Legislation and Advocacy

Kristina Wilmoth, VP & Director of Legislation and Advocacy

Take out your phones!

Follow Missouri PTA on social media

@MissouriPTA

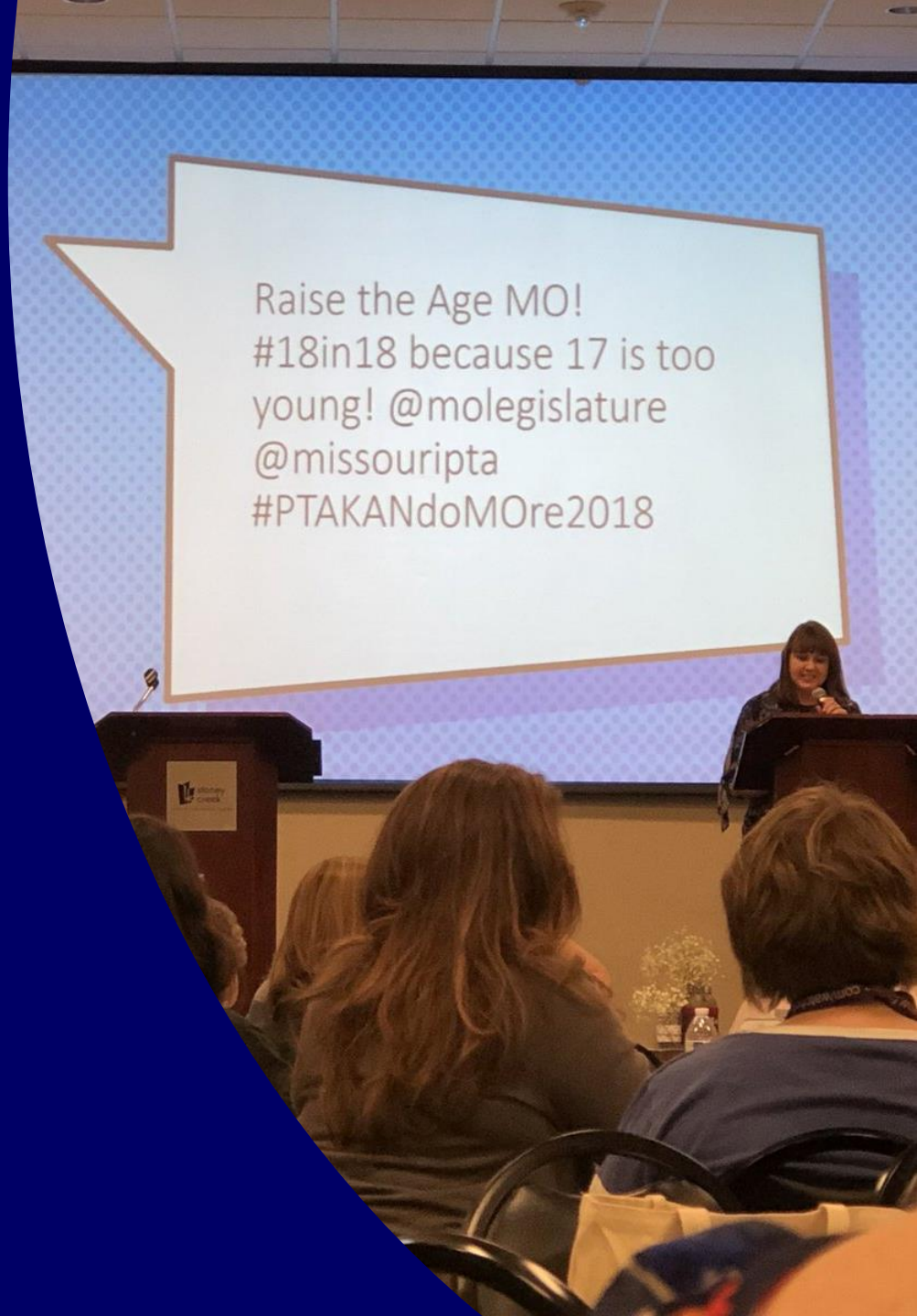
Interactions with Elected or Appointed Officials

