



CONTACT

December 2017
Volume 98 | Issue 11

You cannot grow if you're not willing to feel **awkward** when trying something new.

MOVE OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE

IN THIS EDITION
**MOPTA PRESIDENT SHARES SECRETS
ABOUT YOUR MOST INVOLVED PARENTS**
DESE NEW STRATEGIC PLAN
OUR STATE IS GREAT!
HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FIELD
MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE
YOUR PTA COULD WIN \$\$
**MAKE IT THROUGH
THE HOLIDAYS IN STYLE**
PEOPLE WHO DO THINGS
[YOUR ADVOCACY HANDBOOK]

From the Missouri PTA Contact Editor

MissouriPTA MissouriPTA @MissouriPTA



Andrea Battaglia
Missouri PTA Contact Editor
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EVERYTHING YOU'VE
EVER WANTED, IS ONE
STEP OUTSIDE YOUR
COMFORT ZONE.

Contact Digital Magazine Future Editions:

January 2018 - Fresh Start
Send us your stuff by December 20

February 2018 - Go for the Gold!
Send us your stuff by January 20

March 2018 - Keys to Success
Send us your stuff by February 20

Teamwork makes the dream work

Sometimes the best ideas come from a team. Giving your members or board the opportunities to get to know each other through team-building exercises can boost trust and, in turn, bring new ideas to life. Trust allows them to use humor in meetings—which has proven to help increase creativity.

This is just one technique that organizations have used to strengthen their teams and encourage creative thinking. Trying this tip and supporting your members and board with various gifts to inspire creativity may prove to be a win-win for your unit and member or board morale. Plus, you'll likely discover new and innovative ideas!



Your positivity goes a long way

How to change your attitude and
improve your day, week, month, year (and life!)

Photo credit from Fotor.com

This month I'm challenging you to do one thing every day - focused on keeping a positive attitude, even if things are awkward, hard or frustrating. Sure, these small things don't seem like much if you look at it on a daily basis, but a continued focus on doing one thing will lead to amazing results.

Take a deep breath and count until you calm down.

This is usually the opposite of what I want to do in any frustrating situation. I want to let the other person have it good & immediately. But I've noticed that when I wait until I calm down - usually after a deep breath, a walk or sleeping on it - I'm more mature and graceful with my response and the result is much more constructive and helpful. It's not usually worth it to give someone a piece of your mind. Instead focus on the positive outcome opportunity and let that direct your actions. This will make you a better member, better leader and better advocate.

Change your focus.

When you're frustrated, don't dwell on your anger, re-focus yourself to get positive accomplishments done and think about something else.

Try to interpret the facts in a way that propels you toward your goal, not one that discourages you or holds you back. It's more constructive and it releases you from stewing in your frustration.

Learn from the past and move on.

If you learn that your negative interpretation was right, deal with it immediately and professionally; then move on. You may find out that the bad situation isn't as bad as you think. Be brave enough to make a positive change and resolve the issue once and for all. Better to have an awkward moment for a short while than to live in a time of frustration because you're too worried about what may happen.

Remember, you've lost nothing by having a positive outlook in the interim. Stay passionate in your work with your school, unit and remember why we are doing all of this. Keep your actions focused on what you love and keep a good attitude. You'll be better for it - we all will.

Article adapted from ["Do One Thing: Create Your Own Positive Reality"](http://www.andreabcreative.com)
on [andreabcreative.com](http://www.andreabcreative.com)

When students are engaged,
involved and invested; it makes an
incredible difference for everyone.
Every Single Day.

That's why we need you.



Missouri PTA is seeking a volunteer to fill the State Student Involvement Chair immediately.

This rewarding volunteer position oversees the student involvement opportunities and initiatives of Missouri PTA. You'll get great encouragement and support, will have a leader to guide you with your responsibilities and supporting PTA leaders - parents, teachers and students - across the state.

This position will help grow your skills and offers a rewarding volunteer opportunity. Here are the basics for this essential coordinator position:

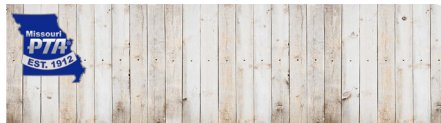
You might be a good fit for the Student Involvement Chair if you are resourceful, personable, innovative and responsible.

In this position, you spend time providing information to units that wish to become PTSAs, developing ideas and coordinating resources for students to become more involved in PTA/PTSA. You work with student reps to plan student workshop activities and promote student participation in Missouri PTA.

This is a great leadership position for you - to express interest, you can [Apply Online](#) or contact Chistine Kent at membership@mopta.org for more information.

From the Missouri PTA President

MissouriPTA MissouriPTA @MissouriPTA



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Susan Rupert
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We have these statements in every edition of Contact Digital Magazine - but this month, I want us to really focus on what they mean.

a relevant resource for all families and communities, and a strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child.



Paula McKinney
Missouri PTA Secretary
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I encourage you to make 2018 the year that you help us accomplish the vision, mission and purpose of PTA. We've been doing great work, but we all know, there is so much more to do. We are parents, we are advocates and we are in this together. Thank you for a great year and here's to an even better future.

The Purpose of PTA is to promote the welfare of the 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 close relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth; to develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education.



Sonia Smith
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PTA Vision: Making Each Child's Potential A Reality



Elaine Gerstenberger
Missouri PTA Procedures & Bylaws Chair
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PTA Mission: PTA is a powerful voice for all children,



Sparkl West
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Photo credit from Fotor.com

The Valuable Insight of Holiday Parties

And what they can tell you about your most involved parents.

