

CONTACT

Volume 92, Issue 1
July 2010

Together



*America, the Beautiful... with every heart,
every smile, every laugh, and every dream*



*PTA like a
Rock star!*



- STANDING IN GOOD**
- ✓ Officers form turned in by March 31.
 - ✓ Membership Dues have been paid monthly.
 - ✓ Your bylaws have been approved within the last 3 years.
 - ✓ Your unit has submitted a copy of their 990 tax filing.
 - ✓ Your unit has submitted their annual financial review.
 - ✓ Your unit has submitted their annual report.

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Thanks to all these fine companies for their support of PTA.

Cover photo:

Scenes from the April Missouri PTA Leadership Conference.

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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 bi-monthly, six times a year. Subscriptions are \$7 per year.

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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.

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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.

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President's Message *By Wendy Jackson, Missouri PTA President*

Goodolsummertime! Lawn chairs, flowers, swimming, amusement parks, vacations, and family!! Summertime is filled with great family times. I hope that each of you take time to make memories for you and your children this summer. Whether it be camping, family reunions, summer camps, or simply time together enjoying one another.

Along with summer come newly elected boards, and the beginning of new-found kinships -- a chance to work "together" for the betterment of all children. Take time to meet with your incoming officers and chairman to plan and set goals. Failing to plan is planning to fail. You must all work "together" to see what great things you want to accomplish. Take some time to see what projects or ideas have worked in the past. How might you improve those projects? Strive to improve the projects from the time before. Make sure you reach out and learn about one another so that you can utilize each person's strengths as well as help with their weaknesses. Are they intimidated by public speaking?? Foster them with encouragement, and opportunities to speak in smaller groups. Give them a chance to shine at what their strengths are as well. Make sure that you provide them

training opportunities. A great way to build leaders is to train through Missouri PTA regional conferences, conventions, or leadership conferences. It is absolutely an acceptable use of PTA funds. After all who will replace you? Part of being a good leader is making sure you have found and trained your replacement. Professional development for teachers is a must; why would you not want to develop your volunteers? Please take advantage of these opportunities.

Missouri PTA is your resource and we are anxious to help you and your unit be successful. We are always a phone call or email away. Please do not hesitate to contact us. It is our pleasure to work with all of you, our members. Together we are the Missouri PTA and we are all in this "together"!

I want to thank you in advance for the time and energy you will expend this school year. Ask yourself this: If not me, then who? You can do it, and we are here to help. It is truly a rewarding experience. Please don't think that it will be easy -- at times it will not. Anyone can lead in still waters; it takes a great leader to guide a ship in rough waters. Good leaders are not born; they are developed. I am confident that you will be a great leader. "Alone we can do so little, but together we can do so much."

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

When is it too late?

By Charles J. "Chuck" Saylor, PTA National President

Not too long ago I engaged in a brief discussion about why today's youth are being so hateful towards each other. I feel I must re-visit the topic, and will continue to do so, until we have a broader conversation about bullying and prevention. This is a serious subject; we have children losing their lives over what other children see as harmless actions.

At least two high profile court cases have been introduced in recent days regarding this very topic. Major publications are reporting these tragic events. High profile celebrities and elected officials are calling for action. So my question is this: "Parents, are you seeing this?"

Parents, teachers and families are the front line observers in the battle. Yes, a battle for the safety of our children. With the rise of this issue, with the tragedy we see more often than not and the increased reports of horrible actions taken by children against children, I am beginning to wonder who in the world is watching?

We all have seen, or remember, the kid who always gets his or her way at home and believes that with that emboldened spirit they can be held harmless at school. One action leads to another and the rest is history. My friends: as parents, teachers and families we need to take action before this battle becomes an uncontrollable war.

Parents: please engage your children and let them know how wrong bullying can be. Support schools that work towards bullying prevention and help create programs for bullying prevention where they do not exist. Teachers: help parents understand what they can do to help you identify this issue. Help parents understand what you see every day. Families: do not be afraid to seek assistance from the school, medical officials or law enforcement if needed.

These are bold comments but we are fastly getting to a point that if we do not address this problem it may just be our child, or a neighbor's child, on the front page next.



Support resources can be found by going to <http://www.pta.org/bullying.asp>

Until next time.

DONATIONS

Thank you for your generous donations. With your continued support, we can do great things.

Building Fund

Raytown High School PTSA
 McCurdy Elementary PTA
 Raytown Middle School PTSA

Founder's Day Fund

Raytown High School PTSA
 Peculiar Elementary PTA
 Summit Pointe Elementary PTA
 Raytown Middle School PTSA
 Raytown Council PTA

Scholarship Fund

St. Joseph Council PTA
 Raytown High School PTSA
 Raytown Middle School PTSA

The Official PTA Kit – Discover the Possibilities with PTA!

Register for your free *Official PTA Kit*—PTA's Big Box of Possibilities—and get the tools you need to serve your community and run your PTA. The kit contains the invaluable *PTA Quick-Reference Guides*, as well as membership materials, program and advocacy resources, and special offers from national partners.

All local, council, district, and region PTAs must register to receive their kit for the 2010–2011 year. The registration form allows your incoming PTA president or other authorized leader to provide your unit's preferred shipping address and date—to ensure that the kit gets into the right hands at the right time.

