

# MEMBERSHIP

## MEMBERSHIP VP/CHAIRMAN

Welcome to one of the most important, challenging and rewarding PTA positions!

Members give our organization the powerful voice we need to create an environment focused on our children's education, health and safety. Membership is the lifeblood of our organization. Without membership, PTA cannot fulfill its mission to make every child's potential a reality. Membership is the force that gives us a VOICE to advocate for our children's future. The time to be a voice for our children is TODAY!

### Why join PTA?

#### Reasons to Join PTA

- ✦ PTA provides an opportunity for involvement by parents, teachers, students, and the community.
- ✦ PTA is a resource for issues concerning our children.
- ✦ PTA contributes a positive attitude to ensure the best possible education for our children.
- ✦ PTA provides a forum for discussion of topics of general concern between school, home and the community.
- ✦ PTA offers resources available from the State and National PTA to help the local units and its members.
- ✦ PTA is the largest volunteer organization whose sole focus is the education, health and safety of our children during their educational years.

Do you have an answer to this question? If not, take the time to decide why you think joining PTA is important. As a service and volunteer organization, some of the greatest things we do are not anything you can hold in your hand, walk out of a store with, eat or wear. That is because advocacy is pricelessly intangible.

When you promote your unit to potential members, you need to tell parents and community members how you are *specifically* helping the children in your school and community. You need to be able to explain what the value of PTA membership is at the local, state and national level.

It can be hard to convey the message of the PTA to busy parents who are working, going to school and running their children to one of several activities they are involved in.

Why join PTA? Be ready! Someone will ask you that very question. Know why *you* joined. Have your 60 second, *What PTA does for our school*, elevator speech ready. Encourage every member of your PTA Board to also have an answer.

PTA is a positive link between school and home; PTA offers the opportunity for involvement in issues concerning our children. *Your* local unit has access to information from the State and National PTA. Check out their websites, each is full of information you can use in your PTA unit. Use these resources as a tool to improve the educational

process for all children. **Anyone** can be a PTA member, and when those member's decisions are guided by a sense of responsibility for all children, as well as their own, then we all truly become advocates for our future -- our children.

## Membership Committee Basics

- í Make a Plan
- í Choose a Theme
- í Create a Sign-Up Form
- í Hold a Kick Off
- í Offer Incentives
- í Promote benefits – tangible and intangible
- í Keep your message out there
- í Say THANK YOU!!!
- í Get recognized.

## NOW WHAT?

### Form a Committee

Many times, the responsibility of membership falls on one person – you. Encourage others to help with the membership drive. It will go much easier with a committee that includes teachers, parents and students. If you are a PTSA, recruit student leaders to help with ideas for your membership campaign and promoting student membership. Get your entire PTA board involved in membership. Recruit volunteers that represent the diverse culture of your school community to man your membership table at all your school events and activities. Maybe you know a creative parent or student that could make membership posters to display at school. Try to split membership recruitment into different jobs, one or two people concentrating on business

memberships, another on signing up all your faculty members, and two or more people on individual memberships. Your enthusiasm will encourage the committee to set goals and celebrate the adventure. Remember - if you are not excited about PTA, how can you expect others to be excited?

### Make a Plan

Set your membership goal. Retain the members you have and consider setting a goal for **inclusion**. A diverse population of age, gender and culture will more accurately reflect your community; and be a more welcoming presence to school families. Be specific when setting membership goals! Use the previous years' totals, and any changes in your school attendance, to set a specific percentage of increase; whether in overall membership or in recruiting a certain population. A 5-10% increase in total membership is a great rule of thumb when setting membership goals. When you are considering goals, do not forget to include business memberships. They are a vital part of our growing community.

Choose a theme. You may want to use the Missouri PTA theme, “**Connect to the Power of PTA**”, or maybe you or someone in your committee has a great theme idea unique to your school. Remember to present your theme to the executive board for approval at the summer planning meeting, and check your budget for a membership promotion line. Plan on applying for the Outstanding Membership Campaign Award. This is a great time to obtain your board's membership dues and begin your membership campaign. *All officers and committee members must be members of your PTA.*

**Create a sign-up form, paper or online.** Try to incorporate your theme into a sign-up form. Think about what information you need, or would like to receive, from your members. Along with

each member's name, you may want to ask for an email address, phone number and volunteer interests. If you mail items to your members, don't forget to ask for their mailing address as well. You might want to ask for their children's names and teachers for any incentive tracking purposes. If you are a PTSA, make sure to create an area that designates whether it is an adult or student membership.

Create or revamp your membership form, and consider offering it online as a fillable pdf. Potential members that aren't able to attend your kickoff event and fill out the paper copy, can still sign up and email their form to you!

