

RESOURCE GUIDE - MEMBERSHIP SECTION

Message to Membership chairs

As membership chair, you have chosen to be the one person most responsible for enrolling as many new members as possible for PTA. Yours is one of the most important duties in the entire association - nothing can happen without members.

Bring enthusiasm and new ideas into your PTA and this, in turn, will bring in new members! A strong membership is essential for PTA to continue to be a major force in the decision-making process that affects our young people. Make this year the very best in PTA by increasing your membership.

WHO CAN PTA?

- parents
- teachers
- students
- school administrators
- school support staff (nurses, secretaries, custodians, cafeteria staff, etc)
- grandparents
- brothers and sisters
- district office administration
- community members (police, firefighters, clergy, pediatricians, dance teachers, sports coaches, Board of Education trustees, etc)
- local politicians
- members do not need to have a student in the school to be a member
- In other words, everyone!

A unit membership chairs duty is twofold

First, you are responsible for the maintenance of accurate membership records. This includes recruiting members, maintaining the online membership roster, providing membership cards to those members who have not provided an email address to receive their eCard, submitting dues money to the unit treasurer, and ensuring that deadlines are met for submitting dues payments to New York State PTA.

Second, the membership chair is responsible for marketing the PTA, which includes recruiting a committee, creating a campaign, publicizing PTA membership and working to increase member recruitment. All current membership materials can be found on the NYS PTA website in the [Membership Toolkit](#).

Membership is everyone's job!

Think about asking the following people to join your Membership committee:

Room Representative (or Class Parent) Chair who can contact new families as they move into the area, inform them about what PTA is doing, and invite them to become members. Recruit translators for non-English speaking families.

Publicity Chair who can keep up-to-date on PTA pamphlets and publicize them, display PTA materials at meetings, submit articles to local newspapers about PTA's activities.

Newsletter Editor/Website/ Social Media Chair who can keep people informed of PTA events on all levels and communicate the importance of parental support and involvement.

Program Chair who can arrange for programs of interest to members, use a questionnaire or evaluation sheet to find out what topics would interest the membership, plan programs that involve the membership using their various abilities.

Hospitality Chair who can make new members feel welcome and introduce them to the executive board.

Treasurer who makes sure that state and national dues are submitted to NYS PTA via online echeck.

Principal who can encourage the teachers and support staff to become members of and participate in the PTA.

Teacher Representative who can promote PTA to teachers and take the responsibility of enrolling them.

Student Representative who can promote PTA to students and be responsible for enrolling them and give input as to the needs of students.

President who can facilitate coordination with the other board chairmen and officers.

ideas for themes and slogans!

The theme you choose will be your slogan for the year. Publicize it and use it often; it will become your PTA's "brand". Feel free to use the NYS PTA's current membership logo, which can be found in the [Membership Toolkit](#).

You may wish to have T-shirts, bumper stickers, magnets or other items made up with your slogan printed on them to sell in your school. Use the theme on posters, letters, fliers, radio announcements and in your PTA newsletter. It will create interest, promote friendship and make PTA fun. You might even have a contest and present a prize to the person who gives you the best idea for a slogan or theme.

Ideas for membership themes/ slogans might include:

- PTA for your Child

- PTA Your Way
- Connecting Families and Schools
- Children First – You Make the Difference
- Put Your Heart in PTA
- PTA – Parent-Teacher Advocates for Children
- Invest in the Future – Support PTA Today
- Be a Champion for Children and Support the PTA
- The Future is in Your Hands – Support PTA!
- Don't Wait – Participate! Support Your PTA