Kit registration starts April 26 at PTA.org/OfficialKit. Kits will ship weekly starting June 18, based on unit orders.

For more details about kit delivery and contents, go to PTA.org/OfficialKit. The *Official PTA Kit* is available exclusively to PTAs in good standing.



Scholarship Fundraiser a Success!

Over \$1400 was raised at the April Leadership Conference from the sale of special "PTA Like a Rock Star" t-shirts and raffle tickets. Thanks to all who participated! If you didn't get a t-shirt at leadership conference, look for them at the Missouri PTA Convention in October in Columbia.

What is a Regional Director?

By Pat Brune, VP of Field Service

A Regional Director is the liaison from Missouri PTA to your unit and is under the direction of the VP of Field Service. Your Regional Director is in contact with Unit and Council Presidents and serves as a resource. A Regional Director may attend your meetings, if you would like. They are available to help with training, through Schools of Information or Regional Conferences. They will also be in contact to help you become and remain a "Unit in Good Standing."

Missouri PTA is divided into 8 regions. Foothills; Gateway; Heritage; Mark Twain; Meramec; Ozark; Pony Express; and Three Trails:

- Gateway has 2 Regional Directors: Pat Higginbotham and Renee Benjamin.
- Meramec has 1 Regional Director: Joyce Asher
- Heritage has 1 acting Regional Director: Kim Weber.
- Ozark has 3 Regional Directors: Elizabeth Aley, Tracy Sayre and Jessica Bruner.
- Pony Express has 1 Regional Director: Linda Wansing.

- Three Trails has 2 Regional Directors: Joanne Schwartz and Lou Hibdon

We have no Regional Directors in the Foot Hills or Mark Twain regions. If you are interested, or even think you might be interested, please fill out a talent bank form (available on mopta.org) and send it to the state office.

Your Regional Director will be in contact with you this summer. Their contact information is on page 13 of this issue of **CONTACT**. You may contact me (patb@mopta.org) with any questions you have regarding Regional Directors.



Unit in Good Standing

Local PTA units must be deemed to be "in good standing" in order to fully participate in the programs and benefits offered by the association. A PTA unit is "in good standing" if it:

- Adheres to the Purposes and basic policies of the PTA;
- Remits national and state dues to the state PTA by dates required;
- Has bylaws approved every three years according to the procedures of the state PTA;
- Submits a copy of the unit's annual financial report to the state PTA by December 1st of each year;
- Submits a copy of the unit's annual financial review (formerly known as the audit) to the state PTA by December 1st of each year;
- Submits a copy of the required IRS tax form to the state PTA by December 1st of each year;
- Submits the names and addresses of officers to the state PTA by March 31st of each year; and
- Meets other criteria as may be prescribed by the state PTA.

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".

If your unit is affiliated with a council, please check for additional requirements that may be prescribed by the council PTA in order to fully participate in programs and services offered by the council.

By virtue of being part of National and the state PTA, the IRS grants a local unit PTA non-profit (501(c)(3)) status. This requires PTAs to be non-partisan, non-sectarian, and non-commercial. PTAs cannot endorse political candidates or parties. PTAs are not religious nor do they endorse products, services, or companies.

If a PTA is not in good standing, neither the unit nor the students attending the PTA's school are eligible to receive awards (this includes but is not limited to membership awards and the state's Reflections contest).

Meet the Office Staff

When you call or e-mail the Missouri PTA office, you'll come in contact with our fabulous office staff, Administrator Linda Thiele and Secretary Liz Hostetler.



Introducing The State Membership Theme for the 2010-2011 year:

Being in the PTA Picture means:

- ◆ Being informed ◆ Being involved
- ◆ Being a part of the largest child advocacy association in the nation.
- Remember membership is the foundation of PTA at all levels.
- Membership in your unit reaches far beyond the walls of your school.
- When you join PTA, you are casting a vote of support for your school throughout the community.



Be a part of the big picture, the PTA picture... *Join Today!*

Just Between Friends (JBF) Communications System

Last year, Just Between Friends (JBF) was selected as the PTA member management & communications system by National PTA. Today, JBF is being used by PTAs in 48 states for member management, communications, volunteer management, directory creation and networking.



Not Using Just Between Friends Yet?

Go to www.justbetweenfriends.com/PTAquickstart to get started. It'll only take you about 10 minutes to register – minutes that will save you hours of work in the future. Then, for a list and schedule of Just Between Friends live interactive training webinars and lots of how-to information, just visit www.learnjbf.com.

Already Using Just Between Friends?

If your unit has elected new officers, or if you know who your next President will be, now's the time to enter the name of your next President and an alternate group administrator to the system. Visit www.JustBetweenFriends.com, click on the Contact Us button -- then, click on JBF Customer Support. A member of the Just Between Friends Customer Support Team will get back to you with instructions to accomplish this task.

If you have any questions about the system, please visit www.JustBetweenFriends.com, click on Contact Us. Then, click on JBF Customer Support. Type your question in the text box and a member of the Customer Support Team will answer your questions.