Who are the parents at your holiday parties? Holiday parties actually provide valuable insight into your classroom parents. There are the engaged parents, who are truly working with the teacher and other parents to put on a great event. Then there are the involved parents. These parents may send in donations or show up to help out. Finally, there are the parents we never see.

Those engaged parents get it. They show up at back-to-school night, parent teacher conferences, communicate regularly and volunteer even for the not so fun stuff. Why? Because they know by being engaged they are having a profound impact on their student's education. Generally, they realize supporting their child means working with the teacher and the school. It is a group effort.

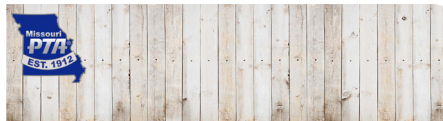
The involved parents are really not that much different from engaged parents except the relationship is not truly one of collaboration between parent and school. BUT, they are right on the cusp of being engaged. When these parents show up for events and programs it is paramount teachers and PTA leaders make that personal contact. Quite often it is the direct connection welcoming them into the school community that moves them from involved to engaged.

Then there are the parents we never see at school. There are a wide array of reasons these parents are unable to attend, but that doesn't mean they don't want their children to have a great school experience. When the parents show up for the holiday parties their children beam with pride. Imagine trying to explain to your own child why you can never be at school events or programs. Regardless the reason your child will leave the conversation disappointed. These are the parents who need us, both PTA leaders and teachers, to go the extra step to reach out and provide support. In essence, we need to go to them. Send a note, email, call and make that quick introduction. Use creative out of the box thinking to find ways for them to be involved. Why can't those parents who can't be there assist with the planning - brainstorming ideas with other parents on games and crafts. Can't go on the field trip? Maybe they could be encouraged to send a special note wishing their child a great trip the teacher or other volunteers could hand out to the child.

Supporting our children's educational success relies on the combined efforts of teachers, parents and the community. Those are the three pieces to the successful education puzzle. But, making all those pieces fit together doesn't always come together easily. Knowing who are our parents are and how best encourage them is the first step.

Missouri PTA Special Update

MissouriPTA MissouriPTA @MissouriPTA



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IN WINTER, I PLOT
AND PLAN. IN SPRING,
I MOVE.



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Calling all Potential Members!

Adapted from National PTA

Listen

Instead of just selling PTA, take the time to ask what people's interests and needs are.

Personalize

It's important to make a personal connection. Find out what may motivate the potential member to join, and share personal stories about how PTA has helped you and your child.

Ask

Don't wait for the other person to take the initiative to join or volunteer: Just ask! Ask for their membership. Most people—especially men—will not join if they are not specifically asked to do so.

Your New Member Recruitment Ideas for Next Semester

Doty Hoffman | Missouri PTA Membership Growth & Development Chair

Promote your PTA. Don't be afraid to "sell" your PTA and ask everyone in the community to join.

Create a flier that tells potential members three things your PTA accomplished last year, three things your PTA hopes to accomplish this year, and three ways PTA helps your community and its children. Put the flier out at all school events.

Increase activities, not meetings. Remember that less is more—at least when it comes to meetings! Increase participation by having fewer meetings and more events. Meetings to vote and discuss business are necessary, but keep those short and to the point. Hold meetings when actual business decisions need to be made, and let members know in advance what you will be voting on.

Make sure people have information prior to the meeting

so that when decisions need to be made, it won't take up as much time. Use any additional time for a social event, fundraiser, or activity with children.

Just ask! Once people have expressed an interest in PTA, contact them right away so you can give them more information, find out about their interests, and invite them to participate.

Make it personal; phone calls and personal visits will result in more members for your PTA. A PTA survey showed that the number one reason people don't join PTA is that they were never asked to join.

Think about the great work you would be able to achieve if everyone in your PTA asked just one additional person to join.

Adapted from www.pta.org



Skip to this Beat

Make a note in your bylaws folder as important changes come up. When you're ready to update your bylaws (at the required mark or when there are important/needed changes), you'll have everything together in one place - making this task something that will have you jumping for joy.

Bylaws template changes and what you need to know

Elaine Gerstenberger | Missouri PTA Procedures & Bylaws Chair

Did you know there were two changes made recently to the suggested unit and council bylaws templates? The affected articles address the selection of Missouri PTA Convention delegates. It is important to review your PTA's bylaws to see how this is currently worded. We have often found that the existing wording specifies a timeframe that will not allow delegates to be selected and meet the current convention registration deadlines.

Please be proactive and check on this now while there is time to make amendments if needed. Be sure to follow the amendment guidelines listed in your bylaws and the steps for amendment approval by Missouri PTA. Contact bylaws@mopta.org if you have any questions.

The templates on the Missouri PTA website reflect the following changes.

Suggested Unit Bylaws:

Article XII Missouri PTA Convention

c. Delegates and their alternates shall be chosen (how) no less than

thirty (30) days prior to the convention registration deadline.

This suggested wording allows units the flexibility to determine how and when convention delegates are chosen based the registration deadline rather. It is not specific to a month and will work well with convention currently being held in the spring or whenever convention is held in the future.

Suggested Council Bylaws:

ARTICLE XIII— MISSOURI PTA CONVENTION

The Council PTA shall be represented at the Missouri PTA Convention by the president or an alternate chosen (how) by the council no less than thirty (30) days prior to the convention registration deadline.

The suggested Council bylaws did not include information about council representation at the Missouri PTA Convention. This article was added as Article XIII and the remaining articles renumbered.

STEM + FAMILIES



We all want to foster passion for science, technology, engineering, and math with our kids. We can do this through fun programs and activities. Wouldn't it be great if you could involve families and STEM experiences together.

