

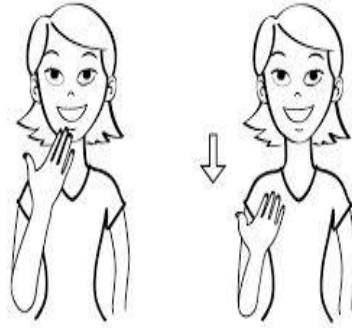
Missouri Parent Teacher Association

CONTACT

Volume 95 Issue 4
March 2014

CHECK OUT OUR NEW CONTEST ON PAGE 1





No matter how you say it, MO PTA would like to say 'THANK YOU' to the following PTA Units and Councils for their generous donations

<u>Founders Gift</u>	<u>Building Fund</u>	<u>Scholarship Fund</u>
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President Message by Kim Weber MO State PTA President

Cover photo:

Our new Board of Managers getting to know one another a little better during the November 2013 Meeting.



Contest Rules:

1. Find hidden icon: 4-leaf clover
2. Send the article name & page #, along with your name to contact@mopta.org.
3. The winner will be randomly selected from all correct entries. Winner will receive a small gift from MOPTA along with recognition in the next CONTACT.
4. Entry deadline: March 8, 2014

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CONTACT Staff

President/Publisher: Kim Weber
Editor: Lisa Holmes

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Missouri PTA Office, Editorial and Publication
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PHONE: 800-328-7330 FAX: 573-445-4163
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NOTE: Advertisements appearing in this publication do not constitute PTA's endorsement of the product or service.

PLEASE SHARE THIS MAGAZINE.

Information from this magazine may be excerpted for other PTA publications as long as credit is given to Missouri PTA and any byline that may appear with the item must be included.

National PTA Office: 1250 N. Pitt Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: 800-307-4782 (4PTA)
www.pta.org



"To the world you may be one person, to one person, you may be the world." Unknown Author

Wow, we have made it to March and the promise of spring is just around the corner!! Congratulations, I feel like this year that is a true accomplishment after the

winter we all experienced. Spring is such an exciting time of the year, full of promise and a fresh perspective. I hope each of you and your PTA have taken stock of what you have accomplished in your membership year and planning for a strong finish to the end now that we are in March. It is also the craziest and busiest time of the school year for so many as we do that push till the end of school year. Remember to take deep breaths and think how if you are stressed and on overload, what it might be doing to our kids. Take each day one at a time; take time for yourself and your children.

Missouri PTA has listened to your concerns in regards to the cancelled meetings due to bad weather and how behind some of you may be in regards to nominating committees and elections. Therefore, the Missouri PTA Board of Managers have voted **to extend the deadline to report new officer names to our state office until April 30, 2014 and our Awards Deadline to May 1, 2014.**

If you are still on track and have had your elections, please go ahead and send in those names, don't wait until the last minute and become a "Unit and or Council Not in Good Standing", just because the deadline was extended. The sooner you can cross that off of the to do list, the sooner you can enjoy the spring sunshine and warmth of knowing you took care of business and did all that was required.

I want to talk about our cover of this issue. These are pictures of some of the outstanding members of the Missouri PTA Board of Managers that I have the honor of calling my PTA family... Since this is the first year of a new term of a board of managers we had a long two day meeting back in November full of training, more training, planning and goal setting, all of which required lots of sitting in one place for long periods of time discussing Missouri PTA and how we can be a better resource and support to our membership. On Saturday night, after a long ten hours and some early morning wake up calls, we left our pens and papers on the table, left our state office and traveled "outside" to a restaurant for a nice dinner and event. Most of the time during our meetings, we "stay in" and eat while still meeting. That night was special because after dinner I hosted a Missouri PTA Board of Managers Game

Night and wow, what competitive people serve on this board. We played a variety of games and reminded ourselves that at the end of the day, volunteering for PTA is supposed to be fun, exhilarating, and a chance to form friendships with people that share some of the same traits. I am just as guilty as anyone that we can get caught up in the day to day operations of our PTAs or our own "to do list", that we forget this is a volunteer gig and it is okay to laugh, joke and have a good time doing the important work of PTA. I do want to say congratulations to the "Yellow Team" from the Missouri PTA Board of Managers Game Night 2013. Members Donna Petiford, Rebecca Stone, Pat Higgenbotham, Dorothy Gardner, and Norvel Johnson took home the medals for first place.

I strongly encourage all of your units and councils to host some type of fun activity and or recognition event for all of you and your volunteers that have been there for your PTA all year long with their presence, dues, food contributions, smiles and support.. National Volunteer Week is April 6-12, 2014 and each of us should give ourselves a pat on the back and others in the PTA a pat on their backs, for all the sacrifices and time volunteering for the PTA at their schools. Each of you is truly making a difference in the life of child. Even if you have never met that child, just know that they are out there and a part of their life and their education is better because you did what needed to be done and volunteered to make a difference.

Who We Are

PTA Vision
Making every child's potential a reality

PTA Mission ~ PTA is:

- A powerful voice for all children,
- A relevant resource for families and communities, and
- A strong advocate for the education and wellbeing of every child.

