IN THIS EDITION

MOPTA PRESIDENT SHARES HOW TO GET MEMBERS ON THE SAME PAGE

SPECIAL INFORMATION! #18in18 [YOUR ADVOCACY HANDBOOK]

OUR STATE IS GREAT! HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FIELD

MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE YOUR PTA COULD WIN $$

CREATE & IMPLEMENT SMART GOALS TO GROW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED IN SELECTING THE NEW COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION
I heard advice recently that you shouldn’t wait until you are ready. Because if you wait until you’re completely ready, you’ll probably never do anything. It made me remember how important it is to take risks, to make progress every day, and to purposefully spend time developing your next step. I know I need to practice this even more than I currently do and I encourage you to do the same. Start something now, even before you think you’re ready.

Start when the idea is just an idea.
I spend many of my days in brainstorming mode. And I come up with some crazy ideas. Some are crazy good and some are crazy terrible. But all of them are worth their time and discovery. Staying in full-thinking brainstorming mode forces me to create and develop tons of ideas and helps me move forward before I’m entirely sure of the end result.

I encourage you to spend a regular amount of time each week thinking up new, crazy ideas. In fact, I want you to schedule that time – it could be your workout time, or even at 4am (when I unintentionally do some of my best brainstorming). You’ll start to notice that you look forward to that time and can think more clearly and purposefully with your big ideas.

Start when things will get messy.
I love a clean process, it’s refreshing to get things done and have them turn out exactly as planned. Do you know what never happens for me? A perfectly neat and tidy process. You know what I’ve learned over the years? To enjoy the mess. In fact, now I really look forward to it. I know things are going to get messy and disorganized. And that’s OK. Because eventually, the same things will get cleaner and organized and totally make sense.

I encourage you to look forward to the mess. Try to do a little something each day. My house is full of projects, my office is full of tasks and I have lists and lists of ideas to start. Each of them have their own life cycle of ideas, mess and success. I know where I am with each item because I focus on a little each day. And I know it will get messy, but I know I’ll also make progress. You may only have fifteen minutes – use it. Doing a little bit every single day will make a difference over time.

Start when the idea scares you.
Recently, a friend applied for a promotion at his current job. His response when asked, “Well, they’ll either hire me or hire someone better than me.” I was impressed with this thinking and wondered how ready he’d felt when he applied. I’d bet he felt mostly ready to take on a new position like this. If you wait until you’re completely ready, you’re already too late - for the job, the experience, the chance.

I encourage you to move forward when you feel about half-way ready. You should feel a little scared-excited with what you’re planning to do. Once you’ve figured out this scary step, be purposeful with your time and effort to help make this step happen. You’ll start to notice that scared-excited begins to look more and more exciting when you really make progress. And soon you’ll be right where you want to be.
Save the Date!
Friday, April 27 to Saturday, April 29, 2018

Combined Missouri PTA and Kansas PTA Convention in Kansas City.

More information coming soon!

Workshops that you need! President Session  Treasurer Training  Success as PTA Secretary  Membership Bylaws  Legislation and Advocacy  Parliamentary Procedure  Effective Meetings  and many more!
Choosing a Missouri Commissioner of Education

Due to the actions taken recently by the Governor of removing and reappointing State board members, the State Board currently does not have a quorum and therefore cannot conduct any business. The listed survey and meetings have been put on hold. We will keep you informed if anything changes. Unfortunately, this what happens when politics takes precedence over what is good for all our kids.

We're conducting a survey on hiring the next Missouri Commissioner of Education, and your input would be appreciated. Click the button below to start this 3-question survey.

The application process for the position of commissioner of education is now open and will close at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 8, 2018.

A public hearing is scheduled for 2-5 p.m. on Jan. 8 to gather public input on the characteristics that Missourians would like to see in the next commissioner. The hearing will be held in the State Board of Education Room on the first floor of the Jefferson Building, 205 Jefferson St., Jefferson City, Mo.
“For what it’s worth: it’s never too late or, in my case, too early to be whoever you want to be.

