

Missouri Parent Teacher Association

CONTACT

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Today



First Timer's Comments

I found it extremely helpful and every person on a PTA Board should attend, even if it's just one. I really liked the Bullying workshop the most. But, the Treasurer and 990 workshops were the most beneficial for me. I found out things in the bylaws workshop that I didn't know about and the President class was great as well. I will definitely be at the next one. - Amy Kentch, Garrett Elementary PTA

I really enjoyed myself. I learned so much by attending workshops. I also networked with PTA members from different cities in Missouri. One thing I really liked was the speed vending. It was something I'd never seen before. I will definitely attend next year. I would like to thank PTA for having something so wonderful. - Shelia Cornell

I wanted to express the wonderful time I had at the Convention. This was my first time attending so I didn't know what to expect. The opening night, PTA Idol, I truly enjoyed the most. It gave me an opportunity to meet new people and enjoy some good clean fun. The classes I attended during the convention were very beneficial and will help Larimore Elementary improve its membership and parent involvement. I am looking forward to attending the next convention in 2009. - Diana Patterson, Larimore Elementary PTA

"The energy here is incredible, wonderful time". - Sharise Vaughen

"I loved convention especially having Chuck Saylor's with us--he's awesome!" - Brandi Long

"I'm learning a lot." - Allison Bruflat

"There's not a bad apple in the bunch." - Brandi Van Ross

"Bylaws were boring but, we're getting to know each other." - Karalea Palmer (Student)

Kristin Dutzel of Stone Church Preschool PTA enjoyed all of the informative information she received and took away a great deal of information for her local unit.

Valerie Lawless of Laurel Hills Elementary took away with her a lot of information and ideas for her local unit. She also enjoyed learning the proper procedures in PTA.



Lachelle Alexander of Southwood PTA enjoyed the No Child Left Behind Workshop. She felt it was very informative. She also learned a lot and took away a lasting first time experience.

Patty Jurich from the Kansas State PTA enjoyed the vendors and the display of the Local units. She said that this was the highlight of the convention for her. Overall she felt it was a great and informative convention.

Cover photo:

President Mary Oyler reads to Mr. Parker's Kindergarten class at Barry School

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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.

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President's Message By Mary Oyler, Missouri PTA President



As we start this new year both on the calendar and with our new elected officials, many things will look different. We have a new president and a new governor along with many new state and federal legislators. Do we know exactly how they will vote on educational issues or issues that affect the health and welfare of our children? We know what they have told us during the long campaign season. But, we as PTA members must be ever watchful that these leaders are making the best decisions for our children - including both the quality of their public education and future.

PTA works hard to make sure that each of our members are informed about what is happening not only in Jefferson City but in Washington D.C. as well. In order for our members to stay up to date on legislative issues we offer subscriptions to This Week in Washington (an e-newsletter produced by National PTA) and membership in the Missouri PTA JC/DC network (you may subscribe for legislative alerts at www.mopta.org).

Also, this year National PTA is opening up its Legislative Conference on March 11 & 12, 2009 to all PTA members - information about this conference is available at www.pta.org. Your Missouri Board of Managers will be sending at least 4 delegates to this conference - but we would welcome any other members that would like to join us as we learn about PTA's National Legislative Platform and visit with all of our senators and congressmen in Washington D.C. that week.

If your unit is unable to send a delegate to Washington in March, I would like to invite units to join us in Jefferson City on January 27, 2009 for Missouri Child Advocacy Day. Please visit our website (www.mopta.org) for more information about this event. There is no registration fee or pre-registration. Excellent workshops are offered during the day and there will be plenty of time to visit with your state representative or senator. If your unit plans to send someone to Jefferson City in January, please let our office know so we can make arrangements to meet at the Capitol that day.

Now, if you are unable to attend either of these events, please consider attending a Kids First Legislative Rally in your community. The Board of Managers, councils and units are

organizing these rallies across the state. Check our website calendar for a rally in your area. If you don't see one in your community, contact our office and we will help your unit organize an opportunity for the community to meet with their state elected officials. As well as, offer a forum to help your membership understand Missouri PTA's position on various state issues - Tax Credits, Deductions and Vouchers; Teen Drivers and Cell Phones; Third Party Child Abuse Reporting in Missouri Schools; and Status of Master Settlement Agreement (Tobacco Settlement Funds). For more information about Missouri PTA's position on these topics and many other issues concerning our children's education and welfare, please visit the Resolution section of our website.

PTA must be a powerful voice for all children - we must be advocates - we must speak out for the most vulnerable members of our communities. We can only do this through the help of our membership. Please take time to look over all the opportunities as we strive to make sure that all of our elected officials are making decisions that will make every child's potential a reality TODAY and every day.

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 well-being 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

Convention 2008 General Meetings

By Patty Buckholz, Administrative Assistant

The General Meetings of the convention are the one time a year when the state membership meets to conduct its business. The meetings had a new twist this year; instead of the traditional three meetings, this year we only had two. Like much of the remainder of the condensed convention, every meeting was jam-packed.

General Meeting I began with the Platte County Middle School Honors Choir giving a spine tingling rendition of the National Anthem following the flag ceremony by Boy Scout Troop 395. Letters were read from past presidents who could not attend but eloquently expressed their regrets and best wishes for a great convention. Convention committees were established and reports were made. Finally President Mary Oyler declared us organized and ready to do business.

Chuck Saylor, National PTA President-Elect, made the keynote address Saturday morning. He talked of parent involvement, particularly the involvement of men in schools and PTA. He spoke of bringing technological equality to our schools. And he spoke of getting out the PTA vote in the coming national election.

All the proposed amendments to the bylaws were adopted, this year using a different parliamentary approach. Historically we have ponderously gone through each proposed amendment, debated and voted on each one separately. This year the entire list was presented as a whole. The delegates were instructed to 'object' if they wanted to pull something out of the list for separate consideration. When no one objected, the amendments were declared adopted by 'unanimous consent.'

