

CONTACT

Volume 94, Issue 1
July 2012



Distinguished Service Award

The Missouri PTA Distinguished Service Award honors individuals and groups for their service and dedication to the children of Missouri of and the mission of PTA. Congratulations!

Aimee Alderman – Center Council PTA
Betty Anderson – Hickman Mills Council PTA
Sherri Anderson – Raytown Middle School PTSA
Lucy-Virlynn Apollon – South Valley Jr. High PTSA
Dot Atkinson – Springfield Council PTA
Dan Barnes – Trailridge Elementary PTA
Cathy Barton – Logan-Rogersville PTA
Amy Blakemore – Trailridge Elementary PTA
Molly Braley – Sycamore Hills Elementary PTA
Wanda Brown – Columbia Council PTA
Linda Burr – Alfred L. Renner PTA
Lorie Calder – Alexander Doniphan PTA
Ryan Calder – Alexander Doniphan PTA
Kelly Caldwell – Alfred L. Renner PTA
Rachel Casey – Grandview Council PTA
Ginger Crow – Liberty Middle School PTSA
Nancy Dal Porto – Grandview Middle School PTSA
Karen Davey – Butcher-Greene Elementary PTA
Bonnie Dennis – Grandview High School PTSA
Becky Dewitt – Liberty Middle School PTA
Ray Downey – Lewis & Clark Elementary PTA
David England – Logan-Rogersville PTA
Cathy Ferguson – Butcher-Greene Elementary PTA
Dr. Dennis Fisher – Park Hill District Council PTA
Laurie Frawley – Warren Hills Elementary PTA
Meagan Gardner – Liberty Council PTA
Donna Giddings – South Valley Jr. High PTSA
Mary Sue Gibson – Mill Creek Elementary PTA
Debbie Gregg – South Valley Middle School PTSA
Amy Hanway – Warren Hills Elementary PTA
Dr. April Hawkins – Inman PTA of Nixa
Amy Hayes – Warren Hills Elementary PTA
Tracy Herwig – Lillian Schumacher Elementary PTA
Angie Hill – Liberty Senior High School PTSA
Debbie Hopkins – Eugene Field Elementary PTA
Patty Ingram – Liberty Oaks Elementary PTA
Doug Jackson – Missouri PTA Board of Managers
Debbie Jester – Park Hill District Council PTA

Katie Jester – Trailridge Elementary PTA
Linda Johnson – Belvidere Elementary PTA
Dr. Brad Kincheloe – Park Hill High School PTA
Gerry Lee – Springfield Council PTA
Denise McPherson – Park Hill District Council PTA
Jeanne Maize – Kellybrook PTA
Janel Manns – Shoal Creek Elementary PTA
Liz Means – Belvidere Elementary PTA
Jess Molton – Center Senior High School PTA
Tisha Moon – Nixa Council PTA
Barbara Moore – St. Joseph Council PTA
Kathie Nichols – Meadowmere PTA
Vacinta Oliver – Grandview Middle School PTSA
Michael Pope – Northview Elementary PTA
Ann Quigg – Martin City K-8 PTA
Lisa Renfrow – Meadowmere PTA
Marjorie Rice – Center Senior High School PTA
Angela Riggs – St. Joseph Council PTA
Jeff Rogers – Grandview Council PTA
Melissa Rosenthal – Center Council PTA
Carolyn Rowlett – Park Hill District Council PTA
Clay Simmons – Martin City K-8 PTA
Dave Singleton – Center Council PTA
Kelly Smith – Sycamore Hills Elementary PTA
Ann Sutherland – Warren Hills Elementary PTA
Shelly Throckmorton – Delta Woods Middle School PTSA
Jennifer Tilley – Nixa Early Learning Center PTA
Rhonda Torno – Shoal Creek Elementary PTA
Kaysie Wahlert – Liberty Oaks Elementary PTA
Stephanie Walker – Conn-West Elementary PTA
Deborah Walsh – Missouri PTA Board of Managers
Diane Watson – St. Joseph Council PTA
Jeff Watt – Manor Hill Elementary PTA
Megan Watt – Manor Hill Elementary PTA
Kathy Weaver – Manor Hill Elementary PTA
Linda Whitford – Grandview High School PTSA
Misty Wilkinson – Northview Elementary PTA
Dr. Leonard Young – Missouri PTA Board of Managers

Recipients of the Distinguished Service Award receive a letter of recognition from the state president, a certificate suitable for framing, and a lapel pin. A portion of the award fee goes to the Missouri PTA Scholarship Fund.

Cover photo:

Reflections 1st Place Primary (K-2) Photography entry, by Elizabeth Ralston, Chapel Lakers Elementary PTA, Blue Springs.

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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 Donna Petiford, Missouri PTA President



At this writing, Missouri PTA has just finished a very successful Leadership Conference and Reflections Showcase. The conclusion of two of our biggest events of the year makes me ever thankful for the devoted PTA volunteers who make up our Board of Managers. We have a great group of "doers" and I am always amazed at their level of professionalism and their willingness to share their time for a great cause. As we look forward to another school year, please keep in mind that this team of leaders is just a phone call or an email away. You will find contact information for specific committee chairs and regional directors in the back of this magazine as well as www.mopta.org.