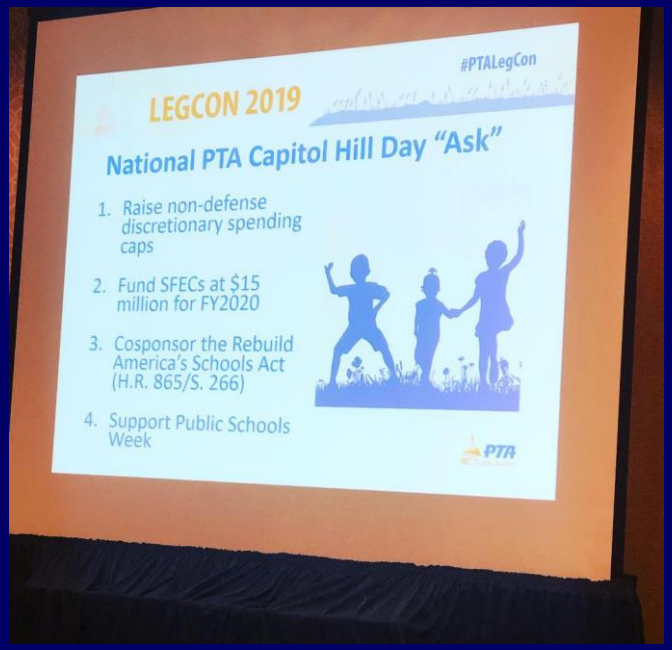
- It is ok to interact with elected officials or members of an executive administration (State and Fed level) with regards to legislation.
- Use your unit or state affiliate's Facebook and Twitter accounts to reach out to your elected officials to support or oppose legislation
- Remember, because PTA is a nonprofit organization, you must refrain from interacting with the campaigns of elected officials or repost a message from anyone that has a campaign message for any candidate.

Thank you for being an advocate!

National PTA honored Missouri PTA with its 2019 Outstanding State PTA Advocacy Award for #18in18 Raise the Age Missouri SB 793 (2018).