National PTA has created a [STEM initiative](#) that will engage students, families, and communities in opportunities to explore... inspire... empower... and educate...

The PTA's [STEM + Families initiative](#) was created to increase access to STEM education and careers, especially among under-represented youth. PTA hopes that by developing, evaluating and sharing effective ways to engage families in STEM experiences it will help to improve access to STEM in our schools and community learning environments. PTA's vision is that all students have the family and community support needed to access and pursue STEM opportunities and careers.

You can help support STEM learning in your local school by having your local PTA unit host a STEM + Families Science Festival. This community event can bring together students and families for a night of hands on fun with science. National PTA has provided a [toolkit](#) that is organized into 5 steps with links to documents and sample templates that you can customize for your own PTA and school.

Families are Key to Student Success National PTA has created a [resource to encourage parents to actively engage](#) in the development and expansion for the of STEM learning and access.

Congratulations to **Lone Jack Elementary PTA** for your Grant from National PTA to Engage Families in STEM Education

STEM + FAMILIES

Making Science Make Sense

STEM jobs will grow **17%** by 2018

The **growth** in STEM jobs will be **55 percent faster** than non-STEM jobs over the next 10 years

approximately **HALF** of all STEM **JOBS** only require a **TWO-YEAR DEGREE**

During this same time period, **2.4 million** STEM jobs could remain unfulfilled in the United States

According to parents (98%) and teachers (97%), hands-on science-based education is a great way to encourage girls' and minorities' interest in science.

Parents are most likely to say they, themselves, play the biggest role in stimulating their child's interest in science (**46%**) followed closely by teachers (**44%**)

Nearly one-third (**31%**) of parents don't feel confident enough in their scientific knowledge to help their children engage in hands-on science activities

Nearly one-third (**32%**) of teachers say parent support or involvement at home would be the most helpful thing in increasing hands-on science learning experiences

STEM + FAMILIES

- + EDUCATE FAMILIES
- + INVEST IN FAMILY ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS
- + MOBILIZE THE COMMUNITY

= **NATIONAL PTA'S STEM PLUS FAMILIES INITIATIVE**

Through this new initiative, Bayer and National PTA will offer **100,000 free STEM experiences** to families nationwide by 2018.

Founding & Presenting sponsor: Bayer

National PTA

SOURCE: STEM PLUS FAMILIES Increasing Students' Access to Opportunities in STEM by Effectively Engaging Families, July 2016



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We need you!
Missouri PTA Reflections Chair
[More Info & Apply Online](#)

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Former Commissioner of Education Elected to National Board of Directors

From the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) elected former Missouri Commissioner of Education Margie Vandeven to its Board of Directors on Wednesday, Nov. 15.

"When given the opportunity to address the nation's chiefs at our meeting in St. Louis, Commissioner Vandeven invited students on stage to share their experience with state chiefs across the country," said Chris Minnich, executive director of CCSSO. "This is an example of the Commissioner's leadership: she always puts students first, turning the spotlight to what's most important in this work."

The Board of Directors is the governing body of CCSSO, which is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of officials who lead departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, Department of Defense schools and five additional U.S. educational jurisdictions.

Department Unveils New Slogan, Logo and Strategic Plan

From the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is phasing out of the Top 10 by 20 campaign. The State Board of Education recently approved a new slogan, logo and strategic plan. The new slogan is Show - Me Success, and the state's goal is that all Missouri students will graduate ready for success. The strategic plan will serve as a guide for helping us reach that goal. The new strategic plan includes three core strategic priorities:

1. Access, Opportunity, Equity: Provide all students access to a broad range of high-quality educational opportunities from early learning into post-high school engagement
2. Teachers and Leaders: Prepare, develop and support educators to ensure an effective teacher in every classroom and an effective leader in every school
3. Efficiency and Effectiveness: Create an internal environment of continuous improvement, effective programming and efficient business operations

[Visit our website](#) to learn more about DESE's plan and priorities to help ensure that all Missouri students graduate ready for success.

Missouri's ESSA Plan

The U.S. Department of Education has announced it received a complete ESSA plan from the State of Missouri this past September. The plan will now enter the peer review process. During this process a team of experts analyze the plan to ensure it complies with the law. It is expected the review process will be complete by January. [Click here](#) to view Missouri's submitted plan.

MOSSAP

The association, under the umbrella of the Missouri School Boards' Association and working in conjunction with the Center for Education Safety, hopes to bring members from all areas of safety and security together to provide a united voice on safety matters for public schools, private schools, and higher education.

Membership in MOSSA is open to current or former school personnel responsible for school safety and other persons interested in school safety and safety education.

Enroll in [MOSSA Membership online](#).

Reflections awards

Reward their imagination! Our [2017-18 Reflections Awards](#) are on sale now. Certificates, ribbons, stickers, medals and trophies. All awards are remarkably value priced to fit the slimmest of budgets. [Check them out online](#) today!

Thank you to our Missouri PTA donor schools, we appreciate you and your contributions to support the children of Missouri!