PTA leaders are encouraged to order your Back to School kit from National PTA if you haven't already done so. This kit is full of the necessary "how-to's" and I think you will find it very useful as you are making plans and setting goals for the upcoming school year. You should also be receiving your summer packet mailing from Missouri PTA very soon. This kit contains even more great information that you will want to share with all of your board and committee members. Remember

that you also have access to all this information online in the password-protected areas of the National PTA (Running a PTA) and Missouri PTA (Members Only) websites, with access information provided via the new and improved PTA membership cards.

Even though we provide this outstanding printed material and deliver it right to your door (and via the internet), you won't want to miss attending our next training event as well. We will be hosting our annual Convention in just a few short months and we know that you will want make preparations now to attend.

Keep in mind that training is an appropriate use of your PTA funds. Training is the necessary ingredient to assure that your PTA has the most current and up-to-date information for the business of managing your board, as well as providing your membership with relevant resources and fresh ideas. Not to mention, you will have the once in a lifetime opportunity to celebrate our centennial as an organization. The entire Board of Managers for Missouri PTA looks forward to seeing you at our Convention in Kansas City, October 19-21, 2012. Please join us inHONORING THE PAST, CELEBRATING THE PRESENT, AND IMAGINING THE FUTURE.

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

The PTA Dad: Adventures in Unfamiliar Territory

By Jay Jefferson, George Washington Carver Elementary PTA, Coral Gables, FL

Jay Jefferson, PTA President. These are words that I truly thought would never be associated with me. But as the saying goes, “never say never.” So how did this Dad become the leader of a PTA traditionally dominated by Moms, you ask? We’ll that’s a very interesting story that has a few twists and turns. But, here is the short version of my adventures thus far, and the lessons I have learned along the way.

After having relocated to Miami from New York City with my wife and two young children, I was eager to connect with my new community. My daughter entered Kindergarten at Carver Elementary, so my wife and I wanted to get involved our school’s PTA. We made our interest known to the “then” incoming PTA President, who informed us of two recent vacancies on the Board. We jumped at the opportunity, and agreed to join. My wife became the Vice President of Membership, and I the Board’s Secretary. Yep, Secretary -another position not commonly dominated by Dads. But since my primary interest was really to work on revamping the PTA’s outdated website, I was told that serving as Secretary would assist me in my efforts. Ok, I jokingly thought to myself, “I’m breaking the glass ceiling for all future Dads who aspire to be PTA Secretary.” Further bolstering my confidence, I proclaimed with Dad-like bravado, “I got this...no problem!”

When school began in late August, I proudly assumed my new role at our daughter’s school. After a week or so of introducing myself as the PTA Secretary to fellow parents, school teachers and administrators -the majority of whom are women- I became aware that I might have a problem. Not only had these individuals never encountered a male PTA Secretary, but they had rarely seen a Dad take an active role in school -period. Apparently, all of this was as new to them as it was to me.

Yet, instead of retreating to the background to avoid the awkward stares -which I admit I thought long and hard about doing- I decided to flip the script, and draw more attention to myself. Yeah, counterintuitive, I know. But since I



was already in the position, I thought I should let my role as Secretary make it less awkward for other Dads to engage with their children at school. And as I jokingly explained to all that gave me that initial look of disbelief after I would introduce myself, “The name of the organization is Parent-Teacher Association, and Dads are parents too.”

After a couple of months, the shock and awe surrounding my role as Secretary waned. My relationship with fellow parents, school teachers and administrators -again, the majority of whom are women - grew better as I allowed my actions to speak for themselves. I had initiated a new weekly PTA newsletter that I personally edited, printed, and distributed to every parent via our school’s weekly communicator folders. Additionally, I began updating the content to the PTA’s existing website, with a focus of posting more event recaps and photos depicting all the wonderful activities taking place at the school. In doing so, I realized that I was often the only Dad involved at many of these events, a fact I took personally since I had endured a few months of “Mr. Secretary” jokes and humorous references. What had gone wrong with my plan to have other Dads join me in my quest for equality in parent-child engagement at school? I felt truly defeated.

At that very time, the “then” PTA President decided to withdraw her child from the school, and vacate her position on the Board. In hindsight,

I can now say this presumably bad situation presented a good opportunity. I was asked by the remaining Board members to become President, and this recommendation was endorsed by the teachers and administrators. Again, I thought long and hard about the challenges of assuming this new role, especially since I had just started to settle into my old role. Ultimately, I said yes, and my nomination was approved by the remaining Board members, the school’s teachers and administrators, as well as the Florida State PTA. I quickly went to work repairing and improving relationships with the teachers and administrators. Additionally, I initiated a rebranding campaign to reinforce the mission of the organization as serving to benefit every child at Carver Elementary by working to ensure they receive the best possible education. I reached out to a cross section of parents and guardians to join the new PTA Team I was building -successfully recruiting six new committee chairs. We have since received numerous accolades for the many activities and events we have hosted. In my few months as President, the new PTA team and I have, in the words of one teacher, “brought new life to the school through our positive energy and passion.” Yes, we’ve made great progress, but still have much more work to do -with one of my highest priorities being to encourage other Dads to participate in the PTA, and become active at school. I cherish the fact my daughter knows I love her so much that I want to be involved in her school. I especially like the twinkle in her eye when she says to her classmates, “My Dad is the PTA President.” For that, all the hard work is worth it!