PTA Purposes

- To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community, and place of worship
- To raise the standards of home life
- To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth
- To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teacher may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth
- To develop between educators and general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education



National PTA Applauds Administration's Commitment to Early Childhood Education in State of the Union

Otha Thornton, National PTA President

In the 2014 State of the Union, an annual address delivered by the President of the United States before members of Congress, President Barack Obama expressed a renewed commitment to ensure that every child has access to high-quality early education.

“For decades, National PTA has called for the prioritization of early education, as research shows that providing effective, targeted supports and interventions to children and parents starting at birth will better prepare them for academic and career success,” said Otha Thornton, National PTA President. “National PTA applauds the Administration’s renewed commitment to early education and the increased dedication of resources to expand access to high-quality programs for all children from birth to kindergarten.”

As the President conveyed in his remarks, one of the best investments our nation can make in a child’s life is high-quality early education. National PTA agrees with the Administration in that we need to increase funding for pre-K programs, make high-quality pre-K available to every four-year-old, and invest in new partnerships with states and communities across the country to support our nation’s youngest children. The association applauds the Administration’s plan to pull together a coalition of

elected officials, business leaders and philanthropists to help more children access the high-quality pre-K education they need. National PTA has supported early childhood education since its inception. Through advocacy, as well as family and community education, National PTA has established programs and called for legislation that improves access to high-quality early learning for all children.

National PTA supports both federal and state incentives for high-quality childcare and preschool programs for children from birth to age five. These programs should be affordable and accessible; developmentally appropriate; coordinated at all levels (federal, state and local); and characterized by high standards for teaching, training, health and safety. National PTA also encourages the inclusion of a strong family engagement component in all early childhood programs.

We echo the President’s vocal support of early education, and National PTA urges the Administration to continue to call for comprehensive reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act/No Child Left Behind in 2014, including strong family engagement provisions as outlined in Family Engagement in Education Act of 2013. Families have waited for more than seven years for this reauthorization, and National PTA believes bipartisan legislative action is critical to provide support and resources to states and schools to improve family engagement, student achievement and school performance.

National PTA is committed to continue working with the Administration and Congress in 2014 to strengthen and advance programs that further the success of all of our nation’s children.

Smart from the Start Community Outreach Grant

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Friday, March 28, 2014 at 5:00 p.m. EST/2:00 p.m. PST

Smart from the Start: Community Outreach provides PTA Regions, Districts and Councils with tools and resources to educate families of children ages 3-5 and partner with a local neighborhood community to improve awareness of energy balance concepts. Energy balance is finding a balance between the calories we consume through what we eat and drink and the calories we burn through physical activity.

GOAL: *PTA Regions, Districts and Councils will:* Educate families of children ages 3-5 about practical ways to ensure their children achieve a balanced intake of nutritious foods and physical activity every day, using the [Energy Balance Pre-K curriculum](#). Mobilize community-based stakeholders to focus on increasing access to nutritious foods and physical activity options in the community, especially for families of children ages 3-5. Find [tips on how to engage your community](#).

FUNDING AVAILABLE: National PTA will award 10 grants of \$10,000 each to PTA Regions, Districts and Councils.

GRANT TERMS: Grant funding must be spent between June 1, 2014 and September 30, 2015.

HOW TO APPLY:

Review the Request for [Proposals](#) for additional information about funding requirements, selection criteria, eligibility, key dates and other specific application components. Once you have reviewed the Request for Proposals, [apply online](#).

The deadline to apply is Friday, March 28, 2014 at 5 p.m. EST/2 p.m. PST.



*Believe,
Dream,
Inspire*

PTA REFLECTIONS
40 Years of Achievement in the Arts

Reflections – Student Showcase

By Susan Rupert, VP & Director of Programs
& Acting State Reflections Chair

Wow, it is hard to **BELIEVE** that it is already March! Where has the school year gone? The Missouri PTA Reflections committee unpacked, sorted and sent our entries to the judges in January. Our first place winning entries have been sent to National PTA, and we are working hard to get notification to our student winners, and the winners list out to our units. Missouri's Reflections entries are outstanding once again. Missouri PTA would like to thank all of the students who participated and **DREAM** of many National winners this year.

Please take time to thank your Reflections chair for the countless hours he or she has spent preparing entries and making sure they were ready for state judging. We appreciate these individuals more than they will ever know. Each year there seems to be some type of change taking place in the Reflections program: online student entry forms, art category

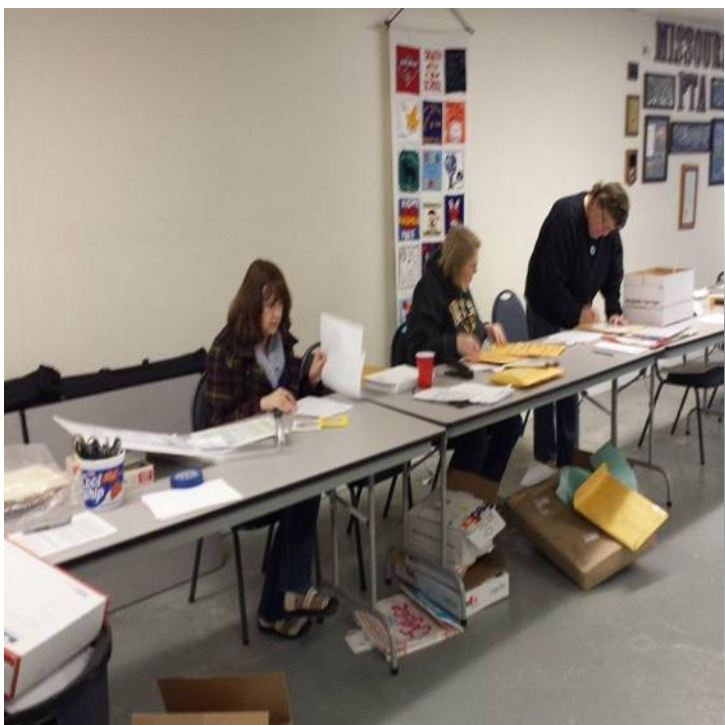
rules revisions, acceptable formats for submission. We understand that change can be stressful and confusing and that further explanation is sometimes needed. We hope the Reflections information on the Missouri PTA website and the ability to email questions were valuable resources as well as the webinars and conference calls sponsored by National PTA.