**Hold a kickoff.** Plan activities that focus on your theme. You may want to plan for a Membership Drive Month in the fall – just remember your membership drive will last all year. Getting off to a great start is essential. Involving your parents, faculty, and students will ensure that you meet or exceed your goals. A kickoff week is a great way to get started, but keep in mind, an activity each month will continue the excitement and keep your membership growing.

**Offer membership incentives.** Grow your membership by attaching a tangible value to becoming a PTA member! Hand out local business coupons and offers (see blue box) to your members, the very moment they join PTA. Hand them a raffle ticket for a free drawing, just for joining. Invite members to specific events; offer free admission, a discount, or free item for showing their PTA membership card. These TANGIBLES should be ready to go at any of your membership tables, the very minute a member joins, as a benefit they will walk away with.

Use your membership committee to begin work on the no cost tangibles that can be offered as a benefit to joining your PTA unit. Work with the administration, teachers and students to find out what is available to be offered, they have great ideas on what works for them. Offer a reward for classrooms achieving a 100% membership. Plan a movie, pizza or ice cream party. This provides a great opportunity for a business member to sponsor an event. Many great items can be included in a drawing, just for joining PTA. Maybe its lunch with the Principal, lunch with a teacher, a special parking spot (monthly for PTSA members at the high school level and for special events, holiday parties and conferences at the lower levels), a no-homework pass, a school T-shirt or other spirit wear item, etc. Once you get started, the ideas for these types of items just keep rolling! Make sure to advertise that you'll be drawing for these items and when. Then be sure to announce the winners at the school and in your newsletter!

Approach your business and community partners for donations. This may seem intimidating, but you have to ask! Start with your current business members, and parents in your school that own a business. You will be amazed at what your unit will be able to enjoy just by asking. Be sure to

### No Cost Tangible Benefits

Be sure to use these as a monthly drawing for everyone who joins PTA.

- ✦ Lunch with the Principal
- ✦ Lunch with a teacher
- ✦ Special monthly parking spot for PTSA members
- ✦ Special parking spot for parents during holiday parties or large school functions.
- ✦ No homework pass (for student members of PTSA's)
- ✦ School T-Shirt or other Spirit Wear Item
- ✦ Local business/community partner donations

## Ideas for Donations / Sponsorships

- ✦ Fast food coupons to give out to each person who joins.
- ✦ Specific member discounts (99¢ drinks during the month of September from 6 to 8 p.m.)
- ✦ Discounted or Free Kids Meals
- ✦ Discounts on bowling or skating
- ✦ Discounts on Purchases

contact the owner/manager, be clear about how their donation will help the children in your community, go in person when you can, and follow up with a phone call and thank you card.

Ask a local fast food place (one that may already offer a school night that you can earn a % back) if they would be willing to donate food or drink coupons for your Back to School Night. In addition, or instead of, ask if they'll offer a specific month when a PTA card carrying member can get a 99¢ drink or food item. Ask a restaurant if they'll provide free kids meal coupons for Back to School Night. Approach other small or locally owned eating establishments and ask for free appetizer or dessert coupons. Maybe they'll offer a dollar amount, or percentage off, their bill if patrons spend a certain amount.

Find out if your local bowling alley or skating rink will offer a free kids' pass to start the year off healthy, and then again when they show their report cards. Hunt for businesses that are child friendly. Think shoes, bicycles, local bookstores, tutoring centers or services, etc. Ask if they will offer a coupon, discount, give-away, or even sponsor one of your events. Some businesses will even be willing to give 5% of their revenue earned from PTA members who patron their businesses, back to the PTA.

As you develop these relationships, you may find you have sponsors for teacher Back to School lunches, classroom parties or classroom rewards, snacks or food for parent education nights, PTA meetings, snacks for testing days, and more. Visit your local grocery store and ask if they'll provide  $x$  cases of water for your events throughout the year.

Speak with your PTA board and administration to decide ahead of time how you will thank and recognize these businesses. Maybe you will give them 5 minutes at the beginning of your PTA meeting to introduce themselves. Maybe you'll put their business in your PTA newsletter and/or on your PTA website. Please note that these advertisements should say "Thank You" and give business card type details (i.e. name and/or slogan, address, phone, web address). Note that you are not pressuring your membership to patron these businesses.

**Promote exclusive offers for PTA members.** PTA members can save money thanks to [National PTA's Member Benefits Provider Program](#). Because of the size of our organization, PTA is able to partner with businesses and negotiate special discounts, fundraising opportunities, and other valuable benefits exclusively for PTA members. This information is available on both the MO PTA and National PTA websites. Check regularly for updates in order to keep your members informed of the newest benefits.