General Meeting II began with the presentation to Synergy House for the convention service project. Members brought items to be used in the Synergy House holiday store.

The delegates adopted the resolution "Food Allergies and Anaphylaxis." Adoption of the resolution has given Missouri PTA a stance on the issue. Missouri PTA will begin to establish resources for members to become more familiar with food allergies and their consequences. Units and councils are encouraged to share such information with their members. Additionally units and councils are encouraged to consider the needs of individuals as they plan events where food is available. Finally, if legislation should come forward regarding food allergies, anaphylaxis and schools, Missouri PTA now has an opinion on which to base its' response.

Delegates were given an update on legislative activities during the last year. Missouri PTA took pride in its' influence in the passage of the Parent and Family Involvement in Education Week and in the defeat of the tax credit (voucher) bill. Once again the delegates were encouraged to vote in the pending national election.

Door prizes were handed out by the dozens to both those brave enough to address the microphone and lucky enough to have their name drawn. An invitation to the 2009 convention in Springfield had everyone eager to do it all again. The meetings concluded with a fun slide show of the many happy faces of the convention weekend.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR'S CLASS OF THE LEADER'S PROJECT

Evaluation Drawing Winner

Congratulations to Valerie Lawless of Raytown. Her name was drawn from the convention evaluations, and she will receive a certificate for a free registration to the 2009 Missouri PTA Convention in Springfield!

Thanks to all delegates who took the time to fill out and turn in an evaluation. Your input is vital to convention planning.

Awards Awards!!

In the blink of an eye the deadline for many awards and grants will be here and gone before you know it. Get the recognition your unit deserves. Outstanding Membership Campaign Grant applications are due April 1. The following awards and grants applications are due to the state office by April 15: Council Achievement award, Unit Achievement award, Newsletter award, Website award, Health & Safety grant, Membership awards, Student Safety award, Parent Involvement grant. Check your Tool Kit's Grants & Awards booklet or the MO PTA website for information and applications.

Quilt Raffle

2012 will mark MO PTA's 100th anniversary during our annual convention. In the interim, the past state presidents have been knocking their collective brains together to come up with fundraisers for this landmark event. Currently a quilt raffle is underway. Raffle tickets are \$2 each and the drawing will be held on Founder's day. Contact Kathy Nevans at kathyn@mopta.org or the state office if you would like to purchase tickets.

It's PTA

JUST A FRIENDLY
REMINDER

When utilizing the copyright name PTA in print the correct format is PTA not P.T.A.

www.mopta.org

Happy Birthday PTA

February 17th PTA's across the Nation will celebrate Founder's Day. Are your members aware of PTA's long and powerful history? Plan a celebration this year spotlighting the accomplishments and milestones of PTA at the National, State and Local level. Foster a sense of pride among your members. Let them know our collective past is just the foundation. It is by their continued participation that a positive difference is made in children's lives today.

PTA Gives Back

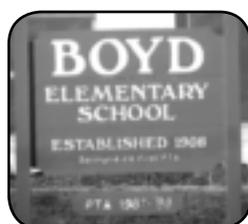
PTA delegates collected items for Synergy Services at this year's convention. Two large boxes of donated items and gift certificates were presented to Lance Page of Synergy Services at the 2nd General Meeting. A special thank you to all of the delegates who contributed to this worthwhile project for Synergy Services who makes a difference for youth, women and children in the Kansas City area through crisis intervention, shelter, advocacy and education.

Kudos to Peggy Richey!!

There has yet to be a job too daunting to scare away the invincible Peggy Richey. One might even say she is a PTA superhero. Over the past many years Peggy has tackled, without complaint, and conquered vast PTA tasks and problems. For many of the Board of Managers she has never failed to offer assistance when called for and supply encouragement when needed. In just the past few years she was instrumental in organizing the St. Louis National PTA convention and the recent MO PTA convention. Because of all Peggy has meant to PTA it was fitting she be honored with the National PTA Life Achievement Award. Congratulations and Thank You Peggy!



Happy Birthday Boyd PTA!



1909-2009 • 100 Years of Advocating for Children

Boyd Elementary School is home to Springfield's first PTA. As the story goes, the Boyd School Mothers' Circle was established in 1909 to solve an urgent health and sanitation problem—community water buckets being shared with a stray dog. The dog wasn't perturbed, just the teacher and the mothers!

The new OMDR Plus POWERED BY JUST BETWEEN FRIENDS

Has your unit signed up for OMDR Plus? If not, get started now! Simply go to this website www.justbetweenfriends.com/2008quickstart and click the start now button. You will be lead question-by-question through to the end.

Quick Start for 2008-2009 school year – PTA Groups

Here's what you'll need to complete the start-up process for your PTA. Please have each item available when you go through the wizard, because if you close your browser before completing the wizard, you'll need to start again.

1. The Local Unit ID # of your PTA Unit or Council.
 - o This is the unique number issued to you by National PTA. If you don't have this, please contact Missouri PTA to obtain it.
2. Contact info for you and your school
 - o Include address, phone and your own email address. If you are running a PTA Council, include info for your school district or coverage area instead of a single school.
3. Number of students in your school (You can approximate.)
 - o For Councils, use the number in your district or coverage area.
4. Number of Families/Households that have children in your school (You can approximate.)
 - o This is the number of families living in one household that have at least one child in your school. (A split home with a father separated from a mother would be considered one household.)
 - o For Councils, use the number in your district or coverage area.
5. A person who will act in your place if you are unavailable.
 - o (Name, address, phone, and email.) You'll create usernames and passwords for both of you to use the system.