Communications Made Easy – Creating Peer Groups

One of the unique aspects of Just Between Friends is the ability to create a peer group for effective communications. This feature of Just Between Friends is so effective in creating groups and communicating with group members, National PTA has adopted it this year to communicate with State PTAs.

Log onto the system and select the people you'd like to have in the group. Send them an invitation to join and include a codeword that you create. Just Between Friends refers to this codeword as a token on the system. When invited people join the group, you'll be able to communicate to keep them updated about the group's activities. The system also sends automatic reminders for events and deadlines.

We encourage to check out the Just Between Friends communication system. It's offered free to local PTAs to strengthen your PTA and simplify the lives of leaders and members.

10+ Ways to Start Your Membership Campaign Off Right!!!

1. **START NOW!** It is never too early to start planning. A well planned membership campaign is ready to go by the first day of school or before.
2. **HAVE THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE IN PLACE:** Membership recruitment is a big job. Split the task into different areas so committee members can use their talents and no one person is overwhelmed.
3. **SET A MEMBERSHIP GOAL:** All good plans have a goal and a "map" on how to get there. 2-5% growth is obtainable for most units. Make sure everyone knows that goal and how you plan to reach it.
4. **BUDGET:** Make sure your budget includes money for the promotion of your membership campaign.
5. **1ST MEMBERS:** Each of your unit's officers and chairmen need to be a member. Sign them up first!
6. **SCHOOL DISTRICT PARTNERS:** Enlist the support of your superintendent and principal. Make sure each of your school board members are card carrying PTA members. Get permission to attend back-to-school meetings to promote your campaign and sign up staff as members.
6. **BUSINESS PARTNERS:** Attend Chamber of Commerce meetings to invite local businesses to join. Ask them to display posters for joining PTA. Give them the opportunity to support the work your PTA does and create ways to give visible recognition for that support.
7. **NEW FAMILIES:** Provide realtors with PTA "Welcome" packets to give to all home buyers. Any person should be considered a potential member, not just parents of school age children.
8. **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. Give away a token with each membership, such as a sticker, button, or pencil inscribed with your PTA's name.
9. **NATIONAL BENEFIT PROVIDERS:** Be sure to promote these along with any local incentives you may be offering. Provide details on how to access the benefits only to your PTA members not to the school as a whole.
10. **BACK TO SCHOOL PTA PACKETS:** Put together packets that inform, promote & invite. Tell prospective members 3 things your unit accomplished last year, 3 goals this year, 3 reasons why their membership is important to the children of your district, the children of Missouri and the children of our nation. This can also be their opportunity to sign up to volunteer for specific events or be a room parent.
11. **BE VISIBLE:** Make all events PTA membership events. Have a bulletin board showing the progress of your drive and an invitation to all to join.
12. **FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL:** Have a "welcome committee" present with a smile to help direct students & parents to classrooms. Hold a "First Day coffee get-together" off campus – for new parents and those of us who still try to deal with first day trauma – it's a great opportunity to promote PTA.
13. **MAIL DUES MONTHLY:** Work closely with your treasurer to make sure the state and national dues are sent in on the first of each month. No one is officially a PTA member until their dues reach the state office.
14. **TAKE A DEEP BREATH!** You are doing great! Remember to use your resources, i.e. PTA Membership Quick Reference Guide, MO PTA website, or National PTA website if you have questions.
15. **TOOT YOUR OWN HORN!** Units/volunteers work hard for our children and deserve to be recognized. Take time to display the awards your unit has earned over the years. Look at this year's recognition to see how you are going to fit into the PTA Picture!

And the Winner Is.....

The 2009-2010 Membership Awards were presented this year at the Leadership Conference on April 24, 2010. These outstanding units were recognized for their hard work.

Students Make A Difference Award

Platte City Middle School PTSA, Pony Express Region

Application Award for the Unit with the highest percentage of student members based on school enrollment. This is the 2nd consecutive year Platte City Middle School PTSA has won this award.

Community Involvement Award

Central High PTSA, Pony Express Region

Unit with the highest number of business members. This unit had 67 business members.

Golden Gavel Awards – these are awarded in 5 different categories

Staley High School Falcon Booster Club PTSA, Pony Express Region

Unit with the highest numerical increase in membership. Staley increased their membership by 241 members.

Christian Ott Elementary, Three Trails Region

Unit with the highest percentage increase in membership. Christian Ott increased their membership a whopping 1,783%.

Blue Springs High School PTSA, Three Trails Region

Unit with the highest membership total. BSHS has received this honor the last 3 years. Their membership totaled 1,080 members this year.

Hazel Grove Elementary PTA, Three Trails Region

Unit with the highest membership percentage based on school enrollment. Hazel Grove's membership percentage is 157%.

Nixa PTA Council, Ozark Region

Council with the highest percentage of total membership increase over previous year.

Congratulations to all our award winning units!

Outstanding Membership Campaign Grant

T.E.A.M. was the membership theme of this year's winning unit of the 2009-2010 Outstanding Membership Campaign Grant, Southern Boone County PTA.

This school's leadership decided to make a concerted effort to increase their membership by promoting Together Everyone Achieves More. They focused on the important role PTA membership and involvement plays in the successfulness of their school district and their children. They used a variety of methods to achieve their membership goals; visibility at school & PTA events, personal interaction and email to get the message out about their TEAM.

