PTA in California
Winter/Spring 2022

Rooted in Advocacy
GROWING as Leaders

CONNECTING | GROWING | INSPIRING | INCLUDING
The mission of the California State PTA is to positively impact the lives of all children and families.

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Dear PTA members and leaders,

Our PTA’s rich history can give us hope and confidence as we navigate current challenges. When things seem too big or complicated or challenging, we need to remember, we have faced difficult times before. Celebrating our 125th Anniversary is an opportunity to honor our past, recognize our ongoing legacy, and look toward the future.

Thank you for being part of this remarkable legacy. As a parent and PTA leader, I am grateful for the great legislative and advocacy work of PTA. I am proud to stand with you, our PTA members and leaders to face the challenges of today, and to be the conscience of our society.

“And how are the children?” is the traditional greeting of Maasai tribe warriors. The expression connotes that the true strength of a community is determined by the well-being of its children. When we focus on our mission to positively impact the lives of all children and families we are focused on the true strength of our association and our society. Doing what is best for kids—all kids—is what PTA is all about.

As you read through this edition of PTA in California, remember the history of PTA is part of our legacy, but you are the continuing relevant, vibrant, active key to the continued growth of PTA as we connect schools and families, engage civilly in our civic process and advocate for all children. That includes all of the programs each local PTA brings to the children and families in your community, including arts, science, literacy, cultural, and many many many more.

Yes PTA counts hot school lunches, the Juvenile Justice System, and the founding of kindergarten among its accomplishments, but today we advocate for nutrition in schools and school meal programs. Today we provide information on connecting families and schools for student success. Today we advocate for early childhood education, internet access and closing the achievement gap, opportunity gap, and the digital divide.

PTA grows and evolves because of you. The true strength of our community is determined by the health and well-being of our children. You as PTA members, leaders, and volunteers are part of that ongoing, most important work on behalf of all children.

Thank you for all you are doing,

Carol Green
1897

First meeting was held and the National Congress of Women was formed

February 17, 1897

California Home and School Child Study Association was organized in San Francisco

California joined the national organization as the California Congress of Mothers and Study Circles

Los Angeles Federation of Mothers’ Clubs was organized

Legislation committee was appointed

PTA supported Juvenile Court Act

Student welfare program started

A playground committee was authorized

Department of Child Hygiene established

Penny Kitchens were established, the forerunner of school lunch programs

1900s

1897

February 17, 1897

PTA supported birth registration bill

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CELEBRATING 125 YEARS OF ADVOCATING FOR CHILDREN

Celebrating 125 years of
your kind of
PTA®

CONNECT AND CELEBRATE
• District Dinners
• State Celebration of our 125th Anniversary
• Prizes and Giveaways

GROW AS A LEADER
• Networking and Workshops
• Exhibit Hall and PTA Store
• General Meetings and Business of the Association

BE INSPIRED
• Student Artist Reflections Gallery
• Keynote Speakers

Plan your Convention experience at CAPTA.ORG/CONVENTION

Scan the QR code for registration prices, hotel information and more Convention details. COVID-19 vaccination required. Read our full policy online.

CALIFORNIA STATE PTA CONVENTION 2022
ONTARIO, CA | APR 29 - MAY 1

CELEBRATING 125 YEARS OF your kind of PTA®

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Celebrate with us!

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1897 2022
Dear PTA leaders,

As a former preschool teacher, I had the privilege of working with young children who were growing and changing every single day. I am pleased to share that your California State PTA also continues to grow, despite challenging times.

PTA membership is growing back rapidly this year after a dramatic decline due to the closure of schools at the height of the pandemic. We have continued to grow partnerships with foundations and organizations that share our mission such as the Hewlett Foundation, the California Emerging Technology Fund, College Board, Impact Teen Drivers, California School Library Association, Create CA for the Arts, and many more.

