

Membership Marketing Guide



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Dear PTA Membership Chairman,

Welcome to one of the most vital positions in the PTA. You are the Membership Chairman because your fellow PTA officers believe that you are a good salesperson, enthusiastic about the association and can work well with others.

In order to be an effective membership chairman, you will need the cooperation of every officer and chairman and the support of every PTA member. Membership is everyone's responsibility. It would be advantageous to form a creative membership outreach committee to assist.

You will need to have a knowledge and understanding of the PTA's programs, projects and activities to market the PTA to those who are already members but not as active as they might be.

This ***Membership Marketing Guide*** is just that - a guide to aid you and your committee in your task by providing you with some guidelines, procedures, general information and a suggested calendar. The materials distributed by the Illinois PTA, the National PTA and PTAs in other states have been used in the compilation of this guide. Use it often and let us hear from you if you have additional ideas that lead to a successful membership campaign.

You are not alone. If you need assistance, first contact your district director or designated representative of the state board of managers. Your questions will be answered, or if necessary, you will be directed to the state membership chairman or the Illinois PTA office in Springfield. Contact information of the Illinois PTA State Office and members of the state board of managers can be found in the *Illinois PTA Yearbook* that was sent to your president, on the front cover of this guide, or on the website. We wish you success in your endeavors.

Illinois PTA
Membership Marketing Chairman

Table of Contents

Section 1 — GETTING STARTED

Outline for Membership Chairman	5-6
Five Elements to a Successful Membership Campaign	7
Hints for Membership Chairmen	8
Calendar	9-10
Facts for Local Unit Membership Committees	11
Facts for Council Membership Chairmen	12
ABC's for Membership Chairmen	13
Who Can Be In Your PTA?	14
Reaching Out To	15-18
When Someone Says "NO"	19

Section 2 — RECRUITING METHODS

Methods Found to be Successful in Recruiting PTA Members	21-22
Membership Ideas	23
PTA Projects and Ideas	24
Elementary Ideas That Have Worked	25
Membership Aids for Junior/Middle and Senior High Schools	26
Put an "S" in Your PTA	27
1. Working with Youth Through the High School PTSA	28
2. PTSA Membership Ideas	29

Section 3 — FACTS

PTA – We're Number One!! – A Public Relations Fact Sheet	31
PTA vs. Other Parent Groups Fact Sheet	32-33
Do You Wonder How Your Dues Are Used?	34-35
Your Membership Card – How Important Am I?	36

Section 4 — RESOURCES FOR MARKETING MEMBERSHIP

Membership Publicity	38-39
Ideas to Put into Action	40
Keep Members from Becoming Dropouts	41
Membership Promotion Ideas	42-43
Membership Theme Ideas	44
Membership Slogan Ideas	45
Membership Invitation	46
Poems and Adages	47
A Principals' Perspective	48

Section 5 — ACTION PLAN, SAMPLE LETTERS AND FORMS

Ideas to Put into Action	50
Sample Letters and Membership Forms	51-65

SECTION 1

Getting Started

OUTLINE FOR MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

I. KNOW THE PTA WAY

- A. Leadership Training
 - 1. Illinois PTA Road to Success Course
 - 2. District Packet Pick up Meeting, Membership Workshop (if offered)
- B. Resources
 - 1. Past membership chairman's files and procedure book
 - 2. Illinois PTA *Membership Marketing Guide*
 - 3. National PTA Membership Resource Materials
 - 4. Council, district, state membership chairmen
 - 5. PTA local unit Bylaws and standing rules
 - 6. *Illinois PTA Bulletin*
 - 7. Illinois PTA Web Site: www.illinoispta.org
 - 8. National PTA Web Site: www.pta.org
 - 9. State Membership Marketing Chairman's email and phone number

II. SET MEMBERSHIP GOALS

- A. Research past membership figures for your PTA.
- B. Obtain approximate number of families in your school.
- C. Obtain number of teachers and school staff.
- D. Determine **realistic** membership increase; work toward that aim.

III. CREATE YOUR ACTION PLAN — See Section Five for the Plan of Action Form

- A. Work with the president to form a creative outreach membership committee. Include the following: public relations, program, hospitality and room representative chairman. Discuss membership goals with the teacher representative and the administration. Call your first meeting to set your goals and formulate your plans.
- B. Review your membership roster and determine whom you need to reach. Remember that PTA is for everyone who wants to support our Mission and Objects/Purposes and wants to advocate for children. In addition to parents and school staff, reach out to grandparents; preschool parents; businesses; religious leaders; former PTA members, including past board members; school board members and parents-to-be.
- C. Review past action plans; determine their success. Continue doing what works, but always add new techniques. Social norms change and it is advantageous to try new methods to increase your membership
- D. Decide the best ways to reach potential members; i.e. flyers, emails, phone calls, school events/meetings and PTA meetings.
- E. Then, you need to create printed materials, an online presence and electronic presentations. You may want to create a short presentation explaining what PTA is and why people should join. Remember not to push people to volunteer. This may turn off many people who feel their lives are too busy already. Get them in the door first and then let them see how much fun it is.

- F. Remember to plan for the whole year. Your entire PTA board should always be thinking about recruiting new members. Who better to explain the benefits of the PTA than its leaders!
- G. Monitor your results. Track your membership numbers throughout the year. If you are falling short or not reaching a particular group, get your committee back together and change your plans. Remember that you can sign up members throughout the PTA year.
- H. Use incentives to build and maintain membership. However, please remember that PTA is for ALL children. A child's homeroom should not be punished because one parent did not join the PTA. An increase in membership should bring a reward for all the children in the school.

IV. MAINTAIN YOUR ACTION PLAN

- A. Collect dues and issue membership cards.
- B. Submit first dues payment to Illinois PTA State Office **by October 1**. This is the responsibility of the treasurer.
- C. Review and submit additional dues **monthly**.
- D. Update membership lists for treasurer and secretary on a regular basis.

V. SUMMARIZE YOUR MEMBERSHIP YEAR

- A. **Observe the designated deadline for PTA membership awards.** The treasurer remits additional dues to Illinois PTA office in Springfield BEFORE the final deadline date, to earn credit for current year membership awards. You may continue paying dues until June 25th for dues to count for the current fiscal year.
- B. Award Eligibility
 1. See **Membership Award Form** in the current Local Unit Packet or Illinois PTA website (www.illinois.pta) for list of awards and the requirements for each.
 2. Return Award Application by the deadline date to the Illinois PTA Membership Chairman c/o the Illinois PTA Office in Springfield.
 3. Check with your council, region, or district for other PTA membership awards which your PTA may earn.
- C. Meet with your committee and evaluate your membership campaign. Include the evaluation in your procedure book and share successes with the Illinois PTA Membership Chairman.

REMEMBER...

A PTA is linked to other PTAs and to a strong state and national association. While a PTA works to promote the education, health and well-being of children in a particular school, it also supports child advocacy throughout the country.



Now add to this information all the things your PTA has been, and will be doing, for the children and youth in your school.

You are now ready to register new members!

FIVE ELEMENTS TO A SUCCESSFUL MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN

Several elements of a successful project are identified in “*Problem Solving: A Five-Step Model*”, by Susan Sayers, one of the Keys to Community Involvement developed by Northwest Regional Laboratory in Portland, Oregon.

These elements are: continuous planning, group support, feeling of ownership of the project, adequate meeting time and on-going training. We have adapted these concepts to suit your membership project. Analyze your project with these concepts in mind. If one of these elements is missing, your campaign may not be as successful as you would like.

CONTINUOUS PLANNING:

Your original plan will include a goal, slogan, theme and activities. After implementation — stay flexible — a change in situation may necessitate a change in direction. New information permits more accurate planning as work progresses.

GROUP SUPPORT:

It is important to have reinforcement from others – you have more power to avoid the discouragement of feeling alone with a problem. You need an active, enthusiastic committee. Build group support by keeping all committee members informed about any successes or problems.

OWNERSHIP:

Allow your membership campaign to fit your PTA unit and community needs. Let them influence your project direction. Develop or adapt your own ideas and materials.

ADEQUATE COMMITTEE MEETING TIME:

Meetings are times when information is shared about everyone’s progress, successes and failures. Meetings provide a time to identify problems, track progress **and** coordinate efforts **resulting in** mutual support.

ON-GOING TRAINING:

You will need initial training on basic PTA information for your campaign workers and on-going training (learning while doing) to keep current. You can request leadership training from your district director or state board representative. You can request membership training from your council, district director, or the Illinois PTA membership chairman.

HINTS FOR MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMEN

A successful PTA membership campaign does not end with the registration of members. It is an ongoing task and must be reviewed to determine its effectiveness. The membership committee, led by its chairman, must continue to play an active role in ensuring a vital, enthusiastic and participating membership.

The following hints may help you achieve that goal:

Member Opinion Survey

- Find out why a member joined.
- Determine what part of the PTA's program, activities, etc. appealed to the member.
- Find out what changes they would like to see take place to strengthen or improve the association.
- Listen for negative comments; then take criticism back to the committee and make plans to correct, improve, **or** change with cooperation from the board.

Missing Members

- Develop a campaign to retrieve those who are no longer members.
- Let the member know they were missed. A phone call or personal contact is most effective.

Personal Interest

- Telephone to let members know of meetings, special events, etc. The committee, in cooperation with hospitality and room representatives, could form a telephone tree to accomplish this. Send emails to members informing them of upcoming meetings and events.
- Coordinate transportation for those who would like to attend a meeting but have no means of getting there.
 - Consider providing childcare for parents who don't have a sitter for their children during meetings.
- Answer questions that members have concerning the PTA, the school, or community.
- Make the member feel welcome and respected. **THEY ARE!**
- Spell the member's name correctly.

New Members

- Take a personal interest.
- Facilitate the introduction of new members at a meeting. Be hospitable.
- Greet at social functions. Be sure to make the person feel welcome. Work closely with hospitality and program chairman to accomplish this.

Utilizing Members

- Notify the president of members who have expressed an interest in serving/assisting the PTA. Encourage the president to appoint them to a committee.
- Develop means to stimulate member's interest in taking part. Inquire about their interests and talents to determine in what capacity they might be willing to volunteer.
- Consider developing a list/database of volunteer hours filled by PTA members utilizing the ***Illinois PTA Volunteer Guide***.

Fact Sheets

- Distribute a fact sheet about **YOUR PTA accomplishments**.
- Advertise meetings, events, projects, etc.
- List responsibilities of PTA members and volunteers.
- Make a list of PTA resources, programs, etc.
- Publish the number of volunteer hours.

CALENDAR

MAY - JUNE - JULY



- Obtain all materials from previous membership chairman; evaluate past action plans. If permitted, include PTA membership forms in the school registration packet sent to parents.
- Meet with members of membership committee.
- Set goals (strive for the 100% membership award – 1 for 1 membership) and be **enthusiastic and positive!**
- Adopt a theme for the coming year.
- Become knowledgeable about PTA and the benefits of PTA membership.
- Create your marketing action plan.
- Develop a membership flyer and ask to have it included in any summer mailings that the school is already sending to all families who have students registered at the school.
- Prepare for school registration. Coordinate with the school principal to set up a membership table at registration and other school events.

