

CONTACT

everychild. onevoice.®

Volume 89, Issue 1
August 2007

believe

BELIEVE...

Include Everyone!

Our Children Deserve Our Support

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
- A strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child

Collaboration: We work in partnership with a wide array of individuals and organizations to accomplish our agreed-upon goals.

Commitment: We are dedicated to promoting children's health, well-being, and educational success through strong parent, family, and community involvement.

Accountability: We acknowledge our obligations. We deliver on our promises.

PTA Values

Respect: We value our colleagues and ourselves. We expect the same high quality of effort and thought from ourselves as we do from others.

Inclusivity: We invite the stranger and welcome the newcomer. We value and seek input from as wide a spectrum of viewpoints and experiences as possible.

Integrity: We act consistently with our beliefs. When we err, we acknowledge the mistake and seek to make amends.

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

Recently updated during NPTA's Strategic Planning process

For a copy of the PTA National Strategic Plan 2007-2010, call (800)307-4782, email info@pta.org, or go to www.pta.org.

Cover photo:

It's back to school and learning for students at Century Elementary in Nixa.

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Cheers to You!

By Kathy Nevans, Missouri PTA president

Here's to the start of a new school year and to all the goals and

dreams that you have for your PTA and the success of your children. Cheers! Cheers! It is times like this that I wish I had a time machine that would allow me to show you how great a year this is going to be for you and your PTA/PTSA. Being a member of your PTA/PTSA board can be one of the best times for you personally with the friendships you will make, emotionally with the strengths you will develop, and mentally with the skills you will acquire. Being a leader, whether an officer or chairman, will enrich your life and those around you. While you may not believe this at all times, when you finish the year and have time to look back and reflect, I promise you that you will have grown.

If you are like me, at times I have to sit down and think: Where do I start? What should I be doing? Don't worry; I believe these questions are quite common in the PTA leadership roles and only time will relieve some of your anxiety. But let me try to help you relax. By now, you should have received your summer packet that included the Missouri PTA Tool Kit, membership cards, and other resources to help you during your PTA year. You should have also received the National PTA Back to School Kit (sponsored by Office Depot), which included several handbooks regarding membership, money matters, programs, and being a president. Have you glanced at all of this material and then disbursed it to whoever would benefit the most from it? Go ahead and

make copies from the pages of the Tool Kit and share them with your officers and chairmen. Since presidents are the only ones who receive most of the information distributed through Missouri and National PTA, it is your responsibility to pass this material on and give others the gift of information and hopefully the reward of knowledge. Being a president has many responsibilities but one of the most important is to train others to follow you. Constantly share information, ideas, concerns, and communications with all the members of your board. Keep them informed and educated. Make them want to become a PTA/PTSA president and then YOU will have succeeded as a president, feeling that you have truly given of yourself. Throughout the year, please keep this quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson in your thoughts:

"To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and to endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty; to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded."

Not only will you succeed but so will all the children at your school. Through PTA/PTSA, parent involvement will increase student success. The year will pass quickly and before you know it, your term will be over. Take each day, week, and month as they come and give the best you have to each PTA/PSTA event as well as to each child you see. There will be some very long meetings, some very short tempers, some awesome moments, some hard to handle situations but most importantly there will be children succeeding. The children at your school will know that they are special because of your involvement in PTA/PTSA. Thank you for believing in PTA/PTSA and in the children of your school. Again, here's to YOU! Here's to PTA/PTSA! Here's to the children!

CONTACT is the official publication of Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers. We are a branch of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. *CONTACT* is published September through May, seven issues. Subscriptions are \$7 per year. Missouri PTA Office, Editorial and Publication Office: 2100 I-70 Drive SW, Columbia, MO 65203, PHONE: 800-328-7330 FAX: 573-445-4163 or www.mopta.org Please notify the Publication Office in case of change of address or to purchase a subscription. It is important that we have accurate addresses so that we may provide the support and information to each local unit.

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: 330 North Wabash Ave Suite 2100, Chicago, IL 60611-3690
Phone: 312-670-6782 (670-NPTA), www.pta.org
MO PTA 800-328-7330

Missouri PTA's New Website

Coming Soon

Missouri PTA Leaders Project

The Missouri PTA Leaders Project gives you the opportunity to be recognized for your leadership accomplishments. As a PTA leader you are already ensuring that your school has family-friendly events, volunteering your time, and taking time to attend training provided to you at the local, state and national level. Why not earn the distinction of becoming a “Certified PTA Leader”? It’s easy; just follow these steps:

- Attend 10 different leadership training activities, programs, and opportunities listed within a two year period
- Have your Missouri PTA Leaders Project Tracking Card signed and dated by a Missouri PTA Board of Managers member upon completion of each leadership training event
- Up to three lines may be signed per state convention or state leadership conference

and up to two lines per regional conference or school of information

- When you have 10 training requirements completed, submit your Missouri PTA Leaders Project Tracking Card and application to Missouri PTA

Once the certification process is completed, you will be a Certified PTA Leader and recognized at the state convention in October where you will be presented with a Leaders Project certificate and pin. New leaders are also recognized in an upcoming issue of CONTACT magazine.