**Keep your message out there.** Make sure you have an updated calendar, with all your school's activities listed, so you can plan to have a membership table at each one. Report a membership

minute at each unit meeting to keep everyone updated on your progress. Put articles in your newsletter keeping everyone updated about the membership drive and any special incentives being offered.

[Get your unit recognized!](#) Review the information about each membership award and consider which one(s) you would like to apply for from the Missouri PTA. Include the requirements needed into your membership drive plan. Make an effort to apply for at least one award each year. Give your PTA unit the recognition it deserves! If *you* don't apply, then who will?

**Thank your committee volunteers and PTA members.** Remember to thank your membership committee volunteers for their help, and your PTA members for supporting their children, school and PTA!

### **GET EXCITED ABOUT YOUR PTA!!!**

Now that you have your membership's attention, engage them! Let them know your PTA is more than just the free offers you gave away on Back to School Night. Remind them that by joining PTA, they are supportive of your efforts to ensure our children are healthy, safe and making the most of their education and opportunities.

*This is the time to focus on the INTANGIBLES.*

Keep members informed of legislation in your local and state areas that affect the health, safety and education of our children. Remind them of Town Halls and other opportunities to discuss these topics with local, state and national legislators. Share a list of ways a parent or adult can become involved, or volunteer, at the school. Remind your male members that all children need positive male role models in their lives, and it is proven that children do better in school when parents are involved. Remind your membership regularly and often of what the PTA is doing in your school, and in your community, to better serve our children.

Our children are the most important, valuable thing we have the pleasure of being responsible for. Show your school and community that the ways in which we treasure our children, are at the core values of PTA; **and be AMAZING!**

## **MEMBERSHIP RESOURCES**

### **The Procedure Book**

A Procedure Book is a wonderful tool to start with. Look through your Membership procedure book from the previous year. If one is not available - **start one now**. A good Membership procedure book will contain all the information you need to get started. This would include information on when to start each phase of your membership campaign, and what has worked well in the past, contacts and resources. It will contain membership totals and goals from previous years, as well as a membership roster, themes, programs and awards applied for. This will help you as you begin to organize and set goals for this year. The more you know about membership and what has worked in the past, the better equipped you will be for the current year. You will add current information as it is compiled. Membership lists and ideas from your committee will help next year's committee succeed. Be sure to include what worked and what did not, so that

next year's committee can learn from you. Details are important and do not hesitate to ask questions.

## State and National PTA Tools

Do not panic - help is available. Membership materials are available from the State and National PTA. The "The Official National PTA Back to School Kit" can be downloaded from National PTA at [www.PTakit.org](http://www.PTakit.org). This kit contains membership materials including the *Membership Quick Reference Guide*. It will assist you with ideas, activities, and planning your membership year. The website also has extensive membership information and marketing tools available. There are many ideas for memberships – all you need is to search the web for them. You can also search on Pinterest and other state websites, to start creating your own ideas.

The [membership section](#) on the [Missouri PTA website](#) has information on responsibilities, recruiting members, conducting campaigns, awards and many other useful topics. The most current member benefit information and available training can also be found on the website. Plan to attend Missouri PTA membership workshops during convention, or if your district or council offers a school of information. **Staying organized and informed are vital to a successful membership year.**

## Internet Help

### Membership Best Practices

- ✦ Deliver the money collected for memberships to the treasurer immediately, with all proper paperwork.
- ✦ Keep a copy of paperwork for the membership chairman's records.
- ✦ Be sure to complete a Dues Remittance form and request the treasurer to write a check for the correct amount of dues
- ✦ **Dues are to be submitted monthly to the state office.**

The Internet is an incredible wealth of resources. Even if you are not the most computer savvy person, you too can find just about anything you may want to know on-line. Consider doing an Internet search for PTA Membership, PTA Membership Campaigns, PTA Membership Ideas, etc. You'll find that you can visit websites from PTA's across the country with useable information on themes, incentives, ideas and other items.

**PTA Publications** can be an invaluable resource tool for your officers and chairmen. Produced by Missouri PTA, *CONTACT* magazine is a monthly electronic publication sent via email to all unit officers whose names and emails have been submitted to Missouri PTA. Digital copies are also available at [www.mopta.org](http://www.mopta.org) *Our Children* magazine is a bi-monthly publication available from NPTA, found under News & Events on [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)

## Submitting Dues

The cost of membership (dues) is set in your unit's bylaws. It is important to read these details before selling memberships. The information will tell you what memberships are available for

your unit and the cost, i.e. individual, student, business. **The National and State portions of dues should be sent to the MOPTA office on the first of each month. Members of your PTA are not official PTA members until the dues have been submitted to the state. \$4.25 for each individual membership and \$5.50 for each business membership must be sent to the M PTA state office to cover each individual's State and National PTA dues.**

A **Dues Remittance Form** needs to accompany any dues that are mailed to the state office. The current year's form can be found and printed off from the Missouri PTA website on the [Forms/Awards](#) page. Always include your unit's National PTA ID # on every Dues Remittance **Form that is submitted.** It is very important that this form is filled out completely and accurately. Many units throughout the state have the same name, so it is important that the proper unit gets the credit. We can ensure accuracy when the all information is current in the state office and matches the form that is sent in.