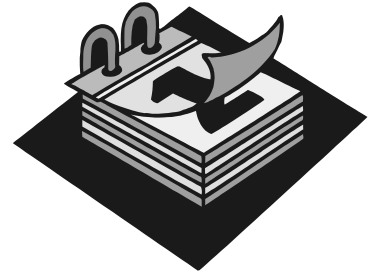
AUGUST

- Membership envelope with cards can be found in the Local Unit Packet (LUP). This packet was given to the president at LUP Orientation. Check for membership award deadlines!
- Promotional membership materials can be found in the August Local Unit Packet, on the PTA Web Sites (www.illinoispta.org or www.pta.org) or prepare your own.
- Ask Mayor to proclaim September/October PTA Membership Time.
- Prepare for school registration and membership sign-up. Coordinate with the school principal.
- Enroll members of the executive board at the first meeting. All officers and chairman must be members of the PTA.
- As needed, request additional membership cards from the state office using the Request for Additional Membership Cards found in the Local Unit Packet.
- Set up membership sign-up tables at school during registration.
- Attend Kindergarten Orientation to explain membership benefits to new families at the school and sign them up to join.
- Remind treasurer to send dues payment and list of members to state office monthly.

SEPTEMBER

- Set up membership sign-up tables at school. Take advantage of Open House at the school to sign up new members.
- Include an invitation to join PTA in your first newsletter or send home a special flyer.
- Request time to speak about membership at all school and PTA events.
- **Turn over all membership monies collected and names of members enrolled to the treasurer as soon as received.**
- Ask the treasurer to send initial dues payment to Illinois PTA Office **before October 1st.**
- As needed, request additional membership cards from the state office using the Request for Additional Membership Cards found in the Local Unit Packet.
- Provide copies of membership list to secretary and treasurer. Continually update so secretary and treasurer have accurate list of members at all meetings.
- Remind the treasurer to send dues payment and a list of members to state office monthly.

THE FIRST DUES PAYMENT NEEDS TO BE RECEIVED BY THE STATE PTA OFFICE BY OCTOBER 1ST IN ORDER TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR ANY MEMBERSHIP AWARDS.



OCTOBER

- Reach out to the community for members.
- Use a follow-up invitation, phone call, or “the personal touch” to ask those who haven’t joined the PTA to do so.
- **Remind treasurer to send dues payment and list of members to state office monthly.**

NOVEMBER

- Continue personal contact to increase membership.
- Use newsletters to remind parents, teachers and community to join PTA.
- **Remind treasurer to send dues payment and list of members to state office monthly.**

DECEMBER - JANUARY - FEBRUARY

- Evaluate recruitment progress. PTA membership generally increases by 18% after the first of the New Year – consider doing a secondary campaign to recruit those who have not yet joined.
- Check with the principal for names of new families. Personally contact them with an invitation to join the PTA.
- **Remind treasurer to send dues payment and list of members to state office monthly.**
- **Find out when Kindergarten Registration will be for your school district and put together information about your PTA to distribute to incoming families as they register new students at your school for the following year.**
- **Submit application for awards by the deadline date.**

MARCH

- Attend convention, membership workshop, report to board.
- **Remind treasurer to send dues payment and list of members to state office monthly.**

APRIL

- Evaluate activities of year and prepare written recommendation.
- Thank everyone who helped during the year.
- Alert parents and teachers of PTA’s achievements through newsletter.
- Prepare your procedure book, material for incoming chairman.
- **Remind treasurer to send dues payment and list of members to state office monthly.**

MAY - JUNE

- **Submit final membership list to state office by June 25th.**
- **Return unused cards (with Transmittal Form) and final dues payment by June 25th.**

FACTS FOR LOCAL PTA UNIT MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEES

1. A supply of membership cards is distributed to every local PTA unit. To obtain additional membership cards, your local PTA unit must have submitted dues for at least half of the original number of cards you received in your Membership envelope. Additional cards may be requested from the state office in one of three ways:
 - a) Send the completed *Request for Membership Cards* (found in the Local Unit Packet) to Illinois PTA, P.O.Box 907, Springfield, IL 62705
 - b) Send the completed *Request for Membership Cards* via e-mail (using the LUP disk) to ptamembsvs@ameritech.net; or
 - c) Fax the form to the state office at 217-528-9617.

DO NOT order from the National PTA office. That will only delay your request.

2. The state and national portion of the dues must be paid for every member.* See the Dues Reporting Form for correct amount. The local PTA determines the local PTA unit portion of dues.
3. Upon payment of dues, each person becomes a member of the local, State and National PTA. **Each person joining the PTA must be given a membership card. Individual memberships are encouraged.**
4. Membership cards should be numbered consecutively so that a record of each member will be available, if needed. When an official vote is taken, it may be necessary to poll members.
5. The membership chairman should make four (4) copies of the membership enrollment list. The following board members need a copy of the list: the secretary, the membership chairman (keeping it in the membership procedure book) and the treasurer. The fourth copy should be sent to the Illinois PTA Office. The membership chairman should receive a receipt for membership dues when this money is turned over to the treasurer. As additional dues are collected, the membership chairman shall make the additional names available to the secretary, treasurer and the state office.
6. Only those who have paid their dues for the current year have the privileges of discussion, making motions, voting, or holding office.
7. A Dues Reporting Form sent to the treasurer is to accompany the payment of dues. These Dues Notices are found in the Local Unit Packet and on the Illinois PTA Web Site www.illinoispta.org. The treasurer fills in the form with the necessary information and payment for each member enrolled. **First payment is due in the state office by OCTOBER 1** to be eligible for awards. Be sure that any memberships you receive after that date are sent to the state office on a monthly basis, accompanied by a Dues Notice and payment. Any memberships received in the state office after the award deadline will not be eligible for membership awards.
8. The records for national and state portions of membership dues should be kept separate from records of the general funds. **These are not considered income.**
9. Membership dues are the MAIN source of revenue for the Illinois PTA and the National PTA. **It is important that they be turned in on time and on a monthly basis.**
10. The *Illinois PTA Bulletin* is emailed to various members of your PTA. The *Bulletin* is for use by the unit's membership and is available at the Illinois PTA website (www.illinoispta.org).

FACTS FOR COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMEN

1. Councils can do so much to encourage PTA membership and are a line of communication. Make arrangements to attend unit meetings to pass on valuable membership information to each unit. Read all materials, such as the *Illinois PTA Bulletin* and *Our Children*, as well as the National PTA and Illinois PTA websites to be aware of current membership promotions.
2. Attend council meetings, district annual meeting, conferences, state workshops and convention.
3. Some councils conduct Schools of Information, which are planned events at which a variety of workshops about PTA are made available to member units. In addition, it would be helpful if local membership chairmen are invited to a membership meeting. At the meeting, you could:
 - a. Help each unit set a membership goal. Help work out ways to reach these goals.
 - b. Supply sample membership invitations, promotion ideas suitable to your community and membership themes that could be used.
 - c. Stress that the job of membership is a year round job. Memberships can be accepted at any time.
 - d. Invite the council publicity chairman to the meeting to give ideas on how the publicity chairman can assist with membership enrollment.
 - e. Study and discuss membership publications that would be helpful and various ways they can be used.
 - f. Stress the fact that membership is “**everyone’s responsibility.**” Cooperation with other committees is essential for successful enrollment.
 - g. Know what membership awards are offered by district, State and National PTA, and promote this to each unit chairman.
4. Keep a chart or record of each unit’s membership. Follow up with each unit. You might call the chairman when a PTA unit is close to increasing their membership.
5. If several schools wish to share a membership table at a shopping center. Provide PTA publications to display and have membership information available on all units.
6. Invite the mayor to proclaim September and/or October as the official citywide membership enrollment month/time.
7. Remind units that dues **should be sent** monthly to the state.
8. Let the unit membership chairmen know you are available to help them whenever they need assistance.
9. Obtain copies of all membership materials for a permanent council file.
10. Above all, show **your** enthusiasm. BE enthusiastic about membership and the PTA! Let others know. Thank everyone who helped you.

ABCs FOR MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMEN

Assess the needs of your membership, what they expect from the PTA, and their special interests and abilities.

Boast about the past accomplishments of your local unit and set new goals.

Communicate parent-teacher concerns by providing well-planned programs to understand the school at work.

Demonstrate knowledge of State and National dues and how they are applied by reading the materials directed to each membership chairman.

Encourage parents and teachers to work together on important issues.

Fathers are an important part of PTA; enlist their services in fields in which they have special competence.

Generate enthusiasm so that others will be inspired.

Help is at hand by seeking the assistance of a membership committee, principal, teacher representative, student representative, public relations chairman and room representatives' chairman.

Involve new members in activities.

Joining the PTA entitles a member to an all inclusive membership in the local, State and National PTA!

Kick off your **Membership Marketing Campaign** by using all forms of media for publicity.

List members as they join and keep an up-to-date roster, which is most important.

Membership is open throughout the year.

Newness of ideas by brainstorming gives membership a forward momentum.

Open house is an opportune time for recruiting members.

Projects keep people interested and involved.

Question your members about their concerns and where they feel PTA should be putting its emphasis.

Report on membership at each executive board and general meeting.

Share information with your members on all areas of child advocacy and parenting and the progress of any National and Illinois PTA activities which have an effect on children.

Target dates for your fall enrollment. Goals should be set.

Uphold and be prepared to explain the Mission and Objects/Purposes of the PTA.

Volunteers are ready to help. They just need to be asked.

Warning! **Dues must be paid to the Illinois PTA Office on a monthly basis.**

X number of membership cards are mailed to each local unit. Issue one for each member and return the unused cards to the state office by the June 25th deadline.

Your room representatives are often a new parent-teacher member's first experience in PTA work.

Zipping through the alphabet with membership hopefully has been a learning experience for you.

WHO CAN BE IN YOUR PTA?

Your PTA is part of the DECISION-MAKING TEAM for your school (Found on your PTA Charter and in the PTA Road to Success Course). This team includes your administrator/principal (who is a valuable member of the team), teachers (who are affected by the decisions of the team on a daily basis), and your PTA members (whose children are affected by the decisions of the team).

EVERYONE who cares about children and youth is a potential resource

You will want to enroll...

- parents
- teachers
- administrators
- school staff (secretaries, food staff, custodians, aides, etc.)
- past presidents (to vote, they must join each year)
- past members (to vote, they must join each year)
- students
- relatives of children in the school
- *Life Members**



These may not be so obvious...

- school administrative district office personnel
- central office personnel
- pupil service center personnel
- scout leaders/ Campfire leaders—at all levels local civic, community and conservation
- council leaders and board members
- Board of Education members

People living or working in your community...

- **All residents of the community**
- Elected officials
 - √ Local government officials (The Mayor’s proclamation may sell them.)
 - √ State representative and senators (The Governor’s proclamation may sell them.)
 - √ Congressional representatives and senators
 - √ Other government officials who serve or live in your community or school district
- Community business establishments, their owners and employees
- Service groups
 - √ Chamber of Commerce members in your community
 - √ Elks, Kiwanis, Lions Club,
 - √ Rotary Club - both members and leaders
 - √ Special-interest groups.
 - √ Local Park District staff
 - √ Community Agency staff (Mental Health/Health Centers)
- Education Organization members in your community
 - √ High School, College and City College staff who live in your community
 - √ Neighborhood public high school staff
 - √ Retired teachers
 - √ Local Library personnel

* A Life Membership does NOT make the recipient a voting member of the unit. It is an honorary award. He/She must rejoin each year.

REACHING OUT TO...