For more information about the Missouri PTA Leaders Project, please check the Tool Kit (mailed to presidents in July), the Missouri PTA website at www.mopta.org or contact Missouri PTA vice president and director of Membership Services Jennifer Casey at jenniferc@mopta.org or home at 816-224-0907.

Bylaws

By Pat Brune, Missouri PTA State Procedure and Bylaws chair

Did you know that unit and council bylaws are due for review every three years? If your unit or council is due, your president will receive a reminder letter in the mail with this information in the next couple of months. This letter along with the CD should go to your bylaws chairman. If you don’t have a bylaws chairman, this would be a good time to select one at the next board meeting. Instructions for going about the review process are included on the CD. You will need to use the new CD and NEVER

just send in copies of your current bylaws even if you make no changes to the current bylaws. Please note that each time Missouri PTA has an update to the bylaws, a new CD is issued. Updates to bylaws may occur each year. So if you just copy your current bylaws and send them in, they will be returned to you along with a new CD for you to use.

By following the proper procedures and using the most up to date CD, your bylaws review process will go smoothly. If you have any questions about bylaws, the CD, or the review procedure, please feel free to contact Pat Brune at patb@mopta.org for help.

Important Resources

National PTA’s website (www.pta.org) has a variety of online resources for your convenience. **Bulletin Boards** allow members to discuss issues important to them and share ideas. Signing up is free. More than 2,000 registered users take part in discussions in several topic areas including student achievement, My PTA, and grant opportunities. Share your ideas or find a few new ones through the **PTA Great Idea Bank**, where members record local activities run by PTAs. The Bank allows PTAs to submit their own success stories and search examples

by categories like Membership, Fundraising, Parents and Principals Working Together. Readers can pull contact information for the PTA person who entered the idea, and print the project details just like a “withdrawal” from the bank. Your username and password are required and can be found on the back of your current membership card. The **Add Your Voice** poll, found in the right sidebar on the homepage, allows members to speak up on important matters and allows leadership and staff to track the issues most important to our membership.

Special Thanks

to these units/councils for their generous gifts

Building Fund

Blue Springs Early Childhood Preschool
Bridger Middle School PTSA
Cambridge Elementary PTA
Chapel Lakes Elementary PTA
Daniel Young Elementary PTA
Espy PTA of Nixa
Liberty Oaks Elementary PTA
Mathews PTA of Nixa
Northgate Middle PTSA
Paxton Keeley Elementary PTA
Sycamore Hills Elementary PTA
Truman High School PTSA

Founders Gift

Blue Springs Early Childhood Preschool
Chapel Lakes Elementary PTA
Daniel Young Elementary PTA
Espy PTA of Nixa
Fleetridge Elementary PTA
Mathews PTA of Nixa
North Kansas City PTA Council
Northgate Middle PTSA
Parkade Elementary PTA
Peculiar Elementary PTA
Raytown PTA Council
Sycamore Hills Elementary PTA
Voy Spears Jr. Elementary PTA
Yeokum Middle School PTSA

Scholarship Fund

Blue Springs Early Childhood Preschool
Bridger Middle School PTSA
Cambridge Elementary PTA
Center PTA Council
Chapel Lakes Elementary PTA
Espy PTA of Nixa
Hazelwood Central High PTSA
Independence Council of PTA’S
Liberty Oaks Elementary PTA
Lucy Franklin Elementary PTA
Mathews PTA of Nixa
North Kansas City PTA Council
Northgate Middle PTSA
Paxton Keeley Elementary PTA
Sycamore Hills Elementary PTA
Truman High School PTSA
Voy Spears Jr. Elementary PTA
West Englewood PTA
Yeokum Middle School PTSA

as of 6/19/07

Education and Career Planning Gets a Boost

As a parent, you understand the importance of helping your students reach their goals and achieve success. The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is pleased to announce the availability of Missouri Connections, a comprehensive education and career planning tool for all ages. First launched to participating schools in February 2007, the site is continuing its development to serve students and is working toward expanding to adults in the coming year.

Missouri Connections is an expansion of the Missouri College and Career Planning System (CCPS) powered by Kuder(R) for middle school and high school students since 2003. While Missouri Connections embodies many of the same components, it now takes career planning to a higher level

with more interactive features and refined tools for learning based on the six career paths and 16 career clusters.

Educators, parents and students (grades 6-14) can use the system free of charge at www.missouriconnections.org. By taking a virtual tour, parents can get acquainted with how students explore clusters and careers and encourage their children to use it.

With Missouri Connections, students can begin to explore careers, start planning their classes, research postsecondary options, and get a hold of their future as early as sixth grade. Research has proven that with career and postsecondary preparation, students are more likely to stay in school, graduate on time, and accomplish personal goals.