If you have suggestions or would like to be a part of next years Reflections' process, I would like to hear from you. Many of our local Reflections chairs have years of experience while this was the first year for others. I am interested in your input. How do we improve the process? How do we **INSPIRE** those units that do not participate in this wonderful opportunity for our children to get on board? Just take a minute to email me your thoughts at reflections@mopta.org.

We will be hosting a special event just for Reflections again this year. The Missouri PTA Reflections Student Showcase will be held in Columbia, Missouri at Rock Bridge High School on April 26, 2014 beginning at 1 p.m. Please mark your calendar and be sure that any students who placed at the state level have received their information letter, and let the Missouri PTA State Office know how many from their family will be attending.

We appreciate all that you do for the students of Missouri. We encourage you to continue supporting the Arts in your schools. Together, we will always be there to help our children.....

BELIEVE, DREAM, INSPIRE.



2014 Outstanding Advocacy Awards

National PTA® is pleased to announce the recipients of its 2014 Outstanding Advocacy Awards, which honor parents and youth from across the country for their leadership and dedication to being strong advocates for education and issues affecting children. The honorees will be recognized during the 2014 National PTA Legislative Conference on Wednesday, March 12 during the PTA Takes Action Dinner at the Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel in Arlington, Va.

This year's recipients are:

[PTA Outstanding State Advocacy Award – New York State PTA](#)

[PTA Outstanding Local Advocacy Award – Maggie L. Walker Governor's School PTSA and Appomattox Regional Governor's School PTSA \(Virginia\)](#)

[Shirley Igo Advocate of the Year Ambassador Award – Yvonne Johnson \(Delaware\)](#)

Youth Advocate of the Year Ambassador Award – Gabriel Unruh (Missouri)

Gabriel Unruh is being recognized for his efforts to save the lives of youth by educating them on the dangers of texting while driving. Unruh organized a Kansas City "Arrive Alive" event that brought together school, community and law enforcement groups. As part of this effort, he oversaw more than 100 volunteers, wrote editorials on distracted driving that were published in Kansas City newspapers, and effectively used social media to promote the campaign. The "Arrive Alive" event was attended by more than 1,000 high school students and community members and received support from over 25 businesses and government agencies. Unruh is in the process of submitting to the Missouri Department of Transportation an official action plan and proposal to create a model "Arrive Alive" program for schools across Missouri. Unruh is a member of the Platte County High School PTSA. As the recipient of the award, he will serve as a youth ambassador for National PTA throughout 2014.

"The recipients of the Outstanding Advocacy Awards exemplify what it means to take action for children and education," said Otha Thornton, National PTA President. "Through their leadership, passion and dedication, they have made a difference to improve the lives and futures of our nation's children, and we are pleased to recognize them during the 2014 National PTA Legislative Conference."

Each year, the National PTA Legislative Conference brings together hundreds of parent leaders from across the country to discuss PTA's public policy priorities and inspire and empower them to advocate for all children. The 2014 conference will be held from March 11 through 13 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel. During the conference, attendees will hear from speakers and participate in interactive workshops and skill-building trainings on a variety of topics, including juvenile justice and delinquency prevention, early childhood education and ESEA-NCLB reauthorization and family engagement. They also will meet with Congressional leaders to discuss key issues impacting our nation's children.

NPTA Member Benefits

SHARP.

Sharp supports National PTA members and their work to improve the lives of students and educators throughout the country by donating electronics to support their efforts. Sharp Electronics Corporation is the U.S. subsidiary of Japan's Sharp Corporation. Recently celebrating its 100th year, Sharp is a worldwide developer of one-of-a-kind home entertainment products, appliances, networked multifunctional office solutions, educational products, LED lighting and mobile communication and information tools. Leading brands include AQUOS® Quattron™ LCD televisions, AQUOS BOARD™ interactive display systems, SharpVision® projectors, Insight® Microwave Drawer® ovens, Notevision® multimedia projectors and Plasmacluster® air purifiers.



Treasurer Tidbits

By Lori Prussman,
MO State PTA Treasurer

Since taking office just a few short months ago I have learned a lot regarding the in's and out's of the IRS and Missouri Department of Revenue (MO DOR). Shortly after getting my books from the former treasurer, I started receiving phone calls and emails regarding units that have lost their **not for profit status**. After a lengthy talk with an informed IRS agent, I have now put a guide together to help those units who have lost their status.