Once you have collected the information you need, it should take you about 10 minutes to complete the start-up process, after which Just Between Friends will send you information about how you can learn to use the system.

Once your unit is set up, Missouri PTA will next approve you and then you will be ready to get your parents signed up.

Mid-Year Membership Checklist

By Shelly Throckmorton, Membership Emphasis Chair

Has your unit met its membership goal for the year? Want your PTA listed on the Missouri PTA Honor Roll? Looking to receive a membership award this spring? Now is great time to recruit new members. We all are feeling more refreshed after the chaos of the first couple months of school and the holiday season. Many parents have made the resolution to devote the time to become more involved in their children's lives. Local community members and businesses may have made the resolution to make a difference. Check these off your list and you can SOAR into 2009!

- √ Membership information provided to all new families entering your school
- √ A membership update given at meetings and/or in newsletters
- √ All school faculty asked to join your PTA
- √ Send out a "second chance" sign-up form to families that missed your first drive
- √ Brag about all the good things your unit has done so far this year
- √ Develop a new local incentive for PTA memberships
- √ Use the OMDR email feature to provide great communication to your membership regarding PTA meeting, activities and other general news
- √ Try a fun winter membership challenge to bring in those extra members to meet your goal
- √ Make sure National PTA Benefit Provider information is given to all members. Use this list of providers to entice new members to join.

10 WAYS TO INCREASE YOUR PTA MEMBERSHIP

1. *HAVE* a letter of welcome, PTA materials, and a membership envelope in the principal's office for distribution when a new family comes to register their children.
2. *GIVE* someone you love a PTA membership on Valentine's Day!
3. *ASK* a local self-defense expert to conduct a special workshop for PTA moms and teenage girls.
4. *OFFER* a door prize to members only at your PTA meetings - must be present to win!
5. *MAKE* sure a list of the National PTA Benefit Providers is displayed at all meetings and listed in every newsletter.
6. *PROVIDE* a PTA budget with copies available to all members to show how their money is spent to benefit children.
7. *SUBMIT* an article to your local newspaper promoting PTA membership for everyone and be sure to include a person or place where memberships can be obtained.
8. *CONSIDER* special accommodations for non-English speaking families. Make translated materials available and be conscious of different customs.
9. *PROVIDE* different colored nametags to denote your members at meetings.
10. *COUNCILS:* Encourage friendly challenges or competitions between schools of similar size. Provide a "traveling" trophy.

The People's Choice on Bylaws

By Linda Klender, Procedures & Bylaws Chairman

By unanimous consent, the delegates elected to make the following amendments to the Missouri Bylaws.

Unit Bylaws change:

#Article IV Section 1

A local PTA is in good standing when it does all of the following. If a local PTA becomes "not in good standing" as soon as it has fulfilled the necessary requirements it is again considered "in good standing."

- a. Adheres to the Purposes and basic policies of the PTA;
- b. Remits national and state dues to the state PTA by dates required (Article V Section 4);
- c. Has bylaws approved every three years according to the procedures of the state PTA;
- d. Submits a copy of the unit's or council's annual financial report and audit to the state PTA by December 1st of each year;
- e. Submits a copy of the required IRS tax form to the state PTA by December 1st of each year;
- f. Submits the names and addresses of officers to the state PTA by March 31st of each year; and
- g. Meets other criteria as may be prescribed by the state PTA.

(Proviso: This amendment takes effect July 1, 2009.)

Council Bylaws changes:

#Article IV Section 1

A council is in good standing when it does all

of the following. If a council becomes "not in good standing," as soon as it has fulfilled the necessary requirements, it is again considered "in good standing".

- a. Adheres to the Purposes and basic policies of the PTA;
- b. Remits the annual council service fee by December 1st of each year;
- c. Has bylaws approved every three years according to the procedures of the state PTA;
- d. Submits a copy of the council's annual financial report and audit to the state PTA by December 1st of each year.
- e. Submits a copy of the required IRS tax form to the state PTA by December 1st of each year.
- f. Submits the names and addresses of officers to the state PTA by March 31st of each year; and
- g. Meets other criteria as may be prescribed by the state PTA.

(Proviso: This amendment takes effect July 1, 2009.)

#Article IV Section 7

Section 7. Each council shall pay an annual service fee of \$25.00 (twenty-five) to Missouri PTA. This service fee shall be due December 1st of each year.

(Proviso: This amendment takes effect July 1, 2009.)

THE ABOVE AMENDMENTS ARE NOT EFFECTIVE UNTIL JULY 1, 2009. DO NOT REPLACE THE CURRENT

WORDING OF YOUR BYLAWS UNTIL THAT TIME.

The following amendment is effective immediately.

Unit Bylaws change:

#Article IV

Section 6. Local units shall submit two hard copies or one electronic copy of their bylaws to the state office for approval by the procedures and bylaws chairman once every three years. Amendments shall be sent immediately after adoption for approval. Bylaws and amendments shall become effective upon receipt of state approval.

Council Bylaws change:

#Article IV

Section 6. Council PTAs shall submit two hard copies or one electronic copy of their bylaws to the state office for approval by the procedures and bylaws chairman once every three years. Amendments shall be sent immediately after adoption, for approval. Bylaws and amendments shall become effective upon receipt of state approval.

You may delete the wording in your current bylaws under this article and section and replace the wording verbatim as above. This is a # Article.

Local Units and councils bylaws shall not be in conflict with the bylaws of the National PTA or the bylaws of Missouri PTA and shall include verbatim any required language as stated in the model bylaws approved by Missouri PTA, and identified by the number symbol (#). Therefore, the above amendments do not need to be voted upon by your unit or council. It is not necessary to submit these as new amendments to your bylaws.

CONGRATULATIONS to our Early Bird Award Winners. Each of the following winners was presented with their award at the State Convention in October.