Building Fund Donations

- Longview Farm Elementary PTA
- Christian Ott PTA
- Trailridge Elementary PTA
- Prairie View Elementary PTA
- Mason Elementary PTA
- Mark Twain Elementary PTA - St. Joseph
- Nixa Jr. High PTSA
- Blue Springs R-IV School Dist Council PTA
- Lee's Summit West High School PTSA
- Blue Springs Early Childhood Presch. PTA
- Blackburn Elementary PTA
- Summit Lakes Middle School PTA
- Meadow Lane Elementary PTA
- Duello Elementary PTA
- Greenwood Elementary PTA
- Keeven Elementary PTA
- Richardson Elementary PTA

Founders Gift

- Longview Farm Elementary PTA
- Christian Ott PTA
- Trailridge Elementary PTA
- Prairie View Elementary PTA
- Timber Creek Elementary PTA
- Bolivar Primary School PTA

- Mason Elementary PTA
- Mark Twain Elementary PTA - St. Joseph
- Blue Springs R-IV School Dist Council PTA
- Lee's Summit West High School PTSA
- Harry S Truman Elementary PTA
- Blue Springs Early Childhood Presch. PTA
- Summit Lakes Middle School PTA
- Meadow Lane Elementary PTA
- Greenwood Elementary PTA
- Richardson Elementary PTA

Scholarship

- Longview Farm Elementary PTA
- Christian Ott PTA
- Trailridge Elementary PTA
- Prairie View Elementary PTA
- Mark Twain Elementary PTA - St. Joseph
- Nixa Jr. High PTSA
- Blue Springs R-IV School Dist Council PTA
- Lee's Summit West High School PTSA
- Blue Springs Early Childhood Presch. PTA
- Summit Lakes Middle School PTA
- Meadow Lane Elementary PTA
- Independence Council PTA
- Greenwood Elementary PTA
- Richardson Elementary PTA
- Mason Elementary PTA

Cake is good. Our Regional Directors are better. Join our team and serve in this important volunteer role.



We need interested, committed volunteers!

Consider applying for our open Regional Director positions now.

The Missouri PTA Regional Director position is a great way to make connections and discover new information. You meet and help units and councils in your area. And you get great training and resources from Missouri PTA. Our state is full of passionate, hardworking PTA parents; it's energizing what we accomplish together.

The Regional Director position is great for someone who is personable, organized, responsible and efficient. You will make friends, develop relevant skills and build confidence through your position as a Regional Director.

Take the next step and consider joining us. To express interest in the Regional Director position or apply online, visit our [Board of Managers webpage](#) or contact Sarah Day at sarahd@mopta.org to learn more.



How our council is taking action to end homelessness

Ashley Fulton | Missouri PTA Three Trails Regional Director

Homelessness among young people is a serious issue throughout the United States. Homeless youth, which are also referred to as unaccompanied youth, "are individuals who lack parental, foster, or institutional care".

Statistics show that homeless youth are at higher risk for physical abuse, human trafficking, substance abuse, mental health disabilities and even death

According to National Conference of State Legislature's website, some common reasons that youth are homeless or run away are because of family problems, transitions from foster care and other public systems and economic problems.

"Many youth run away, and in turn become homeless, due to problems in the home, including physical and sexual abuse, mental health disorders of a family member, substance abuse and addiction of a family member, and parental neglect. In some cases, youth are asked to leave the home because the family is unable to provide for their specific mental health or disability needs. Still some youth are pushed out of their homes because their parents cannot afford to care for them.

Youth who have been involved in the foster care system are more likely to become homeless at an earlier age and remain homeless for a longer period of time. Youth aging out of the foster care system often have little or no income support and limited housing options and are at higher risk to end up on the streets. Youth that live in residential or institutional facilities

often become homeless upon discharge. In addition, very few homeless youth are able to seek housing in emergency shelters due to the lack of shelter beds for young people and shelter admission policies.

Some youth become homeless when their families fall into difficult financial situations resulting from lack of affordable housing, difficulty obtaining or maintaining a job, or lack of medical insurance or other benefits. These youth become homeless with their families, but later can find themselves separated from them and/or living on the streets alone, often due to shelter or child welfare policies".

Just recently at our local council meeting, we were told that there were over 600 students in the Independence School District that are unaccompanied youth. This means that there are over 600 children just in this district alone that do not have a place to call home and have to wonder where their next meal will come from. They may be sleeping in shelters, cars, couch surfing, or even sleeping outside somewhere.

This year Independence Council has decided to collect items such as non-perishable foods, school supplies, toiletries, etc. at each of our monthly meetings. These items are stored away for the Family School Liaisons to use for the youth or families who need the items. The need is so high within the district that they have purchased an additional building to use as a storage location for the items collected. This space will be available at the beginning of the year. Our goal is to be able to continue to work with people within our community to help facilitate different drives to assist with keeping items available.

Bingham Elementary PTA | Three Trails Region



Bingham Middle School Dance/Mixer held just after Halloween. You are viewing some of the special needs students who wanted to join in on a Mummy Wrapping Contest with TP. The gym was a complete cloudy mess of TP at the end but everyone had a great time and many new friendships were made that night!

Longview Farm Elementary PTA | Three Trails Region



Sara Sinks | Longview Farm Elementary PTA President

Longview Farm Elementary PTA, located in Lee's Summit, worked with their local police department to present a Parent Hot Topic seminar on Internet Safety in November.

The event was held at the police station training center and conducted by two Lee's Summit detectives and a resource officer. **The seminar provided an eye-opening awareness of events happening in our very own community.**

Parents and guardians who attended, learned about recent and growing trends among teens in the area as well as local crime trends related to children. The officers explained how automobile

accidents are the leading cause of death in teens, yet we still teach our children to drive.

Technology is here to stay so we need to teach our children how to use the Internet and social media safely. They also discussed ways parents can control access of their children's devices and how to be alert to unusual activity or behavior from your child.

The LFE PTA has planned two more Parent Hot Topic seminars for the 2017-18 school year. The next one will be a self-defense class for parents and students held in February.