Their membership campaign activities included a Back to School Pool Blast, free Soboco Stickers to everyone who joined, Bring a Friend to PTA Night, building contests to increase teacher membership and played Trivia at membership meetings.

Southern Boone County PTA increased their business membership by 90% this year. They contacted businesses personally and by mail. They attended Chamber of Commerce meetings to discuss membership benefits and their goals for the year.

Representatives from the unit were unable to attend this year's Leadership Conference because April 24 was the date of their Annual Family Carnival. Their day started off with a community-wide 5K, the town carnival at 3:00 p.m. and a movie in the park at dusk.

Congratulations to Southern Boone County PTA on an outstanding membership campaign!



Missouri PTA hosted their first ever Emerging Minority Leaders conference on March 20 in Kansas City. We feel it was a huge success. It was the first day of spring and we hope that we planted the seeds for new leaders in Missouri PTA. We would like to thank all who attended.

Early Bird Awards Units that send the **HIGHEST MEMBERSHIP** based upon last year's **TOTAL MEMBERSHIP** to the state office **POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 17, 2010** will earn the **EARLY BIRD AWARD** and be recognized at the Missouri PTA Convention in Columbia in October.

THREE (3) WINNING CATEGORIES

Early Childhood/Elementary/Special Ed.

Middle School-Jr. High/Combined Unit

High School

NO APPLICATION NECESSARY

Get those dues in by September 17, and YOU MAY BE A WINNER!

Reflections Student Showcase

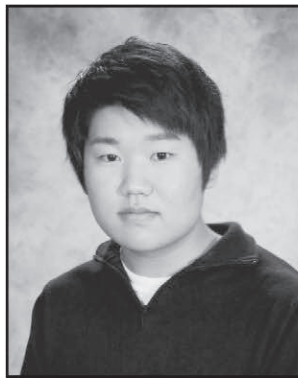
On Saturday April 24, 2010 Missouri PTA held its annual Reflections Student Showcase. In this the 40th year of the National PTA Reflections Program, 71 students and 242 guests from across Missouri came to the Hilton Kansas City Airport Hotel to be honored for their achievements.

Missouri PTA is very proud of all students who entered entries into this year's program, and we hope to see even more entries next year when the Reflections program theme is "Together We Can".



Missouri's National Reflections Winners

Peter Shin, Park Hill High School PTSA senior, is the Outstanding Interpretation winner in National PTA's Senior division, Music Composition, with his selection entitled "Reverie." Peter was honored at the National PTA Convention in Memphis, TN, in June. He was awarded an \$800 arts education award, all-expense paid trip for himself and an adult to the National Convention, certificate and letter signed by National PTA President, Chuck Saylor, gold-plated medallion, and recognition in the annual PTA Reflections online gallery. In addition, the Park Hill High School PTSA unit will receive a \$200 arts education award.



winners are Lindsay Morris, 2nd Grade, Underwood Elementary PTA, Lee's Summit/Three Trails Region and Sarah Kang, 11th Grade, Rock Bridge High School PTSA, Columbia, Heritage Region. They received received a \$200 cash award, a

silver-plated Reflections medallion, a certificate and letter signed by the National PTA President and recognition in the annual PTA Reflections online gallery

National PTA Award of Merit winners are Anna Fredrick, 1st Grade, Eugene Field Elementary PTA, Springfield R-12/Ozark Region, Ian Cross, 5th Grade, Ridgeview Elementary PTA, Liberty/Pony Express Region, and Annika Jackson, 2nd Grade, Platte City Schools PTA, Platte Co. R-III/Pony Express Region. They received a silver-plated Reflections medallion, a certificate and letter signed by the National PTA President, and recognition in the annual PTA Reflections online gallery.

Congratulations to all!

A Parent's Perspective

By Ava Payne, Contact Editor

Hannah Bottarel, Ozark West Elementary PTA in Ozark, was poised when she performed her winning selection at Leadership Conference in Kansas City in April. She and her family came to Kansas City to celebrate the 2nd grader's 1st place musical composition win and 2 honorable mentions in visual arts. Her parents, Francis and Sarah Bottarel, said they first learned about Reflections from a flyer sent home from school, but Hannah didn't need any parental encouragement to enter – her mother said she was self-motivated. Hannah has been involved in a local children's music academy since she was four and has composed her own music around a theme before, so this was nothing new. They just didn't expect she would win first place in Reflections! Hannah was also honored in a school ceremony, at a school board meeting, and in the local media.



parenting
Official Media Sponsor
of PTA's Reflections Program

2010-11 Reflections

"Together We Can . . ."

Look for rules and guidelines in your summer toolkit

R
PTA REFLECTIONS

French Fries a Vegetable?

By Dorothy Gardner, VP and Director Department of Communications

It's not very often anymore that one particular show on television can succeed in captivating my entire families' attention. However, when my husband stumbled upon *Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution* he was incredibly taken back by what he saw and heard. After relaying this astonishing first episode to me and our two children, one in middle and one in high school, the show was immediately programmed to record all episodes on the DVR.

