as well.

The gym was packed with presenters from various backgrounds: Astronomy, Robotics, 3D printing/ manufacturing, nature and wildlife, bridge engineering….the list goes on. Teachers and student groups engaged children in hands on activities that were as fun and exciting as they were educational. It was a blast!

Once again, our community science party known as STEM In The Gym was a hit with Raytown families. In the end, the key to our success with this event was meticulous planning, a solid partnership with our district’s administration and advertising!
Our Favorite Pins This Month

CONTACT | A Missouri Parent Teacher Association publication

SEE THE LIGHT IN OTHERS, AND TREAT THEM AS IF THAT IS ALL YOU SEE.

Dr. Wayne Dyer

BENEFITS of YOGA

Enhanced feeling of WELL-BEING

Improved posture, flexibility & strength

Reduction of ANXIETY & DEPRESSION

Better quality SLEEP

Improved CONCENTRATION

Improved efficiency of LUNGS & CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM

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