Hickory Hills Elementary PTA | Ozark Region

Here to help
Regional
Director



Tori Sallee
Missouri PTA Ozarks
Regional Director
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Leaders
Project
Feature
Article

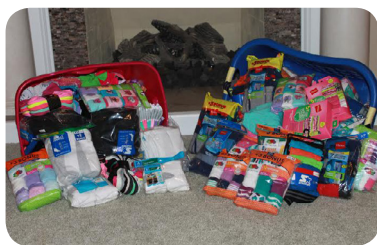
Undie 500 supports local kids in need

Kendall Bennett | Hickory Hills Elementary PTA Charitable chairperson



Last year was the first year that I served as charitable chairperson and coordinated the Undie 500 event at Hickory Hills Elementary PTA. **After seeing the success of this important and fun initiative, it makes me even more thankful for the great leadership and direction from our past chairperson.**

And my personal favorite is that we stood outside like buffoons waving checkered flags in car line to "draw attention" to the socks and undie drive. It was a fun way to include the kiddos and to be visible to parents the week of the drive.



In 2016, we hosted the Undie 500 for a week and advertised through fliers, our PTA, school, and personal Facebook pages. We collected 290 pairs of socks and underwear. This year I included all the outlets from the previous year but amped it up with several discussions and announcements about the drive at our monthly PTA meetings. I also included an interview with Patty Dunn, the Co-Chair of SCPTA Clothing Bank that I published using WeVideo. We used this video to advertise and communicate the need for socks and underwear for students that qualify to shop at the Springfield PTA Clothing Bank the week of the drive.

We overwhelmingly exceeded our expectations for donations this year; we collected 646 pairs of socks and underwear.

I personally work in the school system as a classroom teacher, I have taught for 13 years and worked with students ranging from preschool to middle school. **I am proud that our community works to meet every need of our kids – and others – the generosity and commitment of our community continues to be heartening.** Bringing awareness to the needs of our students is just the first step, the next is to encourage and provide our community the opportunity to serve our students outside of the walls of the school.

Pony Express Region Meetings & Events

Here to help
Regional
Director



Brian Mercer
Missouri PTA Pony
Express Regional Director
brianm@mopta.org

Staley High School and their Veterans Day Assembly.



NKC Schools PTA Council quarterly event where Brian presents guest speakers for district parents and community.



Fox Hill Elementary PTA meeting



It's an honor for me to serve as a Regional Director because it allows me the opportunity to invest in our schools, units and children by attending these meetings and events. I love to see the positive work being done for students and community.

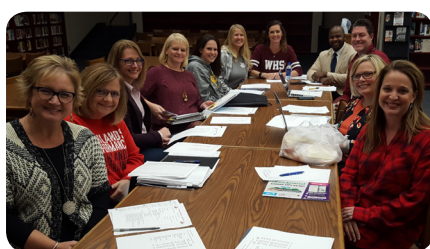
North Kansas City High Schools Trunk or Treat canned and boxed food drive event on Halloween week.



Linden West Elementary PTA meeting



North Kansas City High Schools Trunk or Treat canned and boxed food drive event on Halloween week.



Winnetonka Booster Club meeting



Bell Prairie Elementary monthly PTA meeting

Membership Challenge 2017-2018

10 can make a difference

This membership year 10 new members is all your unit needs in order to be eligible for the Membership Challenge. Every unit who increases their total number of PTA members (a combination of both business and individual members) by 10 over last year's membership numbers will automatically be entered into a drawing for \$75 dollars. Ten lucky units will be the winners.

But wait, there's more - 20 is even better

Units who increase their total number of PTA members by 20 will also be entered into a drawing for \$150. Five lucky units will be winners.

And there's even more - 30 is a charm

Units who increase their total number of PTA members by 30 will also be entered into the grand prize drawing for \$250. Two lucky units will be the winners.

Where should you find these members? Sure, you can reach out to those parents in your school who have yet to join and parents new to the school. But also, reach out to individuals who haven't been or are not traditionally seen as PTA members. These could be grandparents, aunt, uncles, parents whose children have already graduated, business associates, and friends. Let them know why PTA is important and ask them to support not just your unit but all children nationwide.

Over the past 120 years PTA has been instrumental in helping to solve some of the biggest issues facing America's Children. Many of the structures all children benefit from today – child labor laws, universal kindergarten, the National School Lunch Program, and the Juvenile Justice System – were accomplished as the result of PTA members' advocacy.

PTAs are run and governed by volunteers at the local, state and national level. When we say we are non-profit we really mean it!

PTA is a grassroots advocacy organization. Our voice comes from our members.

PTAs are operated with open and transparent procedures. Protocols are put in place to make sure each PTA is operating according to best practices for a non-profit.

PTA collaborates with other organizations and departments both statewide and nationally to make sure issues important to children are seen as a priority.

PTA is diverse and open to everyone.

PTA is focused on parent and community engagement with our school. The impact of true engagement has a lasting impact. We are not a fundraising machine.

BIG PRIZES

From the team:

Missouri PTA Membership

[MissouriPTA](#)
[MissouriPTA](#)
[@MissouriPTA](#)



Christine Kent
 Missouri PTA VP Membership
christinek@mopta.org

I came
 I saw
 I made it
 awkward

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 Missouri PTA Student Involvement
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Awkward moments: Asking for a board member to pay their dues

It would seem that a board member is going to pay for their dues with all of the time dedicated to meetings throughout the year. But in reality, according to the bylaws, each member of the board must pay and be a member of their unit before they can hold a position and vote. But sometimes dues payments don't happen on time or at all.

At the end of each school year or in the summer, encourage all board members to pay their dues (and give dates/deadlines) to prepare for the next school year. Remember, membership has responsibilities - you're not being mean by asking someone to meet these responsibilities, you're being an advocate for your unit, your school and all of our children.

Make the notification simple - send an email or a text reminder - try this: "Hello! This is your friendly reminder that we still need your dues payment - [detail how to pay dues]. Looking forward to having you involved as a member again this year!"