So what have I discovered in my adventures thus far? Well, I’ve learned that there are times when you choose the situation with which to become involved, and then there are times when the situation chooses you. As a PTA Dad, I have learned to embrace both. Furthermore, my quest for equality in parent-child engagement at school will be won one Dad at a time -but we will get there. “I got this...no problem!”

Financial

A financial review and an audit serve the same purpose: someone who has not had signing authority on the account reviews the financial records of the organization to determine to the best of their ability whether the financial statements presented accurately reflect reality. The difference is that an audit is typically performed by a paid professional while a financial review is typically prepared by unpaid members of the organization. For our purposes we will use the term interchangeably.

If an internal financial review results in concerns about accuracy or procedures, then an external audit could well be in order.

Reasons **not** to do an audit:

- You did something that you don't want anyone else to know about.

Reasons to do an audit:

- **Credibility** - The Board and Membership will be reassured that the financial affairs of the organization are being accurately represented by the financial reports.
- **Oversight** - The Treasurer will have confirmation that his/her work was looked at and checked for accuracy.
- **Improvement** - The Audit Committee may identify procedures that could be improved to benefit the organization.

Auditing involves following financial transactions through records to make sure that receipts have been properly accounted for and expenditures made as authorized in the minutes and in conformity with PTA bylaws, standing rules, and budget limitations.

PTA bylaws indicate when an audit is to be made, its procedure, and when it should be reported to the membership. Record books should be audited at least once a year. Books should also be audited if a financial officer resigns, before the new officer assumes his or her duties, and at any other time deemed necessary.

The process for selecting/electing individuals to serve on the internal audit committee or for retaining a professional firm (with nonprofit accounting experience) will also be found in the bylaws of the PTA.

For more information please review the quick reference guide provided by National PTA, *Money Matters*. This guide is included in the "Back to School Kit" summer mailing and under the "Running A PTA" tab on the website: www.pta.org. Additional information is provided by Missouri PTA in the Summer Toolkit mailing in mid-July.

"Don't forget to register to vote!"

National PTA Back to School Kit Now Available



The *Official National PTA Back to School Kit*—Beyond the Basics—contains resources to help PTA leaders serve their communities and run their local units: easy-to-use primers for the president, treasurer, membership chair, and programs chair; membership and marketing tools; program and advocacy resources; and special offers from national partners.

Local, council, district, and regional PTAs are responsible for registering to receive the kit this year. When registering, they will select their preferred shipping date and confirm or change the shipping address for the kit. The persons registering for the kit will have to agree to terms acknowledging that they are authorized to order/receive the kit for the 2012–2013 school year. Council, Regions and Districts can call (800) 307-4782 to register for this year's kit.

Units should use the general kit registration form at PTA.org/OfficialKit. Units can also call the National PTA Information Center at (800) 307-4782 to order the kit by phone. Units will need their unit ID numbers to register for the kit. Some council, district, and region PTAs who don't have membership IDs can call our Information Center at (800) 307-4782 to register over the phone.

The kit registration form will be available May 7 through September 14. Shipments will occur weekly from June 8 to September 14. Units that have not registered for the kit by September 7 will have a kit sent to them in late September or early October, to the address on file with the National PTA office.

Online

The online version of the kit, at PTA.org/OfficialKit, will be available mid-June. It will include downloadable versions of select resources from the kit, as well as online exclusives.

2012-13 Reflections

“The Magic of a Moment”

Missouri Students Among National PTA Reflections Winners:

Missouri PTA would like to congratulate the following National PTA Reflections honorees:

Awards of Excellence

Each Award of Excellence recipient receives:

- A cash award
- A silver-plated Reflections medal
- A certificate and letter signed by the National PTA President
- Recognition in the annual PTA Reflections online gallery

(Dance Choreography) Award of Excellence: Emily Downie, “Diversity in Black and White”, Intermediate, Greenwood Laboratory School PTA, Springfield, MO.

(Musical Composition) Award of Excellence: Sam Garvin “Diversity Means a Caterpillar”, Primary, Rountree Elementary PTA, Springfield, MO.

(Photography) Award of Excellence: Andrew Reardon “Religious Diversity Can Unite”, Middle School, Liberty Middle School PTA, Liberty, MO.

Awards of Merit

Each Award of Merit recipient receives:

- A silver-plated Reflections medal
- A certificate and letter signed by the National PTA president
- Recognition in the annual PTA Reflections online gallery

(Musical Composition) Award of Merit: Daphne Yu “Battle of Nature” High School, Rock Bridge High School PTSA, Columbia, MO.

National PTA recognizes 6 Outstanding Interpretation winners as well as 72 students with Awards of Excellence and

116 students with Awards of Merit across four grade divisions—primary, intermediate, middle/junior, and senior—in six arts categories—dance choreography, film production, literature, musical composition, photography, and visual arts. Winners were chosen from hundreds of thousands of submissions from students across the nation and in European schools serving military families who participated in this year’s program, themed “Diversity Means...” The Outstanding Interpretation, Awards of Excellence and Awards of Merit artwork will be showcased in a virtual PTA Reflections gallery that will be live later this year.

Change to Reflections program coming soon!