Projections show Missouri's economy will need to fill over one million job openings due to growth or replacements in the 10 years between 2004 and 2014. Of these total openings, approximately 20 percent will require a bachelor's degree or higher. Nearly 80 percent will require an associate degree, postsecondary career education training, work experience or on-the-job training.

National projections echo the same trend.

During the same period, it is estimated only four of the top ten fastest-growing occupations will require a bachelor's degree or higher, while six will require an associate degree or on-the-job training.

With their child's permission, parents of students ages 13-18 can access, but not edit, their children's portfolio. With this access, parents can view their child's career interest assessment results, educational plans of study, resumes, and other items saved as "favorites" in their personal profiles, such as clusters, colleges, and more.

There are also a number of other resources to help parents get involved with their child's career planning and get their questions answered. Missouri Connections can connect parents with those resources.

For more information about Missouri Connections, visit dese.mo.gov/divcareered/missouriconnections.htm. Do not hesitate to contact your school guidance counselor for further assistance.



Thanks

to all of our PTA units and members for coming out to the Kansas City Royals baseball game on May 5 for the second year of the "PTA Night at the K". This year over 1700 tickets were sold for the game and congratulations to Daniel Young Elementary in Blue Springs for being the top seller. Everyone had a great time!

Three For Me

In the time it takes to watch a baseball game or organize a kid's birthday party, today's busy parents are helping their child succeed in school. How? Through a program called Three for Me—a simple promise from a parent to a child to dedicate three hours to them each school year at home, school, or in the community.

Three for Me, an official PTA program, is revolutionizing the way parents and families play a part in their child's education. Whether parents help their child review a lesson at home, make photocopies for a teacher, have lunch with their child at school, or volunteer to work the concession stand at a school baseball game on a weekend, every parent can fulfill the promise.

Families now have an easy, manageable way to support their child's education in just three hours each school year. Visit www.three4me.com for more information or to begin making the promise that really counts!

www.mopta.org

MC+ - Promoting the Welfare of All Children

The welfare of Missouri's Children is at the top of Missouri PTA purposes. It is our job as PTA Members to promote the welfare of all children. The state government has initiated changes in the MC+ Program (Medicaid Health Insurance) that greatly affects the children of Missouri. In an effort to make sure that all Missouri children that

are eligible for MC+ are insured, PTAs must get the word out to parents concerning their responsibility to either apply for MC+ Insurance or take the necessary steps to maintain their children's eligibility. Please visit the MC+ website (www.mcplus.org) for additional information.

Sign the Nation's Largest Teacher Thank-You Card

To acknowledge America's 3 million public school teachers, the Parent Teacher Association and the National Education Association are building the Nation's Largest Teacher Thank-You Card. You may send a card to www.teacherthankyoucard.org. All submissions will be compiled into a larger-than-life card that will be unveiled in spring 2008 and travel to major cities throughout the year.

The Joy of Grandparenting

According to Joan Kuersten, the author of the article “The ‘Grand’ in Grandparenting”, the word grandparent means so much more than simply the parent of a child’s parent. The emphasis is on ‘grand’, meaning magnificent and wonderful. She also shares that “grandparents are no longer burdened by the inherent judgment that parents face, namely that a child’s behavior reflects on their effectiveness as parents.” Grandparents are much freer to just enjoy their grandchildren. Kuersten believes that grandparents are also models of fostering a child’s sense of self-esteem.

According to a Rand research brief (2000), nearly four million children and 1.5 million grandparents live in grandparent-grandchild households. According to the article “Grandparents as Parents: A Primer for Schools” by Dianne Rothenberg, reasons behind this trend involve a variety of family circumstances, including the death of one or both parents, parental abandonment, the high incidence of divorce, an increase in the

number of never-married mothers (especially teen mothers), parental imprisonment, drug addiction, or mental illness. The AIDS epidemic also plays a role in this increasing shift of responsibility for child rearing.

Meet Earl Mack. He is the president of Eastwood Hills Elementary PTA in the Three Trails region. He is raising his grandchildren Kylan and Kyra. He and his wife Beatrice have had the twins since they were three months old. Earl says that Kyra always got good grades but Kylan (who Earl says is just as smart) struggled. Because of some health issues, Earl took some time off from work. As he spent more time with his grandson, he noticed a dramatic change in the boy’s attitude and his grades. Earl then started his own cleaning service, which allowed him to have more flexible hours. He could see a difference in his grandson’s life as his home and family life got better. Earl asked the school principal Mr. Scott what he could do at the school to make a difference. Mr. Scott pointed him to the PTA. He noticed

that there were only a handful of men involved. Earl believes in the importance of dads, calling them the “best role model”. He offered to buy lunch for any dad who came to school. He also believes that it’s very important to “walk the walk”.

Earl thinks that most grandparents believe that PTA is just a lot of work and that PTA always wants something. Earl’s message to grandparents is that the schools don’t need money from them; they need for them to spend time with the kids. Earl hopes that grandparents will share responsibility with the teachers. He encourages them to volunteer as he does 3-4 hours each month. Earl Mack will continue to educate dads and grandparents...and he will continue to make a difference. How are we, as PTA/PTSA units and councils utilizing the expertise and love that grandparents can share with our children?