There’s no time limit, stop whenever you want. You can change or stay the same, there are no rules to this thing.

We can make the best or the worst of it. I hope you make the best of it.

And I hope you see things that startle you. I hope you feel things you’ve never felt before.

I hope you meet people with a different point of view.

I hope you live a life you’re proud of. If you find that you’re not, I hope you have the strength to start all over again.”

F. Scott Fitzgerald
This year I will . . .

Help Raise the Age in Missouri

by Will Wiese | State Advocacy Chair

Did you know Missouri is only one of five states that has not raised the age that someone can be tried as an adult to 18? Society has labeled 18 as an adult. Why have we not done the same with the justice system? Currently children as young as 12 can be held in adult facilities.

Missouri PTA asks all our Units but especially our student members to join the movement. This is an issue that may affect any of our youth. Missouri legislators listen to what constituents are saying via social media - students, parents and advocates. Your help is important!

This January join with us as we urge our legislators to Raise the Age and protect the children of Missouri. You can begin the conversation now by posting to social media. #18in18 because 17 is to young. It’s time to Raise the Age MO @molegislature @missouripta

Why house youth in juvenile facilities?
Youth corrections professionals recognize that juveniles are developmentally different than adults and require special treatment.
- The adolescent brain is not fully developed, particularly the area of the prefrontal cortex which is critical to higher order cognitive functioning and impulse control.
- The subcortical region of the brain, responsible for novelty and emotions, will more frequently take precedent over the prefrontal cortex, responsible for self-control, in an adolescent brain.
- Most delinquent adolescents will “age out” of their reckless and criminal behavior by young adulthood.

Youth corrections professionals recognize that young people who commit crimes often come from troubled backgrounds.
- Studies show that 75% to 93% of juvenile offenders have been exposed to some degree of traumatic victimization.
- Youth who witness violence are more likely to have emotional, behavioral, social, and academic problems. This emotional and physical trauma can inhibit effective adolescent brain development.
- Youth who are traumatized are likely to cope with it by becoming aggressive or fighting back.
- Youth corrections programs have the ability to address these problems by providing positive socialization to juvenile offenders.
- Corrections professionals have begun to use therapies designed to teach better decision making and behavior.
- Specific examples that have proven results are Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, Aggression Replacement Therapy, Functional Family Therapy, Multisystemic Therapy, and Therapeutic Foster Care.
- Treatment programs for serious and violent young offenders have been shown to reduce recidivism by as much as 40%.

Youth corrections facilities across the country have been successful at rehabilitating youth. There are several model programs with proven results that have been replicated across the country.
- The Missouri Model uses small-scale residential facilities, group homes, and community based non-residential programs. It is focused on finding healthy alternatives to conflict and aggression. The results speak for themselves. The recidivism rates for Missouri are incredibly low. According to 2008 data, only 10% recidivism back into the Missouri Department of Youth Services. In addition, only 7% of youth are committed to adult prison within 5 years. Missouri is also a cost-effective program. The cost is $94 per all youth in state as opposed to $104 in neighboring states.

What are the benefits?
Our juvenile justice system is better at holding kids accountable and getting them on the right track. Youth leaving Missouri’s adult state prisons are three times more likely than youth leaving our juvenile facilities to reoffend and go back into custody.
- 93% of 17-year-olds arrested in Missouri in 2015 were accused of nonviolent or misdemeanor offenses.
- Raising the age will not prevent 17-year-olds accused of serious offenses from being prosecuted as adults.
- Keeping 17-year-olds in the juvenile system has been shown to reduce recidivism by up to 34%, according to the Centers for Disease Control.
- Missouri’s juvenile justice system has room and resources for 17-year-olds without spending new dollars.
- Even after raising the age, Missouri’s juvenile justice system will be smaller than it was ten years ago. Juvenile arrests have fallen by 57.3%; courts are handling 56% fewer delinquency cases; total days in pretrial detention has fallen by 57.9%; and commitments to juvenile secure custody have fallen by 46.9%.
- Across the country, states that raised the age have downsized their juvenile justice systems and lowered both short-term and long-term costs as a result of decreased reoffending.
- When 17-year-olds are arrested as adults, their parents do not need to be told, and do not have a right to be involved in the court process. But in juvenile court, parents play an important role in their children’s cases.
- Opportunities vanish for 17-year-olds who are treated like adults. A criminal record creates barriers to education, employment, housing, and joining the military.
- The federal Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) requires 17-year-olds to be kept completely separate in adult jails. Non-compliance exposes sheriffs to liability and puts Missouri at risk of losing federal funds. Keeping kids out of adult jails means sheriffs will not have to retrofit their facilities at enormous expense.
- 17-year-olds don’t belong in adult jails and prisons. Kids housed in adult jails are 36 times more likely to commit suicide than kids in juvenile detention. Kids in adult prisons face high risks of violence and sexual assault, and they often spend up to 23 hours every day in solitary confinement, leading to physical and psychological harm.
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 NOW 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 is time to #RaiseTheAgeMO @molegislature @missouripta @raisetheageMO
**Advocacy & Legislation**