Membership Award Focus

You can get more information and your application forms [online](#).

Faculty Awards

A unit may qualify for the awards listed below by enrolling members as listed below who are assigned to the building as PTA members by March 1st.

Combined units must count members for each school included within the unit.

100% Faculty Award

All full time Certified Staff are paid members.

Diamond Faculty Award

All full time faculty and staff are paid members, including all support staff, custodians, food services, etc.



Doty Hoffman | Missouri PTA Membership Growth & Development Chair

That feeling. The feeling of being the new mom or new dad at your first PTA meeting. You apprehensively step into a room of 30 people, but for the love, you can't seem to find even one person you know!

Deep breath. Don't sit too far to the front. Don't sit way in the back. Look interested. But don't look like you want to sign up to volunteer! Palms sweating, you pick an excellent seat in the perfect spot, but then something happens! Oh, no! She sees you. Sitting all alone, nowhere to hide. It's...the...PTA President! Sure, she looks perfectly nice and welcomes you with a big smile but you're fresh meat!

You hold your ground and listen intently, perfectly content through the entire meeting. Meeting adjourned! You feel great! You did it! You can skip out of there thinking you're the best parent in the whole world, give yourself a pat on the back! Also, no need to worry, you'll be receiving those names interested in the three new committees you just gave your life away to shortly after the meeting via email, remind, groupme and any other "helpful" app to come your way. Congratulations!

new parent attending their first PTA meeting serves as an opportunity to discuss the awkward. It's almost awkward to talk about the awkward. This article is awkward. Nothing is more awkward than a new place, new people, new information.

It is a great reminder, however, that we are ALL awkward. The new parent can be awkward, the President can be awkward, speaking about fundraising can be awkward, but the fascinating realization is that we are all awkward together AND we will not be awkward forever!

The PTA President calms down after their second or third meeting. The new parent met several other awkward new parents at the last meeting, and is much more comfortable and open to sharing. Every year, the fundraiser comes and the fundraiser goes and we all make it through just fine.

Because, in the end, it's not about all of us and our awkwardness, but it's about what we all as a whole can do for our kids and their school. You want to know a secret? School kids are awkward too. We need to stay focused on our common goal and get there together, awkwardness and all.

This fictional, or maybe not so fictional, rendition of a



For more information, contact our Membership Chair at membership@mopta.org.

Membership growth is a sign that your PTA is a vital and relevant organization making a difference in your community.

If your PTA is effective, respected, and fun; people will be eager to join.

Re-energize your membership recruitment efforts in the second semester. Plan a second membership campaign for January to reach out to new families and to encourage all parents to make it their number one resolution to be more involved, through PTA. Take a look at your membership goal from the start of the school year. How close are you to reaching that goal? Set a goal for membership recruitment in January.

Thank current PTA members for their commitment. Tell them why you're organizing a January Membership Campaign and how they can help make it a success. Determine whether your PTA/PTSA is meeting the needs of your members and community and realign your goals with the needs and interests of your members and community.

Make sure you have the support of your principal and school staff. School staff can be great allies in encouraging parent participation. Make preparations before school starts again in January. Prepare membership forms, take-home fliers, and promotional signs.

Ask people to join your PTA—don't wait for them to offer. Make it easy for people to join by having all the sign-up materials close at hand or send membership forms and fliers home with January back-to-school communications.



Amy Blakemore
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Make it through your holiday season in style

Kristina Wilmoth | Missouri PR Chair

I hear many coworkers and friends complain that the winter season stalls their goals and they need to hold off planning, creating, or doing anything new until after the New Year. After a quick reflection, I came to the conclusion that I don't like the idea of pushing "pause" on all of the amazing things in my life. Is it possible to keep momentum through November and December? Here are my suggestions to keep on keeping on and still fully enjoying the holiday season:

Prioritize.

My well-being and my family are my number one priority. My career, volunteering, church obligations, friends, etc all fall in line when I keep my priorities straight. I'm able to say, "yes" to new PTA events or obligations (including writing this article in Contact) because I've pre-arranged time for my work and I continuously set aside quality time for my family. My husband and children know they will get my attention, love, and care even in the busy seasons. Having that sorted out ahead of time creates a partnership. Even my children work to give me the time and quiet I need to get the job done because they know that I'm accomplishing great things and they are part of my success.

Take the risk.

This one is difficult for me, but I have multiple mentors who have challenged me to try new things, take the plunge, and stretch myself. And...it works! I jumped at the chance to serve on Missouri PTA Board of Managers, knowing I had talents to give and I could be valuable to the organization. My confidence and self-efficacy have bloomed while serving as PR Chair. I'm thankful I took a risk during a busy time in my life to fill out a talent bank and request consideration for this position.

Follow through.

Your goals are important and you have the support of those that mean most to you. Now is the time to follow through and see those goals checked off your to-do list! Don't wait to make resolutions, celebrate your accomplishments and think outside the box to push yourself even further. I've missed a deadline (or two) and I work hard to own up to those oversights and poor planning moments. But then, I contact those I am accountable to and I "get 'r done"! Following through and completing your goals is a great feeling and it's the start of your next creation. Your consistency will also show others that you are reliable and you're ready for endless possibilities and opportunities.

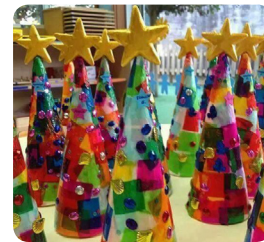
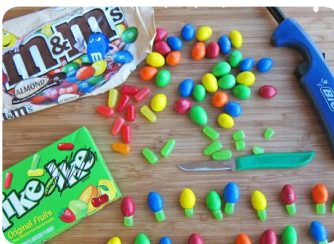
Question:
 "What ways do you keep in contact with your unit or council during school holiday and/or breaks?"