Businesses can purchase a [PTA Business Membership](#). Each local unit sets the price according to their bylaws regarding business memberships. When sending in the business membership dues, please remember to *neatly* print the requested information on the Dues Remittance Form for business memberships. The state office will mail the business certificates and emblems to the unit President. Please make sure these are distributed to your business members.

**For Clarification to our Councils:** Only local PTA units may join the PTA Council. Businesses and individuals are not allowed to join councils. Therefore, Councils *do not sell* business memberships.

### Who do I ask??

- 📌 Teachers
- 📌 Parents
- 📌 School Administrators
- 📌 Students (if a PTSA)
- 📌 Community Members
- 📌 Grandparents
- 📌 EVERYONE YOU KNOW

### One member = one vote

**Every Member** should receive a membership card because voting privileges are attached to each membership. **Cards are issued only to individual members**, never to Mr. and Mrs. Person. For business memberships, the card will be issued in the business name. An official membership roster should be part of your unit's records and kept in the secretary's procedure

book with the minutes and the bylaws. Keep an updated roster in your records, and ask if your President would like a copy as well. You may number the membership cards and keep records of members in numeric order, but this is not required. Keep track of the student members in PTSA's by designating their membership number with an "S", or elsewhere on the list.

## WHO DO I ASK???

**Be Inclusive-Ask Everyone!** We are a stronger group when we include everyone and work together.

**TEACHERS:** Teachers are an essential part of the PTA - they are the 'T' and important to the membership drive. Their commitment to the PTA and involvement will make your drive more successful. The [100% Faculty Award](#) is given to the local units in which all the faculty members

join the PTA. In addition, a special **Golden Apple Award** will be sent to the units with 100% faculty membership. You must apply for these awards. The most current version of the award application is located in the [PTA Members Section](#) of the Missouri PTA Website (requires you to log in). You must fill out these forms and send them in to the state office. This is the only way we will know you have met the requirements.

**PARENTS/GRANDPARENTS/CAREGIVERS:** Parents are a vital asset to any school. Please encourage not just membership from the parents, but participation. Studies have shown the more parents are involved in their child's school, the better our students will do and achieve. The more we all work together, the better our schools will be.

**STUDENTS:** Don't forget these important components of the PTA. If your unit is a PTSA, remember to include students in your membership drive. Even if your unit is not a PTSA, it is important to encourage their participation and be inclusive when planning activities and events.

**Student Membership Award:** The single PTSA unit that has the highest percentage of student members, based on the school enrollment, is awarded this honor. To apply for this award, you must differentiate between student and adult members on the membership roster. The application can be found in the [PTA Members Section](#) of the Missouri PTA website.

**COMMUNITY:** Don't forget to be inclusive and open to members within your community. This could be friends, relatives, grandparents and others who care about children and the schools. Anyone who cares about children and wants to support PTA in its advocacy of children can join. Make sure each one is given a membership card and notified about PTA events and activities.

**BUSINESS:** Community involvement is a vital part of education. This is a great opportunity to involve your local businesses in your school. Business members can vote; their participation is a great resource for promoting school pride. Due to the wording in our Articles of Incorporation, we are required to allow every member a vote. It is important to note each business membership will carry with it one vote. A unit membership card should be given to the business when the membership is purchased. In addition to the support our community members can provide, they can also voice their views by voting. So ask those in your local unit about where they work, or a business they own – "Will you show your support of public education and the PTA by purchasing a PTA Business Membership for only \$\_\_\_\_\_?" You won't know the answer until you **ASK!**

**Community Involvement Award:** The unit that sells the most Business Memberships will earn the Community Involvement Award. This award does not require an application and is presented at the annual Missouri PTA Convention.

### **We Are Here To Help You**

If you have any questions about membership dues, forms, awards, cards, policies, or just would like to ask some general questions, please don't hesitate to contact our membership department via email at [membership@mopta.org](mailto:membership@mopta.org), or the state PTA office 1-800-328-7330, or our web site [www.mopta.org](http://www.mopta.org). This will be an EXCITING year for Missouri PTA!

**Membership recruiting is a year-round activity.**

**Continually ask individuals to join! MISSOURI PTA has put together a [Membership Development Calendar](#) to guide your year-round efforts.**