Early Bird Awards

Preschool/Elementary Level: High Pointe Elementary PTA - Ozark Region

Middle School/Jr. High/Combined Level: South Valley Middle School PTSA

Pony Express Region

High School Level: Raytown High School PTSA - Three Trails Region



Council Leader's Training

By Wendy Jackson, President-Elect

Council Leaders came together at convention to gain insight on council and the role that they play in serving the children of Missouri. Through councils we are able to effectively support units through a variety of means, such as: Schools of Information, programs, trainings, and leadership. The importance of collaboration, awareness, and support was the theme of the training. What can/should we be doing to effectively support our units? Through bylaws, membership, and advocacy we will strengthen our units, develop leaders, and ultimately improve the lives of all children "today". Keep watching for the next chance for you to be involved in a council training event.



We Resolve... *By Denise McCarter, Resolutions Chairman*

The Food Allergies and Anaphylaxis resolution was adopted during the general meeting at the 2008 State Convention.

This resolution addresses the increasing occurrence of food allergies and anaphylactic reactions among school age children in our state. For some students with severe food allergies, school attendance can be risky. Food allergy is the leading cause of anaphylaxis, accounting for an estimated 30,000 emergency room visits and 150 to 200 deaths in the United States each year. Adequate plans and staff who are knowledgeable regarding preventative measures, and are well prepared to handle severe allergic reactions can save the life of a child.

There is no cure for food allergies. The only means to prevent food allergy reactions is total avoidance of the substance to which the child is allergic. The risk of accidental exposure to foods can be reduced in the school and childcare setting if staff,

students, parents and physicians work together to minimize risks and provide a safe environment for all children and youth with food allergic reactions.

Given the severity of food allergy reactions, including anaphylaxis and given the rising incidence of food allergies among children in the U.S., it is imperative to be proactive rather than reactive. Education of students, parents, school staff members and the community to promote a greater level of awareness of the severity of food allergy concerns will make a significant contribution to promoting safe environments for all children and youth, including those suffering from severe food allergies. This can be achieved through adequate planning and training in the areas of information and awareness, avoidance, recognition of the signs of a severe allergic reaction and the appropriate emergency responses.

PTA will begin to implement this resolution

by finding ways to increase awareness of the problem and encourage education and training for those who work with school age children.

The PTA is one of our children's largest advocates. Two of the stated purposes of the PTA are 1) to promote the welfare of children and youth, and 2) to secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth. Take advantage of your membership in PTA, and contact your local representatives. Let them know about the food allergy issue and the many others issues PTA considers to be concerns. Contact information for all Missouri legislators is available on the PTA website.

The resolution can also be viewed on the website. Go to www.mopta.org, and click on legislation, resolutions, Health/Safety, and then Food Allergies and Anaphylaxis. If you have questions about this resolution, contact Donna Petiford, Vice President of Legislation and Advocacy or Denise McCarter, Resolutions Chairman.

Changes to AtLaw Award

In order to inspire more applicants, the Missouri PTA Board of Managers have approved changes to the AtLaw Award (Advocacy Through Legislation) for both individuals and units/councils. Look for these changes on the new application that will be included in your Legislative Handbook as part of the Winter Packet mailing:

- Increased point value for letter writing, responses, phone calls, personal visits to elected officials, attending a Resolutions Briefing at Convention, and speaking at school board meetings;
- Point value added for participation in voter registration drives and student mock elections.

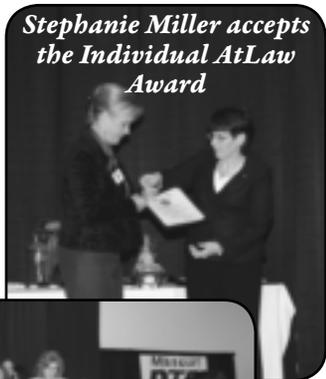
Please share the AtLaw Award application with all PTA members and encourage its use throughout the school year as a blue print for advocacy efforts at the state level. Don't assume that others will speak up for children and youth, instead, use your voice to make a difference-our children deserve our best efforts.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATION TO THE BUILDING FUND

Chouteau Elementary PTA
Inman PTA of Nixa

Franklin Smith Elementary PTA
Lee's Summit West H.S PTSA
Sequiota Elementary PTA
Nixa PTA Council
James Lewis Elementary PTA
Belton PTA Council
Mason Elementary PTA
Mark Twain Elementary PTA
Laura Ingalls Wilder Elementary PTA
Trailridge Elementary PTA

Woodland Elementary PTA
Truman High School PTSA
Pleasant Lea Elementary PTA
Prairie View Elementary PTA
Raytown Middle School PTSA
Greenwood Elementary PTA
Hawthorn Hill Elementary PTA
Lee's Summit Council of PTAs
Hazel Grove Elementary



Missouri PTA Legislative Platform for 2009

This list of legislative priorities is based on the issues that the Missouri PTA Legislative Department expects to target its efforts for the 2009 legislative session. As unexpected issues emerge, Missouri PTA will act in accordance with the resolutions and position statements that have been approved by the membership. A complete list of resolutions and position statements are available on our website (www.mopta.org).

2009 Legislative Priorities

Missouri PTA...

- Opposes any voucher system that finances non-public schools with public funds.
- Supports legislation that gives immunity from civil liability for any action taken by school authorities as a result of a third party making a report to a school administrator of child abuse by a school employee.
- Supports legislation that provides funding to local school districts for Driver's Education and Training in all Missouri Public schools.
- Supports legislation to prohibit teenagers under permit or intermediate license to use a cell phone while driving a motor vehicle.
- Supports enforcement of legislation requiring school districts to have policies dealing with bullying and programs to prevent bullying including skilled intervention and/or treatment for both bullies and their targets.
- Supports preservation of local control of public schools.
- Supports a constitutional amendment to allow school districts to approve bond issues with a simple majority vote.
- Supports legislation that would raise the limit on indebtedness for school districts from fifteen to twenty percent of assessed valuation.
- Supports legislation requiring significant portions of the "Master Settlement Agreement" monies be allocated to statewide youth tobacco prevention programs.