Ways to Spark your Membership Program

- Create a list of the programs, events and activities your PTA/PTSA sponsors
- Sponsor PTA grade-level meetings or orientation for parents and students going to a single grade center, middle school or high school and ask parents to enroll
- Host a “New Parent Coffee” for parents of incoming students to deal with first-day trauma, and provide the opportunity for parents to become PTA members
- Have the room representatives/ class parents promote membership and prepare kits for class meetings for parents to distribute
- These kits should contain highlights of past successes, the program for the year, the PTA directory and blank membership enrollment forms
- Challenge a neighboring PTA unit - the unit which achieves the larger percentage increase will receive a special treat from the other unit
- Provide membership discount incentives when charging a fee for programs, conferences and entertainment events; offer discounted prices to all PTA members
- Offer discounted membership to additional family members, senior citizens and students (Note: unit dues for each member must be at least equal to the amount of the national and state portion)
- Have students bring real or “adopted” grandparents to school for lunch, a program “Grandparents Day” and enroll grandparents
- Ask local businesses to become a “friend of PTA” by offering discounts to eCard-carrying PTA members
- Give a [certificate or a plaque to the business establishment that sponsors the PTA](#); alert the media
- Hold a Business Leaders Day and invite those businesses that have supported PTA to come to school for a tour and special recognition
- Ask service clubs (Rotary, Kiwanis, Elks, Lions, Chamber of Commerce, etc.) to invite a PTA representative to speak about the value of PTA
- Send a special letter of invitation to become a member of PTA after getting the names and addresses of new parents
- Keep a letter of welcome, PTA materials, an invitation to enroll, and a blank membership enrollment form in the principal's office or with the school secretary for distribution when a new family comes to register their children

- Set up a bulletin board in your school with names of all members written on various shapes and pinned to the board, or put colored leaves on a PTA tree; each class can have a branch and can compete for the highest membership
- Always remember to thank those who assist with membership enrollment

Keeping the “T” in PTA

Teachers are a key part of our home-school alliance in PTA. Here are some ideas to get and keep your teachers involved in your PTA.

- Plan to host a teacher appreciation event in your school or community in May
- Download the resources from the National PTA website to celebrate PTA Teacher Appreciation Week in your community
- PTA sponsors Legislation Conferences at both the state and national level
- PTA members stay current about education issues and advocate with legislators for sound educational practices and funding
- Teachers contribute their expertise to our efforts
- Through the support of its members, PTA continues to be at the forefront of developing the research, the assessment guides and the implementation tools needed to boost parent involvement everywhere
- Parent involvement boosts student success
- Through the National Standards for Family- School Partnerships, PTA proves that parent involvement is crucial to student success and shows how families, schools and communities work well together

How to interest men in PTA

- Set a goal for more male engagement
- Being an inclusive PTA means nominating, electing, appointing and encouraging dads, stepdads, grandfathers and other interested males to participate in the activities of your PTA
- Use other men as recruiters as sometimes other dads who are already involved can help create a domino effect
- Send mailings and notices addressed to both parents by name as a sense of being included is important, and if Dad doesn't live at home, send a separate mailing to his address
- Take a male interest survey with a few questions to help you find the keys to more male involvement
- Determine the best time for both parents to attend meetings by sending a questionnaire to all parents
- Sponsor Dads-In-Action Days, where individual dads (or other males) go into classrooms and speak on special hobbies or their job, demonstrate special tools or other equipment
- Encourage men to serve on committees to study and make recommendations on community needs and/or problems
- Ask men who work with youth groups to explain their programs to the PTA
- Urge men to take part in panels for and with young people
- Ask men to serve as liaisons with government agencies concerned with the welfare of children

and youth

- Recruit men to organize cooperative programs with business and industry
- Include in your annual program, a variety of activities and speakers which appeal to both male and female members
- Stress the importance of men's role in rearing children and stimulate their participation in youth activities