It is really important for everyone to know that the IRS "grace period" is now over. No longer can a letter be drafted and sent, hoping for leniency. When you receive a letter from the IRS, it is imperative to respond ASAP. If in doubt, please contact me, and if I don't have the answer I will find it!!! If you are a unit/council that has lost their not for profit status and have not acted yet, please contact me ASAP. My email is lorip@mopta.org. We need to start the process of reinstatement. I have a checklist that I can email you. It will take some time and effort but it will be well worth it in the end.

Tax exempt status...have you checked your expiration date?? You should. The MO DOR will send your unit/council a letter about 3 months prior to the expiration date. Just complete the form and return, and all is well. If you did not respond to the letter and you have now lost your tax exempt status, please contact me and I

can help with getting that reinstated as well. I have also put a guide together that will tell you how to fill out the form. There is also a list of what will need to be submitted to MO DOR. This guide can be used if your unit/council has never had a tax exempt number. All PTA units/councils should have their own Tax Exempt Status and should NOT be using the school's.

Budget committee...now is the time to start looking at your budget for next school year. Please check your bylaws and standing rules to see who is to serve on the budget committee. If it is not stated in your bylaws or standing rules, it is time to add it. This committee is very important to the financial health of your unit or council. Best practice is having a committee of five members. Bylaws state that the treasurer is to be the chair of this committee. Other people to consider having as part of this committee: incoming treasurer, current fundraiser/ways and means chair, incoming 1st VP, and current Recording secretary. This mix will give you experience of current board with the input of new board members.

The current treasurer will have the current budget and the year to date totals for all line items. The treasurer should also give you numbers from the previous year as well. These numbers will give you a look at how well the budget is working. This committee should also ask for input from the chairmen to get their point of view, if the budget needs to be modified, or what adjustments should be made.

PTA is very different from any other "business" because you are setting a budget for the following year and fundraising in that school year to make your budget. Neither the National PTA nor the IRS has any guidelines on how much money your unit/council needs to carry over. I have always suggested that half of your budget be in your account to start the year off solid. Tina Zubeck, National PTA Secretary/Treasurer, recommends two to three months of the budget as a good start.

When you set your 2014-2015 budget this spring, your fundraising efforts in the school year 2014-2015 are to fulfill that budget. You will need to plan your fundraising according to what you need to meet those budget needs. You do not set your budget based on "what you have left in your checking account at the end of the year".

Best practice is to pass your budget at the last general meeting of the school year (usually May). Fiscal year for most units ends June 30th. If you wait until the Fall to pass your budget, please keep in mind that your board cannot "do business" until the budget is passed. That means that while planning can take place, there will be no purchases made over the summer and that some of the projects that have been planned will not have funding until the budget is in place.

If you ever have any questions please feel free to email me @ lorip@mopta.org. I'm happy to help.

Visiting Your Legislator

By Angel Davis, VP & Director of
Legislation & Advocacy

Being an effective advocate requires building relationships with your Legislators. Communicating and meeting with your Legislator and letting them know what policies are important to you, your school and community is an important step in building this relationship. When making an appointment with your Legislator, contact their office three weeks in advance. You can find contact information on the Missouri Senate and House websites. When showing up for your appointment, be prepared and remember these key components.

Dress Professional – Remember, as representatives of Missouri PTA, we want to be taken seriously so dress accordingly. If visiting with a group, avoid matching t-shirts. It is encouraged to wear your PTA nametag or a PTA pin.

Arrive Early – Arrive five minutes early, and be patient if the member is running late or gets called away during the meeting.

State the Purpose of your Visit – After the initial introductions, tell your Legislator that you are a member of PTA, which school

and local unit you are with, what you want to talk about and why. When advocating for a specific bill, know the title, number and status of the bill.

Make it Local – Be sure to connect the issue you are discussing to what is happening in your community. Explain how your community will be affected.

Listen, Respond, and Don't Argue – Listen carefully to what your Legislator or their staffer has to say and allow them to state their opinion and position on the issue. If they do not agree with your position, don't argue or make a future enemy. If you don't know the answer to a particular question, just say so and promise to get back to them with an answer.

Wrap-up the Meeting – Summarize your key points and positions. Give your Legislator supportive information, fact sheets and your contact information. Thank the elected official for their time and leave promptly.

Thank You – Be sure to send a thank you letter to your Legislator and their staff. Remember that you want to develop and maintain a relationship with your elected

official and their staff – so stay in contact.



Capitol Chatter

The MOPTA Legislation Department keeps a close eye on the filing and process of bills relating to child welfare and education. You can see the bills we are following by visiting the MOPTA Capitol Chatter page on our website at <http://www.mopta.org/legislation/capitol-chatter.html>

While you are visiting Capitol Chatter, take some time to look over our Advocacy Resources as well. On the Advocacy Resources page you can find links to the Legislative Handbook, information for Legislative Chairs, Town Hall how-to and more.

Plan It, Host It, Win! *By Pat Higginbotham, Missouri Parent Education & Involvement Chair*

Here is your chance to stand up and be recognized for all your hard work that goes into organizing, planning, and holding programs, projects, workshops and events throughout the year.

We challenge you, as PTA leaders, to look at your events calendar and discuss if and how these activities educate parents and engage families in your school. Why? Because students who have families that are engaged and interested in their world do better in school. If you find that an event is primarily a fundraising event, discuss and ask for ideas of how it can be more. Ask your local, council and state PTA resources and representatives for help.