2009 Legislative Positions In the Interest of Child Health and Safety, Missouri PTA...

- Supports legislation aimed at improving the lives of all individuals affected by food allergies and anaphylaxis.
- Supports legislation to increase funding for programs and services aimed at the prevention of child abuse, neglect and maltreatment.
- Supports legislation establishing a statewide, standard school zone speed limit of 20 mph, with discretion to the governing body of a county or municipality, with the board of education, to establish a speed limit within a school zone lower than 20 mph.
- Supports statewide legislation making it a crime to leave children unattended in motor vehicles.
- Supports tightening enforcement and increasing the penalties concerning the use of the cargo area of trucks as passenger areas for children and youth.

In the Interest of Education and Education Funding, Missouri PTA...

- Opposes tax credits or tax deductions for tuition paid by a parent or sponsors for nonpublic elementary and secondary school children.
- Supports enforcement of legislation requiring school districts to have policies that promote increased parent involvement in their children's education.
- Supports legislation that will maintain or generate local and state funding for public education.
- Supports state funding for renovation and construction of

essential school facilities.

- Supports legislation strengthening laws to limit and restrict projects, which reduce funding to public education through tax increment financing (TIF), urban redevelopment corporations and enterprise zones.
- Supports legislation and other efforts to cause class size reduction in Missouri schools.

In the Interest of the General Welfare of Children and Youth, Missouri PTA...

- Supports enforcement of drunken driving laws and passage of more stringent laws to remove drivers under the influence of alcohol and other drugs from Missouri streets.
- Supports legislation supporting mandatory statewide recycling, and additional laws for the promotion of programs to provide incentives for individuals to make a greater effort to stop pollution and conserve our natural resources.
- Supports legislation calling for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) that would make manufacturers and distributors financially and/or physically responsible for their electronic products when those products become obsolete as a means of controlling e-waste or techno-trash and protecting the environment.
- Supports parentage legislation that would assist a custodial parent (or legal guardian) in establishing paternal responsibility via DNA technology and that would provide the custodial parent (or legal guardian) with a readily available legal remedy for assessment and collection of child support.

It was once said that the moral test of Government is how that Government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped. —Hubert H. Humphrey-US politician (1911 - 1978)

Missouri Child Advocacy Day

Missouri's Child Advocacy Day

Tuesday, January 27, 2009

Make plans now to join Missouri PTA and Missouri's Alliance for Children, Youth, and Families in the Capital beginning at 9:00am in the Capital Rotunda. The events for the day include:

- Recognition of this year's Child Advocate Award
- Workshops
- Exhibits showcasing services for children and families
- Meetings with legislators
- Networking with other advocates
- March to the Capitol and Rally

Items to Remember:

- You do not need to pre-register.
 - You may attend Child Advocacy Day free of charge.
 - Parking is available in the Madison Street Garage for a fee. Free parking is available on the west side of the Capitol (down the hill).
 - Call your Senator or Representative in advance to make a 15-minute appointment.
 - Find the name of your senator or representative on the Internet at http://www.senate.mo.gov/llookup/leg_lookup.aspx
- Business casual clothing is suggested.



Hurtling Obstacles

By Dorothy Gardner, Editor

Before we settled down in our workshops, gathered in general meetings or presented awards, MOPTA President Mary Oyler and National President-Elect Charles Saylor sat down with Kansas City metro area superintendents to discuss the roadblocks with respect to parent involvement. In attendance were representatives from Blue Springs, Fort Osage, Hickman Mills, Lee's Summit, Liberty, Park Hill, Platte County R3, Raytown, MSBA and MNEA.

PTA is proud to be one of the single largest advocates for children. But, there is an inherent problem with the word advocate. As President-Elect Saylor pointed out, parents are like "deer in the headlights" when they hear the word. They just don't know what that means with regard to their role. Currently National PTA has in place various programs such as MORE, 3 For Me, and Healthy Lifestyles designed to help parents understand how they can get involved and become an advocate. But before any program can be successful there are hurdles to overcome.

Just how do schools view PTA? Some look for the parents to be a key partner, but others still look to parents as a blank check. This latter mindset needs to be replaced with a shared power goal. Parents need to become involved, vested in the education process. At this point the discussion turned the spotlight directly on how both schools and PTAs need to first recognize and then toss aside the hurdles facing non PTA parents. In order to be successful we are charged with the ever-difficult task of getting parents truly involved in their individual child's education.

One of the biggest myths in place is the notion 'not enough time'. Often parents look at their busy schedules and fail to see how they could possibly fit in more. Saylor pointed to the '3 for Me' program, designed to usher parents into the school volunteering world. He pointed out that when talking with parents he likes to break those 3 hours down to minutes. "How much time did you spend at a movie, 180 minutes? Do you have that much time to volunteer in schools?"

However, just convincing parents they have

enough time will not dispel the perception they may have of school. In general, some parents carry with them a negative school experience from their childhood. To overcome this obstacle we need to put a face on the school and make it a welcoming place. Have we looked at developing a marketing plan to welcome parents into the PTAs and schools? Perhaps it is now the time to do just that. Let them know what we have to offer and why they would benefit from actively participating.

Teas are nice, one of the representatives pointed out, but people want to feel like they are making a direct difference with kids. Once we have convinced parents to share 180 minutes with the schools there needs to be authentic participation. There must be a purpose and a design to it. In many cases this feature will tip the scales and help parents make time during their day.