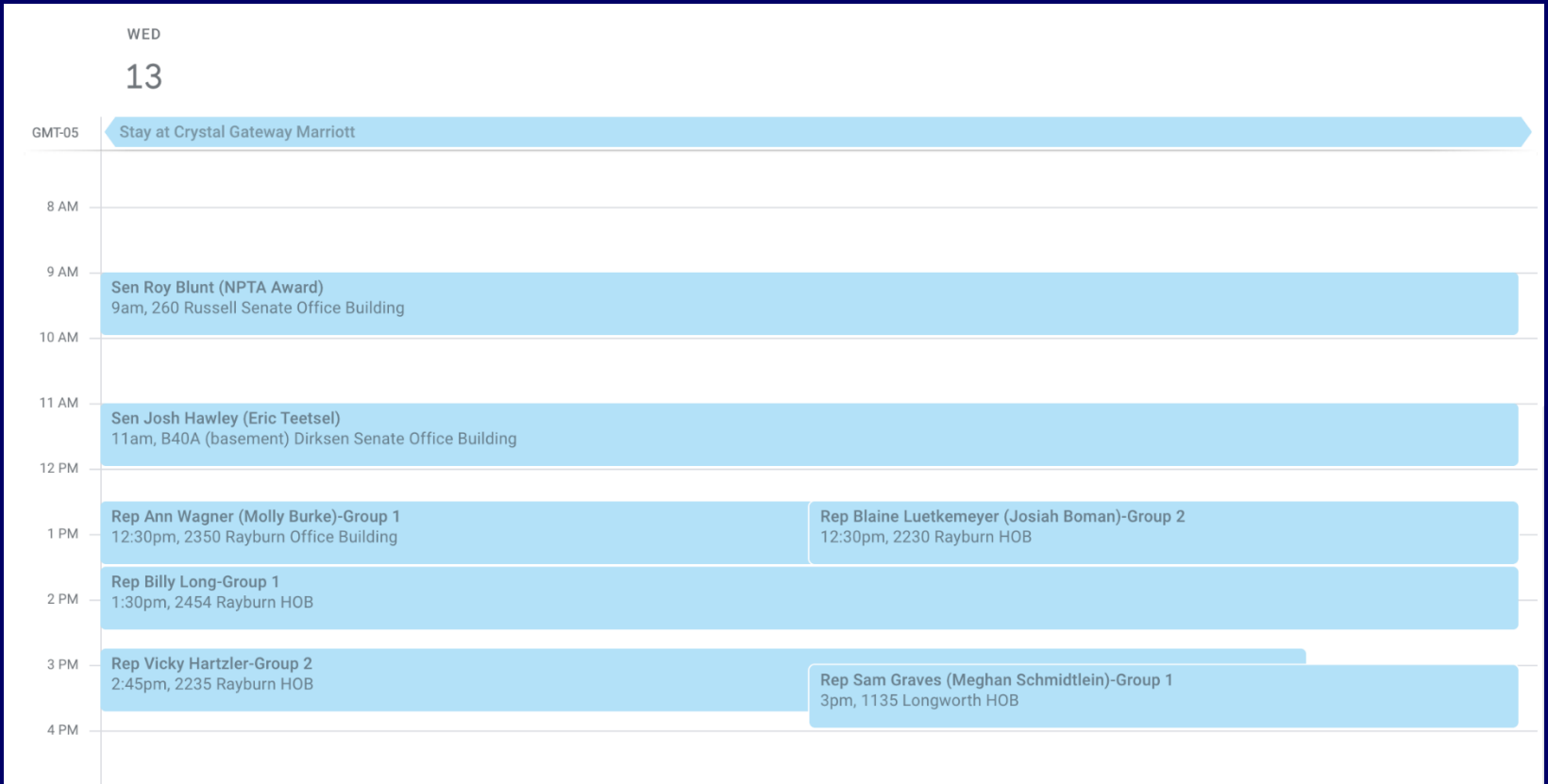
National PTA presented Missouri PTA with the award at a reception during the association's 2019 National PTA Legislative Conference, Wednesday, March 13, 2019, at the Legislative Convention.





2019 National PTA LegCon

Hill Day 2019



Who Are We Now?

4 million members

24,000 local units

16.5 million students served

59% students of color

55% Title I schools

100+ years

Why is PTA Advocacy/Legislative Chair so important?

As your local Advocacy/Leg Chair, you help Missouri PTA advocate

- to protect & call for local control of schools
- for strong laws protecting our kids from abuse and neglect
- to increase mental health services
- to maintain or generate local & state funding for public education
- to keep youth from being placed in the adult court system unless certified to do so.

What is the Advocacy/Leg Chair responsible for?

Advocacy Chair gives legislative updates at meetings and in unit/council newsletters, passes along Action Alerts to members, encourages participation in the JC/DC network, and presents monthly Legislative Report (given to you by Missouri PTA).

How do I get started?

- Join the JC/DC network (sign up at mopta.org)
- Volunteer to run for your local PTA Advocacy or Legislative Chair.
- Familiarize yourself with MOPTA Advocacy Resources at mopta.org.
- Advocate! PTA was founded as an advocacy organization and we need YOU to help us as we speak up for all of America's children!

Want to know more?

Contact Kristina Wilmoth
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Missouri PTA®
everychild. onevoice.

@MissouriPTA

What Have PTA Members Accomplished?