PARENTS

- **You** are an integral part of over 6.8 million member network - the largest child advocacy network in the United States — sharing a commitment to improving the lives of children and youth across America.
- **You** profit from the knowledge and expertise of PTA leaders at the council, district, state and national levels by obtaining on-site assistance and guidance in program planning.
- **You** are given opportunities to implement projects funded by the National PTA. Past projects, directly involving local PTA volunteers, have dealt with teenage alcohol use, health education, improving school food and nutrition programs, urban education and television violence.
- **You** develop your skills as a community leader and organizer through workshops conducted by the council, district, region, state and national PTA representatives.
- **You** influence local, council, district, state and national legislative issues affecting children such as tuition tax credits; child labor laws; health, including obesity prevention; and the school lunch/breakfast programs through information provided by the National PTA's Office of Governmental Relations in Washington DC.
- **You** receive practical, timely information on education and parenting through National PTA's award winning magazine *Our Children* (one free copy to the president) and the *Illinois PTA Bulletin* (emailed to the Illinois PTA network and posted on the Illinois PTA website). You have access to numerous Illinois PTA and National PTA publications and emails on subjects such as parenting, nutrition, alcohol/drug abuse, collective bargaining, health education, leadership and membership.
- **You** can attend State and National PTA conventions to take part in shaping PTA policies, programs and directives.
- **You** benefit from the reputation of a highly respected national association with more than 100 years of experience in child advocacy.
- **You** can develop a comprehensive communications network with your school parents. Parents may feel that their involvement is not needed or wanted if they are not kept informed about PTA activities and notified about meetings and school events. Through newsletters, bulletins, letters sent home with children and personal phone calls, parents know what is going on in the school. You may incorporate the following points in your written, electronic and verbal communications with parents:

Research has shown that academic achievement among students is higher in schools with active PTAs. When parents and school staff interact positively and regularly with each other on an individual and group basis, the enthusiasm and interest are transmitted to the children.

Parental involvement in the schools is needed more than ever before. There are two main reasons for this: a) primary responsibility for educational decisions has shifted from the federal level to state and local governments and b) funds for education have been severely cut back. Parents must work together to insure adequate funding for their schools. By joining with other parents and educators through the PTA, they gain a more powerful voice in the decision-making process.

PRINCIPALS

The school principal faces many complex problems. The principal is expected to be an educational leader and an administrator in charge of implementing directives from the school district and state and federal governments. Further, he is accountable for his actions to the school superintendent, the board of education, teachers, school support staff, students and their parents, citizens' groups, the general public and the news media. The PTA can gain the trust, support and membership of the principal and other school administrators by emphasizing that the PTA's involvement in the schools can help them do a more effective job.

- Assure the principal that the PTA is there to help create an atmosphere in which learning can take place. Encourage the principal to speak openly about his goals and concerns for the school children regarding curriculum, instruction, etc.
- Work with the principal in planning PTA programs that take advantage of the expertise of school staff and are of assistance to school staff e.g. after school tutoring, help with grading papers and other types of paperwork, an informational hotline.

TEACHERS

Many teachers are active, devoted members of the PTA. Other teachers are not convinced the PTA wants their participation or feel their efforts should be focused on associations concerned primarily with educators. But, in addition to being a large natural resource for increasing PTA membership, teachers are essential to the success of your PTA. Parent-teacher cooperation in the education of children is one of the most important reasons for the PTA's existence. Consider it your challenge to explain to teachers why it is important for them to join the PTA and the many ways in which they can benefit.

- Present teachers with PTA materials on subjects you feel would be of use to them, e.g. critical viewing skills, absenteeism and collective bargaining. Send a copy of each to the teacher's lounge.
- Ask for teacher's suggestions on how the PTA can best work with teachers to solve school-related problems they face. Perhaps teachers would want to hold a meeting to explain to parents how they can reinforce at home what students are learning in school and to answer their questions about the school curriculum.
- Appoint teachers to key leadership positions in the PTA, e.g. teacher representative. Encourage teachers to hold elected offices and to serve as committee chairmen.
- Make parents and other community members more aware of what is going on in the school.
- Recognize the importance of the teaching profession and sponsor special programs to give recognition to teachers. Consider giving a local unit ***Educator of the Year Award*** from your unit.
- Create support for teachers' efforts within the community.
- Encourage American Education Week participation and teacher appreciation during National PTA Teacher Appreciation Week.

NON-TRADITIONAL FAMILIES

Single parents are a rapidly growing population in America. At least one-fifth of our nation's youth live with only one parent due to separation, divorce, or death. Single parents are a significant group in almost every community. Your sensitivity to their special needs will help ensure that they become active members in your PTA.

Another important group is grandparents raising grandchildren. They are dealing with special situations in their lives and want to do the best for their grandchildren. Grandparents can offer special talents and wisdom, which can be an important asset to your PTA.

- Sponsor a special meeting for non-traditional families at the beginning of the year in addition to your regular PTA meeting. Invite a social worker, college professor, or a psychologist with expertise in non-traditional families to talk with them as a group about their unique problems.
- Form a non-traditional family task force, which meets regularly.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

Business-school partnerships are becoming increasingly important. More and more, schools are counting on large corporations and small companies to help pick up where funds for education have left off. In addition, many business leaders may have children attending your school.

- Ask local stores to display membership promotion posters in their windows.
- Write to various companies asking if they would donate ad space for membership promotion or insert flyers in their employee publications.
- Ask business to include “plugs” for PTA Membership Month in their print and broadcast advertisements or to let you set up a membership booth for a short period of time in an appropriate space.

MEDIA

The media can be very useful in promoting membership if you understand and respect their needs. Here are some tips for working with newspapers, radio and TV:

- Develop a mailing list of editors, reporters, radio and TV news assignment directors, and public affairs show producers who have been assigned to cover the schools in your area. Update the list periodically. Develop lists of information and note specifically to whom the information should be sent.
- Get to know your local media. Establish yourself as a reliable source of newsworthy information. When contacted by the media, be sure to know and meet their news deadlines. Communicate your willingness to help them do their job.
- Use public service announcements (PSAs) to communicate your PTA message. Radio and TV stations are required by law to donate a certain amount of time to non-profit organizations. PSAs can be used to promote membership or announce meetings and special events. Most stations like 10, 20 or 30-second spots.
- Mail or hand-deliver information to the news media in the form of typed, double-spaced press releases. Include the date, name and phone number of a contact person. Begin with the most important (who, what, where, when, why and how) and save the least important details for the end. Keep your release brief – one to two pages.

SENIOR CITIZENS

Senior citizens, another booming population in the United States, are proving to be a valuable resource in the schools. Older people possess a wealth of knowledge and skill, accumulated over many years and have plenty of free time to volunteer. By welcoming senior citizens to the PTA you will be providing creative outlets for talented individuals and receive a great deal in return.

- Ask your members who have older relatives living in the community to urge them to join the PTA. Invite students to do the same with their grandparents.
- Provide opportunities for senior citizens to share their experiences with your PTA. Many of them were once PTA members themselves.
- Plan a Senior Citizens' Day at which they can tour the school and talk with students about their past experiences.
- Post invitations to join the PTA and notices about meetings and activities in senior citizens' homes, places of worship and community centers. Address bulletins specifically to their attention.



WHEN SOMEONE SAYS “NO”

Following are some possible reasons for which individuals are reluctant to join your PTA unit. Used thoughtfully, they may convince a vacillator to join. But, take care to use them sparingly and in an earnest, friendly spirit. If they are used as “ammunition” to “shoot down” arguments, you may wind up scoring points in logic, but alienating the person you are trying to enlist!

NO TIME FOR PTA!

“I can understand that. However, it is your interest that counts. If you are unable to support the PTA with time, would you at least consider giving your financial support **as a member**, so that all the people working in the PTA know that you, too, are supporting the purpose of the PTA. You will have the satisfaction of knowing your money is helping as the PTA works on many programs/projects which benefit our children and youth.”

BUT I DON'T HAVE ANY CHILDREN IN SCHOOL!

“You don’t have to have children in school to belong to the PTA. **Everyone** who cares about children can join our association!! As supporters of our schools, it is important that we have a voice in the decision-making process of our schools. You can have that voice through the PTA. Every child needs you!”

I DON'T AGREE WITH A LOT OF THINGS THAT THE PTA DOES!

“Of course not. The only way to avoid disagreement here and there would be to adopt a “do-nothing” policy. You wouldn’t want that kind of association. But, in any case, it’s easy for you to join and help to change the direction of the association, as soon as you understand the whole picture.”

YOUR ASSOCIATION DOESN'T REALLY DO ANYTHING!

“I can’t speak for what may have happened in previous years, but let me bring you up to date on what we are doing now. (Of course, the person recruiting must be knowledgeable about the PTA!) As you see, we are a very active group, doing many things, which benefit all our children. We need time, funds and good will from people like you to keep it up!”

I CAN'T HELP NOW - MAYBE LATER!

“Our children can’t wait. Problems exist now and they will become worse if we “wait for the perfect time to become involved.” We will all lose if we put off until later, what we know must be done today!”

I JUST CAN'T JOIN ANOTHER ASSOCIATION! I BELONG TO TOO MANY ALREADY!

“I know. There are so many good associations to belong to and we all have to make choices. But I think the PTA is very special. Let me tell you a little about what we are doing. I find it helps to have information when I’m making a choice... (Tell them about the PTA). Remember, many associations fight a problem AFTER it has happened. PTA works to prevent problems! We really need people like you in the PTA.”

SECTION 2

Recruiting Methods

METHODS FOUND TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN RECRUITING PTA MEMBERS

Being able to explain to potential members what your PTA has accomplished for the children and community is critical!

THINK POSITIVELY

INVITATIONAL LETTERS

- Send invitational letters with an enrollment form attached. Also include a list of your local unit accomplishments, Illinois PTA trifolds/handouts and National PTA informational trifolds/handouts (obtain from the National PTA). PTA publications may be copied as long as there is no copyright indicator on the publication.
Suggestion: circle in red, a date on a calendar month. On that date, state, "Please take a minute and send your dues by the Red Letter Day."
- It is helpful if the principal, as well as the membership chairman and president, sign the invitational letter.

PERSONAL CONTACT

Learn the background and facts about PTA and promote personal contact with potential members. Tell potential members what your local unit has accomplished. JUST ASK!

TELEPHONE CALLS/EMAILS

After your initial push for members, take a look at those persons who have not joined (especially parents and staff), and call or email them. They may just need a reminder to join.

Check with the administration that these phone calls or emails to parents are appropriate.

FLYERS

Flyers with membership information and an application can be effective providing the pieces get home with the children.

BLOCK PARENT PLAN

A parent on each block is asked to recruit members. If lists cannot be obtained through the school office, this method could also be used to obtain names and addresses of the parents. Some principals will allow children to address envelopes to their parents as an alternative to giving an address list to the PTA.

KNOW YOUR PTA

INVOLVE THE PARENTS

- Parents are the key to membership; they are the majority of all PTA members nationwide. This has proven successful in opening the door to interest in the PTA and subsequent membership increase. If parents understand the Mission of PTA and are part of its process, they will be more enthusiastic about joining, volunteering and recruiting.

BE ENTHUSIASTIC AND FRIENDLY

WELCOME HOSTESS/COMMITTEE

- An individual or a committee may call on new families to offer help, information on school/community, etc. The PTA could develop a “Welcome” kit for new families.
- Arrange for a board member to be present at the door to welcome everyone to PTA meetings and school events. Have them wear a badge that says PTA.

BACK TO SCHOOL SOCIAL

Could be used at the beginning of the school term as a “get acquainted evening” for parents and/or introduction to teachers. Also schedule a short business meeting, announcing the year’s goals and programs. If not done previously, this would be a good time to have the budget and programs adopted. Set up a membership sign up table.

KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION

Plan the meeting in conjunction with the Parent Education chairman. Invite kindergarten mothers and fathers and ask the kindergarten teacher(s) to be in attendance. You could also partner with the school and make a presentation at their kindergarten orientation they hold for new families.

OPEN HOUSE AT SCHOOL

Cooperate with the principal and teachers - serve refreshments. Have a membership table at the event to sign people up and answer any questions you might have.

REGISTRATION DAY/OTHER SCHOOL EVENTS

Have a booth/table set up to take memberships. Have a bowl of candy, or other give away, available to draw their attention to the table.