Our relationships with policymakers including the Governor’s office, State Board of Education and the Legislature have grown as well. We continue to be present on the key issues impacting all children and families from health care, to social and emotional wellbeing, and fighting for a quality education for all.

We are committed to growing and “building up” our local leadership pipeline by investing our resources so that every local PTA leader succeeds and thrives. As we celebrate our 125th birthday this year, we can look back and see the tremendous growth in all that we have done. California State PTA sincerely thanks the thousands of parents and PTA leaders who have given their time, resources and passion to continue the legacy of this amazing organization.

Happy Birthday PTA!

Sherry S. Griffith
organizations require a mission or project that is universally compelling. To create sustaining change for all children within a community requires the involvement of people with diverse backgrounds — numerous professions, classes, ages, backgrounds, ethnicities, and languages. To communicate the mission, PTA leaders should use targeted audience messaging, identified messengers, and the correct messaging tools for each audience. To sustain your organization’s mission long-term, emerging leaders must be identified, encouraged, mentored, supported, and advanced. As today’s leaders, it is imperative that you invest in the growth of tomorrow’s leaders.

• Is your PTA hitting the mark in terms of communication and leadership development?
• Are you translating your PTA messages into the languages most used in your community?
• Are you using powerful images, a timeless strategy for telling your PTA stories?
• Are you identifying a diverse cadre of volunteers to mentor?
• Are you reaching out to individuals whose mission, like yours, is the improved condition of children?

Leadership is Key to Seeing Your PTA Vision Bloom

Leaders must undertake advance planning, networking, and ongoing personal contact to continue to motivate the next generation of leaders. To move people to action,
Spring is the Time to Nurture New Leadership

Your PTA’s charge each spring is to elect members to your nominating committee. This is the most important committee of your PTA. The members of the committee must understand your school community, its diversity, and your PTA’s future. Even secondary students can be involved as committee members and as nominees. The nominating committee will seek diverse, talented, energetic team players who are passionate about the condition of children, to continue making a difference as the board-elect begins.

These nominees must be able to engage and embrace others, including the boisterous and the quiet ones, in the work of your PTA. The PTA process from nominating committee, to the slate announcement, to the election is a powerful democratic process.

Volunteers Require Special Care

The value of a PTA can be measured by the manner in which it honors its volunteers. In addition to appreciation lunches at term-end and thank you’s sprinkled throughout the year, recognition awards are available from California State PTA and National PTA.

Typically, these special PTA recognitions are awarded at a program on February 17, our Founders’ Day. However, awards can be presented any time throughout the year to celebrate a volunteer, a health professional, an elected leader, an educator, an administrator, etc. The California State PTA Honorary Service Award (HSA) Program offers six awards from the Very Special Person Award to its highest honor, the Golden Oak Award. (Learn more about each award on page 9.)

With each award, an amount is dedicated to “pay it forward” in the name of the recipient — a gesture that says to the community and the recipient, “we value your contribution to our PTA” and dedicate funds to encourage others to “grow in your footsteps.” In turn, funds from the HSA program support California State PTA’s Grants and Graduating High School Senior Scholarships Program. The individual grants support volunteers, educators, nurses and counselors as they improve their mastery in a subject area. PTA grants provide funds for PTA units to translate materials and support unique projects. The graduating high school senior scholarship program provides a lifelong opportunity for California’s future parents and our next generation of PTA leaders.

Each Year the Cycle of Leadership Begins Anew in the PTA Garden

Today, leadership is central to the existence of your PTA just as it was 125 years ago. Everyone must be involved — officers, chairs and PTA members. Some traditions are sustained and new adventures begin. Basic business functions, such as communication, minutes, financial transparency, tax filings, meetings, and record keeping, will always require some attention. When well tended, this core work enables your PTA to identify its unique mission and programs for the year. In turn, the programs you create support children and families, and engage more members in PTA — these members will grow and become your PTA’s new leaders.