While each of the episodes proved effective in causing us to scratch our heads and really think about the food we eat and how we view food, one episode in particular drummed up the most conversation. Incidentally my in-laws were in town visiting and happened to be seated in the living room when this episode aired. Previously they had seen previews for the show and watched interviews with Jamie Oliver on the morning shows. But this was the first episode they'd actually viewed. During one segment Jamie is struggling with the food administrator's decision that the healthy vegetable stir-fry meal he has created for the high school students does not contain enough vegetables to be considered a reimbursable meal. However, the meal offered in the line next to Jamie's, hamburgers and French fries did meet the requirements. When he questioned why, since the students were basically served in his view a protein, a starch and a starch, the response was - potatoes are considered a vegetable.

Immediately I looked over at my son and asked, "Do they serve French fries everyday in school?" Without a moment's hesitation he answered "yes" and then proceeded to add that they are offered hamburgers, fries and pizza every day. Honestly, I thought my mother-in-law was going to fall off the couch. It has been a long time since she had children in school and much has changed in the last 20 years since her youngest graduated. Thus began a fairly lengthy conversation between the six of us regarding what my children ate and drank each day at school, what their

friends consumed, and what they thought of the food in general. If one is what one eats, then is offering fries every day really such a good idea?

School cafeterias are filled to the brim with processed food. Why? Because it's cheap. Feeding thousands of students each day is time consuming and expensive. But, let's not just focus on school cafeterias. Drive down the street in any town and I'll bet the road is lined with fast food restaurants and convenience stores. Our fast natured lifestyles have given way to the rise of processed foods. Once again, they are not only cheap but also convenient. Shoot, you can even fill up your car at QuikTrip and then grab breakfast or lunch inside while you pay. Two birds – one stone right?

During the 2009 National PTA convention, I attended a workshop on Farm to School. The premise was to encourage schools and teachers to begin to incorporate fresh locally grown food in their cafeterias and classrooms. There were several interesting facts I learned during this workshop. Probably the biggest impact, for me, was the story told by a teacher who traveled around to elementary schools and conducted workshops on fresh vegetables. For years, when she was teaching, her classes actually grew and cultivated their own fruits and vegetables in a school garden. Workshop after workshop, in school after school, she was astonished by the number of children who had no inkling where their food came from or how it tasted raw. Most particularly, she was blown away while visiting a rural school where many of the children had never tasted a raw tomato. On her way to the school she had passed several tomato farms. While these farms were local, basically in the community, the children's interaction with tomatoes had always been after processing.

Bottom line, processed and 'fast' foods are not necessarily good for our bodies. Study after study has linked these food choices to many health problems such as heart disease, high blood pressure and obesity. There is a saying, If you look at

the list of ingredients on the back of food packaging and you see words your grandmother wouldn't recognize, don't eat it. Throughout the episodes of *Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution*, Jamie focused on changing one town, one community. He tried to open their eyes and bring awareness to how important good healthy food is for their health and well-being. After watching the entire series I personally felt the show achieved a bigger goal, at least where my family was concerned. Each one of us came away from that show empowered. Empowered to make better food choices and expect more from our food. No, I haven't marched up to the school and demanded they cease French fry production, but I did get my previously super picky son to try radishes. Believe me, that was a HUGE milestone.

In conjunction with National PTA, Jamie Oliver has created a toolkit for parents. "National PTA is working to mobilize parents and families to end the nation's growing childhood obesity epidemic. By giving them the resources they need, like this toolkit, we are empowering families to eat healthy foods and to be active together," said Charles J. "Chuck" Saylor, National PTA President. "Now more than ever, it is important to act and provide solutions and tools for families to address this important issue." You can download this toolkit from the National website at http://www.pta.org/JOFR_NewsletterPTA11.pdf. Check it out and see what sort of revolution you can create for yourself.



Promoting Family Involvement – It's as easy as 1-2-3!

By Deann Jepson, Parent Education and Involvement Chair

Unit and council members are now meeting to discuss next year's plans. Your strategies should include the incorporation of family involvement activities throughout the year. Research indicates that family involvement promotes student success. Students with involved parents are more likely to earn higher grades, go on to post-secondary education, and have better social skills. In addition, when families, schools and communities work together, student achievement, teacher and staff morale, and communication between these groups improves. As an added bonus, partnerships, as well as friendships, begin to develop. This creates a vibrant and supportive learning environment in which students thrive.

PTA units and councils can assist in building these partnerships with the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships. These Standards consist of three key steps:

1. *Raising awareness* about the power of family and community involvement
2. *Taking action* to grow family-school-community partnerships through specific programming and practices
3. *Celebrating success* as your school experiences increased involvement.

The National Standards for Family-School Partnerships Implementation Guide is a valuable tool for empowering people to work together and ultimately, building an environment for student success. Anyone with a stake in improving schools and student achievement can use this tool: PTA leaders, parents, school administrators, school board members, and community organizations. This Guide can assist organizers with implementing programs and policies which encourage family-school partnerships. Used with the supporting resources, it can help organizers educate communities about the importance of family involvement and direct the development of effective partnerships.