Recruitment ideas that have worked for others

- Emphasize that PTA is an association for everyone
- Stress that people need not have children in school or be a teacher to become part of PTA
- Sometimes a PTA needs a cause around which people can rally to realize a growth in membership – a cause to create positive interest in the association
- Identify a real need in your community and become involved
- Request a PTA bulletin board or showcase, then use it wisely and keep it timely
- Develop an information sheet to distribute to members and prospective members explaining the value that members get from local, state and national dues
- Include information about last year's PTA accomplishments as well as this year's goals
- Send a personal invitation asking each teacher to become a PTA member
- Ask to speak for a few minutes at a faculty meeting and let them know the value PTA has brought to the school
- Also let school administration know you are grateful for their continuing support of PTA
- Ask each board member to seek out new members
- Inform the local news media of your unit's activities and successes and the importance of what PTA is and does
- Train and support PTA volunteers. Involve your members after you recruit them
- Look to PTA history for inspiration and use PTA resources
- Send invitations to become a part of PTA throughout the entire school year
- Use as much personal contact as possible in recruiting members. Include testimonials in your campaign
- Set up a table for recruiting members in your library, local supermarkets and movie theater lobbies
- Have membership tables at ALL PTA meetings and school functions and make posters to display in area stores and banks
- Ask people to support the work of your PTA by purchasing a membership
- Never stop recruiting – always encourage new membership
- Use social media to share information about your unit's membership, events and successes

Try some of the following suggestions:

- Plan meetings at times when more parents, teachers and students can attend and offer refreshments to attendees

- Mail notices of the meetings to the homes of students, accompanied by a letter of invitation signed by the unit president, the principal, student body president and the membership chair
- Have student spokespersons meet with the middle or junior high PTAs to explain the importance of parents continuing their involvement in PTA on those levels
- Explain PTA programs, policies and procedures to high school students and encourage them to become members
- Young people are more likely to participate if they see the relevance of the PTA/PTSA to their own lives and understand their specific roles in the association
- Question young people regarding the needs of the school and students and the type of PTA programs that would best meet their needs
- Ask the art department to assist you in constructing posters and displays to be placed in prominent places in the school during fall registration
- Each time parents are in the school, have PTSA representatives at the door to greet guests and offer the opportunity to become part of PTSA
- Wear a large name tag with PTA/PTSA visible
- Put handwritten notices for each teacher in the school mailboxes. Let them know you are grateful for their continuing support of PTSA
- You do NOT have to be designated a PTSA to have student members
- Bylaws can be amended to offer discounted student membership dues
- Encourage students to become members so they may have full voice and voting privileges
- Encourage students to become members so they may have full voice and voting privileges
- Match students with adult mentors in their area of interest. Students are more likely to become part of PTA if they can walk away with a marketable skill or resume item
- Have students serve as officers and committee members in your association (Refer to bylaws for legal restrictions)
- Have Students help recruit other student members and give input on their needs.
- Arrange with the school for PTA members to get discounts at school functions – athletic events, musicals and plays
- Ask the school administration to help promote PTA's "Reflections" program as a way for students to participate in a PTA activity

Calendar

June - July

- Obtain and review membership records and procedures from previous membership chair
- See that funds are included in the budget for membership brochures, posters and awards
- Register to attend NYS PTA Summer Leadership Conference, as well as region workshops and training - these are legitimate PTA leadership training expenses

- Introduce yourself to your region membership chair (RMC)
- Plan your membership campaign for the upcoming school year
- Recruit members for your membership committee and have a meeting
- Set some Goals (look for your NYS PTA goal on the Unit Data page in MemberHub)
- Adopt a theme and plan your membership promotions
- Work with room representatives or their counterparts to select a membership representative and a translator, if needed

August

- Arrange for publicity and publications
- Present your plan of work to executive committee for approval
- Finalize plans for September membership month
- Arrange for volunteers to help staff a membership table at open house night
- Send email through MemberHub to all “people” on your site and ask them to join
- Check the National PTA website for helpful graphics, reproducible flyers and customizable posters
- Check the NYS PTA website for updated marketing materials, graphics and information