Tend your leadership garden and your PTA will flourish.
Founders’ Day is February 17, it’s a time to celebrate and grow PTA as we continue to build upon our commitment to the children and families within our communities and throughout California. Our founders, Alice McLellan Birney, Phoebe Apperson Hearst, and Selena Sloane Butler, represented women of imagination and courage. They had a simple idea — to improve the lives and futures of all children. They understood the power of individual action, worked beyond the accepted barriers of their day, and took action to change the world for all children.

As your PTA/PTSA grows, you will see the impact it has on the lives of all children and families. Founders’ Day is a special time to recognize how far we’ve come and where we’re going as an association. It is also the time for your PTA/PTSA to highlight the impact it has had on your community, no matter how big or small, and to showcase the relevant resources it provides for parents to help empower them to be champions of public education — for not only their child — but for all children.

Founders’ Day brings the opportunity to celebrate both the small and mighty things we’ve done together, as a community. Whether you are planning your first celebration or an annual one, here are some things to keep in mind.

1) Keep Founders’ Day Inclusive
PTA has celebrated 52 years of the integration of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers and the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers, which make up today’s National PTA. When our organization says “Every Child. One Voice,” we truly mean each and every child in our public schools. We advocate on their behalf to give them the best chance to thrive and grow on their path to adulthood in order to become the next leaders of our world.

What can you do?
- Set up a DEI Committee/Chair that can work with membership to provide translation and make your PTA efforts more inclusive.
- Develop membership communications that remind every part of your community of the value your PTA continues to bring to all children.

2) Find a Way to Celebrate Founders’ Day at Your PTA/PTSA
No matter how big or small the celebration, it is important that we take the time to recognize our commitment to the safety and wellbeing of all children and families. Whether that is at a membership table, a virtual town hall, or an in-person banquet or celebration, such events can recharge our members and encourage our community to become members because of the value that PTA brings.

By Jeff Price, Vice President for Membership Services
What can you do?

• Ask students what PTA means to them and build a sticky note wall.
• Ask your teachers to participate and join PTA to bring more value in and out of the classroom.

3) 125 Years Strong
Kool & The Gang gave us some inspiration: “There’s a party goin’ on right here, A celebration of PTA to last throughout the years, So share your good times and your laughter too…” Take the opportunity to use Founders’ Day not only as a celebration, but as a time to realign your PTA to the needs of your community.

What can you do?

• Send out a survey asking for feedback.
• Find ways to include translation services into your events and meetings.
• Look at your bylaws to find your PTA’s birthday. Then celebrate your own PTA’s birthday and the milestones your community has reached together.

Grow your membership.
Grow your impact.
Grow your PTA.

Growing as a leader by developing a Founders’ Day event or celebration. Bring it to your PTA board and Principal to see what you can do to start a Founders’ Day event (whether virtual, hybrid, or in-person) depending on what your school district and insurance are currently allowing. Use your membership budget to turn your event into a part of your spring membership drive. And don’t forget about the Founders’ Day Membership Challenge: if you have 17 new memberships in the month of February you will earn a certificate! Be sure to continue celebrating 125 years of PTA with us and take part in all of the 2022 Membership Challenges & Incentives (scan the QR code to see them all).

Honorary Service Awards
Show your appreciation for dedicated volunteers, professionals and groups with our PTA service awards recognition program.

Choose from seven distinctive types of awards that include a certificate and a pin.

- Very Special Person Award (VSP)
  Recognize an individual or organization for their service to PTA.

- Honorary Service Award (HSA)
  Recognize an individual or organization for outstanding service to children and youth in your community, going above and beyond what is asked of them.

- Continuing Service Award (CSA)
  Recognize an individual or organization for ongoing or long-time service to children and youth, providing support year after year.

- Outstanding Teacher Award (OTA)
  Recognize a teacher for outstanding service to children and youth through PTA, school, or community.