Special Information from Missouri PTA

National PTA advocates for the improvement of public education for all children and to guarantee public funds are not diverted to any private school choice proposal and/or voucher system. However, parents reported they’d like to have a greater say in their young child’s use of social media and messaging apps. Nearly three-quarters of parents whose children use messaging apps indicated that they want more control.

Where Does National PTA Stand on Private School Vouchers?

Despite online safety concerns such as bullying, parents believe messaging apps and social media can help keep their children safe and can provide good tools for learning. Poll results also show that connecting with family is the primary reason parents allow their young children to use messaging and social media apps.

- 68% of parents agreed that messaging apps help them connect as a family.
- 69% of parents said their children use social media to communicate with relatives such as grandparents and cousins.

As part of National PTA’s ongoing digital safety efforts, the association encourages families to have open, ongoing conversations about devices and technology use and establish ground rules together using The Smart Talk. National PTA remains committed to helping parents empower their children to become smart digital citizens in an increasingly connected world.

National PTA recently released results of a national poll exploring the use of social media and messaging apps among young children. The poll, which surveyed 1,200 parents of children under the age of 13, was conducted in collaboration with Facebook earlier this year through Lincoln Park Strategies. The findings show that the majority of parents allow their children to use messaging apps and social media to stay in touch with friends and family.

“Helping children navigate the digital world has become a crucial element of parenting,” said Jim Accomando, president of National PTA. “Through the poll, we explored the prevalence of young children using social media and messaging apps and gauged how they are using these tools. The results make our efforts to empower parents to help their children be safe and responsible online that much more important.”

Key findings revealed that:

- 61% of parents said their children under age 13 use messaging apps and/or social media.
- 81% of parents said their children started using social media between the ages of eight and 13.
- 64% of parents whose children under 13 use social media say that it provides convenient ways to keep in touch and keep track of their children when they are not with them; 61% of parents whose children under 13 use messaging apps feel similarly.
- 57% of children who use social media are using their own device, and 58% of children who use messaging apps are using their own device.

Through the poll, parents also reported wanting to help their young children use social media and messaging apps responsibly—nearly nine in 10 say that they monitor their children’s online activities. More than half of parents said they would not allow their children to use social media and messaging apps without monitoring tools. However, parents reported they’d like to have a greater say in their young child’s use of social media and messaging apps.

“As parents, we want our children to connect, learn and have fun through technology, and at the same time, stay safe,” added Nathan R. Monell, CAE, National PTA executive director. “Learning about how families are using social media and messaging apps is a critical component to helping them take advantage of the opportunities that the tools offer while building good digital habits and ensuring children have the skills they need to be responsible in the digital world.”

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**This year I will...**

**Have an Open, Ongoing Conversation with My Children about their Digital Safety**

National PTA advocates for the improvement of public education for all children and to guarantee public funds are not diverted to any private school choice proposal and/or voucher system.

National PTA also opposes tax credits and deductions for elementary and secondary school tuition and other education-related expenses for public and non-public school students.