September

- Check out the Membership Award focus this month on the [Membership Awards webpage](#)
- Email everyone on your MemberHub site and ask them to join PTA if you haven’t already
- Announce your theme and publicize it widely. Display posters in local store windows, libraries, and banks
- Hold a prize drawing for all memberships received before your first PTA meeting and draw the winner at your first PTA meeting
- Set up a PTA membership table and enroll members at ALL school functions, not just Open House and Meet the Teachers Night
- Sporting events such as soccer and football games are a great place to enroll new members
- Invite teachers and administrators to become PTA members
- Reach out to your community’s preschool parents, senior citizens, school staff, school board members, students, past presidents, Honorary Life Members and Distinguished Service Award winners, local politicians, service clubs and other community organizations
- Give a membership report at each meeting to include the current number of paid members, and how many more members are needed to reach your goal
- Turn all dues money over to the unit treasurer as soon as it has been recorded and obtain a receipt for it
- Remind your unit treasurer to make an online echeck state dues payment

October

- Check out the Membership Award focus this month on the [Membership Awards webpage](#)
- Visit local businesses – invite them to support the work of your PTA and give them a framed certificate for their office or front window
- Check your list of members against the list of parents from each classroom and your list from last year and contact those who have not enrolled with a personal invitation

- Submit another article to your newsletter/website editor
- Regularly contact all newcomers and invite them to become PTA members
- Make sure the unit treasurer processes the echeck State Dues online payment

November

- Check out the Membership Award focus this month on the [Membership Awards webpage](#)
- Continue your current membership drive
- Be sure all your unit board members and principal have purchased their membership
- Room representatives should personally contact parents and teachers who have not yet become members
- Have a membership table at all general meetings and functions (holiday bazaars, Teacher Conference Days, Election Day, concerts, etc)
- Submit articles about PTA membership to your PTA newsletter

December

- Check the unit treasurer that dues payments to the state office are up to date
- Run a Give the Gift of Membership campaign this month

January

- Check out the Membership Award focus this month on the [Membership Awards webpage](#)
- Continue to market and recruit new members as membership is year-round

February

- Check out the Membership Award focus this month on the [Membership Awards webpage](#)
- Enroll as many new members as you can now
- Celebrate Founders Day
- Turn over to the unit treasurer any additional dues collected (always obtaining a receipt) and see that they are submitted to the state office
- Have membership tables at kindergarten registration, middle school and high school parent orientations in order to recruit new members

March

- Check out the Membership Award focus this month on the [Membership Awards webpage](#)
- Don't forget to make your monthly echeck Statue Dues payment online

April

- Check out the details of the Good Apple Membership Growth Awards on the [Membership Awards webpage](#)
- Evaluate the year's program and make recommendations for next year
- Register to attend your region's Spring Conference
- Continue to recruit new members

- Be sure the unit treasurer sends the final dues echeck payment for all members to date by April 30

May

- Make strong efforts to get every potential member enrolled before the end of May
- Be sure the unit treasurer makes a state Dues payment for any new members who joined

June

- Prepare a final membership report for your board and newsletter
- Bring your records up-to-date for your successor
- Pack up all physical files for the secretary and your successor
- Copy all electronic records to a flash drive to pass on
- Thank everyone who helped you with Membership

When people become members of a local unit, they automatically become members of New York State and National PTAs. Unless the state and national portions of the dues are submitted, these people are being denied their rights as members. It is fraudulent to keep dues that were collected for New York State and National PTA. The state and national portion of dues are not part of a unit's funds. They should not be included in the cash on hand.

New York State PTA Board of Directors procedures state that:

Membership Dues Overpayment - Requests for return of overpayment of membership dues will be honored if made in writing within 60 days of payment and prior to the close of the membership year. Thereafter, refunds may be granted at the discretion of the state Membership Coordinator and designated officer and may be limited to the state portion of the overpayment. Determinations will be made on a case by case basis.

WHY PTA?

What can PTA accomplish that we can't do alone? Why should we belong to a state and national association when we just want to help our children in our own school? Here are some answers:

Unified action - PTA can provide a unified attack on major problems, a unified push to improve legislation, a forum where many diverse voices can share ideas, and a chance to meet with others and share concerns about mutual problems.

Information - PTA cooperates with other state and national organizations concerned with family and child- oriented programs. Therefore, there is no need to spend hours doing research on local problems needing solutions; a telephone call, email or fax can put you in touch with region, state or National PTA, where you can get answers to many local problems and tap into resources, programs, information and training.