Then submit your application for the **Missouri PTA Parent Education and Involvement Award** that recognizes programs that educate and/or celebrate parent involvement in your school. It is as easy as that!

Your PTA unit or council can qualify for the award by sending the following information about your program:

A brief description of your program, workshop, or event

A list of goals or objectives for the activity

How you will evaluate your activity after the event to determine its success

Award applications must be submitted to the Missouri PTA office on or before May 1, 2014.

Award winners will be recognized and receive a monetary award at the Missouri State Convention.

Let us know about your PTA success stories!

NPTA Member Benefits

e-Trak's **Alert** allows a child who is lost, hurt, or eTrak, the world's smallest location tracking device, is FREE to PTA parents. Plus, each subscription order earns a local unit \$6 and \$2 each for state and National PTA. It is the child safety solution parents have been looking for!



eTrak is affordable!

The device is free to PTA parents (regularly \$129). An activation charge of \$39 and nominal monthly fee of \$15, guaranteed for twenty-four months, is a reasonable price to help keep children safe and give parents peace of mind. Please visit etrak.com/pta or call (800) 279-1261 to obtain a free device, subscribe to the tracking service, and earn PTA donations.



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Student Success for MAP Testing

By Michele Reed,

VP & Director of Communication

As we approach MAP testing for all students in Missouri it is important to encourage parents and students to make sure they are getting plenty of sleep and eating the right foods for brain power. As parents, teachers and caregivers; we need to encourage students at this critical time to eat fruits grains and dairy, to make sure they are in the best shape possible. Of course eating these foods should be encouraged all year long. It has been proven in many articles that kids that eat healthy perform better in everything they do; whether it is sports or academics. The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education list the below tips for making sure your child does well on the MAP test.

Tip #1: Read, Read, Read!

Reading takes skill and practice. One of the best and simplest steps to improve the reading ability for children is to provide sustained periods of time for children to read.

Tip #2: Help your child to read like a writer.

Even in the early grades, children can begin to "get into the head" of the author. Reading improves a child's writing, and writing improves a child's reading.

Tip #3: Read a variety of books and magazines.

MAP Communication Arts test contains short stories, poems, dialogues, magazine articles, charts and tables. Children need to be able to read a wide variety of texts ranging from road signs to restaurant menus, comic books to classics, and from tennis shoe ads to computer manuals.

Tip #4: Build your child's reading stamina.

To build reading stamina, you may wish to encourage your child to increase gradually the amount of time she reads at one sitting. Include short breaks, such as stretching or closing her eyes for a minute. Set individual reading goals based upon doing the "best that she can."

Tip #5: Teach your child that visuals are part of the text.

Students are often required to gather information from photos, captions, drawings, charts, and graphs. You can help by teaching your child to look at all of these materials as part of the total text.

Tip #6: Help your child know how to use text-based support in written responses.

Most of the constructed-response items on the MAP assessments have two parts or require children to explain or show how they arrived at their answers. Children will receive only partial credit for answers to questions that are not supported with specific details or that do not contain an explanation.

Tip #7: Teach your child to preview the test before starting.

Planning the test time will allow your child to pace himself while he is working and decrease stress.

Tip #8: Teach your child to identify all parts of a question.

Teach your child to identify exactly what each question is asking. Some questions have multiple parts, which are often combined into a single sentence with a single question mark at the end. The child should underline each question word (who, what, when, where, why, how and any other word or phrase that indicates a question). By doing so, she can see if a question has multiple parts. Not answering all parts of a multi-part question is a

common error.

Tip #9: Teach your child to paraphrase test items, turning questions into statements.

Teach your child to turn questions into statements. The child may underline the question words as described above, and then turn each part of the item into a statement. For example, the question, "Why did the main character play with the ball?" could be rephrased as "The main character played with the ball because ..." This practice allows the child to phrase the question in a way that makes the most sense to him. He is then ready to read the passage and look for answers.

Tip #10: What can a parent or guardian do to ensure successful assessment for their student?

Be aware of the testing schedule.

Be certain that your child has had adequate rest (this may mean getting them used to an earlier bed time before the week of testing).

Be on time for school.

Avoid scheduling appointments that can be done at a later date.

Dress your child in layered clothing. This way, the child may add clothing to get warmer or remove some clothing to be cooler.

If your school allows it, make sure your child has a book to read when the testing session is complete.

Be certain that your child has two or more number two pencils (not mechanical).

Have a positive attitude.

Adapted from the Practical Parenting Partnerships by Laura Schwab and the 2001 MAP Class 6 Team.

March Membership Minute

By Michele Reed, VP & Director of Communication

So you have made it to March as Membership Chair for your PTA Unit. Perhaps you are beginning to breathe a sigh of relief, having completed a successful year, but your year is not over. Membership recruiting is a 365 day a year job. Use all of your resources to encourage parents, teachers and community members to be a part of "Today's PTA".

So where do you go from here? You feel you have exhausted all ideas, and are not sure where to "start again"; below are a few ideas that will help you and your unit soar to new heights.

Who's missing? – look at last year's membership list to see who hasn't joined, personally contact them, and ask them why they have not joined this year. Be sure to keep in mind that some of these parents might have had their last student "graduate" from your building; and they are members of another unit. Stress to them the importance of their membership - the local benefits you provide to their child, the state benefits and the National Benefits they receive including the PTA influence in legislation.