Our association believes that private school choice systems have detrimental effects on our public school systems. Public dollars must remain invested in public schools for the benefit of all students and the future of our nation.
Advocacy & Legislation  Special Information from Missouri PTA

The filing period for new legislation has begun. Below you will find four bills Missouri PTA feels are very important in the upcoming session. You can follow all the bills Missouri PTA is watching in the advocacy section of the Missouri PTA website. Please remember to sign up for our action alerts and to participate in each alert we send out. Advocacy is one of PTA’s most important functions and ensures that the children of Missouri receive the best education possible while protecting our public schools statewide.

Missouri HB 1255 - Nick Schroer
SB 793 - Wayne Wallingford
Requires children under the age of 18 to be prosecuted for most criminal offenses in juvenile courts unless the child is certified as an adult.
Missouri PTA supports these bills. These are the bills that we are starting our student advocacy campaign around this month. It has been PTA’s long held position to support efforts and legislation that prohibits the incarceration of youth in adult facilities.

Missouri HB 1248 - Patricia Pike
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Missouri HB 1639 - Dan Stacy
Establishes the Missouri Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Program.
Missouri PTA opposes this bill. The Missouri Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Program is a particular concern for PTA because this program would create an account that would allow taxpayers to make a qualifying contribution to an educational assistance organization and claim a tax credit, as described in the act. The tax credit is for one hundred percent of the amount of the contribution. The tax credit may be carried forward for four years and may be transferred, sold, or assigned. The scholarships will be used in private schools effectively creating a voucher system in Missouri.

Missouri HB 1668 - Kathryn Swan
Creates an educational savings plan for K-12 educational expenses.
Missouri PTA opposes this bill. The Missouri Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Program is a particular concern for PTA because this program would create an account that would allow taxpayers to make a qualifying contribution to an educational assistance organization and claim a tax credit, as described in the act. The tax credit is for one hundred percent of the amount of the contribution. The tax credit may be carried forward for four years and may be transferred, sold, or assigned. The scholarships will be used in private schools effectively creating a voucher system in Missouri.

This year I will . . .
Sign up to be part of the JC/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 JC/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 for meaningful school safety legislation.

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

The Missouri Bill Watch  Missouri PTA Bill Watch List

Missouri HB 1255 - Nick Schroer
Add powdered alcohol to provisions relating to intoxicating liquor
Missouri PTA supports this bill. Powdered alcohol contains 55% alcohol, a percentage much higher than beer (3-10%), wine (8-14%) and the most common spirits (Tequila 40-50%, Vodka 30-50%, and Whisky 40-53.3%). But unlike the liquid forms of alcohol, powdered alcohol is easily concealed by youths and can be mixed in a manner making the end product more harmful to youths.
Powdered Alcohol can be sprinkled onto food products, taken as a pill, snorted, and mixed with alcohol making it even more potent and inhibiting the user’s ability to fight off alcohol poisoning. It can also be mixed with caffeinated beverages resulting in a dangerous mix of a depressant and stimulant. This bill would label powdered alcohol an intoxicating substance and will help prevent the ability of youth to purchase this substance.

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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 Christine Kent at membership@mopta.org for more information.
Consider applying for an open Regional Director position 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.
Wilder Elementary PTA | Ozark Region

STEAM Night learning brings lots of smiles

Kelly Burton | Wilder Elementary PTA

Last summer, after finalizing plans to launch a STEAM Club at Laura Ingalls Wilder Elementary School in Springfield, first grade teacher Danielle Moss found out about the National PTA STEM + Families Math Night Grant, sponsored by Mathnasium. She submitted an application and was thrilled when Wilder was announced as a recipient, one of only 35 elementary schools nationally. After connecting with Scott Kinsey from Mathnasium of Springfield, they decided to add an art, technology and engineering component to the math night, complementing the existing STEAM focus and building on excitement within the school.

After weeks of planning, the event took place on December 7th and included 11 activities for students and their families to complete together: 9 math games provided by Mathnasium, an art/technology activity where students made a bracelet or ornament using binary code as a guide, and an engineering challenge using marshmallows, toothpicks and spaghetti. Families were challenged to complete 10 of the activities, which earned students a fun goodie bag and parents the chance to win numerous prizes, including gift cards and Mathnasium gift certificates. There was also cookies and popcorn on hand for all participants, giving families a chance to take a break together while enjoying a snack.