KEEP SMILING

After you have enrolled members, don’t forget them.
Work with your officers and chairmen to plan interesting meetings and enthusiastic programs.
Create a spirit of friendliness.

***Show your members that they are important and necessary
for the success of the PTA association!***

MEMBERSHIP IDEAS

Think about incentives that can be offered to PTA members. **However, think about ALL children when planning children's events.**

- Give a free subscription to *Our Children* drawing a name from all members who have joined.
- Offer babysitting services at a free or reduced rate to those attending your meetings. Girl Scouts like to perform this duty as a way to assist them in earning a badge and high school students may be able to earn Service Learning time.
- As members join, have them sign a "birthday sheet". Hand-deliver or mail each one a card for a special "Happy Birthday from PTA".
- Always e-subscribe to the *Illinois PTA Bulletin* for all members of your executive board and let your general membership know they, too, may e-subscribe — **a member benefit.**
- Choose a door prize recipient from among those who show their membership card at each meeting.
- Give an ***Illinois PTA Honorary Life Membership Award*** to a deserving member of your unit.
- Grandparents Award - for the grandparent most actively involved in the PTA.
- Have an exercise class for members only.
- Have a members-only female basketball game, with males as cheerleaders.
- Have a craft fair/flea market sponsored by PTA - only members may exhibit and sell their wares.
- Sponsor a skating party and let parents in free if they show their membership cards.
- Have a "parents' day out." Once a month PTA members may leave children for a free afternoon - staffed by other members on a volunteer rotation basis. Discuss and determine parameters for the number of children. Make safety a priority.
- Give a discount at the PTA's Book Fair for any parent that shows a membership card.

PTA PROJECTS AND IDEAS

- Keep members involved. Mail a letter to all members (following the major enrollment) addressed to them by name. Welcome them to the _____ PTA, reminding them of the next meeting. Put in a survey sheet asking what hours they could assist the PTA, their area of interest, or expertise, etc. Send return envelopes, they can provide the stamp.
- Invite kindergarten parents to assist in class with teachers' permission and guidance.
- Hold a new parents' get-together coffee for parents of kindergarten and first graders to deal with first-day trauma.
- Display copies of *Our Children* and *Illinois PTA Bulletin*; include subscription blanks for use by the members. Make sure your Principal received the *Illinois PTA Bulletin* electronically.
- Sponsor an "Open House" before school opens in the fall to visit classrooms, meet teachers, and join the PTA. **Coordinate this event with the administration.**
- Many PTAs serve a teachers' luncheon sometime during the school year. This is an opportunity to give some recognition to the teacher representative on your executive board. Thank, by name, other teachers who have served the PTA in any way beyond the call of duty!
- Have students bring real or "adopted" grandparents to school for lunch, a program or a tour of the building on "Grandparents' Day."
- Present parenting programs from state and national and invite the non-PTA schools in your area. **This gesture may promote an interest in PTA and present a possibility for the formation of a new unit.**
- Establish a "Grandparent" program. Retired people can share their skills — woodworking, weaving, crocheting, etc. - through a series of classes/sessions.
- **Set up a PTA table/booth at community events to promote membership and interest in the PTA.**
- Arrange for a PTA float if your community has a seasonal parade.
- Sponsor a spelling bee at one of your general membership meetings.
- Provide ways for students to assist the PTA with activities in order to earn Service Learning hours.
- Business Leaders Day — invite those businesses that have joined to come for special recognition and an opportunity to see inside the school.
- Give an award to the media in your community that publishes news about your PTA regularly.

Elementary School ideas that have worked!

- Room representative chairman called and personally invited parents to join — membership up 10%.
- Used “Burma Shave” type posters. Membership up 66%. Don’t know these ads. Access the web site <http://burma-shave.org>. Click on Jingles//Year/Topic. These ads were most effective and a lot of fun. Adapt for PTA.
- 1. Sent invitation letter (bilingual if necessary) in envelopes to join PTA;
2. If no response, second letter was sent;
3. Personal contacts made with those who had not responded — membership up 100%.
- Held a doughnut party. Sent out doughnut invitations - Membership up 25%!
- Made personal contact by telephone. **Tell potential members what your local PTA unit has accomplished. JUST ASK!** Membership up 51%!!
- Membership table set up at school registration. Membership up 51%!!
- Sponsor an event to kick off PTA membership campaign — fun day, assembly, etc. Membership up 15%.
- Developed different posters and slogans for different learning modules. Adapt your modules to what’s “hot” with kids now. Below are examples.
 - √ Primary group saw characters from “Sesame Street.”
 - √ The intermediate module enjoyed “Peanuts” people.
 - √ The advanced group was treated to “Star Wars” characters.

Students enjoyed seeing the characters on the posters inviting them to join the PTA. Membership up 44%!

- Include membership invitation and form in school registration materials.
- Personally speak with each school staff member and ask them to support PTA by becoming a member.
- Hold a “Welcome Event” for the kindergarten parents.
- Greet new parents as they tour the school and invite them to join PTA.

Send out a follow up letter to families that have not joined, in January – try using the theme: “Resolve to be Involved”.

- Invite the Dads to have breakfast with their child (ren) before school starts. What a great way to start the day. **JUST ASK the Dads!**
 - Plan an event inviting Grandparents or significant Seniors to join the children for time together. Just ask the Grandparents!

Membership Aids for Junior/Middle and Senior High Schools

“What can we do to interest more parents in joining and attending our middle school, junior, or senior high school PTA?”

In today’s world, there is a need for young people and adults to understand and communicate with each other, and to work together for a common cause. PTA is as important as ever in middle/junior high and high schools. PTAs in secondary schools often include and involve students in the association - thus, PTSA (Parent-Teacher-Student Association).

If your PTSA offers outstanding programming; if it undertakes meaningful projects; if it gives an opportunity for students to take part; you have the beginning of an active unit. It then is up to the membership chairman to get the members who sustain the unit. That is a job, which requires energy and time — as do all projects concerning young people.

Try some of the following successful suggestions:

1. Have meetings in the evening when all parents, teachers and students can attend.
2. Include fathers, mothers, students and an administrator on the membership committee.
3. Mail notices of the meetings to the homes of students. Many students resent acting as courier, particularly if they did so in grade school. Since the school cannot give the PTA names and address, the PTA could stuff and stamp the envelopes, allowing the school to address them.
4. Ask the art department to assist you in constructing posters and displays to be placed in prominent places in the school during fall registration.
5. When the first notice is mailed out, let it be accompanied by a letter of invitation signed by the principal, student body president, PTSA president, as well as the membership chairman. Let people know you are united in your concern and prepared to work together.
6. Put handwritten notices in the mailboxes at school for each teacher. Let them know you are grateful for their continuing support of PTSA.
7. As a follow-up notice to parents that did not join at your first invitation, send a reminder note or make a phone call — **JUST ASK**.
8. Be generous in expressing appreciation to those who assist with the membership enrollment and recognize all new members at each meeting of your PTSA.
9. Perhaps you could use the school mascot, if you have one, in promotional activities.

PUT AN "S" IN YOUR PTA

Student memberships benefit both young people and the adults. These benefits are one reason why students join PTA and why parents and teachers should encourage students to become active members of the association.

What are the benefits?

- The opportunity to hear and understand viewpoints from two different age groups.
- If students are members, they may readily express what they feel are the needs of the school and community. Students are certainly essential and involved members of the school system. For this reason, they may reveal needs and problems in the school, which previously have been overlooked. At the same time, the youth may be able to suggest possible solutions to these problems.
- PTSA may also serve to help young people develop their leadership skills. The association can entrust students with responsibilities, which may later result in the students being reliable and dependable adult citizens.
- Public relations improve because the entire community takes notice when young people become involved in working on their own problems and the needs of their school and community.
- Membership is frequently increased. This happens not only because students join, but, because more parents are willing to take an ACTIVE part when their young people are interested and involved.

Additional Suggestions regarding students:

- Some PTAs use a contest wherein a membership increase will entitle the student body to a special activity.
- Sell memberships to students and give them a voice and voting privileges. Students are usually charged only state and national dues.
- Have students serve as officers in your association.
- Have students serve as membership assistants.

Working With Youth Through the High School PTSA

Make a special effort to enroll youth in your high school PTSA. Through participation in the PTSA men, women, and youth bring the power of shared thinking and purposeful action to bear on education, drug abuse, environmental deterioration, human relations, poverty, student unrest, and any other problems that affect the community's children and youth.

Our youths' challenge must not go unanswered. Let us challenge them to join us and share with us the burdens, responsibilities and satisfaction of upholding the values of responsible freedom.

The purpose of the PTSA is to get things done. Identify problems in the school by meeting with the students directly involved. The important thing is to begin working with youth.

Examples of service projects are: orientation programs for new students, painting and cleanup of school and community facilities, citizenship award programs, dinners and receptions for new teachers, canned food drives, library projects, health programs, safety programs, motorcycle safety and statistics.



PTSA MEMBERSHIP IDEAS

- ⇒ Use the energy and enthusiasm of students as full and equal members to recruit other students to membership. If involved and given responsibilities, they will become strong supporters and salespersons.
- ⇒ Hold an orientation for parents and students who will be going to junior high or middle school. Send a PTA invitation.
- ⇒ Keep dues for students at a base rate.
- ⇒ In PTAs, include signature of student body president or PTSA student representative on flyers and invitations.
- ⇒ Mail notices home from junior and senior high schools PTAs/PTSAs.
- ⇒ Sponsor science and math fairs — bridge-building contests. Get support from local businesses — not just money, but use of resources, building continuing relationships.
- ⇒ Sponsor several academic teams and award those students who achieve. How about an Academic Excellence Award? Membership cards give admittance to competition.
- ⇒ Many PTAs and PTSAs sponsor non-alcoholic parties after prom and graduation. Those with PTA membership cards will get their names in a pot for a drawing during the dance or party.
- ⇒ Plan a special focus week on the vocal and instrumental students and instructors. Sponsor a concern with a big PTA membership night.
- ⇒ Sponsor a college night for students and their parents.
- ⇒ PTA/PTSA board prepares a resource book for students to inform them of job opportunities, volunteer possibilities and student resources.
- ⇒ Sponsor a financial aid workshop for parents and students.
- ⇒ Involve students on planning committees for PTSA projects. Allow them to exercise leadership ability.
- ⇒ Promote Reflections in high schools. Have an awareness meeting for art teachers early in the year.
- ⇒ Hold a poster or slogan contest for students with PTA membership as a theme.
- ⇒ Plan a contest in cooperation with the teachers at the end of the school year for next August or September, if possible.
- ⇒ Have essay contests sponsored by PTA with 3 levels — elementary, junior high/middle and high school.
- ⇒ Allow discounts at athletic events to those who have PTA membership cards. Have PTA pay the difference so there's no revenue loss for the athletic event.
- ⇒ Set up booths at sporting, music events and other community activities.
- ⇒ Sell concessions at ball games, with parents and teachers as volunteers.
- ⇒ Ask permission to set up membership tables during "adult education classes."
- ⇒ Hold junior/middle school sponsored craft show on a Saturday. 100% participation from teachers is not unusual.
- ⇒ A Speaker's Bureau may be composed of three students or parents or a combination. Have them well trained to go to civic organizations and businesses talking about public education and PTA.
- ⇒ Involve students in Teacher Appreciation Week - let the students think of different methods of tribute.
- ⇒ Send Thank You Grams to students who join PTSA.
- ⇒ Build a system in a high school PTA to monitor violence on television — perhaps tying it in with crime in the local community.
- ⇒ Start a community service program.

SECTION 3

Facts

PTA - WE'RE NUMBER ONE!!

A PUBLIC RELATIONS FACT SHEET

DID YOU KNOW...