Based on feedback from local and state volunteers, National PTA has announced a new streamlined process for submitting Reflections entries. Missouri PTA expects to receive the details of this process in late June and will share this information with our units as soon as possible. Due to the timing of this new information, our Reflections toolkit information may be arriving separate from our annual summer packet mailing to PTA / PTSA leaders.

Fund Your Healthy Lifestyles Program

Looking for a way to fund a program at your school that will help ensure that all students stay healthy and ready to learn? With the PTA Healthy Lifestyles Grants from National PTA, your unit could receive up to \$1,000 to support activities planned for November’s PTA Healthy Lifestyles Month. Grant applications are due by 5:00 p.m. EDT, Friday, August 31 — giving you time this summer to work with your leadership team to put together a program and submit your application. The application form, event ideas, and other planning resources are available online at PTA.org under Programs.

Check your Back to School Kit for more information.



PTA Healthy Lifestyles

The Ongoing Problem of Child Abuse

By Denise McCarter, Health & Safety/Juvenile Services Chair

Children are suffering from a hidden epidemic of child abuse and neglect. Over 3 million reports of child abuse are made every year in the United States; however, those reports can include multiple children. In 2009, approximately 3.3 million child abuse reports and allegations were made involving an estimated 6 million children. Child abuse can take many forms and includes neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse and medical neglect. The repercussions of all types of abuse are life altering and lifelong.

- A report of child abuse is made every ten seconds.
- More than five children die every day as a result of child abuse.
- Approximately 80% of children that die from abuse are under the age of 4.
- It is estimated that between 50-60% of child fatalities due to maltreatment are not recorded as such on death certificates.
- More than 90% of juvenile sexual abuse victims know their perpetrator in some way.
- Child abuse occurs at every socioeconomic level, across ethnic and cultural lines, within all religions and at all levels of education.
- Abused children are 25% more likely to experience teen pregnancy.
- Abused teens are less likely to practice safe sex, putting them at greater risk for STDs.
- About 30% of abused and neglected children will later abuse their own children, continuing the horrible cycle of abuse.
- About 80% of 21 year olds that were abused as children met criteria for at least one psychological disorder.

As a PTA, what can we do to make a difference in this staggering problem of child abuse? Our goal should be to prevent child abuse before it occurs. Although recognition and treatment are important, prevention is the best way to combat this epidemic. Heightening the awareness of the problem is an important first step in the fight against this epidemic. As a PTA leader, you have the ability to make a difference in the lives of the children and families around you. Educate yourself about the problem and the resources around you. There are many types of programs that strive to prevent abuse. Support and education for new as well as older parents, early and regular child and family screening and treatment, and general family support all can contribute to preventing abuse. As a PTA, we can do our part to provide information, education and family support through our programs at the local, state and national level. We also can advocate for laws and policies that strengthen the family and work to prevent and treat child abuse. PTAs can collaborate with other organizations that specialize in the prevention of child abuse and connect the families in our schools with these organizations.

“Missouri KidsFirst” offers these steps for helping to prevent child abuse. They can be found at <http://www.missourikidsfirst.org/pcamo/Missouri%20Prevention%20Partners/five-steps-.pdf>

1. Care for Yourself

Learn more about how children grow and learn, and tips for parenting during each stage of growth. Take time out for yourself so you have the inner strength to bounce back when things are hard. Seek support from family, friends and neighbors to help cope with the stress of everyday life.

2. Care for Children

Spend time listening, reading, talking and playing with a child. Teach good behavior by using good behavior yourself. Let children know they are loved.

3. Care for Others

Offer a helping hand to others who care for children and let them know everyone needs help from time to time. Provide emotional support to family, friends and neighbors caring for children.

4. Get Involved

Ask community leaders and businesses to make caring for children and families a priority. Register to vote and stay informed about local, state and national policies that impact children. Volunteer your time or donate to help children thrive.

5. Report

Trust your instincts. If you believe a child has been or may be harmed, call the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-392-3738 or 911 for law enforcement.

The PTA mission, to be “a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for all families and communities, and a strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child” should be our focus as we work together to prevent child abuse. We can make a difference.

Scholarship Fund Donations

Sparta PTA

Prairie View Elementary PTA

Glendale Elementary PTA

Founder’s Day Donations

Lee’s Summit West High School PTSA

Prairie View Elementary PTA

Belton High School PTSA

Peculiar Elementary PTA

Introducing

The State Membership Theme for the 2012–2013 Year

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 or those of us who still cry to deal with first day trauma and an opportunity to join 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 Blast Off...your membership campaign!



Early Bird Awards

The unit that sends the
HIGHEST MEMBERSHIP
based upon last year’s
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP to the state office
POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE
SEPTEMBER 28, 2012 will earn the
EARLY BIRD AWARD
and be recognized at the Missouri PTA Convention
in Kansas City 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 28, and
YOU MAY BE A WINNER!

AND THE WINNER IS.....

The 2011-2012 Membership Awards were presented this year at the Leadership Conference on May 5, 2012. These outstanding units and councils were recognized for their hard work.

Golden Gavel Awards

Unit with the highest numerical increase in membership.
Smith Hale Middle School PTA, Three Trails Region
This unit increased their membership by 270 members over last year.

Unit with the highest percentage increase in membership.
Smith Hale Middle School PTA, Three Trails Region
Smith Hale had a 1227.27 % increase in their membership compared to last year!