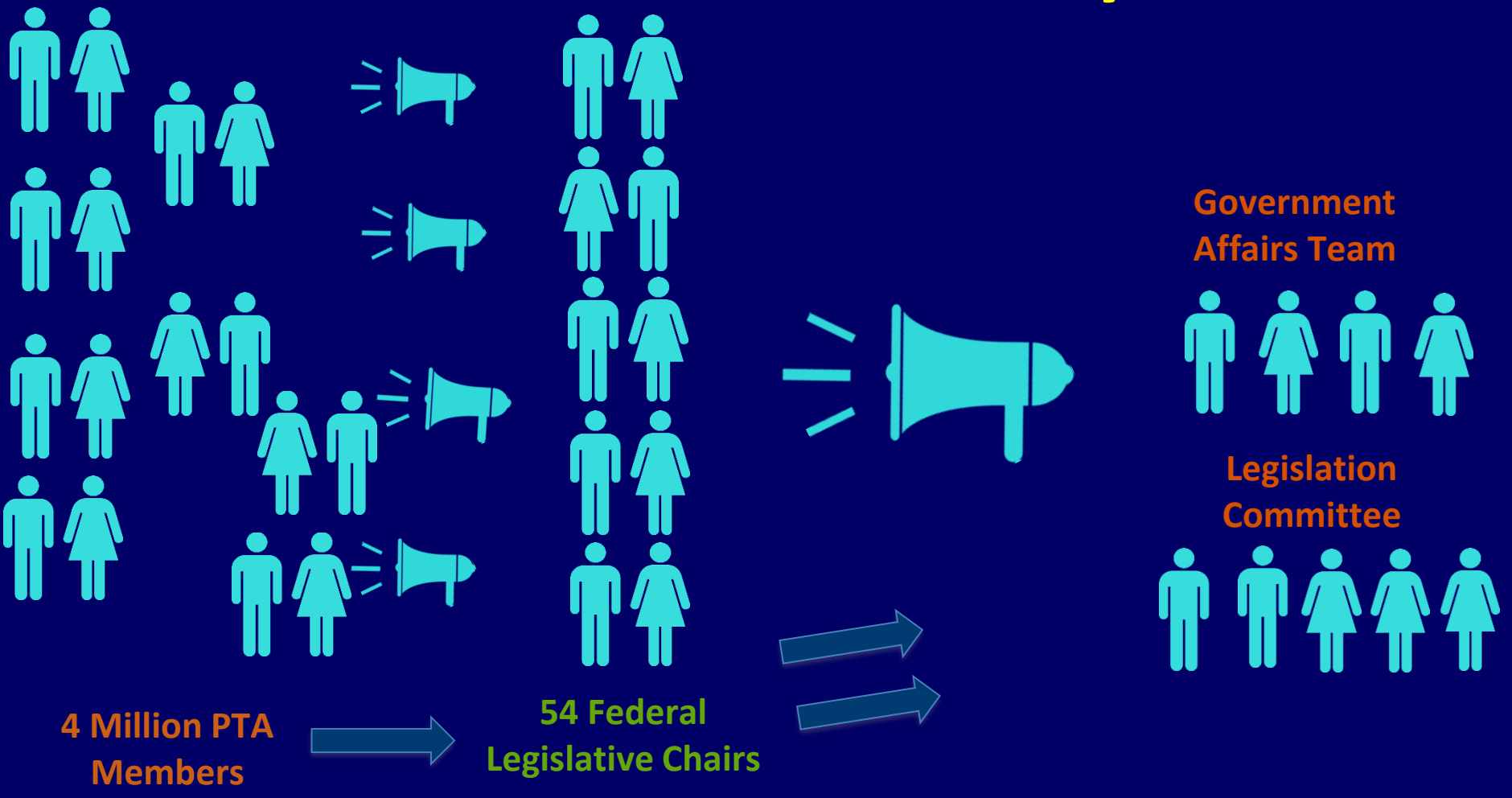
1903
Worked With Policymakers to Create a Juvenile Court System

1911
Successfully Advocated to Establish Public School Kindergarten

1938
Successfully Advocated to Establish Child Labor Laws

1941
Successfully Advocated to Expand Federal School Lunch Program

How National PTA Advocacy Works



Advocacy begins with you…

- Regularly attend PTA Meetings
- Attend school board meetings
- Join JC/DC
- Ask to receive MO Capitol Chatter (monthly Leg Report) or Kansas Vote Counts
- Register to vote and vote
- Hold a candidate forum
- Contact legislators when Action Alerts are published
- Meet candidates for office and ask questions

By becoming and Advocate you..