Another point everyone agreed upon was the barrier between parents and teachers needs to be demolished. The same parents who enter the school with negative baggage often feel they do not bring value to the table with regard to their child's education. This in itself makes it increasingly difficult for them to engage in meaningful and productive conversations with the classroom teacher. On the flip side many new teachers are scared to interact with parents. Having no children of their own, they are not sure how to deal with the parent dynamic. Parents need to be empowered, terminology easily defined and communicated with on a regular basis. Core leaders must guide those new teachers, share the tips of the trade and offer constant support.

Finally one of the biggest struggles for schools today is reaching the transient and homeless population. Both these groups have two things in common; they have little association with schools, often flying under the radar, and usually have the lowest test scores. For the transient population, unlike the homeless, it is often not an economic issue. For various reasons parents move in and out of the school districts, resulting in a much higher disconnect with schools and PTAs. Do we even attempt to identify these groups and make contact? The number of homeless students is on the rise and the burden of providing social

work services has increasingly fallen on the school district's shoulders. These parents often need help just getting their children to school. Assisting schools with programs and services for these families is a great start. But a much larger question remains. How are we working to get those parents involved? Are we reaching out and finding ways to actively involve them? What are we doing to honestly empower these parents?

The group adjourned after sharing much, but in the end the consensus pointed out all the work there is still to be accomplished. Unfortunately no easy fix exists to solve the problems we face with regard to parent involvement. Therefore we must continue to evaluate what we are doing and evolve to make ourselves better.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR THOUGHTFUL DONATION TO THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

- Independence Council of PTAs
- Chouteau Elementary PTA
- Raytown High School PTSA
- Inman PTA of Nixa
- Springfield PTA Council
- Franklin Smith Elementary PTA
- Watkins PTA
- Lee's Summit West H.S. PTSA
- Nixa PTA Council
- James Lewis Elementary PTA
- Belton PTA Council
- Sequiota Elementary PTA
- Center High PTA
- North Kansas City High PTA
- Mason Elementary PTA
- Mark Twain Elementary PTA
- Sherwood Elementary PTA
- Sugar Creek Elementary PTA
- Pleasant Lea Middle School PTA
- Trailridge Elementary PTA
- Woodland Elementary PTA
- Highland Park Elementary PTA
- Sherwood Elementary PTA
- Truman High School PTSA
- Pleasant Lea Elementary PTA
- Prairie View Elementary PTA
- Raytown Middle School PTSA
- Greenwood Elementary PTA
- Hawthorn Hill Elementary PTA
- Raytown PTA Council
- Columbia PTA Council
- Lee's Summit Council of PTAs
- Hyde Elementary PTA
- Laura Ingalls Wilder Elementary PTA
- Lakeview Middle School PTA
- Hazel Grove Elementary
- Hickman Mills Council of PTAs

Missouri PTA Scholarship Program Information

By Sheryl Kaullen, Mo State PTA Scholarship Chairperson

Missouri PTA Scholarships are awarded to Missouri Public High School graduates to promote exemplary teaching in Missouri Public Schools. Teacher Education Scholarships are financed from the investment income earned by Missouri PTA Scholarship Funds. Contributions from PTA Units, Councils, Missouri State PTA and half the cost of Missouri Distinguished Service Award are added to the principal of the Missouri PTA Scholarship Funds.

Currently, there are four (4) scholarship endowments from which scholarships are financed. The number of scholarships granted from each fund/foundation, is based on the fund's income revenue. Sufficient funds must be available to meet ongoing current scholarship obligations, before graduating seniors can receive new scholarships.

Accordingly, a maximum of ten (10) scholarships may be awarded annually to accredited public high school graduates from Missouri Public School Districts that

contain at least one (1) PTA unit in good standing. Current State PTA Scholarships are:

- Caroline B. Ullmann—established in 1923 to honor Mrs. William Ullmann of Springfield, President of Missouri PTA at the time.
- Dillard A. Mallory—established in 1962 by D.A. Mallory, former superintendent of Dallas County R-1 (Buffalo School District). This scholarship is awarded to a student preparing to teach social studies.
- Irma G. Detjen—established in 1967 by Mr. C. Wheeler Detjen in memory of Irma Detjen, President of Missouri PTA from 1952-1955.
- Helen B. Maupin—established in 1992 by former trustee and chairman of the scholarship program, Helen B. Maupin, to help deserving students become teachers.

Scholarship contributions are dedicated to the scholarship trusts/ funds and are not used for State PTA operational expenses. All administrative costs are borne by Missouri PTA.

Contributions may be made payable to Missouri PTA Scholarship Fund and sent to the Missouri State PTA Office. All units and councils are encouraged to donate funds to this important endeavor, as nothing is more important than the education of Missouri's future teachers.

WELCOME NEW UNITS

Nowlin Middle School PTSA
Columbia Missouri Association for the Gifted and Talented PTA
Raytown Central Middle School PTSA
Raymore-Peculiar Middle School PTA
Imagine Academy of Environmental Science and Math PTA
Van Horn High School PTSA
Sugar Creek Elementary PTA
Fairmount Elementary PTA
Three Trails Elementary PTA

Students Are Leaders Too

By Mark Kempf, Student Involvement Chair

That's right, student are leaders too and as such deserve the opportunity to take advantage of the same high quality training that Missouri PTA members have come to expect at our annual convention. However, in order to take advantage of training opportunities they have to actually be offered.

At this year's Missouri PTA convention, we did just that. This year offered students the training they have been asking for. Student workshop offerings included

- o Student Resolutions Briefing
- o Bylaws For Students
- o Membership Issues
- o Leadership Skills Development
- o Boardmanship For Students

Our goal this year, and moving forward, is to treat our student delegates as the leaders they are, and help them develop into the

leaders they want to become. In PTSA students are included for a reason, and we owe it not just to them but to our units to train all of our leaders. In order for a PTSA unit to achieve to its full potential, the unique talents and point of view of its students must be fully developed and utilized.