MoPTA Answers:
 Use your eNewsletters, consistent Facebook posts, and backpack flyers to stay connected to parents and families. Each of these are great ways to stay in touch with your unit and council members through the holidays."

Missouri PTA President Connect Facebook Group

This resource provides presidents across the state with a networking tool so we can work together to achieve our common goal of helping our children reach their full potential. Share ideas, ask questions, or ask for advice. Send a request to join at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/presidentconnect/>

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You feel good & when you feel good, YOU do good & when YOU do good it Reminds others of what joy feels like & it just might inspire them to do the same.

- Don't give stuff. Give "Five Hands" instead.
1. Handmade.
 2. Hand-me-down.
 3. Second hand.
 4. Helping hand (donate).
 5. Hand-in-hand (spend time together).



What we love right now

share
me!
PACKED WITH PTA
RESOURCES

Missouri PTA Advocacy Handbook

Your Resources This Month

*I want to be around people that do things.
I don't want to be around people anymore that judge
or talk about what people should do.*

**I want to be around people
that dream, and support,
and do things.**

Amy Poehler



RAISE
↑
THE AGE

Join the Movement

- We cannot vote.
- We cannot join the military.
- We have not graduated from high school.
- We have just begun to think about our future.
- We are not adults!

BUT.... we can be tried as adults and held in adult prisons. Join the student-led movement coming this January to change the way we look at youth offenders. You can begin the conversation now by posting the following to social media. #18in18 because 17 is too young. It's time to [Raise the Age MO @molegislature @missouripta](#)

The future of the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) is at stake and why it matters

Missouri's State Board of Education is framed by the Missouri Constitution to be both bipartisan and independent of state politics. This purposeful intent makes Missouri unique and our Department of Education has been afforded stability and flourished under this design. Board members are appointed by the Governor and then approved by the Senate.

Over the last few months Governor Greitens has made five interim appointments. Currently the Senate is out of session and therefore has yet to review and approve or disapprove the appointments. It had been widely reported the Governor wished to have the now former Commissioner removed in order to bring in an out-of-state individual.

Three newly appointed interim members to the State Board of Education (Claudia Greim, Dough Russell, & Eddie Justice) called for a special meeting to discuss the firing of the Commissioner of Education, Dr. Margie Vandeven. This came after developments this past September when Melissa Gelnor's appointment was revoked after she refused to agree with a request from the Governor to fire the Commissioner.

Governor Greitens withdrew the appointment of Tim Sumners to a seat on the State Board of Education. Sumners had indicated he would not support the removal of Commissioner of Education Margie Vandeven. Why is our governor doing this? The answer is easy:

Governor Greitens wants a new Commissioner of Education who will support the platform he campaigned on to expand vouchers and charter schools. He began the work to replace the commissioner before he was elected. He has removed three appointees because they refused to vote as he wanted. It is very concerning that the new appointees have not even been confirmed by the Senate yet they are already meeting and making decisions about MO education.

the future of Commissioner Vandeven was debated. A vote was taken for her removal but failed. The board met again during closed session after another last minute appointment. The Commissioner was fired immediately.

Missouri PTA is deeply concerned with the politicization that is currently occurring with regard to the State Board. Our children, all our children, do best when non-political independent individuals focus on what is best for kids instead of their own political aspirations.

If you are concerned as advocates of education for all children let both the State Board of Education and your State Senator know your thoughts on this matter.

Emails can be sent to the State Board of Education at sbe@desse.mo.gov, request your email be distributed to all board members.

State Board of Education members:

- Charlie Shields – President
- Vic Lenz – Vice President
- Michael Jones
- *Claudia Greim
- *Eddy Justice
- *Dough Russell
- *Tim Sumners (just removed by the governor for failing to support the removal of the Commissioner)
- *Marvin "Sonny" Jungmeyer

*Newly appointed State Board members

There have been several articles posted lately regarding this development

- [STL Today – Greitens Attempt to Oust Top School Official Appears Back On](#)
- [STL Today – In Five Months Gov Greitens Has Turned Over More Than Half the State School Board](#)
- [STL Today – Ex-School Board Member Accuses Governor of Strong-Arm Tactics](#)



Take Action!
Sign up to
be part of
the JD/DC
Network

100th General Assembly
of MO Legislature
begins in January.

If you have not signed
up to be a part of
Missouri PTA's [JD/DC
network](#) please take a
few moments to do so
now.

This session will be
very active with charter
schools and vouchers
again being proposed
for Missouri.

In addition to these
Missouri PTA will be
working to Raise the
Age and meaningful
school safety legislation.

Presidents and
legislative chairs
will begin receiving
legislative reports in
January to help you
keep track of key
legislation.

November 21st DESE met in a closed session where

2018 National PTA Legislative Conference Early Bird - Social Media Toolkit



LegCon Overview

This year National PTA is supporting our advocates to “Get In the Game” at the 2018 Legislative Conference (LegCon), March 13-15, 2018, at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Va.

As we get ready to help you hit your advocacy goals out of the park, we are asking all PTA members to help promote LegCon using this media toolkit, which contains sample graphics and messaging you can use to promote the event via social media and through newsletters. Don't forget to visit PTA.org/LegCon to register for LegCon and view this year's schedule!

This toolkit is designed to highlight Early Bird Registration and is for use before December 15th.

For State/Local PTAs

Check out the 2018 LegCon images below and display the images on social media networks like Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, or add the graphic to your email signature. You can add these graphics to your website too.