There are six National Standards for Family-School Partnerships and the full Implementation Guide is available for

download at pta.org. The materials are best used after the formation of an Action Team whose mission is to focus on family involvement promotion. Team membership can consist of parents, caregivers, grandparents and other family members, school staff, community leaders, and PTA officers/members.

Hint: Strategies to develop and recruit members to this team can be included in next year's PTA plans!

The following standards are provided to assist in guiding the Action Team in forming successful Family-School-Community partnerships:

1. Standard One - Welcoming All Families into the School Community
Create a welcoming climate.
When parents walk into the school building, do they feel welcome?
Is it a respectful, inclusive community?
2. Standard Two - Communicating Effectively
Create regular opportunities for an open, honest dialogue.
Are the principal and other school administrators accessible to any parent?
Does the school and PTA unit/council make it easy for parents and families to build connections and communicate with each other?
3. Standard Three - Supporting Student Success
Keep families informed.
How does the school inform parents of standardized testing results in order to strengthen student skills?
Does the school and PTA unit/council report on school progress to the community?
4. Standard Four - Speaking Up for Every Child
Be a strong advocate for children.
Do parents know the role of school and district staff and do they know who to contact?
Are parents informed of the federal and state law mandate which states that schools must involve and inform parents?
Do parents know that by federal

law, children have a right to qualified teachers?

5. Standard Five - Sharing Power
Be a full partner in making decisions on issues affecting children, both at school and within the community.
What governance structures exist to discuss and weigh issues of equity, such as how are children eligible for the gifted program?
How do school council and PTA units/councils develop and support leadership among parents?
6. Standard Six - Collaborating with Community
Develop partnerships connecting the school with businesses, service clubs, social service agencies, youth organizations, etc.
In what ways has support from community partners been organized?
What are the plans to turn the school into a hub of community life?

The Implementation Guide is meant to serve as an effective tool in developing greater involvement. Begin by reviewing the Guide and then just take one step at a time. You will be amazed at how much you can achieve! Begin by discussing these standards with your principal, PTA members and/or community leaders. Soon there will be dialogue between the various groups and partnerships will form. The important point is to start building an effective foundation from which you can build a program which best serves your school community.

Start today. Download the Implementation Guide and familiarize yourself with the standards. Action begins with you. Our children's ability to reach their potential depends on our commitment to these activities. For more information on how to implement the National Standards in your child's school, contact Deann Jepson, Missouri Board of Managers Parent Education & Involvement Chair, at deannj@mopta.org. Also visit the Missouri PTA (www.mopta.org) and National PTA Web site (www.pta.org).

PTSAs – Remember Your Student

By Mark Kempf, *Student Involvement Chair*

The new school year will be here before we know it and we will all be getting back to the work that PTAs and PTSAs do so well. As a PTSA unit it is important to remember to include part of your focus on the students, not only as members, but as a part of planning and organization.

Students are capable of more than we sometimes want to give them credit for. Just like any other potential board member, students can perform tasks required by many of your board positions. Of course like any other responsibility, a lot depends on the individual and the level of training and information they are given.

Including students as part of your board, and therefore in the decision making process, your PTSA unit will benefit in many ways:

- With the difficulty some boards have in filling all of their board positions, utilizing students provides another pool of volunteers.
- By including students on the board and in the decision making process, you are showing the students at your school that their voice is important.
- For those students who actually serve, they receive experience that they may not find anywhere else in organization, leadership, public speaking, the importance of volunteerism, self esteem and character development.

Another important reason to include students in your unit's decision making process is having the voice of the people you serve as part of the process. After all,

who knows more about what's going on among the student population than the students themselves? After all, who hasn't made plans, or policies, for the students that sounded GREAT to us, but then had those plans receive a very poor reception? With students as part of the process, situations like that can perhaps be avoided.

As we all know, students often live up (or down) to the level of our expectations. If we make a serious effort to include them in our PTSA board's process, and if we show them that we believe in their ability to do the job, they will surprise us. Give those students support, give them direction, and give them training and they may just be some of the best board members you have.

Male Involvement

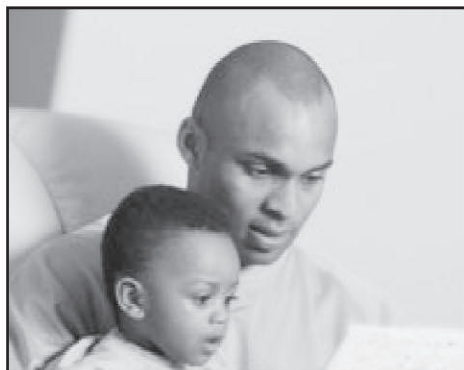
By Jeff Rogers, *Male Involvement Chair*

The time has arrived for school to start again. This time of year means finding that special backpack, filling it with school supplies, and planning those Fall PTA events. As your PTA/PTSA begins planning, I want all Missouri units and councils to think about how they can include more men in their events. Here are a few ideas:

- 1) Hold a fitness evening
- 2) Start one of the Male involvement programs found on the PTA MORE website. (www.pta.org/pta_more.asp)
- 3) Donuts for Dads
- 4) Father / Daughter Dance
- 5) Hobby Night
- 6) Cook out / Friday Night tailgate at the school or High school

However, the best way to get more men involved is to ASK them what their ideas are and what they want to do. The key to increasing your male involvement can be simplified to the ABCD's of increasing male involvement.