- √ The PTA is the largest volunteer association in the United States devoted solely to the welfare of children.
- √ Your voice is heard in Springfield through the Illinois PTA Legislation Chairman who spends many volunteer hours talking with legislators, compiling reports and informing PTA members of legislation pertaining to children.
- √ The PTA's juvenile protection projects include working with state agencies on problems of child abuse, foster children and juveniles in the court.
- √ The PTA's safety projects include bicycle safety, playground equipment, school crossings, school buses and teenage drivers.
- √ The Illinois PTA's Scholarship program provides scholarships each year to qualified students.
- √ The PTA's activity in health issues include - comprehensive health, tobacco including second hand smoke and smokeless tobacco, food allergies, diet disorders/obesity, steroids, ingredient labeling, alcohol and drugs, immunizations, HIV/AIDS, fluoride in water, child nutrition programs and others.
- √ The PTA's Cultural Arts Program has given thousands of children a better understanding of art through the Reflections Program, musicals, trips to art museums, concerts and art volunteers in the classroom programs.
- √ The PTA offers training courses free of charge to its members. These courses provide information about PTA and how it best functions. The PTA offers self-improvement training, which enables members to function well as leaders in PTA and other community activities as well.
- √ National PTA initiative to include parent/family engagement at the Federal level began with a component in the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB), based on the National PTA Standards that addressed parent involvement in the schools. The Illinois PTA joined the National PTA to help with the passage of *The Goals 2000: Educate America Act*, with the inclusion of the eighth goal of parent participation in the schools.
- √ The Illinois PTA cooperates with more than 40 agencies to improve the quality of life for children. (Agencies such as: Advisory Committee on Education; Alliance for Exceptional Children; Department of Children and Family Services, etc.)
- √ The PTA provides publications for all PTA work and information pertaining to child growth and development.
- √ The PTA publishes the *Illinois PTA Bulletin* electronically several times yearly and keeps members informed of PTA projects and action.
- √ The PTA maintains a good working relationship with all groups of public school personnel.

PTA vs. Other Parent Groups Fact Sheet

PTA Membership offers us many advantages over other parent groups. Any PTA may take advantage of as many of the following benefits as it chooses.

PTA

Being a part of the National PTA, over six million members in fifty states, the District of Columbia, Europe, the Pacific Congress and Puerto Rico. Begun in 1897, it is now the largest child advocacy volunteer association in the world. As a part of the National PTA since 1900, PTA membership in Illinois is over 140,000.

An individual PTA member may take his concern to the local PTA; the local PTA can take its concern to the council; the council to the district; the district to the region (if one exists) or the state (region to the state); the state to the National PTA. **Networking in Action!**

Units are immediately covered by Illinois PTA group non-profit, tax deductible and tax exemption status, under the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Rules and Regulations, 501(c)(3) determinations.

Illinois PTA Sales Tax Exemption, granted by the State of Illinois Department of Revenue, covers units.

Low cost insurance is available to PTA units; Group and Special Event Liability, Bonding and Theft.

Legislative committees at the state and national level are working to promote laws that benefit children.

Governed by the membership, which follows PTA bylaws, thereby recognizing the importance of elected officers and public meetings.

Leadership training is provided at national, state, region, district, council and local unit levels.

Annual Convention for both the state and national levels are held to share ideas and govern the association.

Illinois PTA sponsors many conferences throughout the state on timely subjects and concerns

OTHER PARENT GROUPS

With state or national affiliation, there are limited resources or networking available.

No platform to address concerns other than as an individual.

Individual groups must attain IRS status on their own at a cost of \$150 to \$350, plus legal fees.

Exemption must be obtained individually.

Insurance must be obtained individually, often at a higher cost.

No legislative office or contacts.

Groups may lack structure or definition of purpose.

Leadership training must be self-generated.

Most do not conduct state or national conventions.

Groups plan meetings on local issues.

PTA

Trained volunteers are available to assist with programs, problem solving, resources, etc. Free workshops and speakers are available to local units and councils.

PTA has representation on various state advisory boards and councils, such as the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois Curriculum Council and the Illinois Department of Public Health.

The following publications are free to PTAs: *Our Children; Illinois PTA Bulletin*. Free state and national mailings/emails dealing with PTA, education, legislation and updates. "How To's" on leadership, conducting meetings, record keeping, presenting programs, etc. (Some publications are available in Spanish at no or low cost.)

Students receive recognition of their talents in the cultural arts, through the National PTA Reflections Program.

Illinois PTA Scholarships are awarded yearly, to two high school students in each PTA Field Service Area in Illinois. Over \$2,600,000 has been awarded to students since the inception of this program.

Recognition of teachers through the Illinois PTA "Local Unit Educator of the Year" Award.

Recognition of educators through the National PTA Phoebe Apperson Hearst Educator of the Year Award.

Awards to honor PTA volunteers who have given outstanding service on behalf of all children: National and Illinois PTA Honorary Life Membership, Illinois PTA Book of Recognition, "T.H.A.N.K.S." Award, Distinguished Service Scrolls.

National PTA awards and grants to local PTA units for projects dealing with AIDS, Drug Education, etc.

OTHER PARENT GROUPS

No organized outside resources.

No representation.

No free publications or mailings.

Reflections Program is not available to students of Non-PTA schools.

No organized scholarship or grant programs.

Available only to Illinois PTAs.

Available only to PTAs.

State or national level recognition programs not available.

Available only to PTAs.

DO YOU WONDER HOW YOUR PTA DUES ARE USED?

HOW WE STRETCH YOUR DUES

What do you get from PTA? Are you getting your money's worth? Are your dues sent to the state office used wisely and efficiently?

We all know that costs have risen in the past few years. Stationery and postage are two examples of the problem of high costs. There are many more. The State PTA's budget is made-up from the membership dues. This is the main source of revenue we have as a non-profit association. Great care is used in determining how the money is spent to help in providing services in the areas of health, safety, parent education, legislation and the quality of education for all children and youth.

As we work together for children and youth, the Illinois PTA:

1. Equips and maintains a state office. Facilities are provided for duplicating and assembling of the annual Local Unit Packet and the Mid Year Packet, keeping membership records, duplicating and mailing letters and special materials of the state board of managers, distributing publications, preparing materials for special projects and leadership training, answering all letters, sending orders and keeping records of the Illinois PTA Scholarship Program. In addition, convention packets and materials are prepared at the state office. Many other services are required from time to time. If you are traveling to or through Springfield, stop and visit the office. This is **your** office - everyone is welcome.
2. Employs an Executive Director whose knowledge of PTA is valuable and very helpful. She is aided by clerical staff to service the Illinois PTA at all times.
3. Produces the *Illinois PTA Bulletin* - keeping the line of communication open between the state branch and the local units and councils.
4. Offers **free*** leadership training study courses and workshops as follows:
 - Study Courses:**
 - PTA Road to Success Course
 - Money Matters Course
 - Council Course
 - President's Course
 - Workshops:**
 - ABCs of PTA Finance
 - PTA and the Law
 - Advocacy 101
 - Nominating Committee
 - Building Successful Partnerships

Leaders are provided through your PTA District for these courses.

*If workshop leaders are from outside the PTA District, there may be a nominal charge for mileage.

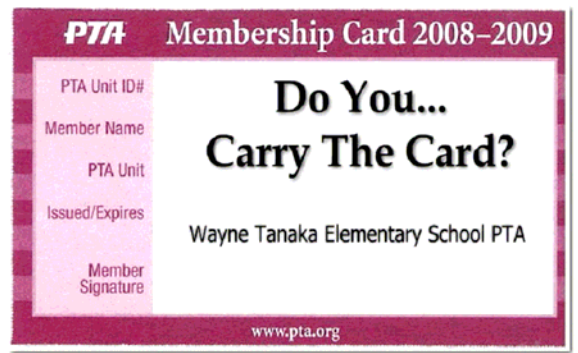
5. Administers the Illinois PTA Scholarship program.

6. Coordinates the National PTA Reflections Arts Program, providing judging at the state level, an awards ceremony at the Illinois PTA Convention and a traveling exhibit of the students' work.
7. Plans the Illinois PTA Convention and assumes financial responsibility for convention expenses not covered by registration fees.
8. Holds an annual meeting in each district.
9. Offers state conferences in different areas of PTA work each year. Each member unit and council are notified and invited.
10. Lobbies for legislation in Springfield and sends out pertinent legislative information affecting children and youth the year round to units and councils.
11. Receives dedicated services from its **volunteer** state board members, who are reimbursed only for actual expenses involved in attending state board meetings and annual state convention.
12. Provides, through its state chairmen, training in interest areas such as parent education.
13. Provides field service through the district director, field service area representatives, or the Vice President of Field Operations. The primary purposes of field service are to do public relations work, present basic PTA information to local PTAs and form new local units.
14. Cooperates with other agencies and brings back valuable information from these meetings which is passed on to local units and councils. (For example: American Cancer Society; Department of Mental Health; Illinois State Board of Education; Illinois Commission on Children; Illinois Department of Corrections; National Foundation - March of Dimes.)
15. Prints publications and duplicates information in special areas when needed.

Please Join
the PTA



HOW IMPORTANT AM I?



WITH ME:

- You will be admitted to all PTA/PTSA meetings.
- You are eligible to hold office in PTA/PTSA.
- You can vote at local, state and national meetings.
- You will have informed and trained leadership.
- You have a stake in your child's future.
- You have a unified voice influencing public action.
- You can work for the education and welfare of ALL children and youth.
- You will receive information on the most recent pending legislation.
- You will determine the direction taken by your local PTA unit, Illinois PTA and the National PTA.

WITHOUT ME:

- You may attend meetings only as a spectator without a vote.
- Your voice will not be heard at State and National PTA conventions.
- You will not be recognized as a member of a national association.
- You will not receive publications, such as the National PTA magazine, *"Our Children."*
- You will not be invited to conferences and workshops.
- You will not be able to take advantage of study courses.
- You will not be able to exchange information throughout the State and National PTA.
- You will not have the benefit of others' experience in meeting and solving problems.
- You will not have representatives from the State and National PTA.
- You will not have strength in numbers.

INVEST IN ME – FOR I AM VALUABLE TO YOU!!!

SECTION 4

Resources for Marketing Membership

MEMBERSHIP...PUBLICITY

The media can be very useful in promoting membership, if you understand and respect their needs. By working with your publicity chairman you can increase community awareness as well as establish your PTA as a reliable source of newsworthy information. If your PTA is well known in your community, then it is a lot easier to recruit new members. With good name recognition, people in your community will know what the PTA has accomplished and how much fun you have doing it. Here are some tips to get started with publicity.



- Know to whom you should send what kinds of information. Develop a mailing list of editors, reporters, radio and TV news assignment directors, and public affairs show producers who have been assigned to cover the schools in your area.
- You not only need to know who to send information to but you must know what deadlines are. Establish a list of all deadlines for each media resource. You also need to learn what topics interest the reporters. Remember, they are trying to sell newspapers or draw viewers.
- Don't just focus on future fund raising events. You want to communicate all aspects of the PTA mission. When working with reporters, always remember:

Be Honest	Be Brief
Be Available	Be Timely
Be Fair	Be Flexible
Be Objective	Be Positive
Be Informed	Be Professional

- One of the most read parts of a newspaper is the Letters to the Editor (Op-Eds). One way to get name recognition is to write letters to the editor. Pick a topic that is relevant to your community and is an issue where the national or state has an established position or your local PTA has voted to take a position on an issue. You can also just write an op-ed about the value of PTA.
- Use public service announcements (PSAs) to communicate your PTA message. Radio and TV stations are required by law to donate a certain amount of free airtime to non-profit organization. PSAs can be used to promote membership or announce meetings or special events. Most stations like 10, 20, or 30-second spots.
- Contact your educational TV channel and inquire about time available to present PTA item. During their programming, many stations will give up 30 minutes of airtime each month.
- Contact the news media to find out the best way to deliver materials and in what format. Include the date, name and phone number of the contact. Begin with the most important information (who, what, when, where, why and how) and save the least important details for the end. Keep your releases brief - one or two pages.