Are you still visible? – Make sure you and your membership team are still available at all events in your building. New students are constantly entering your building and those parents are looking to be involved in their child's new education surroundings and school community.

New Member Benefit – Work with a local business to offer PTA members of your school a special discount. This will allow current members to participate as well as entice new members to join.

Kindergarten Enrollment, incoming middle school students, and freshman – Many parents will be enrolling their first child into your school this spring, and moving their first child up to your building, things change as children get older at each level of education, be sure you as a PTA are available to help parents make that transition from pre-school to elementary, from elementary to middle school, and middle school to high school.

10 Ways to Soar your unit to New Heights

1. **Reach Out:** Contact those community members, businesses & parents who have had strong interest in leadership in your PTA but no longer have children in school.
2. **The Student Market:** Offer a special drawing to all students that are members because it is never too late to join. Make sure the prize appeals to students. (ie: iTunes Gift Card.)
3. **Contact:** Contact new families as they move into your community and school. Welcome them with a personal call and invitation to join your PTA.
4. **Consider:** Consider distributing one special issue of your PTA newsletter to all residents in your school area. This is excellent public relations and can realize membership and participation from those with no children in school.
5. **Place a membership table at every entrance.** Place tables strategically so people must pass by to enter the activity.
6. **Use your time wisely:** Instead of starting from scratch use the customizable resources that are available on the National and Missouri PTA websites.
7. **Training = Knowledge=Success!** Encourage your chairman and officers, including incoming officers to attend the new Training Camps provided by Missouri PTA. These are held in your local area and will help get your board ready for a new year.
8. **Create opportunities** to talk about PTA without creating more meetings.
9. Take time to **thank your members and volunteers** for their support; without them there would not be a PTA
10. **Councils:** Offer special recognition to all units, which exceeded their previous year's membership at the last council meeting.

Take your Family to School Week Grant Recipient

By Sonia Smith, Gateway Regional Director

National PTA's [Take Your Family to School Week](#) is a program encouraging strong family engagement and the importance of partnerships among parents, teachers, and school administrators. For the 2013-2014 academic school year, *Take Your Family to School Week* will incorporate the theme, *Supporting Student Success*, which will address the risks associated with a huge problem for our nation's youth: **dropping out of high school**.

This year there were 51 Grant Recipients from all across the United States. One of those recipients was none other than our own McNair Elementary PTA in Hazelwood MO. During the week of Feb 24-28, 2014, McNair Elementary had a fun filled week of activities. The following is a list of what was planned.

Monday, Feb. 24, they invited the parents of Kindergarten, 2nd grade, and 5th grade students to come visit their child's classroom from 2:00-3:00 pm. The parents were also invited to come early for their Learning Fair in the library from 1:00-2:00 pm where they provided information and resources to parents.

Tuesday, Feb. 25, they held their PTA meeting at 6:30 pm with a special workshop entitled "Connect and Communicate with Your Child."

Wednesday, Feb. 26, at 3:00pm in the cafeteria, their 4th grade parents were able to view a sneak peek of the Grandparent's Night Performance.

Thursday, Feb. 27, all grandparents were invited to attend Grandparent's Night from 4:00-6:00 pm.

Friday, Feb. 28, they invited the parents of 1st grade, 3rd grade, and 4th grade students to come visit their child's classroom from 10:00-11:00 am. The parents were also invited to come early for their Learning Fair in the library from 9:00-10:00 am where they provided information and resources to parents.

**Trailridge Elementary School PTA from Lee's Summit MO was also named a winner

National PTA and LifeLock Forge Partnership to Empower Kids and Teens to Be Safe While Using Digital Technology

*With the Proliferation of Children and Teens
Using Technology, the Partnership Will Focus on
Developing Tools for Students and Families
on Good Digital Citizenship*

National PTA® and [LifeLock, Inc.](#) have partnered to raise awareness about the long-term impact of online activity and encourage students to be good digital citizens. The program is designed to empower students with the knowledge and skills to be safe when using the Internet and mobile technology. The ultimate goal is to teach children and teens to make smart decisions as they engage with others in the digital world. National PTA and LifeLock are kicking off their partnership today in conjunction with Safer Internet Day as designated by [ConnectSafely.org](#).

"Technology is essential for learning, especially in the development of 21st century skills that will help students thrive in their chosen careers. Digital learning also empowers teachers and parents to understand the needs of each student and modify instruction accordingly," said Otha Thornton, National PTA President. "While technology is a powerful tool for teaching and learning, parents are concerned about the risks they see, especially with social media. It is a high priority of National PTA to increase understanding of the implications of online interactions. We are pleased to partner with LifeLock to engage students, families, educators and communities and foster safe, effective use of the Internet and mobile devices."

Through a variety of activities and initiatives, including interactive digital tools and engaging learning kits, National PTA and LifeLock will work together throughout 2014 to raise awareness and increase understanding of smart and effective practices families can use to foster good digital habits among students.

LifeLock president, Hilary Schneider, said, "We want our children to embrace technology to live freely in the digital world, but we also want to introduce the positive online habits that will keep them safe and protect their personal information. PTA has the leadership, infrastructure and expertise to foster these digital dialogues between families, students and teachers in communities across the U.S."