- [Facebook Cover](#)
- [Instagram Photo](#)
- [Facebook Photo](#)
- [Twitter Photo](#)

Facebook

Early-bird registration is open for #PTALegCon! Join fellow advocates at [@NationalPTA](https://www.facebook.com/NationalPTA)'s Legislative Conference in DC March 13-15, 2018! Save money and register now for in-depth discussions and training

to help grow your advocacy efforts. Visit PTA.org/LegCon for more information! We look forward to seeing you there!

Twitter

Sample Tweets to use before December 15th

If possible, please tweet about LegCon twice before early bird registration closes:

Sample Tweet: Early Bird Reg. is open for [@NationalPTA](https://twitter.com/NationalPTA) 2018 LegCon! Save money & register today for PTA's annual advocacy-focused conference <http://PTA.org/LegCon> #PTALegCon

Sample Tweet: It's a great time to register for [@NationalPTA](https://twitter.com/NationalPTA)'s annual advocacy conference, #PTALegCon! Early-bird registration is now open at PTA.org/LegCon.

Sample Tweet: I registered for #PTALegCon...did you? Early-bird registration is open until Dec. 15! Register now to attend [@NationalPTA](https://twitter.com/NationalPTA)'s Legislative Conference. PTA.org/LegCon

E-Newsletter

You won't want to miss National PTA's premier advocacy conference this Spring in D.C.! This year's [National PTA Legislative Conference](#) is inspired by the upcoming Olympics—because the best advocates are like athletes, always training and striving to be better.

Please join us in the nation's capitol, March 13-15. Early-bird registration is officially open, which means if you register before Dec. 15 you'll save \$30! We'll hear from Washington, DC influencers, get face-to-face advocacy training from experts, and get a chance to speak one-on-one with federal policymakers!



2018 LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

MARCH 13-15, 2018

ARLINGTON, VA | CRYSTAL GATEWAY MARRIOTT



2018 National PTA Advocacy Awards Social Media Toolkit



Advocacy Awards Overview

Nominations for the 2018 Advocacy Awards are now being accepted!

National PTA's annual Advocacy Awards recognize outstanding youth, individual PTA advocates, local unit and state level PTA that have done great advocacy work. We are counting on you to both nominate strong advocates in your states and promote the awards while nominations are open.

If you know of an outstanding youth or individual PTA advocate, or know of a local unit or state level PTA that has done great advocacy work, please nominate them to receive an award for their efforts from National PTA! Winners will be announced in January and will receive their awards at the 2018 Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.

About the Advocacy Awards

Shirley Igo Advocate of the Year Award

The Shirley Igo Advocate of the Year Award is presented to an individual PTA member, who through their leadership and advocacy efforts, affected federal policy priorities within PTA's annual Public Policy Agenda. Shirley was a model of public service and volunteerism throughout her life. She was an impassioned and compassionate leader, dedicated to moving PTA forward and committed to ensuring that others would follow.

Outstanding Youth Advocate of the Year Award

The Outstanding Youth Advocate of the Year Award is presented to a young person—who—through his or her creativity, leadership, and dedication, has positively affected policy or change in his or her school or community in a way that aligns with PTA's mission and goals.

Outstanding Local PTA Advocacy Award

The Outstanding Local PTA Advocacy Award is presented to a local, district, council or regional PTA that, through their dedication, leadership and efforts positively affected legislative and/or regulatory policy compatible with PTA's mission and goals. These efforts must include an education/learning component for PTA members and the community-at-large. Working with multiple organizations or coalitions through grassroots collaboration is preferred.

Outstanding State PTA Advocacy Award

The Outstanding State PTA Advocacy Award is presented to a state PTA that, through their dedication, leadership and efforts positively affected legislative and/or regulatory policy compatible with PTA's mission and goals. These efforts must be based on a statewide issue, involve working with multiple organizations or coalitions through grassroots collaboration, and contain a public awareness/advocacy training component for PTA members and the community at large.

This toolkit is designed to highlight the Advocacy Awards and is for use before December 18th.

Twitter

Sample Tweet: Nominations for the 2018 Advocacy Awards are being accepted! The deadline to nominate is 12/18. Details here: www.pta.org/advocacyawards

Sample Tweet: The deadline to make your nominations for the 2018 Advocacy Awards is approaching fast! Nominate an outstanding advocate today! www.pta.org/advocacyawards

Facebook

Facebook Post: Nominations for the 2018 Advocacy Awards are being accepted! Deadline is 12/18.

If you know of an outstanding youth or individual PTA advocate, or know of a local unit or state level PTA that has done great advocacy work, please nominate them! Details here: www.pta.org/advocacyawards

Facebook Post: The deadline approaching fast to make your nominations for the 2018 Advocacy Awards!

If you know of an outstanding youth or individual PTA advocate, or know of a local unit or state level PTA that has done great advocacy work, please nominate them to receive an award for their efforts from National PTA!

Make your nomination right now: www.pta.org/advocacyawards

E-Newsletter

Nominate Your Favorite PTA Advocate!

The deadline to submit a nomination is Monday, Dec. 18.

National PTA is now accepting nominations for the [2018 Advocacy Awards!](#) If you know of an outstanding youth or individual PTA advocate, or a local unit or state PTA that has done great advocacy work, [nominate them](#) to receive an award for their efforts from National PTA at the 2017 Legislative Conference. You can also nominate yourself!

Award Categories:

- [Shirley Igo Advocate of the Year Award](#)
- [Outstanding Youth Advocate of the Year Award](#)
- [Outstanding Local PTA Advocacy Award](#)
- [Outstanding State PTA Advocacy Award](#)

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