- Outstanding Administrator Award (OAA)
  This award may be given to recognize an administrator for outstanding service to children and youth through PTA, school, or the community.

- Golden Oak Service Award (GOSA)
  The most prestigious of the Honorary Service Awards to honor an individual or organization that has made significant contributions to the welfare of children and youth in a school or community.

PTA Advocacy
- Held statewide parenting conferences teaching effective advocacy
- Sponsored legislation to bring arts back to schools
- Established Cultural Arts grants for unit, council & district PTAs
- Supported $105M ongoing funding for arts and music and $500M for P.E.
- Initiated “SMARTS – Bring Back the Arts” campaign
- Moved California State PTA headquarters to Sacramento
- Consolidated resources creating California State PTA Toolkit
- Provided training for PTA leaders at “PTA University”
- PTA U held at UCLA
- PTA advocates visit every California senator and assembly member
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California State PTA has a long history of advocating for children. The foundation of our organization is rooted in advocacy. This year marks a huge milestone for PTA as we proudly celebrate 125 years of PTA’s mission to positively impact the lives of all children and families. Here are some advocacy highlights from your California State PTA history archives.

**Kindergarten for All Children**

Education was a top priority for our PTA founders. Phoebe Apperson Hearst was an education champion and recognized the need for early education for children of all backgrounds. She founded the first free kindergarten, open to all children. At the 1911 National PTA Convention, delegates supported legislation to make kindergarten part of the public school system.

Last year, California State PTA supported two kindergarten bills that may be considered further in 2022: Assembly Bill 966, which would expand the Full-Day Kindergarten Facilities Grant Program, and Senate Bill 70, which would require kindergarten before beginning first grade. [Our California State PTA resolution on Early Care and Education for all of California’s Children (2019) urges an investment in early care and education with “the goal of making high-quality, publicly funded early care and education available to all children.”]

**Immunizations for the Health and Safety of Children and Families**

PTA has supported mandatory vaccinations throughout our 125-year history. In 1908, the PTA supported the movement to combat tuberculosis including offering parent education programs. In the 1950s, schools collaborated with parent-teacher associations to promote the Salk polio vaccine program.

In 2021, California State PTA reiterated long-held support of the use of vaccines to protect the health and safety of children and families across California.

The California State PTA Vaccination position states, “California State PTA believes that vaccination is a proven deterrent to diseases that in previous generations have impacted large numbers of children annually.”

- Carol Green, California State PTA President
Preventing Underage Drinking, Vaping & Smoking

PTA addressed smoking by minors starting as early as 1926 with a National PTA resolution urging action to eliminate youth smoking. In the 1920s, the California State PTA approved a resolution regarding the sale of cigarettes to school age children. The PTA joined the California Interagency Council on Drug Abuse in the 1960s and in the 1990s, developed a “Kids at Risk” legislative agenda.

The “Alcohol and Tobacco Use in Youth: Education, Prevention and Intervention” resolution (approved in 2002) identified the need for community-based, youth-oriented alcohol and tobacco programs to address prevention and intervention strategies on underage drinking and smoking.

Education for All Students

In the 1930s, California State PTA supported legislation on the education of migrant children. In the 1960s, California State PTA prepared “How to Prepare Your Child for School” with Spanish language tapes. In 1970, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers merged with the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers to become one organization.

In 2021, California State PTA created an equity agenda to address the needs of all children. California PTA supports bills that address income and racial inequality; the need for quality childcare and early learning for all children; meeting the physical, social, emotional and mental health needs of children; the need for equitable and adequate school funding; the recruitment and development of a diverse educator workforce; and a culturally relevant and responsive curriculum. Read on our website the full list of bills supported by the California State PTA to address inequities: capta.org/advocacy-agenda-for-equity-2021.

Prioritizing School Funding

Since the 1970s, California State PTA has urged that public school finance be a top priority. In the 1980s, PTA supported the revision of the state tax structure for public education and in the 2000s worked to pass an initiative requiring a 55% majority for passage of local school bonds.