Click [here](#) to view an infographic demonstrating how children, teens and families are engaging with technology and digital education.

For more information about Safer Internet Day,
visit [SaferInternetDay.us](#).

Leader's Training Camps

Is your unit looking for spring training to refresh current officers, and get valuable training for new incoming officers?

Missouri PTA will be hosting our Leaders Training Camps at various locations around the state. Please mark your calendars for anyone of the leaders training camps listed below.

The registration form will be posted online on the Missouri PTA website and will be emailed out to local unit and council presidents in late February or early March. Reservations will be on a first come first served basis.

April 17, 2014 – Three Trails Leaders Training Camp
Independence, MO (specific school TBA)

April 19, 2014 – Heritage Leaders Training Camp
Missouri PTA State Office, Columbia, MO

April 22, 2014 – Three Trails Leaders Training Camp
Stansbury Leadership Center, Lees Summit, MO

May 3, 2014 – Ozark Leaders Training Camp
Nixa, MO (specific location TBA)

May 8, 2014 – Pony Express Leaders Training Camp
St Joseph, MO (specific location TBA)

We are working to secure other locations in other regions, so please check the [MO PTA](http://www.mo.pta.org) website often for updated locations and dates.

NPTA Member Benefits

MetLife Auto & Home®

With MetLife Auto & Home You Can:

- Take advantage of group discounts
- Receive a discount for bank account deduction
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Learn more about the benefits of your group auto insurance program from

MetLife Auto & Home®

Call us today for a free quote

(877) 491-5089. Or visit:

<http://www.myahprogram.com/PTA>.

MetLife Auto & Home® has partnered with the National PTA to provide members with access to valuable features and benefits, including special group discounts on auto insurance.



“Bully Bus” Visits Ozark Tiger Paw Early Childhood Center

By Kristy Nelson, Tiger Paw PTA President



Hearing that bullying begins in preschool, the Ozark Tiger Paw Early Childhood Center's PTA decided to do an anti-bullying program. On October 21, 2013, the Tiger Paw PTA had the ZoeBus visit with seven classrooms of children ages 3 to 5.

The students were taught how to behave on a bus and bully prevention strategies. The students were given a unique lesson on the bus – which is modified and has TV monitors for a short video. The students also received in-class presentations, complete with the reading of "Bravery At Barkalot" – a ZoeBus book about preventing bullying on the school bus, written by Gina Crump and illustrated by Sharon Edwards. The PTA also purchased a copy of the book for each classroom.

“We were excited to be able to offer an anti-bullying program that was age-appropriate,” said Kristy Nelson, Tiger Paw PTA President. “It is vital to start these lessons as early as possible.”

The children were very excited to learn about bus safety and how to be kind and respectful to each other. The ZoeBus is owned and operated by Gina Crump. For more information about the bus, please visit zoebus.org. Tiger Paw Early Childhood Center in Ozark, Missouri, has approximately 150 students through its childcare program (ages birth to 5), Early Childhood Special Education, and Title I Preschool program. It also houses the Parents as Teachers program.



Winter Packet and Legislative Handbook

Missouri PTA website now has the Winter Packet and Legislative Handbook available for download. *You must log into the 'Members Only' section, then go to 'Tools'.* The 2013-2014 Winter Packet contains resources such as reminders, award applications, new program ideas, and will serve as a guide for the remainder of the school year. The Legislative Handbook includes information about contacting your Legislators, 2014 Missouri PTA Legislative Platform, the 'how to' and 'why you should' on Resolutions as well as the AtLaw Award Application.

Missouri PTA hopes you find these resources valuable as a membership benefit to help with the second half of the school year. Remember at any given time, your Missouri PTA Board of Managers and myself are no more than an email or phone call away to help answer any questions or to listen to a concern or suggestion you might have for us.

Awards Deadline – May 1, 2014 Don't Forget to Apply!

As we begin to prepare for our 2014-2015 school year by nominating our new officers and submitting them to Missouri PTA, don't forget to celebrate the new heights your unit has soared to during this school year and don't forget to apply for all the awards Missouri PTA offers. The full list of awards and qualifications can be found on the Missouri PTA Website under the forms and awards page, as well as in the Tool Kit, that is available in the Members Only section (www.mopta.org). Most applications will take only a few minutes to complete, so please take a few minutes to fill out all applications your unit is eligible for; and complete your 2013-2014 school year soaring to new heights.

The following award applications must be postmarked by May 1, 2014:

- Outstanding Membership Campaign Award**
- Council Achievement Award**
- Unit Achievement Awards (Blue and Gold Seal)**
- Outstanding Local Unit/Council Newsletter Award**
- Outstanding Local Unit /Council Website Award**
- Membership Awards**
- Student Safety Award**
- Health/Wellness & Safety Education Award**
- Parent Education and Involvement Award**
- Male Involvement Award**

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

March

National Nutrition Month

Save Your Vision Month

- 1 Dues to State Office
- 5 Ash Wednesday
- 9 Daylight Savings Time BEGINS
- 17 St Patrick's Day

April

Autism Awareness Month

National Child Abuse Prevention Month

- 1 Dues to State Office
- Awards Deadline
- 17 Three Trails Leaders Training Camp
Independence, MO
- 19 Heritage Leaders Training Camp
Missouri PTA State Office, Columbia, MO
- 20 Easter
- 22 Three Trails Leaders Training Camp
Stansbury Leadership Center, Lees Summit, MO
- 23 Administrative Professionals Day
- 26 Reflections Showcase in Columbia, MO
- 31 New Officer's Due to State Office