PTA has already done the research about many issues that affect children, and experts have set up successful programs that your local unit can implement. Whether it comes to running your unit, learning

how to advocate on a local issue, or learning new skills that will benefit you as a person long after your children have graduated, being a member of PTA keeps you in the information loop. The assistance of experts from all over the country is at your disposal.

Not all problems can be solved locally - Most laws affecting the welfare of children are made at the state level, not by the local government. When your unit or council grassroots information and research comes to the attention of the state or National PTA, we can support your efforts with many voices. Conversely, as part of the state and National PTA, your local unit extends its influence beyond your neighborhood and helps secure state and national action for the benefit of all children.

PTA cares - PTA cares about schools and education, of course, but also about the safety of children's homes, the health of their environment, influences they are exposed to in movies and video games, and all the out-of-school influences that mold children's attitudes and behavior. PTA also understands the importance of parent involvement, just to name a few of the advocacy items on our agenda.

PTA trains its volunteers - Leaders are not born – they are trained. PTA offers a wide variety of opportunities to its members to receive help and guidance.

PTA speaks -PTA speaks and speaks loudly! Caring about issues is not enough; PTA works to effect change where needed to ensure the well-being of every child. Not every parent has the time or inside knowledge to advocate effectively for their child. Often PTA is the only voice these children have. That is why our tagline is “everychild.onevoice.®” Remember, the more voices you have, the more influence your local group's efforts will have with decision-makers when combined with others.

PTA has a name - We've been around since 1897– long enough to be recognized as a powerful force working for children. When you become part of PTA, you immediately become a member of both the state and national associations as well as your local unit. Your members will benefit immediately from the association through member discounts and parenting resources.

It is through membership in this nationally-recognized and respected group that you, your unit and, most importantly, your children will benefit.

State Dues

The state dues enable New York State PTA's Board of Directors, who are volunteer PTA members, to plan and execute a statewide PTA program. For units, councils and regions, the state PTA:

- Maintains the state office in Albany
- Provides leadership training, workshops, conferences, schools of instruction, annual conventions, etc
- Provides leadership in the PTA regions and visits to PTAs by region directors, members of the board of directors, and state specialists to assist in workshops, conferences, etc.
- Finances representation of PTA at meetings of cooperating agencies
- Promotes state and federal legislative activity affecting education, health and safety of children

and youth

- Informs the membership of new issues and changing policies of governments and agencies
- Produces educational material, including the New York State PTA Resource Guide
- Produces the New York Parent Teacher quarterly newsletter
- Produces the NYS PTA Connection
- Develops publications and handbooks on issues affecting children and youth
- Provides instructions to do effective PTA work
- Reports activities in New York to the National PTA annually
- Maintains the New York State PTA website at nyspta.org and social media, i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, Instagram and mobile app
- Works with other school-related and child advocacy organizations to improve the education, health and welfare for New York's children
- Co-chairs and participates as a member of the Educational Conference Board
- Provides a network for common educational issues and support to local units
- Sends representatives to meetings of the Board of Regents and other groups

The national dues enable the National PTA's Board of Directors, also volunteer PTA members, to plan and execute a nationwide PTA program. For the units, councils and states, the National PTA:

- Maintains the national office in Alexandria, VA, a suburb of Washington, DC
- Maintains the National PTA website at pta.org
- Provides leadership training and field service at state and regional levels
- Provides a national convention and other leadership training opportunities
- Develops publications on issues and distributes them free or at a nominal cost
- Provides program planning kits
- Conducts pilot and demonstration projects planned with the help of expert consultants
- Initiates special projects that meet special emergency needs
- Provides communications and news releases
- Publishes National PTA magazine Our Children (OC) and electronic newsletters
- Cooperates with other national organizations
- Informs members about national legislation relative to the care and protection of children and youth
- Provides support and access to grant funding for special projects and initiatives