- A – Ask them
- B – Be Flexible
- C – Communicate
- D – Develop a Plan



Men are problem solvers and if you hand them a plan of work with what is needed spelled out they will be more likely to volunteer to help. I have a sample plan of work if you need one. All you have to do is e-mail me at jeffr@mopta.org and I will gladly send it to you along with any help you need to get started.

There are many ways to increase our male involvement. Last year, when Chuck Saylor, our National PTA President, took office only 10% of the National PTA membership were men. He committed to raising that percentage to 20% before the end of his two year office. Let's all pull together this year and help him meet his goal!

Find Jeff's Male Involvement group on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=173377396330>

Missouri PTA Attends Child Advocacy Day in Jefferson City

Four members of the Board of Managers of Missouri State PTA attended the 28th Annual Child Advocacy Day in Jefferson City, Missouri on April 7, 2010. Wendy Jackson, President, Donna Petiford, President-Elect, Denise McCarter, Vice-President of Legislation and Advocacy, and Tonia Neilsen, Administrative Assistant, traveled to Jefferson City to attend workshops on advocacy, to visit personally with Missouri Senators and Representatives, and to award the Distinguished Service Award to Representative Charlie Denison.

Child Advocacy Day is put on by the

Missouri Alliance for Children, Youth, and Families, which was created to be a state-wide network of citizens and community-based organizations whose objective is to improve coordination and communication among those concerned with the well-being of Missouri's children and families. Child Advocacy Day is an opportunity for advocates to become better informed about children's legislation that is coming up before the Missouri General Assembly, and to share their views with legislators.

Workshops available included a Legislative Briefing, Autism, Children's Health

Insurance, the Missouri Budget, the Safe Haven Law, and Strengthening Families Initiative. Missouri PTA was proud to be a part of this annual event and always welcomes members of PTA to join them in Jefferson City. Plan now to join our members next year at the 29th Child Advocacy Day. Together we can make a difference in the decisions made by our state government. For more information, visit www.childadvocacyday.org or contact Denise McCarter, Vice-President Legislation and Advocacy for Missouri PTA denisem@mopta.org.

Rep. Charlie Denison Awarded The Distinguished Service Award by Missouri PTA

During Child Advocacy Day, the Distinguished Service Award was presented to Charlie Denison, Representative of the 135th District in Springfield by Missouri PTA. The Distinguished Service Award is given to individuals who have shown an ongoing commitment to children

and youth in Missouri. Representative Denison has shown dedicated support for the purpose and vision of Missouri PTA since he entered office in 2004.

"I am truly honored by this award and the recognition of the Missouri PTA," Denison said. "Since my first days in the

legislature, I have been committed to improving the lives of Missouri's children by working to improve our schools."

Denison has been an advocate for increased educational funding and has worked on a number of education-related issues. This year has been especially difficult because of the significant budget cuts that have had to be made. His priority for education has guided his work and decisions while in the House of Representatives. The Missouri PTA is thankful for Representative Denison's commitment to Missouri's children.



From left: Missouri PTA Board of Managers Administrative Assistant Tonia Neilsen, President-Elect Donna Petiford, Rep. Charlie Denison, VP & Director of Legislative Services Denise McCarter, and President Wendy Jackson

Nixa Council and “The Eagles Nest”



Walking through Nixa school buildings and seeing children whose pants were a little short or wearing a coat that was a little snug, I couldn't help but think, "I have all those items my kids have outgrown." Often times many families give these items to "Least of These", a local food and clothing bank, but I thought it might be helpful to have a location directly located in a district building for families of students. When the idea was presented to the Nixa Council PTA Board in July 2009 I was so excited! The Nixa Council Executive Board voted unanimously to support this project. We spoke with district personnel seeking guidance and asking if they saw the same needs. Their one response was "Put it down on paper and let's see what you come up with."

Many hours were spent researching clothing closets: how were they run, who did they help, what donations did they accept, and where were they located. What followed in the months to come were many meetings, e-mails, countless hours on the computer and Internet, and many presentations to district staff. It was not long before the vision was shared and others in the community saw the need as well.

The Nixa School District generously donated time and resources to remodel a portion of the NJH concession stand to create "The Eagles Nest – Where

Eagles Care and Share." The Eagles Nest is open Wednesdays from 10-2. We closed in May for the summer and reopen August 11. We have clothing in sizes birth to adult. We carry new socks and underwear as well. A generous donation of brand new washer and dryer has allowed us to make sure all items are clean and ready to wear. Nixa

students and their siblings are eligible to receive clothing and shoes based on a referral from school personnel, typically a school counselor. All Eagles Nest volunteers sign a confidentiality form and the referral from the district contains no identifying information. A family does not even need to tell us their children's names! We also work with "Least of These" to share resources and information.

A dream, a vision, an idea has now come to fruition because many in our community saw a need. We all saw a need to help students in Nixa. We have come together to lend a hand, to make a change, to make a brighter day for all the students in Nixa. All of us in the Nixa community are well aware of the effects

that the economy has had on each of us, even the youngest. In joining our efforts with the community, Nixa Council PTA wants to support families and students. Nixa Council PTA wants families to see The Eagles Nest as a positive resource for help. We are honored to help families and see the possibilities multiplied for students. It is all about giving to others. The delight on a child's face when they are presented with new clothes is truly overwhelming.