- When you submit an article to the news media promoting the idea that PTA is for everyone, be sure to include a person or place where memberships can be obtained.
- Put an ad in your local newspaper, the high school and junior high school newspapers and your school's newsletter promoting PTA.
- Call businesses with marquees for possible free publicity, especially during the initial Membership Month campaign.

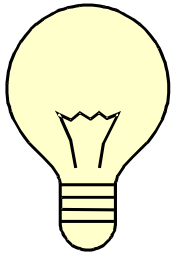
Other marketing ideas include:

- Have a PTA booth/table at your county and state fairs.
- Arrange for a PTA float if your community has a seasonal parade.
- Business Leaders Day: Invite those business leaders who have joined PTA to come for a special recognition and an opportunity to see inside the school. They have a stake in education. Coordinate this event with the administration.

Additional information that may be useful to the publicity chairman throughout the year.

- Get to know your local media. Establish yourself as a reliable source of newsworthy information. When they call, be sure you meet their deadlines. Communicate your willingness to help them do their job.
- Set up a database containing the names, addresses, phone and fax numbers, and email addresses for the media in your area.
- Be honest. Though it is your responsibility to present the PTA in a positive light, don't exaggerate your accomplishments or try to cover up errors. They will sense this and possibly never call you again.
- Try to develop an awareness of what is and what isn't news. Don't deluge the media with notices of every spaghetti dinner or pancake breakfast. These events can be lists in the "Community Calendar", but they usually don't merit TV coverage or an entire article. Do, however, contact the media with stories related to your PTA's efforts to combat student absenteeism which resulted in an increase of 10% high school attendance this year, or your meetings to discuss ways to implement a sex education curriculum in your school.
- Develop a feel for the kinds of issues discussed on radio and TV talk shows. Think realistically before approaching them with a spokesman. Don't be disappointed if all your ideas aren't used. Many other groups are vying for media exposure.

**IT IS VERY IMPORTANT AS MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN THAT
YOUR PUBLICITY CHAIRMAN IS PART OF YOUR COMMITTEE.
BE SURE TO SHARE THIS INFORMATION.**



Ideas to Put Into Action and Tips for Strengthening PTA Unit Relationships

A strong PTA unit is the result of sincere effort on the part of its leadership. Creative problem solving and clear communication are keys in this effort.

Following are tips to foster creativity, enhance communication, and ultimately strengthen the PTA network.

Tips for Membership:

- Survey your members regularly to determine their needs, what attracts them to your PTA and what will motivate them to use your resources and services.
- Publish a peer-networking directory and include vital information about unit leaders.
- Remind members of available services. Feature a “service of the month” in your newsletter.
- Create a buddy program in which active members are paired with new members or with members that may be struggling.
- Justify the price of your membership dues. Remind members of the benefits provided to them.
- As unit members are recognized in their local press, encourage them to mention their affiliation with your PTA so that you can benefit from free publicity.
- Offer members who regularly attend your activities a discount on admission to a PTA event, i.e., skating party, fun fair etc.
- Follow through on commitments made to the leadership to maintain a high level of credibility.

Tips for Communication:

- Include other area PTAs on your mailing lists. This will increase information exchange and peer networking exchange.
- Personalize correspondence with the members’ name, rather than “Dear Member.” Personalized letters are more likely to be read.
- Feature a membership benefit or service in each newsletter or publication.
- Let readers become involved in the newsletter or publication. Encourage letters to the editor and use question-and-answer columns and fax-back forms.
- As materials, forms and manuals are updated, provide leadership with the revised versions.
- Although technology is great, remember that not everyone has it. It may still be necessary to follow up faxes or e-mail with the traditional phone call or mail.
- Consider using postcards. Short messages are more likely to be read and using postcards reduces your stationery, printing and postage costs.
- To save time when responding to requests, use 3-inch by 4-inch cards bearing the name, address and logo of your PTA along with a greeting such as “Compliments of...”

KEEP MEMBERS FROM BECOMING DROPOUTS

One of the most common reasons members leave a PTA is that their children no longer attend school. **How do you keep former members interested when they no longer have a personal vested interest in the school?** Remember that the definition of member includes many categories. (See page 14)

First, **look at the Objects/Purposes of PTA.** Review the programs and projects that PTAs can sponsor. Although most PTAs are organized in schools, the purpose of PTA is not to serve only the needs of one particular school.

Evaluate your PTA's activities and programs. If, for instance, the only projects your PTA sponsors are fund-raisers to buy equipment and other items for the school, then members have no reason to continue their support of your PTA.

For example, you might sponsor a community-wide drug and alcohol awareness program, a cultural festival, or a community forum where educational issues could be discussed. Your PTA's activities and programs would continue to affect the lives of the entire community.

You must **show each member or former member what benefits they'll gain** from staying in your PTA. Do this the minute a new member joins and make this an ongoing activity. If people are reminded of what they are getting for their support, they are less likely to end their membership. Be sure your membership materials include statements about the benefits of membership and the achievements of your PTA.

Inform people about the important accomplishments of local and state PTAs as well as the National PTA. Remember to point out that the PTA is a not-for-profit association and that contributions are tax deductible. Explain how their support will make it possible for PTA volunteers to continue to work for a better public school system, help improve children's health and safety and assist parents and educators in improving life for all children and youth.

If you've been keeping members informed about all the good work done by your PTA, your job is half finished. Now it's time to **plan several strategies** for convincing members to continue their support.

You might begin by sending them a letter saying that although their children are graduating, they still will be affected by the work of the PTA. Give some examples. Mention how the PTA's programs are designed to help children in the community become better students and avoid drug or alcohol use (or whatever your programs address).

- Mention the charitable status of the PTA and ask for their continued support and contributions. Provide an envelope in which they may return their dues.
- When they send in their dues, write a thank you note and let them know their membership card will be sent to them in the fall. Make sure they are added to your mailing list to receive all PTA flyers, meeting announcements, newsletters, etc.

Send those who don't respond a reminder notice, something eye catching and clever. Then follow up with a phone call. Be prepared to explain again the benefits of membership and what their contribution will make possible for your PTA and the children and youth it serves.

By making a special effort to keep these members, you may begin a new tradition of "once a PTA members, always a PTA member." That means more opportunities to not only serve the needs of your children but all children and youth in this nation.

MEMBERSHIP PROMOTION IDEAS

1. Extend as many personal invitations as possible.
2. Secure the mayor's Proclamation for PTA membership month from the local government.
3. Plan your membership effort around a theme.
4. Set up a membership booth at a shopping mall, fair, or on Main Street.
5. Encourage husband and wife teams for the membership committee.
6. Take memberships on school registration day.
7. Put a banner across Main Street, or use the electrical display boards of banks, etc.
8. Have a "Welcome" hostess or "Sunshine" committee to call on new families in the school area or community.
9. Challenge another unit or town to show a larger increase or percentage increase in membership. Be sure to provide some entertaining types of awards.
10. Use membership breakfast, "potluck" suppers, etc., to get new members acquainted or enrolled in your PTA.
11. Use membership stickers — "JOIN PTA".
12. Ask local business concerns to let PTA use their sign space for one week. Marquees are sometimes available just for the asking.
13. Some PTAs have used commercial billboard space for membership signs.
14. Form a Men's Club within your PTA.
15. Have floats or a PTA sign in local parades — a float at local "homecoming" celebrations.
16. Secure time on TV "interview shows."
17. Keep the reason for belonging to the PTA audible and visible in your community.
18. Take advantage of "Party Line" programs at your local radio station.
19. Ask a teacher to contact other teachers to promote PTA and recruit members.
20. Have volunteers sponsor neighborhood or block "coffees" to discuss PTA plans and membership.
21. Ask your bus company for permission to display "Join Your PTA Today" signs in buses during the month of September.
22. Have knowledge of current PTA projects and concerns.
23. Have poster chairman or other member prepare attention-compelling posters for display in library, school, or store windows.
24. Have members invite a friend or neighbor to attend a PTA meeting with them.
25. Supply the school lounge and the public library with PTA materials.

26. Offer baby-sitting services for meetings.
27. Have table for membership committee at **every** meeting and event held during the year.
28. Try a dinner meeting. Engage a relevant/motivational speaker to end the evening.
29. Use room representatives and phone committees to get people involved.
30. Form a master calendar considering all community activities so there are fewer conflicts on PTA night.
31. Involve as many members as possible in your PTA activities and projects. Getting people together helps to foster community relations!
32. Try "Help Wanted" ads in the newspaper.
33. Send out a newsletter each month including reports from PTA committees and chairmen. Highlight your membership goals and achievements.
34. Be sure that people nominated for offices are willing to work.
35. Talk about PTA at scout meetings; invite people to join.
36. Make sure your membership chairman works cooperatively with other committees.
37. Make known the PTA's position on vital issues.
38. Utilize your members to get more ideas for membership promotion. You have a wealth of talent there!
39. Be enthusiastic in all your conversations about PTA. Enthusiasm is catching.

The following suggestions can be found on the National PTA Membership Quick Reference Guide:

- Yard signs can be placed in high-traffic areas, such as school turnarounds and busy intersections. (Please obey local sign ordinances when placing these signs.)
- A postcard to let parents and others know about the benefits of parent involvement and PTA membership can be mailed to prospective members, used as handouts at tabletop displays and placed in staff mailboxes and welcome packets.
- Door hangings are a perfect way to inform the community about a special PTA event. (Please obey handbill rules for your community.)
- Posters are useful and can be displayed in school windows, on community bulletin boards, or in other high-traffic locations.

MEMBERSHIP THEME IDEAS

Listed below are some membership themes and descriptions of promotion ideas, which have been used by PTAs:

“You Auto Join PTA” - Antique cars were used to represent each room traveling along the road. The display was set up on the stage in the cafeteria and progress was indicated as each room added members.

“School Kids, Hot Dogs, Apple Pie and PTA” - A get-acquainted roundup was held at the first PTA meeting (outside). The teachers and PTA board members dressed in western clothes. Hot dogs were furnished by the PTA; drinks and apple pie were sold.

“Fishing for the PTA” - A poster board aquarium was taped to each classroom door. Fish were added as members were enrolled. A real aquarium was purchased by the PTA and placed in the classroom with the greatest attendance at PTA meetings.

“Happiness is PTA” - Large Snoopy Dogs were placed in each room. A figure of Woodstock with the student’s name was placed beside Snoopy as members were enrolled. Snoopy doghouses were filled with cookies to remind them of the membership drive.

“Pep Rally” - Parents, teachers and administrators dressed as cheerleaders for a junior high PTA pep rally at the beginning of the membership drive.

Ice Cream Theme - Each room received an ice cream cone on poster board. When memberships were collected, a scoop of ice cream was attached to the cone.

Race Theme - Use phrases like “help us reach the finish line”, “join our pit crew”, each member is represented by a race car, horse, runner, etc.

Apple Tree Theme - Green apples on a poster represent mothers, red apples — fathers, yellow apples — teachers. Oak tree and different colored leaves could be used.

Trip to the Smoky Mountains - Use replica of a mountain with roads leading to the top. Each room is to have a car that proceeds toward the top of the mountain at a rate corresponding to the increase in membership.

Rocket Ship - Use a rocket ship to represent each room. Let it race toward the moon as membership increase.

Kite - Make a kite poster for each room, adding a colorful tie for each PTA member.