Did You Know

that the average age of first-time grandparents is 48? About one-third of American adults are grandparents. America’s grandparents spend more than \$30 billion a year on their grandchildren – double what was spent a decade ago. According to information released in September 2006 by the U.S. Census Bureau, 56 million grandparents reside in the United States. Of these, 1.7 million are married. An astounding 1.4 million are in the labor force and provide for most of the basic needs of their grandchildren. In fact, 700,000 grandparents with a disability are caring for their grandchildren and 460,000 grandparents with an income below the poverty level are caring for their grandchildren. Hallmark Research reports that about 3 million grandparents receive Grandparents Day cards each year.

GRANDPARENTS DAY – September 9, 2007

This is a great time for PTA/PTSA to reach out to grandparents!

Superstar Unit: Voy Spears Elementary



Congratulations to Voy Spears Elementary PTA! They are this year's winner of the Outstanding Membership Campaign Grant. This is an application award and includes \$100 grant that is given to the unit that has the best overall year-long membership campaign.

VSE is located in the Blue Springs School District in the Three Trails region. The theme they used for their membership drive was "VSE Start Your Engines...Join PTA!" They cleverly utilized a black and white checkerboard tablecloth as the background of their membership bulletin board. Each class was represented by a

character from the movie "Cars" that moved across the board from 0 – 100% to the finish line.

This unit began their campaign before school started at their "Meet the Teacher Night" and continued to promote membership at their curriculum nights and other school events. Membership forms were available in each month's newsletter, a weekly "Wednesday Envelope" distribution, and on their website throughout the year. Business members have their business card displayed in each month's newsletter. PTA publications and information were available at a membership table during school events throughout the year.

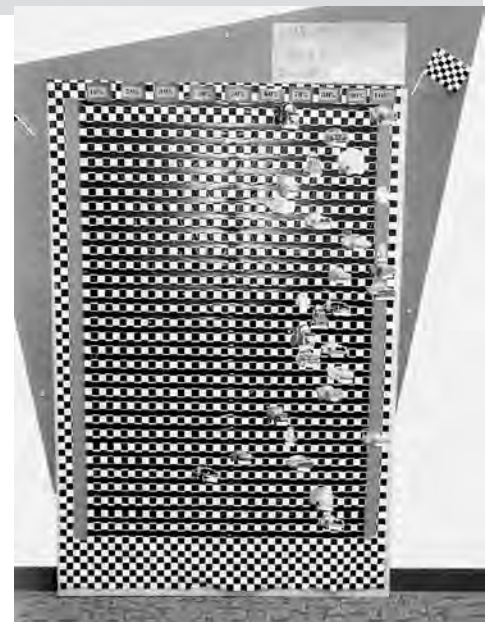
They utilized membership incentives – the first class to 100% received a pizza party and every class reaching 100% thereafter received an ice cream party. They had six classes reach 100% and 19 classrooms had 75% or better membership.

Because of their great effort, this unit reached 100% membership for this year, increasing their membership ten percent over their 2005-2006 membership. Jamie Conaty, unit president credits their success to the outstanding support of their parents and school staff and the excellent membership campaign organized by membership chair Sheila Gray. They look forward to repeating their achievements in the upcoming year.

CONGRATULATIONS

Voy Spears Elementary PTA,
winner of the Outstanding Membership
Campaign Grant

Membership is
Everyone's Job!



Voy Spear's racing theme bulletin board was a success!

Leadership Conference A Big Hit!



**CELEBRATION
PREPARATION**



**INTERACTION
CONNECTIONS**



NETWORKING
LEARNING



FUN
INFORMATION

Membership Challenge Winners

Bridger MS PTSA
(state convention registration)
Pioneer Ridge MS PTSA
(state convention registration and meals)



10 Ways To Increase Your PTA Membership

1. **START** your membership drive early. Set a realistic goal and don't give up until you pass the goal!
2. **HAVE** a "Membership Kick-Off" event – make it festive and fun!
3. **SPONSOR** a PTA "open house" before school opens in the fall to visit classrooms, meet teachers and join PTA.
4. **SUBSCRIBE** to the State PTA "CONTACT" magazine for all members of your board and let your general membership know they too may subscribe.
5. **DISPLAY** membership posters in appropriate places in your school and community.
6. **CHALLENGE** each board member to recruit at least one new member who has never been a PTA member.
7. **VISIT** senior citizen's centers in your community. Tell them about today's PTA and welcome their membership. They have wisdom and time to offer – you have activities in which they can participate.
8. **USE** every talent available to promote membership. Ask a journalist to help with letters and articles, an artist for posters, sketches and logos, businesses for access to a copy machine, etc. Put a "Help Wanted" ad for talent in your newsletter.
9. **PRODUCE** a calendar for members with PTA and school activities clearly displayed.
10. **COUNCILS:** Ask the mayor to proclaim a PTA Membership Enrollment Day, Week, or Month. Publicize.