May

- 1 Dues to State Office
- Awards Deadlines
- 3 Ozark Leaders Training Camp, Nixa MO
- 8 Pony Express Leaders Training Camp
St Joseph, MO
- 11 Mother's Day
- 26 Memorial Day
- 31 Deadline for **14 in 14** Membership Contest

Friends Of PTA

Friends Of PTA donations help support Missouri PTA's mission and purpose to make every child's potential a reality. Because Missouri PTA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization all donations are tax deductible. You too can be a Friend Of PTA by visiting our website and making a donation of your choice. By supporting the work of PTA you will be supporting all children.

NPTA Member Benefits



Focus Education, creator of ifocus

ifocus is a multi-award winning attention training system for children ages 6-12. Using the Jungle Rangers computer game as its centerpiece, *ifocus* is the fun and scientific way to improve attention, focus, and memory, and is supported with behavioral, nutrition, and fitness components that encourage family engagement. Visit www.JungleRangersChallenge.com to learn more about how school fundraising, family savings, and student achievement is possible with just one program—*ifocus*.

Missouri PTA Officers

President: Kim Weber kimw@mopta.org
Secretary: Norvel Johnson norvelj@mopta.org

President Elect: Dorothy Gardner dorothyg@mopta.org
Treasurer: Lori Prussman lorip@mopta.org

Administrative Assistant: Patty Voss pattyv@mopta.org
State Procedure & Bylaws Chair: Sarah Day sarahd@mopta.org
Immediate Past President: Donna Petiford dpetiford@mopta.org

Parliamentarian: Dr. Leonard Young

Department of Legislation and Advocacy

VP & Director: Angel Davis angeld@mopta.org
State Legislative Chair: Michelle McLaughlin michellem@pta.org
Resolution Chair: Contact VP of Legislation & Advocacy

Department of Membership Services

VP & Director: Rebecca Cahill rebeccac@mopta.org
Membership Emphasis Chair: Contact VP of Membership Services
Membership Outreach Chair: Angela McCormick angelam@mopta.org
Resource Development Chair: Contact VP of Membership Services

Department of Communications

VP & Director: Michele Reed micheler@mopta.org
CONTACT Editor: Lisa Holmes lisah@mopta.org
Information Technology Chair: Amy Blakemore amyb@mopta.org
Public Relations Chair: Contact VP of Communications

Department of Field Service

VP & Director: Catherine Sweeny catherines@mopta.org
Foothills Regional Directors: Contact VP of Field Services
Gateway Regional Directors: Angie Carey angiec@mopta.org
Aisha Faulkner aishaf@mopta.org
Sonia Smith sonias@mopta.org
Heritage Regional Directors: Terra Merriweather-Shultz terras@mopta.org
Mark Twain Regional Director: Contact VP of Field Services
Meramec Regional Director: Carla Wiese carlaw@mopta.org
Ozark Regional Directors: Contact VP of Field Services
Pony Express Regional Directors: Rebecca Stone rebeccas@mopta.org
Joyce Brewka joyceb@mopta.org
Three Trails Regional Directors: Lisa Smallwood lisas@mopta.org
Virginia Pennington virginiaip@mopta.org

Department of Programs

VP & Director: Susan Rupert susanr@mopta.org
Reflections Chair: reflections@mopta.org
Health/Wellness & Safety Chair: Christine Kent christinek@mopta.org
Male Involvement Chair: Steven Cook stevenc@mopta.org
Parent Ed & Involvement Chair: Pat Higginbotham path@mopta.org
Student Involvement Chair: Mark Kempf markk@mopta.org
Youth Representatives: Meagan G.
MO PTA Scholarship Chair: Donna Petiford dpetiford@mopta.org

How
We
Help
You

32nd Annual Child Advocacy Day

Jefferson City MO

April 1st, 2014

Each year the Missouri Alliance for Children, Youth and Families hosts their Child Advocacy Day and invites individuals and organizations from across the state to join them in advocating for our children and education in Jefferson City.

Missouri PTA will be there speaking with legislators about issues concerning child welfare and education. MOPTA members are welcome to register for the full day event at <http://www.childadvocacyday.org/> or may visit with their legislators on their own.

Members who chose to visit legislators on their own should make appointments with the Senator and Representative before traveling to Jefferson City (See page 6 for tips).

Be sure to stop by the MOPTA booth in the Rotunda and pick up a copy of our 2014 Legislative Priorities and talking points for bills we are watching.



National PTA Membership Challenge

Jump start your membership push and get a chance to win \$1,000 for your PTA. Get 14 members to join your local PTA between February 1 and May 31 and receive one entry to win \$1,000 for your PTA.

For every 14 members you recruit, attach one "Official National PTA 14 in '14 Entry Form" to your State PTA membership dues report. Send the [entry form\(s\)](#) and your membership dues report to your State PTA Office.

Start recruiting now to increase your odds of winning.* 14 local PTAs will be selected to win \$1,000 in June 2014. Drawing will be held at the 118th Annual National PTA® Convention & Exhibition in Austin, Texas. ***Limit 10 entries per PTA.**