California State PTA continues to advocate for additional funding for our public schools. Resolutions supporting school funding include the Adequate and Equitable State School Finance System (1987), California K-12 Public School Funding Crisis (1998), and Improving and Stabilizing Education Funding (2018). Most recently, California State PTA supported Proposition 13 (the Public Preschool, K-12, and College Health and Safety Bond Act of 2020), which narrowly failed.

For 125 years, PTA has demonstrated time and time again our commitment to the health and well-being of our children. We support the growth of the whole child in all areas. We will continue to strive to build a future where all of our children can grow through eradicating inequality and inequity. California State PTA remains committed to being a powerful voice to better the lives of every child in education, health and safety.

We look forward to sharing more successes as we continue to celebrate our 125th year. Stay tuned for more advocacy highlights from your California State PTA.

Read more about Phoebe Apperson Hearst:
From the time children are born until they reach adulthood, their families play a vital role in their learning and growth. Our Family Engagement Commission has gathered some ideas for keeping your involvement effective as children grow. (Be sure to turn to page 14 to read the tips on family-school partnerships you can use to ensure your child’s success, too.)

Birth to Preschool >> Parents and caregivers influence their child’s cognitive, social, and emotional development from the time children are born.

- Sing songs, read books to your child, and enjoy time together inside and out in nature
- If your child is in childcare, be sure to communicate regularly with your provider

Preschool >> Interactions and activities that occur at this age help shape a child’s readiness for school. If your child does not attend preschool, you can still help them develop skills needed for school success. Adult-child interactions at home and in preschool help shape language and literacy development, as well as a general curiosity for exploring and learning.

- Encourage art, singing, dancing, and reading
- Use math concepts like counting and sorting objects
- Ask your child lots of questions and talk to them about what they are seeing, feeling, and hearing
- Seek out community events and activities at the library, community center, or by local groups that are for this age group

Elementary School >> Families who are involved at their child’s school show their student that they value education. Help to reinforce a child’s school lessons at home by engaging in home- and community-based learning experiences, help with homework and school projects. As our children progress through elementary school, they begin to become more independent and can take on more responsibilities.

- Familiarize yourself with what your child should be learning at each grade level (National PTA has guides for Language Arts and Math curriculum on their website and California State PTA, capta.org has a guide to arts education at each stage of schooling)
- Enhance their academics with time together - cooking, neighborhood walks, visiting museums, Zoos, or community performances
- Join a parent group, attend parent education meetings, read and respond to emails from your school and district
- Attend parent teacher conferences and stay in contact with your child’s teacher
- Participate in school events and parent education nights
- Attend Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) and School Site Council (SSC) meetings

By Heather Ippolito, Vice President for Family Engagement
Middle School >> Family engagement really shifts during these years. During elementary school families are far more involved on campus, while in middle school engagement is more likely to happen away from the classroom and at home. Families can help their student by talking about their expectations, promoting opportunities for their child to be independently responsible for their schoolwork, and by working together to develop concrete plans for the future.

- Keep lines of communication open (this is a time of big changes for your child)
- Make sure your child is getting enough sleep and that they have the resources needed to successfully complete homework
- Continue your membership in a parent group, attendance at parent education meetings, reading and responding to emails from your school and district
- Volunteer at school events, find out what school committees need parents to serve as members
- Don’t be afraid to contact your child’s teacher, counselor, or the school administration if you have concerns about your child (they have many resources available to help)

High School >> Families should stay involved during their child’s high school years—there are so many new challenges for our kids during these years. As classes become more challenging and social pressures grow, having family support is important for young people.