Students will be more successful in the classroom and have more self confidence when they have clothing that they can feel positive about. Nixa Council is excited to see students flourish and thrive as they achieve in the classroom.

The Eagles Nest is a reality because of the Nixa School District, School Board, Jim McCauley, Glenn Scott, Bob Childers and SCORE, Adam and Buffy Busch, Elite Automotive, Doug and Wendy Jackson, Craftline Cabinets, Dave and Amy Koenigsfeld, Kim Grimm Design, ActNow Promotions, Bill and Tina Mooneyham, Robert Schriffer, The Nixa Council Officers, Century PTA, Espy PTA, High Pointe PTA, Mathews PTA, Thomas PTA, Inman PTA, Main Street PTA, Nixa Junior High PTSA, Nixa High School PTSA, and those who wish to remain anonymous, but their support was invaluable nonetheless.

Missouri Student Wins 2011-12 Reflections Theme Contest

4th grader Gavin Green of Ozark North Elementary PTA in the Ozark Region is the winner of the Reflections Theme Search Contest for 2011-12. Way to go, Gavin! His winning theme will be announced next year.



Short Takes

NATIONAL PTA UNVEILS NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH NICKELODEON, DORA THE EXPLORER

National PTA has joined Nickelodeon's in an effort to help prepare children for their first day of school. The partnership is part of a new campaign in celebration of *Dora the Explorer's* tenth anniversary. It's called, "*Beyond the Backpack*," and will offer support for preschoolers and their parents as they enter school. Look for it at <http://www.nickjr.com/dora-the-explorer/beyond-the-backpack/?xid=backbackpress>

MULTI-LANGUAGE RESOURCES FROM NATIONAL PTA

State PTA leadership helped identify key PTA resources to be translated into eight languages to cover needs in a variety of markets. The first phase of this ongoing project includes four PTA publications translated into Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, Chinese, Arabic, Russian and Somali.

Disclaimer: Language translations provided by TransPerfect Translations, using certified linguists and subject-matter specialists with proven expertise in every major industry, certified to both the ISO 9001:2008 and EN 15038:2006 quality standards. For more information, visit www.transperfect.com.

NEW COALITION LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT CHILDREN

To further the reach of the School Safety Alert Program, Consumers Union, along with the National PTA and a number of education and health based organizations, has formed a National School Safety Coalition.

National PTA and Consumer Reports have partnered to form the School Safety Alert Program, which promptly warns parents, schools, health officials and educators to dangers and allows them to remove dangerous products from homes and schools. Each month a safety tip will be featured in this newsletter and even more information about product recalls and other important information can be found online at PTA.org/safetyalert.

To further the reach of the School Safety Alert Program, Consumers Union, along with the National PTA and a number of education and health based organizations, has formed a National School Safety Coalition. The goal of the coalition is to get vital safety and recall information to every school and every parent to protect every child.

The National School Safety Coalition has launched the Click, Check and Protect Campaign to help safeguard children and inform parents, educators and caregivers about potential dangers. For more information on this campaign, visit clickcheckandprotect.org for vital safety alert and recall information to keep children safe.

DISASTER RELIEF - A QUICK NOTE REGARDING DISASTER RELIEF AND PTA UNITS.

If a PTA is collecting funds, it is best to ask the donor to make the check payable to the agency receiving the funds. The PTA can collect the checks and forward them to the agency. It is better if the PTA does not deposit the money into its regular bank account.

If the PTA does deposit checks into its regular bank account, it will have to declare these funds as income. The PTA should keep accurate records of the deposit and disbursement of those funds.

Mark Your Calendar

July

- National Parks and Recreation Month
- 4 Independence Day
Missouri PTA Office Closed
- 20 Special Olympics Day
- 26 Parents Day

August

- National Immunization Awareness Month
- Children's Eye Health and Safety Month
- 1 Dues to State Office

September

- National Preparedness Month
- Baby Safety Month
- 1 Dues to State Office
Deadline for Advocacy Through Leadership Awards (Individual/Unit/Council)
- 7 Labor Day
Missouri PTA Office Closed
- 13 Grandparents Day
- 15 Deadline for Certified PTA Leader Application
- 17 Constitution Day
- 22 Fall Begins

A PTA can vote, per its bylaws, to donate its own funds to a relief agency, provided that that agency is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Any substantial contribution from PTA funds should be to an agency that focuses on a school- or student-related relief effort.

PTAs involved in disaster assistance must also consider how they will keep information about the beneficiaries confidential. A PTA may wish to partner with the school district or another community agency to guard the privacy of the displaced citizens and to ensure that donations get where they are most needed.

PUT YOUR UNIT OR COUNCIL IN CONTACT

We want to spread the word about your unit or council. Please send event information to the CONTACT editor at avap@mopta.org.

Missouri Congress of Parents & Teachers
Missouri PTA
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Together We Shape The Future

**Missouri PTA Convention
October 15-17, Stoney Creek Inn, Columbia, MO**