This year's convention demonstrated our commitment to offering real leadership training to all of our delegation. Regardless of whether a delegate is a parent (P), teacher (T) or student (S) they come to convention as delegates seeking training and to have a voice in our organization. We should never underestimate the importance of any of these three vital components.

Moving forward, looking towards both the spring leadership conference and next year's convention expect to see more quality offerings for our students. Offerings that will take into account the needs and wishes of our student leadership. We will definitely have some fun, but we will also

take our training opportunities seriously.

I'd also like to thank all of the students who attended this year's convention. Each and every one of you contributed to making this year's student program one of the best ever. I hope to hear from you with your thoughts and ideas for how to improve our program and continue to move forward in our goal to provide the highest quality-training event we can. I look forward to seeing you all at future events.

I would also like to encourage all PTSA units to remember your student leadership in your training budgets and I hope to see more students attending future events.

To quote one of our student delegates, "The convention was great. The classes were informing and Mark kept us interested even through bylaws. I would recommend this to anyone who wants a weekend of fun and information." - Beth from Belton High School PTSA

Idols Really Shine at Convention!

By Stephanie Miller, State Legislative Chair

Who knew there were so many talented performers in our PTA? Well,

I guess we all know how talented our PTA members are by the wonderful work they do for the children of Missouri everyday. But did we know they had “other” talents too?! Did anyone really know some of our friends can sing (kinda), dance (kinda), read and write poetry (ok, this one was good, really!)

For those of you who were able to attend the pre-convention activities you witnessed first hand PTA’s version of American Idol, for those of you who couldn’t attend, we’re sorry because you won’t understand the million jokes that are going to be circulating for a long time! Hopefully this article will shed a little light on the wonders we witnessed.

First and foremost, MOPTA would like to extend our sincere thanks to Paula Abdul (Kim Weber), Randy Jackson (Scott Jennings) and Simon Cowell (Mark Kempf). We also had a celebrity emcee, Chuck Saylor, our NPTA President Elect. Some of you may know him as Chuckie (Tony) Orlando! Thank you also to our great performers!

The evening started out with a blast from the past! Chuckie Orlando and the Dawns (Tina Zubeck & Kathy Nevans) performed Knock Three Times. Chuckie opened the evening by asking the crowd “Who loves ya baby?!” From that point on the crowd couldn’t help but get into “it.” Paula was overheard emotionally saying it brought tears to her eyes!

The Village Idiots were the next performers doing their own version of YPTA. Wendy Jackson, Peggy Preston, Elizabeth Aley and Lynn Boone were in full costume for a blast from the past. Simon was quoted saying “the name was appropriate” and of course he was booed unmercifully! Simon ate his words later when this group snagged the coveted PTA Idol award and gave an encore performance!

Ella, Esther and Mildred (also known as the Butt Sisters) lost their breath and the words to the song when they sang “Lets

Get Physical.” Kathy Nevans, Tina Zubeck and Patricia Hudgens did a great job trying to bounce each other off the stage and they impressed Randy. He said “you know baby – I got to admire these dogs – they’re doing it the right way!”

The Dancing Queens showed their wide range of talents when they started with a dramatic skit and followed with a song and dance routine. Patricia Hudgens, Peggy Richey, Kathy Nevans and Tina Zubeck did a great impersonation of the real thing! They even had the crowd dancing along with their boas and antics!

The evening started drawing to a close with some of the MOPTA members taking part in their own version of “Come Ride the Train.” Many joined in and a few chose to sit back and enjoy while a few more just looked at those of us dancing like we were nuts, and after a night like that, some of us were.



THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE FOUNDER’S FUND

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Inman PTA of Nixa | Woodland Elementary PTA |
| Watkins PTA | Pleasant Lea Elementary PTA |
| Lee’s Summit West H.S. PTSA | Prairie View Elementary PTA |
| Nixa PTA Council | Raytown Middle School PTSA |
| James Lewis Elementary PTA | Greenwood Elementary PTA |
| Mason Elementary PTA | Summit Pointe Elementary PTA |
| Lake Contrary Elementary PTA | Hawthorn Hill Elementary PTA |
| Pleasant Lea Middle School PTA | Columbia PTA Council |
| Timber Creek Elementary PTA | Lee’s Summit Council of PTAs |
| Trailridge Elementary PTA | Hickman Mills Council of PTAs |

How'd They Do It?

By Barb Gilmore, VP Programs

PARENT EDUCATION & INVOLVEMENT GRANT AWARDS



Skaith Accelerated PTA held Skaith Parent University (SPU), which they founded in 2006 to provide parents with learning opportunities to stay informed about current school and educational issues. A survey was conducted to determine what topics would be of interest for SPU. They were then developed into an hour-long class. As an incentive for attending these classes, participants were given “credits”. They also received credits for attending PTA meetings, and volunteering for the PTA’s “Three for Me” program. This was an excellent way to connect teachers, and parents in a positive way.

Clever PTA instituted an “Art Night”, which was an event where the hallways were converted into an art gallery for parents and students. Those attending could wander the area looking at many different types of artistic creations from each of the students. The students acted as the guides, explaining techniques, and what they liked best. The PTA program’s Reflections entries were showcased to illustrate the theme and each student’s interpretation. This was a wonderful program to show the value, importance, and affect that art has on students’ learning skills.

HEALTH & SAFETY GRANT AWARDS

Cameron PTSA put on a Health & Safety Fair for 4th graders of the district to help showcase such areas in health as sports and bicycle safety, dental hygiene, and healthy eating habits. Volunteers guided the students through this event, and representatives from the local police department fingerprinted the children. An identification kit was sent home. The Missouri Extension office demonstrated good hand washing with a black light and their “secret soap”. There is also information given out to parents to use as a resource. The goal was to teach students, and inform and teach parents on good health and safety.