- Understand graduation requirements for your school and create a plan with your child
- Talk about their future, including college and career paths
- Encourage them to participate in clubs, extra-curricular events, and school activities
- Visit colleges, help them identify and participate in work-based learning opportunities such as apprenticeships
- Attend events such as Back to School Nights, arts and sporting events so that you are familiar with the staff, students and culture of the school
- Offer to proctor exams, serve on school site councils, join booster clubs, and continue your membership in parent groups
- Support teachers, staff, and students with donations as requested or as able, and watch for volunteer opportunities that fit your skills, interests, and availability
- Participate in WASC accreditation meetings (parent involvement is a component of accreditation)

College/Early Career >> Our children still need support and guidance after high school. While parental involvement certainly does not look the same as it did back in elementary school, your child still needs you to provide a listening ear and emotional support.

- Give your child opportunities for different work and volunteer experiences, especially during summer breaks
- Help them work out their financial needs and responsibilities
- Network with friends who may be able to give input on your child’s career path interests
- If your child chooses to attend college, see if there is a group for parents, attend family weekends on campus

Join us on the California State PTA blog every Friday for Family Engagement Friday posts. We share our tips, tricks and all the latest in family engagement news for your school, PTA unit, and family to use.
Family-School Partnership Opportunities

When families and caregivers partner with schools, the impact for children is doubled. Here is a list of things that families can work with teachers and administrators to seek out, participate in, or advocate for in their local schools:

- Teachers and parents can work together to identify skills families can work on at home
- Establish regular two-way communication with families and host parent education events
- Include families in decision-making on campus, offer opportunities for families to get involved (either on campus and inside the classroom or helping from home)
- Conduct a parent needs assessment to ascertain the tools or knowledge families need to support their child’s education
- Help families understand how the middle school experience (including academics) can affect their child’s future success
- Prepare students and families for the transition to high school by providing high school tours/workshops, familiarizing them with high school culture and course options (including advanced or honors opportunities), plus extra-curricular activities
- Help families recognize how factors such as attendance and credit accumulation keep students on the path to on-time high school graduation and college and career readiness
- Share information about financial aid for college and the application process for families
- Provide a central “bulletin board” to post volunteer opportunities/internships to ensure that students have equal access to opportunities
- Host events on campus that feature local postsecondary options, including community colleges, technical education, and any internship programs
In California, college-readiness and college-going rates vary greatly by race and ethnicity. Black, Latino, Native American, and Pacific Islander students are less likely to be prepared for and enroll in college due to lack of access to resources.

The best way to ensure that all students have the option to attend a public university like a California State University (CSU) or University of California (UC) school is to provide access to resources and encourage A-G course completion in high school. Currently, only 43% of 9th graders graduate high school and complete the A-G requirements. Not only does this vary by race and ethnicity, but also by socioeconomic status. Students who receive free and reduced-price lunch, or whose parents do not have a high school diploma, are half as likely as their peers to complete the A-G requirements.

We know that all parents want the best for their children. Our schools must do better, and you can help!

You can make a difference by taking these three steps today!

1. Advocate for your school to offer high-quality A-G approved courses.

2. Encourage your school to use the latest state grant fund to offer A-G approved courses.

3. Help students understand college requirements and the application process.

Data pulled from Public Policy Institute of California: Geography of College Readiness in California and Geography of College Enrollment in California.

Visit our website to read the article in full on our blog.
As a member of California State PTA, you deserve a few extra perks of membership.

Be sure to take advantage of exclusive offers and discounts available to PTA members like you!

Thank you for all you do to advocate for children, promote parent and family involvement in schools, and improve the lives of all children and families.

GET YOUR PERKS
capta.org/memberperks

Commemorate PTA with a Proclamation

In honor of PTA’s 125th Anniversary, a proclamation is an ideal way to remind your community of the great work your PTA/PTSA is doing and has done.

Getting a proclamation from a City Council, County Board of Supervisors, School Board or other government group is exciting for the kids and volunteers who make up your PTA.

Scan the QR code to learn more and download your California State PTA Proclamation Kit to get started. Be sure to let us know about it!