To qualify for EARLY BIRD awards, be sure to get your dues in by SEPTEMBER 21st!

Time to "Power Up" Your PTA Unit

Are you ready to get "powered up"? Do you have your membership drive all planned? The key to making your PTA a powerful unit is all in the details. Successful units have a game plan for their year. Make sure you incorporate the following 10 steps and you too can become a **POWER UNIT!**



1. **START EARLY!** You can never start too early. A well planned membership campaign is ready to go by the first day of school or before.
2. **HAVE A MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE OF MORE THAN ONE.** To be a truly successful unit, split membership recruitment into different jobs and utilize the talents and resources of your parents and students.
3. **SET A MEMBERSHIP GOAL.** All good plans have a goal. Make sure that everyone knows what that goal is and how you plan to reach it.
4. **CREATE MEMBERSHIP INCENTIVES.** Arrange for discounts or coupons for PTA members at local businesses or create awards for students and/or classrooms that reach 100% membership.
5. **ASK YOUR SCHOOL FACULTY TO JOIN AND BECOME INVOLVED IN YOUR DRIVE.** Teachers and school staff can be your greatest allies in running a successful campaign. Show them what PTA does for them and utilize their help to reach parents.
6. **RECRUIT BUSINESS MEMBERS.** Give local businesses the chance to support the work your PTA does and create ways to give them visible recognition for that support.

7. **BE VISIBLE – ADVERTISE WHAT YOU'RE DOING.** Have a PTA bulletin board showing the progress of your membership drive. Remember to always have a PTA table with information and sign-up forms available at every school event or function.
8. **GET COLLECTED DUES SENT IN MONTHLY.** Make sure those state and national dues get

sent in on the first of the month. No one is officially a PTA member until their dues reach the state office.

9. **REMEMBER...MEMBERSHIP IS A YEAR ROUND EFFORT.** Don't stop your membership recruitment after the first couple months of school. Give everyone the chance to become a PTA member - those who missed out on the first go around, new parents to your school, and anyone else who supports work done on the behalf of children.
10. **APPLY FOR AWARDS – RECEIVE THE RECOGNITION YOUR UNIT DESERVES.** Let your hard work and the success of your unit shine! Show off those awards and recognition certificates on your PTA bulletin board or a PTA wall in your school. Give your PTA members the chance to enjoy a visible accolade made possible through their support.

With the right planning and help, every PTA has the opportunity and ability to become a success. Is your PTA ready to be a **POWER UNIT?** Follow these 10 steps and you are well on your way to reaching that goal. We know you can do it!

This year's membership theme: POWER in Membership...Join PTA!

Get Connected With OMDR!

Online Membership Data Reporting (OMDR) is here and Missouri PTA is LIVE! All units were to begin reporting their membership in the OMDR system beginning **July 1, 2007**.

OMDR is a database system that allows for National PTA to account for its more than six million members, much like any other organization. Once a member has been entered into the system, they will be eligible to receive many of the wonderful products that National PTA has to offer including the online version of OUR CHILDREN magazine, parent involvement resources, exclusive member benefits, and sponsorship information.

For you, OMDR is yet another tool to help you as a unit connect and communicate with your membership. Once you have entered your member information you can move that information into a template that will allow you to print mailing labels, membership rosters, and even batch emails to inform your membership or ask for help at your next event! Communication is a key tool to a successful year!

When creating your Membership Form for the upcoming school year, you will want to make sure that you have collected all of the information needed to input into the system. The information you will need from your new member includes: name, complete address, phone number, and email address.

This Year's REFLECTIONS

Theme

"I can make a difference by..."

Deadline

FRIDAY

JANUARY 18, 2008

2007 Winners Gallery is now online at www.pta.org

www.mopta.org

Once you have collected this information you can enter it into the OMDR system and your new member will receive a "Welcome to PTA" message from National PTA.

Check the OMDR section in the Missouri PTA Tool Kit (mailed to Presidents in July) for more detailed instructions in navigating the OMDR system. OR join an OMDR webinar offered by National PTA, which will walk you through screen by screen with help of a National PTA representative. You can ask questions as you go through the screens and receive an answer instantly!

The link to register for the webinars is: registration.intercall.com/go/nationalpta. Be sure to register at least two hours before the webinar time. If you have any questions feel free to contact Missouri PTA Membership Service vice president Jennifer Casey at jenniferc@mopta.org or home at 816-224-0907.

OMDR Webinar training is available from your home on the dates and times listed below:

Thursday, August 2 – 4:00 p.m.
Saturday, August 4 – 12:00 p.m.
Monday, August 6 – 2:00 p.m.
Wednesday, August 8 – 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, August 14 – 11:00 a.m.
Thursday, August 16 – 3:00 p.m.
Monday, August 20 – 9:00 p.m.
Wednesday, August 22 – 10:00 a.m.
Tuesday, August 28 – 4:00 p.m.
Thursday, August 30 – 12:00 p.m.