- Keep the interest of PTA on the minds of policy makers.
- Engage policy makers in a dialog that benefits PTA.
- Effect the change that will benefit our children for generations to come.

Who are PTA Advocates?

PTA advocates speak up for every child to ensure a high-quality public education, no matter the race, ethnicity, disability, gender, income or place of birth.

PTA advocates engage families in schools, communities and all levels of government to protect the rights of all children and families.

YOU! You are a PTA Advocate.

The most important tool you have is to vote!

- Consider holding a voter's registration event.
- Provide information on the candidates to our members. How do I learn about issues?
- Local school board elections are the best way parents can impact the education of their children.
- Post candidate information on your website or newsletters.
- MAKE SURE YOU VOTE!!!

Federal Legislation

Quality Education

- Elementary and Secondary Education
- Special Education
- Early Learning and Childhood Education
- Post-Secondary Access & Opportunity
- Federal Investments in Education

Federal Legislation

Health Safety and Overall Well-Being

- Gun Safety & Violence Prevention
- Juvenile Justice
- Child Health & Safety
- Education Technology& Student Data Privacy

Forms of Organizing for Social Change:

Form	Approach
Service	Providing a direct response or program to solve a problem
Education	Researching and raise awareness a problem to generate support for an issue
Speaking Up for Others	Researching and raise awareness a problem to generate support for an issue
Grassroots	Lobbying about an issue on behalf of a community. *Adapted from Midwest Academy with permission

Legislation

Please do not promote any legislation that has not been released by MO PTA without first contacting the office. The bills MO PTA (thus each Council and Unit) supports or opposes must meet either MO PTA or National PTA's resolutions or position statements!

Things to Remember

- You have a voice!
- If join your voice with the other 44,000+ MOPTA members voices it they will be to loud to not be heard!
- Every call or email counts!

PTA is a 501 (3) (c) organization

- There is one basic rule: 501(c)(3)s may not support or oppose any candidate for public office. This means 501(c)(3)s may not endorse candidates, rate candidates, contribute to candidates, or do anything else that might seem intended to help or hurt a candidate.
- PTA is a non profit organization, violating the rules could cause you to lose your 501 status. If in doubt contact MO PTA and ask.

What you can do…

- PTAs should support issues that are good for children and youth. PTA should oppose issues that are bad for children and youth. That includes state and national legislation, as well as local laws and school district policies. PTA can and should take a stand on bond and levy issues.
- PTAs can sponsor public forums (including candidates forums – all candidates must be invited), lectures and debates.
- Educate candidates on issues important to PTA.

• PTAs can send out questionnaires to all candidates asking in an unbiased way for their positions on issues. The results must be reported accurately and without editorial comment.

• PTAs can conduct voter registrations. The registration must be open to anyone, regardless of which party or candidates they want to vote for after registering.

•Remind members to vote.

What you cannot do…

- Invite only one candidate in an election to come speak to the PTA.
- Tell PTA members to only vote for a candidate who supports X position.
- Distribute any campaign materials on behalf of a candidate.
- Wear campaign buttons or T-shirts during a PTA meeting.
- Establish, participate in or support PACs (Political Action Committees).

Communicating Your Message: The Power of PTA's Voice

1. PTA media
2. Social media
3. News media
4. Word of mouth

"If we don't stand up for children, then we don't stand for much."

- *Marian Wright Edelman*

- For more information, contact:

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