Unit with the highest membership total
Blue Springs High School PTSA, Three Trails Region
This is the 5th consecutive year BSHS has received this honor!
Their membership totaled 1,025 members this year.

Unit with the highest membership percentage based on school enrollment.
Greenwood Lab PTA, Ozark Region
This is the second year Greenwood Lab has been recognized for this achievement. Their membership is 123.86% of their school enrollment.

Council with the highest percentage of total membership increase over previous year.
Hickman Mills PTA Council, Three Trails Region
This council increased their membership total 91.41% over last year.

Community Involvement Award

Unit with the highest number of business members.
Central High PTSA, Pony Express Region
45 business memberships allowed Central to win this award again this year!

Students Make A Difference Award

Recognizes the unit with the highest percentage of student members based on school enrollment. This is an application award. To be considered, an unit must fill out the application. There were no applications for this award for 2011-2012. Remember...You have to apply to win!!!

“Catch The Fever...Join PTA” Winter Membership Challenge Winners

\$50 Challenge Winner

Spring Garden Middle School PTSA
St. Joseph School District
Pony Express Region

\$100 Challenge Winner

Eugene Field Elementary PTA
St. Joseph School District
Pony Express Region

Congratulations to all our award winning units & councils!

Outstanding Membership Campaign

WINNING CAMPAIGN - “GET CONNECTED!”

Congratulations to Voy Spears Jr. Elementary PTA for being recognized as the 2011-2012 Outstanding Membership Campaign Award winner.

This unit’s promotional materials featured a technology theme which coincided with their ongoing goal of keeping their classrooms’ technology up-to-date. They put many of the membership basics to work which began with setting a goal; 100% student representation. They had membership tables at school events and used drawings that featured items of technology (a Nook and iPod Shuffle) as local incentives. Classroom competitions were held and bulletin boards were used to keep the message visible at all times. Businesses were able to pick from 3 levels of membership. These included being recognized on the school’s website and the opportunity to partner with PTA by sponsoring a carnival game.

Congratulations to Voy Spears Elementary PTA for a great job and meeting your goal, 100% student representation!

SPECIAL RECOGNITION – SPRINGFIELD COUNCIL OF PTAs

A council cannot sell memberships, but a council can find other ways to promote and increase PTA membership. The Springfield Council of PTAs did just that! They were a source of tools, information and motivation to their local units. A tri-fold board was given to each of their 52 units for use in their local campaign as a promotional tool on their membership tables as school events. State membership information about deadlines, awards and challenges were passed on to the units through their council newsletter. SCPTA held its own membership challenges which units could win prizes such as skate parties for their school.

Thank you Springfield Council of PTA’s for being a good mentor to your units and for reminding us what an important role a council can play in Membership.

Welcome Our Newest Unit

Join us in welcoming Hazelwood Galactic PTA of Florissant.

The Legislative Piece of the Puzzle

By Dorothy Gardner, Vice President and Director, Department of Legislation & Advocacy

Understanding what role Legislation fits into within your unit or council might seem hazy, confusing, or just plain vague. From its very inception PTA has been about advocating for kids. Our purpose, mission, positions and resolutions spell out the language of that advocacy. But when it comes to legislation – issues and elections – many units and councils are not sure what role they can take. Couple that with the legal guidelines surrounding 501(c)(3) status organizations – which all PTAs are – mass confusion often ensues.

So let's break it down just a bit.

- The Legislative Chair

In the unit or council it is the primary role of the legislative chair is to inform the members about legislative issues and encourage members to become legislatively involved. Sounds simple but where to find the information on current PTA issues and how to explain to members how to become involved might seem like you've just jumped into the deep end of the pool. We have developed some great resources to assist you in your role.

- In both the Tool Kit (distributed to all presidents during the summer) and Legislative Handbook (distributed to all presidents this past January) you will find more in depth examples of what you can do in this role. Both of these resources are also available on our website in the Member's only section.
- During the school year the Legislative department issues a monthly suggested legislative report. This report is broken down into local, state and national current issues/happening. Examples of how members can be advocates are also provided.
- New on our website under the Legislation tab is a page entitled 'Advocacy Resources'. This page provides template and links to the great legislative tools provided by both Missouri and National PTA.
- Legislative events/action

As PTAs we can take a stance on issues – support or oppose bills and other ballot issues. However we can never, under any circumstances,

support or oppose candidates – this includes political parties. Think of it this way -- we advocate for issues not people. So what sort of legislative ventures, especially during an election year, can your unit or council under take.

- Host a candidate's forum – the event must be completely impartial. All candidates must be invited and given equal time for responses.
- Publish a candidate's questionnaire – all candidates must be given the opportunity to respond and responses must be printed exactly as submitted by the candidate.
- Educate candidates on PTA issues.
- Register voters – once again this must be completely impartial.
- Remind members to vote. Typically presidential elections have a higher voter turnout, in 2008 71% of voting-age citizens were registered to vote and out of that 71% only 64% voted. In 2010 only 59.8% of eligible voters were registered and of them 41.8% actually voted. There is a saying "those who show up run the world." In the case of voting those who make policy are elected by those who show up to vote.
- Inviting elected representatives to attend meetings as guests.
- Actions to avoid under any circumstances in your role as a PTA leader or at a PTA function.
 - Telling other members to only vote for a candidate who supports a specific issue or position.
 - Distribute any campaign materials on a candidate's behalf.
 - Wear campaign buttons or t-shirts during a PTA event.
 - Invite only one candidate to speak to the PTA.