Destination: Leadership II Emerging Minority Leaders Conference

Designed to recognize and reinforce the significance of ethnic minority leaders' roles in PTA, this conference creates an opportunity for ethnic minority leaders to connect, share, and galvanize efforts.

**October 19 – 21, 2007
Dallas, TX**

Mark Your Calendar

AUGUST

Children's Eye Health and Safety month

- 1** PE&I grant deadline
- 5 Friendship Day
- 12 International Youth Day
- 13 International Left Handers Day
- 15 Best Friends Day
- 25-31 Be Kind to Humankind week

SEPTEMBER

National Five a Day month

- 1** Advocacy through Legislation Award (AtLaw) applications due
- 1-7 National Childhood Injury Prevention week
- 8 International Literacy Day
- 10 Swap Ideas Day
- 15** Leaders Project applications due
- 21** Early Bird membership awards deadline
- 24 Family Table Day

OCTOBER

Positive Attitude month

- 7-13 National Fire Prevention week
- 12 – 14** Missouri PTA Annual Convention (Columbia)
- 15-19 National Health Education week
- 19-21 Emerging Minority Leaders Conference (Dallas, TX)
- 21-27 National School Bus Safety week

Looking Ahead

APRIL

- 25-26 Leadership Conference (location: TBA)

JUNE

- 21-23 National PTA Convention (San Diego, CA)



Legislative Session Wrap-up

By Donna Petiford, Missouri PTA state legislative chair

BILLS THAT PASSED

The following bills passed both chambers of the Missouri General Assembly and as of this writing (June 1, 2007) are awaiting the Governor's signature:

Appropriations

(HB2, Ictet) Adds more than \$157 million to education funding. Included in this bill are \$132.6 million to the foundation formula, \$5.13 million for transportation, \$5.2 million for the virtual school program, additional money for Special Olympics, \$3.6 million increase for the A+ School program, an increase of \$2 million for Parents As Teachers, and almost \$3 million for the eMINTS Program.

School Vision Screening

(SCS/SB16, Scott) Requires that each child enrolled in kindergarten or first grade shall receive a comprehensive vision examination. Missouri PTA supports early vision screening because proper vision correction is essential to learning to read and ultimately to all areas of student achievement. Because this bill allows parents to "opt" their students out of the vision exam, a concern remains that needy children may be opted out and remain unserved. PTAs need to continue to work within their school communities to ensure that all students get the vision exams and eyeglasses they need to properly see in school and to be ready to learn at all ages.

SCHOOL OPENING DAY

(CCS/HCS/SCS/SB64, Goodman, Section 171.031) This act authorizes each school district to set its opening date each year, provided that the date cannot be earlier than ten days prior to Labor Day.

Make-up Days

(CCS/HCS/SCS/SB64, Goodman, Sections 171.031 and 171.033) The annual calendar for the school term, as prepared by the school board, is required to include six make-up days for the possible loss of attendance due to inclement weather. A district shall be required to make up the first six days of school lost or canceled due to inclement weather and half the number of days lost or canceled in excess of six days.

DEFEATED: TUITION TAX CREDITS

(HCS HB 808, Bearden) Would have established the Betty L. Thompson Scholarship. Perfection defeated March 7, 2007 (NOES: 96, AYES: 62). Missouri PTA

has historically opposed tax credits or income tax deductions for tuition paid to nonpublic elementary and secondary schools. We believe in public funds for public education only. Missouri PTA (State Legislative Chair) testified against this bill during a special committee hearing held in Springfield in September 2006. A Missouri PTA Legislative Alert was issued on February 20, 2007, and tuition tax credits were a focus of our Regional Kids First Rallies. Missouri PTA appreciates the support of those legislators who voted in opposition to this bill (<http://www.house.mo.gov/bills071/jrn/jrn036.htm>).

BILLS THAT DID NOT PASS

Driver's Education And Teen Cell Phone Use

(HB 609, Baker) Would have required every school district to offer a driver's education course available to students 15 years of age or older and prohibits cell phone use by temporary permit or intermediate license holders. This legislation was a focus of our Regional Kids First Rallies and on March 6, 2007, Missouri PTA (State Legislative Chair) testified before the Committee on Crime Prevention and Public Safety in support of this bill. This bill was voted out of committee but did not make it to the House floor for debate. PTAs should continue to encourage elected officials to support this legislation because traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for young people ages 15 to 20 years old. Many of the leading causes of crashes among young drivers can be addressed through proper Driver's Education programs. In 2005 only 49 school districts in Missouri offered Driver's Education programs during the traditional school calendar. In addition to proper education, teen lives may be saved by eliminating the distraction of talking on a cell phone while driving. This bill addressed both of these issues while establishing a funding pool for the development of an on-line course and to offset fees for students who qualify for the reduced-price lunch program. In addition, PTAs and parents should encourage teens to enroll in driver's education classes for elective credit, when appropriate. Parents are encouraged to set the example for teens when driving by either refraining from talking on a cell phone or by stopping the vehicle to talk on a cell phone.