In total, more than 100 Wilder students and around 150 parents and other family members took part in the educational fun, a great turnout for the first year. The evening was made possible by the more than 50 people from the community and the incredible Wilder staff who served as volunteers for the evening – not one parent from the school had to volunteer that evening! Feedback on the event has been very positive: students enjoyed the games and having the chance to interact with their teachers outside of the classroom, while the parents got new ideas for educational activities to do at home.

Springfield Council of PTAs | Ozark Region

Annual SCPTA Legislative Rally supports members’ understanding of current issues

In November, Springfield Council of PTAs extended invitations for elected local, state and federal officials representing our school district to participate as panelists in our annual Legislative Rally hosted in conjunction with Missouri PTA. PTA has a successful history in advocating for children locally and nationally and we were pleased to discuss current issues affecting our children.

Our purpose for hosting this event was to provide the opportunity to increase our members’ understanding of the democratic process and the issues affecting children and schools. All state and federal legislators in the Springfield Public Schools area were being given an equal opportunity to participate in this event.

The event was a question and answer forum. Each panelist was given equal time to give a brief introduction and a response to each question posed by Dorothy Gardner, MoPTA state president, who served as the moderator.
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.

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.

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.
This year I will . . .

Share the value of PTA membership

PTA membership is something that tends to dwindle as the school year progresses, but guess what?! Members can join ALL YEAR LONG! Remind parents in your school community that their New Year’s Resolution should be to join PTA!

Shake it up! Think outside the box! It’s a fresh start!

PTA membership is critical for a thriving, healthy PTA. Membership does not have to be something introduced only to the community at the beginning of the school year. Membership should continue throughout the year as you have events, Book Fairs, fundraisers, etc. The start of the new year is a prime example to introduce membership to those in your school community who have not yet joined. Suggest ‘New Year’s Resolutions’ to join, ‘The PTA ‘hearts’ the school’ around Valentine’s Day, “Spring in to the PTA” throughout March, the possibilities are endless and the results can be amazing!

We’re about half-way through the school year and your PTA has had an impact all through the first semester. Who wouldn’t want to be a part of that?! Create an opportunity for new meeting attendees, new volunteers and new committee chairpersons. Focus on the future and the things coming up this semester, things like Staff Appreciation, Field Day, Spring Carnivals. Reiterate to your community how important your PTA is to the school, and how the goal continues to be an impact on the students. Keep it fresh, keep thinking, keep collaborating, keep pushing for new members!

Membership Award Focus

Student Membership Award

20% increase over previous year of student memberships

Units may earn this award by achieving an increase of 20% or more in total student memberships by March 1st over the previous year’s membership totals.

Business Partnership Award

20% increase over previous year of business memberships

Units may earn this award by achieving an increase of 20% or more in total business memberships by March 1st over the previous year’s membership totals.

Create & Implement SMART Membership Goals

Now that the new year is providing us with a fresh start to our membership goals, don’t forget the S.M.A.R.T. way of working toward more members. PTA.org also has e-learning courses that you can use to refresh your tactics or try something new.

Remember that everyone in your unit can ask someone if they have joined a PTA yet. And that we welcome family members, friends and neighbors. If someone supported PTA once, there really isn’t any excuse not to continue to support PTA forever, even if the kiddos have all grown. We all need to be working towards our state goal of 50,000 members! We are close but not quite there yet.

Whatever your plans are for the rest of the year, try to make your goal targets by March, so that you can apply for some membership awards before their deadlines. But even after you have applied for those awards, keep working on those memberships. Everything counts till the end of the school year for our state goal of 50,000 members, so don’t stop, always keep asking. We can do this, all of us, together!
In the PTA Shop this month:
PTA Thank You Greeting Cards

Those who can, do.
Those who can do more,
VOLUNTEER. If there are parents and educators that “do more” be sure to thank them!