Legislation should be a main component of your unit or council. It's up to your local membership how much or little you want to take on this upcoming year. At the very least every unit and council should appoint a legislative chair. Of course we, in the Legislative Department, think this is the coolest place to be, and we are happy to share our passion with you. Contact any one of use and we'll be happy to answer questions or just chat about what is going on in the PTA legislative world.



Resolutions...What Happens Next?

By Angel Davis, Resolutions Chair

The resolution process doesn't end once resolutions are adopted at convention. This past October the delegates of the 96th Annual Missouri State PTA Convention adopted three separate resolutions. What happens to those resolutions after they are adopted? What significance do resolutions hold for the members of the MOPTA?

When speaking as a representative of your local PTA unit or as a member of the MOPTA, your position on any issue must be in line with the stance of the PTA. Those stances are not just arbitrarily picked, but chosen, developed, voted on and agreed to by the general membership of the PTA.

MOPTA uses its resolutions in several ways. First MOPTA can decide the issue is of national importance and submit the resolution to National PTA for consideration at National Convention. This is what happened to both the Improved Infrastructures Around Schools and Distracted Driving resolutions. While these resolutions are being considered at the National level they are still being worked on at the state level as well. If they are adopted at by the delegates of the National Convention, National PTA begins working on them on a federal level.

Within the state, MOPTA is often asked by groups who have the well being of our youth in mind to testify on behalf of a bill in legislation. The American Heart Association approached the MOPTA and asked if we would testify on behalf of House Bill 1337. Before we could agree, we first had to make sure the language of the bill was in agreement with the wishes of the membership of the MOPTA members. By consulting the resolutions, it was determined MOPTA could support HB1337 and a letter of support was drafted and sent to the committee considering the bill.

Other times MOPTA works with legislators to draft bills that are in accordance with one of our resolutions. In 2011 MOPTA partnered with Senator Will Kraus to get Senate Bill 112 filed in the Senate. This act was on behalf of a resolution the MOPTA adopted in 2007 to close the loopholes in third party child abuse reporting laws. While SB112 was not passed, three other bills were introduced that included similar language and MOPTA worked to let legislators know the importance of those bills. On May 12, 2011 SB54 was "Truly Agreed To and Finally Passed" and then signed into law.

Without the input of our members and units, letting us know which issues are important to them and what should be done about those issues, the Missouri PTA would not be able work with legislators, testify on issues or speak on your behalf to improve the lives of our youth.

Town Halls – Gaining Info and Insight

By Lou Hibdon, State Legislative Chair

The Spring Legislative Session is winding down, and as a result of numerous Town Halls throughout the State this past year, our Legislators had an opportunity to hear and understand from us how we feel about issues affecting children of our State. As well, we have had the chance to hear from our Legislator's positions and get to know them better. Hosting a Town Hall is a wonderful way to learn about your legislators and legislative positions relating to PTA.

Do you want to get to know your Legislators? Would you like to have them understand how you feel about what is going on in Jefferson City? Well, this past year we had numerous PTA Councils that hosted Legislative Town Halls across the state. Those who attended got that opportunity to interact and get the "listening ear" of our State Congressional Members.

It all began with a Town Hall in Liberty in November, where we had a roomful of attendees hear about our PTA Legislative Priorities, and how their own Legislators felt about them. Additionally, the Distracted Driving pledge sheet was available for those who wanted to make that commitment. Look at the cover on the March issue of Contact and you will see Meagan, our MOPTA student representative, as she sits at the Distracted Driving pledge table from that event.

In the month of December, Springfield Council again hosted a great Town Hall, moderated by our own Donna Petiford. Springfield holds their meeting in the morning, and

has continually had great participation and interest. It doesn't matter so much the time, if people are involved, they will attend.

The new year brought a Town Hall in Lee's Summit. There was a lot of help supplied by their Council Members, from greetings at the door and passing our handouts, to helping with the refreshments. Everyone was working towards their ATLaw Award.

St. Joseph hosted the next Town Hall. It was great to see how their Legislators approached issues in a smaller community, but had the same outlook on the result. It was a great meeting and we even had a little snow.

Both Raytown and Hazelwood PTA Councils rounded out the Town Halls for the year, and hosted their events on the same day, at different ends of the state. Kim Weber, our President Elect, traveled to Hazelwood to moderate their first ever Town Hall. What an opportunity for both Legislators and attendees. Raytown's Town Hall had a casual feel. Everyone sat around a large square of tables, as Legislators responded to questions - a very comfortable feeling.

We are encouraged by the number of Town Halls this past year, and would like to encourage more Councils/Units to host them next year. Advocating for our Children is what we are all about. This is a great way to effect and influence the Legislators who serve us in Jefferson City. We can hear their views, and they can understand ours.

Town Halls step-by-step

Thinking about hosting a Town Hall this coming school year but not sure where or when to start planning? It's never too early to look at your busy PTA calendar and pick a date. The Missouri Legislative session runs from January through May. Keep these months in mind when picking your date. If you plan on having a Town Hall during the Missouri legislative session, remember that representatives are busy in Jefferson City Monday through Thursday afternoon. During these months your representatives will only be available to attend your Town Hall Thursday evening, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Once you have a date the Legislative Department has developed a variety of tools to streamline both the planning and tasks.