Level Of Bonded Indebtedness For School Districts

(HJR 10, Baker & SJR 8, Ridgeway) The Senate passed its version of this bill that proposed a constitutional amendment raising the allowable level of bonded indebtedness for school districts (to 20%) but the bill died in committee in the House (House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee). Missouri PTA issued a legislative alert regarding this bill on March 12, 2007, and discussed this legislation at our Regional KIDS FIRST Rallies. Current legislation states that a school district may become indebted in an amount not to exceed fifteen percent of its assessed valuation. This current fifteen percent ceiling on indebtedness can restrict school districts from providing adequate construction, expansion, and/or renovation of facilities. Please continue to SPEAK UP for our public schools by asking your representative government to support this legislation.

Simple Majority Approval For School Districts

(HJR 17, Schoemehl) Proposed a constitutional amendment allowing simple majority approval for school district bond issues. This bill died in committee (House Elementary and Secondary Education) Missouri PTA supports the passage of school bonds by a simple majority vote.

Limits On General Revenue Appropriations

(HJR 20, Bearden) This bill proposed a constitutional amendment establishing limits on total state general revenue appropriations. HJR 20 would have prevented Missouri from investing in the vital services needs of our communities (including public education) even in times of budget surpluses. Missouri PTA issued a legislative alert on April 12, 2007, because we oppose any attempt to place additional restrictions on the State's ability to provide revenue for essential services such as public education. Both the House Budget Committee and the House Rules Committee passed the bill out of committee but it did not come up for debate on the house floor. Colorado is the only state in the nation to have adopted this kind of proposal, which is known as the Tax Payer Bill of Rights (TABOR). The 2005 National Kids Count Data Book and The Kids Count in Colorado 2005 Data Book show that TABOR has crippled services for children such as health care and education.



School Overcrowding Attributed to Local PTA Unit!



Century Elementary in Nixa has a tremendous PTA. When asking children in the school why their PTA is so great, a seven year old girl named Hannah summed it up by saying that “our PTA is so great and does so many great things for us that other people hear

about it and it convinces more and more people to move here.” It could be true since Century Elementary had a record enrollment of 608 during the last school year, up from 529 the previous year. Other children believe that the PTA is so great because...

They help us when we don't even ask for it.
Paige, age 8

They spend their time doing stuff for us!
Conner, age 9

They want to help us learn more.
Jacob, age 9

They do lots of fun things.
Teneka, age 9

They respect us and help us with many adventures.
Chyan, age 10

They are nice.
Greta, age 5

They make school fun!
Gavin, age 8

They care about us.
Peyton, age 9

They volunteer for US!
Katie, age 9

They like to help the teachers.
Abi, age 6

They love us!
Ashley, age 9

Notice that none of the children mentioned fundraising. They love PTA and can see the benefits of parent involvement in each activity and event.



Meningitis: Possible to Prevent, Dangerous to Ignore



Each year meningococcal disease strikes nearly 3,000 Americans and 10 to 12 percent of those infected will die. Up to 83 percent of meningococcal disease cases among adolescents and young adults are potentially vaccine-preventable. The disease can take one of two forms: swelling of membranes that surround the brain and spinal cord or the more deadly meningococemia, an infection of the blood. Lifestyle factors common among adolescents and young adults seem to be linked to the disease. These included crowded living situations such as dormitories, boarding schools, and sleep-away camps, going to bars, smoking, and irregular sleep habits. For more information, visit www.nmaus.org.

www.mopta.org

Attention Student Delegates!

Students in grades six through twelve are invited to attend the 92nd Missouri PTA state convention in Columbia, Missouri October 12-14! Students will experience a weekend full of opportunities:

- Separate track of student workshops
- General sessions, convention meals, and exhibit hall
- Networking with other students in events and activities throughout the weekend
- Hosting this year's student service project — a Health Fair for the delegates

Make sure to attend the student gathering on Friday, October 12th from 4:30 to

6:00 p.m. for dinner and to set up the Health Fair.

The Health Fair will be held Saturday, October 13th from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Expo Center (Exhibit Hall).

Delegates attending the Health Fair will have access to health related informational brochures and will rotate through check stations to learn more about healthy choices and health-wise numbers.

Upon arriving at the Health Fair, all delegates will be registered for FREE door prizes!

Missouri PTA BELIEVES in our students! You are our future!

A Step Backward for School Integration

The U.S. Supreme Court recently ruled against diversity in schools, taking a significant step backward in ensuring inclusive, multi-racial student bodies. PTA is disappointed in the Court's ruling. As parents and teachers, we are doing everything we can to see every child's potential made a reality and to educate children in a world that is rapidly changing and diverse.

It is abundantly clear that to prepare children, education must include learning with children from multiple racial and ethnic

backgrounds. We know geography and economic status often create homogenous communities; however, schools can and should serve as bridges to connect children, families and communities. By limiting the ability of school districts to use narrowly-tailored criteria to create inclusive schools, the Court is undermining the importance of providing our children with the opportunities and advantages of a diverse learning environment.