Another recipient of the Health & Safety Grant was Moreland Ridge Middle School PTSA. Moreland Ridge’s project was to put on a self-defense program that could be attended by any who wished to come for free. The PTA partnered with TAKE Defense program, which honors the life of Ali Kemp – The Ali Kemp Education Foundation. This program provides a hands on self-defense workshop for females ages 12 and up to provide safety awareness. The PTA used media resources, district websites, flyers, and the link between all PTA/PTSA units in the district to promote the planned program. In order that it was free to all who attended, they took corporate donations as well. When registration ended, more than

300 females were signed up for the event. The goal was to learn the importance of why self-defense is needed for females, at any age, and to teach those important skills.



“Paxton Keeley Elementary PTA accepts the Phoebe Apperson Hearst award from Mary Oyler”

To Be or Not to Be Normal

By Elaine Gerstenberger, Pony Express Regional Director



At this year's State Convention our keynote speaker was Bowen F. White, MD. Dr. White presented "Why normal isn't healthy". "Doing what comes naturally-what millions of years of evolution have programmed us to do-may be perfectly normal, but it's not necessarily healthy. Where, in headlong 'progress' of the human race, do you really fit in? Take a minute to find out, and find your self". In

his presentation as well as in his book he is devoted to the proposition that a "whole, healthy, heartfelt life is something that each of us must and can learn-and-earn-again". We all fail in order to learn, if we didn't or don't allow ourselves to make mistakes how do we learn to cope with life?

Dr. White's presentation was very good, a well needed break to laugh and gain insight as to how not burn out. Burn out one's self, family, job and community for all of those who think they NEED to do it all. Doctor ordered: "Laugh, misbehave, make mistakes, and through it all discover your very own potential for health, healing, and wholeness".

Dr. White is an expert in the field of preventive and stress medicine. We could all learn a lot from him by not taking life so serious.

Quotes taken from Bowen F. White, MD Book "Why Normal isn't Healthy".

NPTA Member Benefits

- BARNES & NOBLE.com – PTA members will save 5% from this discounted online bookstore on books, music, DVD's and more.
- KIDZ-IDZ - This program is free to all PTA-affiliated schools. Simply visit http://www.kidzidz.com/id_cards/index.html to enroll your school or individual child.
- LIBERTY MUTUAL INSURANCE – Group discount on auto, home & renters insurance for PTA members.
- MEDICALERT - For more information and to sign up for the MedicAlert Kid Smart® program visit www.medicalert.org/pta or call 1-800-ID-ALERT.
- SHARP ELECTRONICS - All of the products on the Sharp Electronics/PTA Member Store site are being offered to PTA members at reduced pricing.
- SOUTHWEST VACATIONS – 5% discount on vacation packages of two nights or longer to any Southwest destination.
- NEW!! T-MOBILE – 14% discount off your monthly service charges for new and existing T-Mobile subscribers.

Check out the Missouri PTA, www.mopta.org or National PTA, www.pta.org websites for further information on how your members access these benefits. Make sure the details on benefit access are provided only to your PTA members.

"WOW!" Reflections Reminder!!

ALL STUDENT ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED IN THE MOPTA OFFICE BY 4:30PM ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 2009

Please plan your delivery method so that your artwork submissions arrive on time!

Mark Your Calendar

JANUARY

- PTA Mid-Year Membership Drive
- Kid's First Legislative Rallies
- 1 Membership Dues to State Office
- 1 New Year's Day
- 15 Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday
- 16 Reflections Projects Due to State Office by 4:30pm
- 20 Presidential Inauguration Day
- 26 Chinese New Year
- 27 Child Advocacy Day in Jefferson City

FEBRUARY

- Black History Month
- 1 Super Bowl Sunday
- 1 Membership Dues to State Office
- 1-2 African American Read In
- 9-13 PTA Take Your Family to Work Week
- 14 Valentine's Day
- 16 President's Day
- 17 PTA Founder's Day

MARCH

- Women's History Month
- Music in Our Schools Month
- National Nutrition Month
- 1 Membership Dues to State Office
- 1 PTA Hearst Awards Applications Due to National Office by 11:59am
- 2 Read Across America Day
- 8 Daylight Savings Day Begins
- 11-12 National PTA Legislative Conference
- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 29 PTA Chorus of Voices for Children Week Begins
- 31 Officers Due to State Office

APRIL

- Alcohol Awareness Month
- 1 Membership Dues to State Office
- 8 Passover Begins
- 10 Good Friday
- 12 Easter
- 13 Drop Everything and Read Day (D.E.A.R.)
- 15 Unit, Membership, Health & Safety, and Student Safety Award Applications Due to State Office
- 22 Earth Day
- 23 Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day
- 24 Arbor Day
- 26 National Volunteer Week Begins

MAY (Looking Ahead)

- 1-2 MO PTA Leadership Conference

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Missouri PTA Annual Leadership Conference

May 1 - 2, 2009

Hilton Garden Inn
Independence, Missouri

PTA: MISSION POSSIBLE



Accept this mission and bring your entire board and *explode* all the possibilities for a great PTA/
PTSA.

Training, networking, team building, skills development and resource opportunities.
Adults and students in middle school through high school are encouraged to attend.

Adult Registration: \$75.00 Student Registration: \$35.00

Registration fees include all workshops, Friday night keynote speaker and meals!

Student Showcase – students will receive recognition from Missouri PTA for their Reflections entries
and art work will be returned in a quicker time frame!

**Mission instructions (registration packets) will be mailed to all
unit and council presidents in March.**



Missouri Congress of Parents & Teachers
Missouri PTA
2100 I-70 Dr. S.W.
Columbia, MO 65203

ADDRESS SERVICES REQUESTED