The first step you will want to take is to contact the State Legislative Chair. This board member will not only assist you with some of the planning but can answer any questions you might have. It is also important to let us know what date you have planned so we can make sure nothing conflicts on our end.

Next take a look at your 2012 Legislative Handbook. This valuable resource was distributed to all unit and council presidents in January of 2012. Don't have one or can't find it. Don't worry. The entire resource is available online in the member's only section of the MOPTA website. You can also contact the state office to replace a lost hard copy. The 2012

Legislative Handbook includes a section with step-by-step guides and worksheets to plan and implement your Town Hall. No need to reinvent the wheel!

Holding a Town Hall may seem like an overwhelming task, especially if you've never tackled one in the past. But broken down into planning stages and utilizing the State Legislative Chair, you can pull off this event successfully. Trust us – it's really not as scary as it seems. Our goal is to help you succeed, so give us a call or send us an email.



PTSA members man the "Distracted Driving Pledge Table" during the Hazelwood Town Hall

What's Your Social Media Presence?

Facebook is a great way to do Social Media marketing for your PTA. Facebook is perfect for brand awareness because it is free advertising and promotion for your local PTA, it allows you to share information with your members, it will enable you to start conversations on various topics, and it gives them the chance to share with their friends as well. Reference: Mansfield, Heather (2011) A How to Guide for NonProfits: Social Media for Social Good. USA:McGraw-Hill

As always, know your district's policy regarding social media and student identification.

1. Create Your Voice. Your voice will often be found in the status updates of your fans, which means it is very important to find content that engages your fans and encourages them to want to engage with you. A great way to help you gauge this will be by the number of likes, shares, and comments you receive on your posts.

2. Fun and Informative. A great place to get started with content is to share success stories, breaking news, grant deadlines, calls to action, events, and information shared by National PTA.

3. Professional vs. Personal. While adding personality and flair is important, keep in mind that there is a difference between a personal Facebook page and your PTA's professional one. Set up rules of etiquette for your PTA's Facebook page so that everyone knows the rules and can help make it a safe place for sharing information.

4. More Than One. Be sure to have at least two people (although three would be best) as administrators of your PTA Facebook page. This way if someone is sick, traveling, unreachable or has to leave for any reason there are multiple people with access to the page. This also helps spread the responsibility for posting and sharing content, lessening the pressure on everyone.

5. Posting Limits. Be sure to limit the number of posts. Too many posts will cause people to hide or un-Like your Facebook page. Ideally, four to six posts per week is best, though you should not

post more than twice a day.

6. Content Sharing. Be sure to share links, videos, and pictures whenever possible in your posts. This will help increase your PTA's visibility and activity. Facebook is all about sharing information.

7. Tagging Gold. Tag sponsors and supporters whenever possible; this will help them to keep up with what you are doing and engage them more. Plus, it gives them greater visibility among your PTA members and supporters.

8. Events. Create events and send them to the fans of your page. It will remind them about your unit and your events, and it will help you engage them in a new way.

9. Do Not Automate. It is always tempting to automatically sync several social media platforms to Facebook so you only have to send one status update. However, avoid doing this as much as possible because each social media platform is unique in the culture of the community and the way content is shared.

10. Encourage. Do not forget to encourage your PTA board members, volunteers, students (if you are a PTSA), teachers, and families to engage and be active on your PTA page. This will help create a flow of information and sharing that will encourage everyone! Most of all, do not forget to have fun, learn a lot, and remember that social media is just another resource for you, your members, and the parents and teachers that will give every child one voice!

For more information about how your PTA can best utilize social media, please contact our Communications Department. This tip sheet is one of many resources that National PTA offers members. Go to PTA.org for more!

National PTA Social Media

Facebook - www.facebook.com/ParentTeacherAssociation

Twitter - [@NationalPTA](https://twitter.com/NationalPTA)

YouTube - Youtube.com/nationalpta

PTA Great Idea Bank - www.ptagreatideabank.org

LC Sponsors

NPTA Member Benefits

METLIFE - MetLife Auto & Home® has worked with PTA to bring PTA members a group insurance program that comes with special savings and benefits. This program includes competitive benefits and superior discounts for members.

- Office Max - Together, National PTA and OfficeMax keep parents and students supplied!
Now, PTA members receive exclusive savings at OfficeMax! When you shop OfficeMax, you'll find everything from notebooks, binders, and pens to paper, furniture, and so much more:
- SHARP ELECTRONICS - The PTA/Sharp Electronics member store is now available to offer you valuable member discounts on Sharp AQUOS Liquid Crystal Televisions and

other home electronics products! Every unit is offered at special PTA member pricing, guaranteeing you the lowest possible price.

- T-MOBILE – 14% discount off your monthly service charges for new and existing T-Mobile subscribers, plus additional savings for new subscribers.
- Hertz - We're at the Airport and in your Neighborhood. The world's largest airport general use car rental brand, operating from approximately 8,500 locations in 146 countries worldwide is proud to offer PTA members benefits like: Savings of up to 20% off rentals, special promotions in addition to your discount and Fee Waived Hertz #1 Club Gold® enrollment—a \$60 savings!