Children educated in multi-racial educational settings learn tolerance, become comfortable with members of other ethnic

and racial groups, and develop critical thinking skills. Ideally, every neighborhood school would provide such a multiracial setting. Bridging the gap between communities not only ensures a level of educational equity within the school district, but helps break down barriers among various segments within the broader community. A democratic society demands equal opportunity to learn.

PTA stands ready to work with schools across the country to find real world solutions to ensure an inclusive school environment for every child.

Thoughts

No good can give us pleasure if we do not share it with others.

— Seneca

Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.

— Thomas Edison

The difference between the impossible and the possible lies in a person's determination.

— Tommy Lasorda

Do You Know... Kim Weber?

Editor's note: This interview was given under duress as Kim doesn't believe that the things she does are unique or noteworthy. I disagree.

Kim Weber is an honest, sincere, and outstanding leader. Although she shies away from the limelight, Kim is a person who consistently "gets it done". Her motives are clear. She wants to "make a difference" by helping to change the life of a child somewhere; she believes that the child may not even be her own. Kim's message to

volunteers is that "you shouldn't stand in the back...if you have a voice and opinion, express it."

Kim is very proud of her children Andrew, Matt, Leah, Stephanie, and Amanda. In fact, her involvement with PTA began because she wanted to know what was going on in her children's schools. She believes that she was also motivated by her mother, a lady who led by the example that no matter how busy she was, she always had time for Kim.

Kim currently serves as the Missouri PTA vice president and director of Communications. Previously, she was a state regional director. Her local involvement has included about any officer/chair position you can think of...president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, volunteer coordinator, and membership, hospitality, and fundraising chairs.

Kim has won many honors including a Presidential Service Volunteer Awards in both 2006 and 2007 for her work in Girl Scouts, PTA, and the community. She was recognized with a Hero Award for the City of Columbia for volunteering in the community and her role as an advocate for children. Columbia Schools recognized her for Distinguished Service and both Gentry Middle School and the Columbia PTA Council bestowed Missouri Distinguished Service Awards on Kim this year. Kim is also employed with the Boone Hospital Center, working there for the past 17 years.



The Bottom Line: This Could be the Start of Something Big!



By Peggy Preston, Missouri PTA CONTACT editor

I just love new beginnings! I love the smiles on the children's faces as they bound from the school bus to start a new school year. I love new

school supplies, especially sharpening new pencils, trying on new school clothes, and the smell of the hot laminator in the teachers' workroom. All of these things signal a new beginning to me.

I believe that everybody needs a fresh start at some point in time. For a PTA unit or council, this is the time to set goals and make plans for the coming year. It is also the time

to invite everyone to join your PTA/PTSA. Yes, everyone! Did you know research shows that most people will participate in an event if invited? I do believe that the personal touch and the feeling of being included and important is the reason this is true. Everyone wants to belong to something positive, especially something that benefits children. So let's not ask them to join this year; instead let's invite them to join. An invitation suggests importance. And along with the more traditional PTA/PTSA members, (parents, teacher, and students if you're a PTSA), let's invite grandparents, aunts and uncles, custodians, cooks, substitute teachers, and community members...anyone with a stake in the future of our children...to join our PTA. What a great opportunity we are giving them to contribute to our greatest blessing... children.

How May We Help You?

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Missouri PTA

92nd Annual Convention



Date: October 12-14, 2007
Place: Holiday Inn Select
Columbia, Missouri

Registration Info

- **Convention Package**
(includes Registration Fee, Friday Kick-Off Luncheon, and Saturday Evening Banquet)
 - Adult \$130.00
 - Student \$100.00

- **Registration (no meals)**
 - Advanced \$80.00
 - Student Advanced \$50.00
 - On-Site \$90.00
 - Student On-Site \$55.00

- **Convention Meals**
 - Kick-Off Lunch \$25.00
 - Sat. Banquet \$40.00

- **Hotel Room Rates**
 - Two Double Beds (single/quad) [plus applicable taxes] \$89.95

**Advanced Registration
Deadline:**

September 10, 2007

Missouri PTA
www.mopta.org
800-328-7330

*You are the reason we **Believe** in the **POWER** of **PTA**.*
Come take advantage of the energy Convention activities will spark in your leadership team. Bring several members of your Board and general membership. Jump start the training of the next generation of leaders.
*Everyone attending will be inspired to **Believe!***

Highlights

- Motivational Speakers and Entertainment
- Over 40 Workshops offering new ideas, improved skills, recharged energy
- Silent Auction
- Exhibit Hall
- Awards Presentations
- Networking Opportunities
- Debate of Resolutions and Bylaws Amendments
- Student Service Project designed especially for delegates and conference attendees
- Election of 2007-09 State Officers

The Call to Convention was mailed in July! Each unit/council president should have received one. Please share with your members! If you missed yours, contact Missouri PTA at office@mopta.org or 800-328-7330 or visit www.mopta.org.



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