Sail Boat - Draw a large sail boat with an oversized mast. As members join, attach a corresponding number of banners to the mast.

Football Field for Teachers - Prepare a football field complete with yardage markers along the sidelines. Each player could represent a teacher with his name and grade on the back. As parent membership increases, move the players along toward the goal line. 100% membership in the room could make a touchdown and be placed across the goal.

Need more ideas? Contact your state membership chairman.

MEMBERSHIP SLOGAN IDEAS

When planning your membership campaign, choose a theme or slogan, which will become familiar to everyone in your community. You may wish to have T-shirts, bumper stickers, or other items made up with your slogan printed on them to sell in your school. You might even have a contest and present a prize to the person who can give you the best idea for your theme or slogan.

- ⇒ Travel the PTA Way - Join Today!
- ⇒ Three Way Partnership: Parent, Teacher, Youth
- ⇒ Invest in the Future - Join PTA Today!
- ⇒ Show the Way - Join the PTA
- ⇒ Join Today for Their Tomorrow
- ⇒ Don't Wait - Participate!! Join Your PTA!
- ⇒ PTA - Preparing Tomorrow's Adults
- ⇒ PTA Membership - An Investment in the Future



Current TV commercials sometimes help form ideas. People do not need to be bored with PTA information. It does no harm to dress it up and make it more appealing. Use your theme/slogan all year long! It will create interest, promote fellowship and make the PTA more fun! Use your imagination and sense of humor. Above all, be Enthusiastic and Positive in your approach.

JUST ASK!

MEMBERSHIP INVITATION

Membership is the beginning, the foundation of all Parent-Teacher Associations. JOIN TODAY! WE NEED YOU!

Early enrollment helps make the work of everyone easier. WE NEED YOU!

Mothers, Fathers and Grandparents are all welcome. Everyone is an important part of our PTA. JOIN! WE ARE COUNTING ON YOU!

Be informed. Attend our PTA meetings. Make it a must. WE NEED ACTIVE MEMBERS. JOIN TODAY!

Everyone in our community is eligible to become a member. Requirement: an interest in the welfare of children. JOIN NOW - WE WANT YOU!

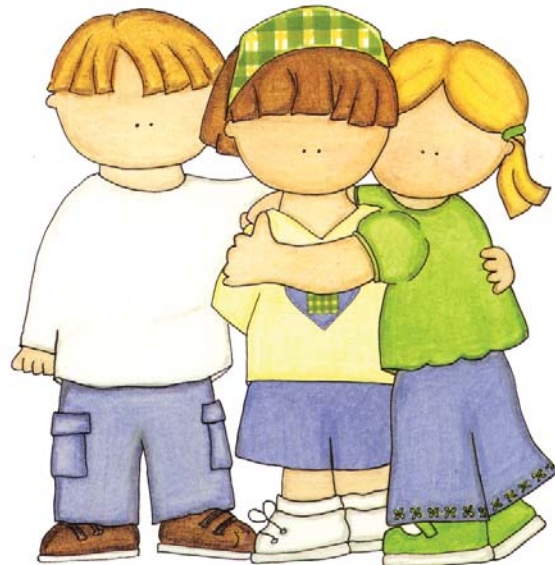
Remember - September is membership month. Let's make it 100% - JOIN TODAY!

Survey those around you. They are parents of your children's friends.

Hospitality! Extend a hand of friendship, a smile of welcome and a cheerful greeting. JOIN NOW. WE WILL GIVE YOU A WARM WELCOME.

Information about PTA is printed on the back of your membership card. YOU JOINED!!

Programs, personal contact and participation can be yours when you join PTA. WON'T YOU JOIN TODAY?



Poems and Inspiration

SOMEBODY ELSE

There's a clever young person named **SOMEBODY ELSE**.
There's nothing this fellow can't do.
He's busy from morn 'til way late at night.
Just substituting for you.

You're asked to do this, and asked to do that,
And what is your ready reply?
"Get **SOMEBODY ELSE**, kind sir
He'll do it much better than I."

There's so much to do in our PTA,
So much, and the workers are few.
And **SOMEBODY ELSE** is getting weary and worn
Just substituting for you.

So, next time you're asked to do something worthwhile,
Just give him an honest reply.
"If **SOMEBODY ELSE** can give time and support,
You bet your last dime, so can I!"



Let's All Work Together and
Be Somebody Else!

THE PTA STORY

It is the oldest and largest volunteer association in the world devoted exclusively to the welfare and concern of children and youth. The National PTA is composed of:

- More than 6 million members
- 50 state branches; the European Congress of Parents, Teachers and Students; the Pacific Congress of American Parents, Teachers and Students, Inc.; the District of Columbia; the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. All officers and chairmen - local, state and national are unpaid. ALL are volunteers.

WHO CAN BE IN PTA

Anyone and everyone who subscribes to the OBJECTS/PURPOSES of the PTA and wishes to support its efforts for children and youth.

Membership in a local PTA assures membership with the State PTA and the National PTA. There are NO other dues!

TAKE TIME

Take time to make everyone feel important in your PTA:

- Six most important words: "I'm proud of what you've done"
- Three most important words: "Would you please?"
- Two most important words: "Thank you!"
- Least important word: "I"

Why a PTA School? — A Principal's Perspective

“Parent Involvement” are buzz words used in much of the effective schools and school reform literature. When you attempt to answer ‘Why a PTA school’ with simple buzz words, much is lost. Many schools not affiliated with PTA have active and involved parents. The difference is not the amount of parent involvement, but the quality of parent involvement.

In a non-affiliated school, parents learn effective parent involvement through hit and miss experiences as their child passes through the grades. By the time they’ve mastered how a school and home can work together to improve the school experience for children, their child has moved to the next level. In a PTA affiliated school, the experiences and wisdom of 100 years are passed along in an organized fashion. If parents take advantage of all that is offered through PTA, they can become an effective “school parent” in one or two short years.

The welfare and education of our children is no longer impacted by an isolated local community. More and more we are part of a global community. Decisions made at state and federal levels greatly impact the lives of our children. Individuals or small groups of individuals are “tilting at windmills” in their efforts to effect change at these levels. PTA is the world’s most powerful lobby for children and is connected from the individual member to the national level. For a small membership fee (usually the price of a few gallons of gas), a member is exposed to and has the voice in all current issues involving schools and children.

PTA offers opportunities for its members to experience personal growth. Through leadership training, experience in leadership roles and educational materials, PTA members grow as human beings.

As a principal of an elementary school, I have a powerful and effective partner in the PTA. I want to see parents involved any way possible, but it seems obvious that parents who are connected at state and national levels, who are trained as leaders and are growing as human beings have much to offer. This is why being a PTA school is so essential.

John Villotti, Principal
Emerson Hough Elementary
Newton, Iowa

SECTION 5

Membership Action Plan, PTA Script Sample Letters, and Forms

Introducing PTA to Your Parents and Community Members

We know that most people may not be comfortable speaking in public. The following is a speech you can customize for your PTA. It contains information that is true about all PTAs and also talks about the Illinois PTA.

Hi! I'm insert name. I'm the insert title of the insert PTA name PTA.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak with you about PTA.

The PTA is the largest volunteer association whose sole purpose is to help **ALL** children.

The PTA mission is to speak for children, encourage the community to become involved in and support our public schools and help parents become more effective caretakers.

Since children cannot speak up for themselves in the community, the PTA is there for them. The Illinois PTA closely monitors legislation that may affect children and ask our legislators to vote based on the PTA position on that issue. We keep our members informed about this legislation and ask that they take part in this process. Our delegates at the annual convention determine the focus of the Illinois PTA legislative positions. We are constantly urging our legislators to adequately fund our public schools and not create any more unfunded or under-funded mandates. We speak for children at all levels of our government, from the federal level to the local school board.

PTA encourages the community to be involved in our public schools. We know that this involvement is more likely to create the best schools for our children and to make sure that schools meet the community needs. We want the community to be aware of issues in the public schools. We want them to be involved in the decision-making process. Community members are urged to volunteer in the schools.

The PTA wants to help parents with the toughest job around. We provide programs on critical issues facing our children in today's society. This ranges from bullying and health issues to helping with homework and behavior modification. We also provide information on making proper choices in our TV viewing. This information is provided through printed materials and programs.

You may not be aware of some of our accomplishments. The Illinois PTA recently was successful in urging the State to create a separate Juvenile Justice Department so that children are not thrown into the adult criminal system. The Illinois PTA was the force behind getting the bus arms on the front of the buses, new legislation on vicious dogs and we worked with the Secretary of State to create the Parent Guide for Teen Drivers.

The insert name of your PTA has been involved in: (list what your PTA has accomplished/provided for students).

We all have fun working on PTA events. We learn new leadership skills that can help us outside of PTA. We get to meet a lot of different PTA members around the state and learn from and share with them.

We want to stress that just being a member greatly helps us. The larger the membership, the louder our voice is at all levels of government. Your dues help support our work financially, and, what other nationally known association can you join for just \$*insert local unit dues amount*.

If you do wish to be involved as a volunteer, let me give you some of the options you have with our PTA. We have some opportunities you can do at home on your own time and others that are more structured. We probably have something that will fit your interests and the amount of time you can spend. We have tasks that are once in awhile and some that are ongoing. Let me describe what's going on here at our local unit PTA:

List volunteer opportunities in your PTA unit and have a sign-up sheet available.

Again, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak with you about PTA.

SAMPLE INVITATIONS

1

Dear Parent,

We have a team of very dedicated and hard working volunteers more than willing to donate their time to provide the services that PTA is known for. We need the support and encouragement of your membership so we know the job we are doing is important to your child.

That's correct! PTA does not work for you or me but for our children and the betterment of their education. It is a far bigger and better job than either you or I could do alone and it is a very important job, worthy of your support. PLEASE JOIN TODAY!!!

Many of you expressed a "lack of time" as the reason you haven't joined PTA. As you can see, you may be an important part of PTA without surrendering a minute. We need the strength of your supportive membership so PLEASE JOIN TODAY!!

Name _____

Address _____

Child's Name _____ Classroom Teacher _____

I can volunteer some time _____. Here is my membership of \$ _____ per member.

I cannot volunteer any time, however, here is my membership dues of \$ _____ per member.

2

Dear Parents and Friends,

Our children are back in school again and there is a greater need than ever before for a close relationship between parents and teachers. PTA is an association made up of parents, teachers, and other community members with the sole purpose of helping children and youth.

Parents need to increase their involvement with their children and show their loyalty and interest in the school system through PTA. We expect so much of children in their school achievements and school conduct. We need to turn and lend an ear to hear about new ways of guiding young people. Come to PTA meetings - your child will be pleased to know you are taking an active part in his/her education and in him/her.

Please send your dues in today!! Just \$_____ for each parent. The children need your help through PTA projects and programs.

Sincerely,

PTA President

PTA Membership Chairman

.....
Name _____

Address _____

Child's Name _____ Classroom Teacher _____

I can volunteer some time _____. Here is my membership of \$_____ per member.

I cannot volunteer any time, however, here is my membership dues of \$_____ per member.

3

Dear Parents, Teachers, and Friends:

We take this opportunity at the beginning of the new school year to welcome you, and invite you to attend and join the _____ PTA this year.

Our annual membership enrollment is now and we need you in the PTA. For the smallest dues of any national association, you will become a part of a nation-wide democratic voluntary, adult education association of over 6 million members.

PTA is a group that centers its whole interest on the well being and education of all children and youth. Membership is open to all friends of children. As a member, you will be helping to give each child a chance to achieve a life that is satisfying to themselves and helpful to others. You will have a part in establishing good home-school relations, so that every child will be assured of wise guidance and warm understanding both at home and at school.