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

Springfield PTA Leader Honored

Springfield Council of PTAs honored outstanding PTA Leader, Dawn Thompson, for her commitment and devotion to children and youth. The Springfield Council of PTAs presented Dawn Thompson with a National PTA Life Achievement award at its meeting on May 2, 2012.

Dawn has been actively involved with many local PTA activities for the past 13 years including serving as President at Wilder Elementary PTA and in volunteer positions with Pershing PTSA and Glendale PTSA. Dawn served in various roles with the Springfield Council of PTAs beginning in 2003. She has served as the council president for the last two years and has provided leadership to the council as Vice President of Programs, VP of Promotions and Secretary.

“Springfield Council of PTAs is pleased to present this prestigious award to Dawn Thompson,” said Kim Horton, Vice President of the council. “She has been a great leader for this organization by promoting teamwork and by encouraging new ideas and programs.” Dawn has been instrumental in developing the All Pro Dad program that now includes 12 schools and has promoted other new programs such as the “Save a Life Tour” and the “Ned Show”. Dawn also serves as Regional Director for the Missouri PTA Board of Managers.

PTA promotes the collaboration of families, schools and communities throughout the country, and encourages everyone who cares about kids to speak up with a powerful voice on their behalf,” added PTA National President Betsy Landers. “Dawn Thompson possesses a mighty voice, and we cannot thank her enough for the work she has done and will undoubtedly continue to do.”

The National PTA Life Achievement Award is the highest honor a PTA can bestow. Formerly known as National PTA Life Membership, the award was established in 1899, just two years after PTA’s founding, to pay tribute to those who had demonstrated exemplary service in support of children.



Missouri PTA thanks the following proud sponsors of the 2012 “Let’s Get Real” Leadership Conference:

Delegate Packet Flyer



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Membership Awards Luncheon



Reflections Arts Showcase



Short Takes

PTA E-LEARNING MODULES

Realize your potential with PTA Leadership Development E-learning.

To reach as many members as possible, National PTA is proud to present e-learning, a computer-based training program. Each member's potential is just beginning to be tapped with e-learning.

Technology is driving us toward access, information, and speed. E-learning gives National PTA the power to advance membership training by quickly moving knowledge from people who have it to people who need it. Members can develop or hone leadership skills when, where, and as they need them. E-learning's up-to-the-minute information is accessible from home, in the office, at the library, or on the road 24 hours a day and seven days a week.

Leadership Fundamentals

Conflict Management — This course is taught using a simulated real-life situation, and providing immediate feedback and expert advice.

Ethical Leadership — Learn how to accomplish your goals with fairness and integrity.

Grant Writing — Learn the basics of grant application.

Parliamentary Procedure — Learn how rules of conduct positively affect PTA decision-making, while ensuring fair and orderly unit operations.

Planning and Goal Setting — Developed around a five-step process from time-management company Franklin Covey, this course contains printable tools and exercises to help you set and reach your goals.

Planning Your PTA Year — Learn to keep volunteers motivated by putting an achievable plan together for the year.

Preventing Theft in Your PTA — This course is a must for leadership.

PTA Basics — Discover PTA's history, structure, programs, and the issues for which it advocates.

Writing and Proposing PTA Resolutions — Stories from "the field" combined with practical advice make the resolution development and proposal process easy.

Diversity

Cultural Competency — Learn cultural awareness and how to build relationships across cultural groups.

Advocacy

Effective Advocacy for Your Child — Organize around local issues and address them to benefit the needs of children and your community. (Course designed for emerging local leaders, but all are welcome to attend.)

Leadership Enhancement

Creating and Delivering a Speech — Improve your public speaking skills

Mark Your Calendar

July

National Parks and Recreation Month

Order National PTA's Back to School Kit

4 Independence Day -
MO PTA Office Closed

August

National Immunization Awareness Month

Children's Eye Health and Safety Month

September

National Preparedness Month

Baby Safety Month

1 Dues to State Office
Deadline for the following state awards:

- *Advocacy Through Legislation*

(Individual) Award (AtLaw)

- *Advocacy Through Legislation*

(Unit/Council) Award (AtLaw)

- *Leaders Project Application*

3 Labor Day - MO PTA Office Closed

9-15 Missouri Parent and Family Involvement in
Education Week

9 Grandparents Day

11 Patriot Day

16 Stepfamily Day

17 Constitution /Citizenship Day

28 MO PTA Early Bird Membership
Award Date Postmark Deadline

October

19-21 97th Anniversary Missouri PTA
State Convention in Kansas City

PTA Program Essentials

Creating Successful Family-School Partnerships For Local PTA Leaders — This course helps local PTA Leaders learn what they can do in their units to build successful Family-School Partnerships.

Creating Successful Family-School Partnerships For State PTA Leadership — This course helps state PTA leaders learn what they can do to help local PTA units build successful Family-School Partnerships.

Reflections 101 — An overview and how-to for local units on running PTA's popular Reflections program.

Running a Successful Program — Learn the steps for taking a program idea from concept to reality.

Missouri Congress of Parents & Teachers
Missouri PTA
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Columbia, MO 65202

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Learning, networking and celebrations will be everywhere!

Don't miss this opportunity to gain new ideas and a fresh
perspective for your unit!

All PTA members are encouraged to attend!