In our PTA you will count as an individual and you will be counted upon. As a responsible citizen, you belong in the PTA. Dues are \$_____ per year. Join us now. A warm welcome awaits you.

Sincerely,

PTA President

Principal

PTA Membership Chairman

Name _____

Address _____

Child's Name _____ Classroom Teacher _____

I can volunteer some time _____. Here is my membership of \$_____ per member.

I cannot volunteer any time, however, here is my membership dues of \$_____ per member.

4

Hi Neighbor,

Welcome!!

As a new resident of this area, your children will be attending the _____ City or County school. To make your new life as complete and fulfilling as possible, may we urge you to join the _____ PTA. Not only will you become better acquainted with your neighbors and keep abreast of what's happening in your own school district, but you will make your child's school days a happier experience because you care enough to become involved.

Remember, the child you help may be your own.

If we can offer any assistance to you while getting established here, please feel free to call on us.

Sincerely,

PTA President

Principal

PTA Membership
Chairman

Name _____

Address _____

Child's Name _____ Classroom Teacher _____

I can volunteer some time _____. Here is my membership of \$_____ per member.

I cannot volunteer any time, however, here is my membership dues of \$_____ per member.

5

SAMPLE NOTE TO BE SENT HOME WITH MEMBERSHIP CARD

Dear _____,

Welcome to the _____ PTA!

Thank you for joining us as we lead the parade for the well being of children. It is good to know that we can work together for your child and all young people. We know you will enjoy the satisfaction of being a part of the perpetual challenge of PTA work.

If you have a wealth of ideas, or just one tiny suggestion, let our PTA know. Your officers can always use new ideas. Feel free to contact your child's room representative, board members, or our president. They will be happy to help you become acquainted with other parents in our school.

Thank you for joining,

PTA Membership Chairman

6a

The _____ PTA invites you to join us as “**Advocates for Children**” for the _____ school year. Working together we can continue to ensure a better future for our children. For a \$_____ investment you can help us to “raise the flag” for education. Don’t delay...join today!!!!

Clip and return with your dues remittance:

Name(s) _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Amount Enclosed _____ # of Memberships _____

Please make check payable to: _____ PTA

6b

SECOND REMINDER

Dear Parents,

One lone member won her neighbor true
Brought her to meetings and then there were two
Two earnest members each enrolled one more
That doubled their number and then there were four
Four sincere members worked and couldn't wait
Till each had won another and then there were eight
Eight enthusiastic members got 16 more
And in just 6 more verses the enrollment is 1,000 and 24!!

Please join us as “**Advocates for Children**” and further the Objects/Purposes of the PTA. We are aiming at increasing our membership to _____ for a state and national award. Won't you help us?

DON'T DELAY ... JOIN TODAY

Thank you,

PTA Membership Chairman

Name _____ Address _____

Amount Enclosed _____ # of Memberships _____

7

Dear Business owner,

As a businessman, you are certainly aware of the great impact advertising has on the public.

As concerned parents and teachers, we feel it is important to make the public aware of the necessity and value of PTA. As an aid to achieving this public awareness, we would like to solicit your help.

During the next two months, Illinois schools will be conducting their yearly PTA membership campaigns. In planning your advertising strategy for the month of September and October, by newspaper, radio, TV, billboard, handbills or menus, may we urge that you help us publicize PTA by featuring specials for PTA members? You know what ideas best sell your products, so whether it is a special item, discount price special, or outright give away, please advertise it as a "PTA Special" feature. If it is consistent with your business procedure to feature a special discount on presentation of a coupon, make it the presentation of a current PTA membership card. We will be reminding parents to watch for local merchant PTA Specials.

A PTA representative will call you to confirm your participation. May we count on your support, and take this opportunity to remind you that the child you help may be your own.

In addition, we invite you and your employees to become members of the PTA. This can be accomplished by joining a local PTA unit at a school in your area, or by contacting the Illinois PTA at 800-877-9617. There are additional opportunities for PTA business membership.

1. You can become a Cardinal PTSA member. For a membership fee of \$20, you will receive a e-subscription to the *Illinois PTA Bulletin* and visitor privileges to the Illinois PTA convention upon payment of the convention registration fee. The Cardinal PTSA membership supports the Illinois PTA Scholarship Fund.
2. Annual Partnership: A Contributor or Patron annual partner receives a complimentary e-subscription to the *Illinois PTA Bulletin*, visitor privileges at convention with the payment of convention registration, and a listing on the Illinois PTA website (www.illinoispta.org). Benefactors receive all of the benefits listed above and are recognized at our annual convention with a certificates suitable for framing.

Annual Partnerships are one of the following options:

Contributor	\$25.00 to \$100.00 contribution
Patron	\$101.00 to \$500.00 contribution
Benefactor	\$501.00 or more

Sincerely,

_____, PTA President

_____, Principal

_____, PTA Membership Chairman

SAMPLE MEMBERSHIP FORM

_____ PTA/PTSA
(Name of unit)

MEMBERSHIP FORM

ADULT DUES - \$ _____ (year) STUDENT DUES - \$ _____

ADULT(S): _____ Member No. _____
_____ Member No. _____

ADDRESS: _____
_____ Zip _____

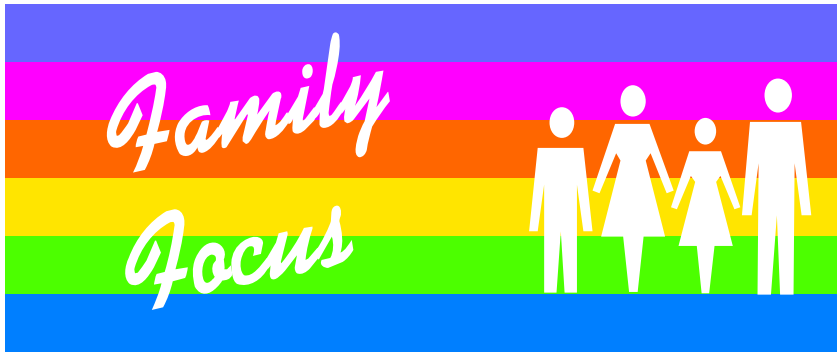
NAME(S) AND GRADE LEVEL(S) OF CHILD(REN) ATTENDING _____
(Name of School)

NAME _____ GRADE _____ Member No. _____

NAME _____ GRADE _____ Member No. _____

NAME _____ GRADE _____ Member No. _____

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____



SAMPLE INVITATION LETTER FROM PTSA

Welcome from the PTSA to all parents of students who are entering _____ High School this Fall. The high school years are a crucial period in the lives of all students....the period which will prepare them for the outside world or on to higher education.

This is the time we need you to help us understand and communicate with the students and teachers through your suggestions and support at our meetings. We want you to understand the teachers in their efforts and the administration in their guidance to prepare your son or daughter for the future. PTSA is the force which cements and guides the administration, teachers, students and parents, into a common cause...to help youth to help themselves so they will be able to function as individuals.

Can we count on you to strengthen this force...PTSA? A mere \$_____ investment for membership in the PTSA helps to make this possible. Join us now by completing the form below.

PTSA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____ Telephone (_____) _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip Code _____

Students Name: _____ Grade: _____

Dues are \$___ per person

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$_____

Please make check payable to: _____PTA/PTSA

Mail completed membership form and check to: (Insert local unit information here.)

SAMPLE FOLLOW UP LETTERS – POST INITIAL RECRUITMENT

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

I was reviewing my records and I noticed that you and/or your family have not yet joined the _____PTA. **Can we Deal you In?**

Are you aware that the _____ PTA provides services to all the children at ____, not just PTA member families. In addition, did you know that the PTA is known for their dedication to the advocacy of issues relating to all children and youth across America. That’s correct! PTA does not work for you or me, but for our children and the betterment of their education. It is a far bigger and better job than any of us could do alone and it is a very important job, worthy of your support.

Our annual membership enrollment is now and we need you in the PTA. For the smallest of dues of any national association, you will become a part of a nation-wide voluntary association of over 6 million members. Likewise, as a member you will be helping to give each child a chance to experience opportunities that can only be offered by PTA.

Many believe that along with membership, comes volunteer hours. However, by becoming a PTA member, you will not have to surrender a minute of your time, unless you chose to do so. We continuously strive to involve anyone who wants to play a role in PTA activities, however, if you feel you do not have the time to commit to planning and executing PTA events, then I am simply asking for your membership if you decide that volunteering is not an option for you.

This year we are aiming to increase our membership to ____ members! That would be a __% increase over last year’s membership total. To do this, we need everyone to join and provide their support in numbers.

For as little as a \$__ investment you can help us **deal the kids a winning hand!**

If you have any questions regarding membership in the _____PTA, please feel free to contact me.

Name

Membership Chair, _____ PTA

Our PTA is ACES –

Advocate – Communicate – Educate – Support

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

I was reviewing my records and I noticed that you and/or your family have not yet joined the ___PTA.

- Are you aware that the ___ PTA provides services to all the children at _____, not just PTA member families?
- In addition, did you know that the PTA is known for their dedication to the advocacy of issues relating to all children and youth across America?

Yes! That’s correct! PTA does not work for you or me, but for our children and the betterment of their education. It is a far bigger and better job than any of us could do alone and it is a very important job, worthy of your support.

Our annual membership enrollment is now and we need you in the PTA. For a minimal \$___ you will become a part of a nation-wide voluntary association of over 6 million members. Likewise, as a member you will be helping to give each child at _____ a chance to experience opportunities that can only be offered by PTA.

Many believe that joining PTA means volunteer hours. However, by becoming a PTA member, you will not have to surrender a minute of your time, unless you chose to do so. We continuously strive to involve anyone who wants to play a role in PTA activities, however, if you feel you do not have the time to commit to planning and executing PTA events, I am simply asking for your membership if you decide that volunteering is not an option for you.

Please say “Yes, I would like to be a part of our PTA” and it’s many programs including (customize for your PTA):

- Educational and Cultural assemblies for our children
- Reflections—an Arts Recognition and Achievement Program
- Panther Press
- Year Book
- Back to School Picnic
- Teacher Appreciation
- Family Fun Events
- Family Fitness Night at YMCA
- Health and Safety Programs
- Room Parents in each classroom
- Kindergym
- School Directory and School Calendar
- Electronic Distribution of Information
- Arts Integration Partnership with Metropolis Theater

Please see the reverse side for information on how to join. If you have any questions regarding membership in the ___ PTA, please feel free to contact me.

Name
Title
Phone
email

There is still time to join the ____ PTA!

Simply return this form with the correct payment and we will add you to the PTA distribution list to ensure you are receiving all communications and information during the year. Show your support of the students who attend ____ by joining the PTA today!

Family

Name: _____

Adult Member name(s):

Email:

(____) Individual Membership - \$X.00 (____) Family/Household Membership - \$XX.00

I have enclosed: ____ Cash _____ Check made payable to ____ PTA

Please return completed information to school by December 4th.

Dear Past _____ PTA Member,

_____ PTA would like to hear from you!

Thank you for joining _____ PTA last school year (20xx-20xx). We noticed that you have not yet joined the PTA this school year. Knowing that you saw the benefit of joining in the past we are concerned that something might have been overlooked this year on our part. So, to better serve the parents of _____, we would appreciate your input as to why you have not re-joined. Please mark the description below that fits your reason for not re-joining.

I do not recall receiving information on how to join this year.

I don't see the value and chose not to be a member.

I had problems with the registration process

Other: Please comment

It's not too late to join! Simply complete the reverse side of this form and return to school with your dues payment. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our membership coordinator, name, at [email](#) or phone.

20xx-20xx PTA Membership Dues

\$x.00 – Individual Membership

\$x.00 – Household Membership (counts as 2 memberships)