Upcoming Events & Deadlines

Mark your calendars for these important deadlines and exciting events!

☑ DECEMBER 20 > Insurance due through channels

☑ JANUARY 14 – 15, 2019 > 2019 California State PTA Legislation Conference in Sacramento

☑ FEBRUARY 1 > Applications due for Graduating High School Senior Scholarships

☑ APRIL 30 > Submissions due for Membership Challenges

 SAVE THE DATE

California State PTA Annual Convention
May 16-18, 2019 in Monterey, CA
About two years ago, I was driving through my old neighborhood and saw two boys walking home from school. One had a giant red mohawk haircut so he was easy to see, and the other was walking along the curb next to his friend. I could spot them at least two football fields away. As I drove closer to them, another car was coming towards me. The boys spotted the car and started to do the fist pump – you know, the international sign to get a trucker to honk their horn. There they are on the side of the road, pumping their fists in the air trying to get this car to honk their horn, and the car just drove past them. The boys slumped their shoulders over; they were so disappointed that the car drove past them without even a glance. As I drove towards them, they were determined to get someone to notice them so they started pumping their fists again at me.

So, what do you think I did? Of course I laid on my horn for the rest of the way down the road they cheered and jumped up and gave each other a high-five. They were so happy that I noticed them, that I took the time to honk my horn for them.

This reminded me of the PTA. The work that we do, in essence, tells our children – I see you, I notice you and what you need and the PTA is going to work hard to make sure that you, the kids in our schools and communities, have it. What I have also found is that our PTAs are humble. We don't do the best job at communicating all the amazing things we are doing to support our schools, staff and especially our kids.

So my message to you is to TOOT YOUR PTA HORN! Share your goals and what you are planning to accomplish this year with your parents, staff and community. Reach out to other community partners to see how you can team up with them. So many of our partners have the same goals as our PTAs do. If you are planning on hosting a family engagement night on mental health, reach out to your local National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). They have local support and resources that our PTAs can use to support your events. The goal is not to duplicate our work, but to expand it, and to include others in our communities to help support the children and families we all are serving together.

PTA helps create strong communities. We are the connection to information in your schools but we can also be the communication connection to other groups that are supporting our kids. As you hold your back-to-school events and think about the year ahead, think of how your PTA can toot their horn and share the great things you’re doing. Don't be humble, be bold!

Thank you for all you do – for believing in our children, and believing in PTA.

I believe in you,

Dianna MacDonald
California State PTA President
During this busy time of year, we know you are juggling so many responsibilities as PTA leaders. Because you are multi-tasking and wearing many hats, I really want to encourage each of you to not “reinvent the wheel” when it comes to resources that we can offer from California State PTA. If you are putting on a program about science or the arts, or you want to advance stronger family engagement practices at your local school site, count on us as a bridge to the latest information.

We just completed a parent survey regarding how aware parents and families are about the state-adopted Next Generation Science Standards. This fall, we will present the findings and work towards increasing the awareness level for all parents and families so they in turn can support their children, plus gain greater knowledge about what they should see taught in all K-12 science courses and lessons. We are fortunate to have a Bechtel grant to do this important work. If you have interest in learning more, please go the California State PTA website.

We are also doing some exciting work in the area of the arts and advocating for a full curriculum for every child. Research demonstrates that the arts are more than a luxury, they are an integral aspect of the learning process. The arts increase academic achievement in other subjects and can prevent or reduce absenteeism because the arts are engaging. We have launched, along with our partners from Create CA, an overview of what children across the state should learn in the arts disciplines of dance, music, theatre and the visual arts by the end of each grade level called The Parents’ Guide to the Visual and Performing Arts in California Public Schools. Download this resource at [www.bit.ly/VAPAGuide](http://www.bit.ly/VAPAGuide) and be sure to share it with your school community.

This wonderful partnership with Create CA has also created a public will campaign to outreach to the general public, the art community, parents, teachers, administrators and policymakers to transcend the old stereotypes that the arts are an afterthought in public education. Remember the “Got Milk?” campaign? Well, that is the type of campaign we are embarking upon. Please be on the lookout this November for materials and messaging about the campaign through the California State PTA website. We urge you to utilize the resources and toolkit that will be developed so you can turn your PTA parents and families into advocates for more arts in your local schools.

At the time of this writing, the legislature just adjourned the two-year legislative session and we are excited to announce that our sponsored bill AB 2878 – which will strengthen the definition of family engagement under the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) process – was signed by the governor. We are pleased that there was bipartisan support in the California State Senate and Assembly! Imagine every school district in California engaging parents and families in meaningful ways and local PTAs and their members having a greater voice in how funding is spent. This is our time to lay the foundation for the current and future generations of parents and families.

So, as you continue to juggle and multi-task this school year, don’t forget to access California State PTA resources, policy positions and statements and of course, our trusted California State PTA website. You will find so much from education policy to leadership tools. We want you to have more time for your friends and families and want to make running your PTA easy in 2018 – 2019 and beyond!

Sherry Skelly Griffith
California State PTA Executive Director
All year long, make sure you are taking advantage of all the amazing resources available to you! Be sure to check out The Parents’ Guide to the Visual and Performing Arts in California Public Schools, created by California State PTA in partnership with Create CA. This reader-friendly guide provides an overview of what children across the state should learn in the arts disciplines of dance, music, theatre and the visual arts by the end of each grade level. Learn more at www.bit.ly/VAPAGuide.

The California School Dashboard is another great tool to use to your school community’s advantage. The Dashboard reports on multiple aspects of a quality school environment, with both state and local indicators that include data on readiness for college and careers, graduation rates, progress of English learners, availability of basic services, school climate, family engagement and more. Learn more at www.capta.org/dashboard.

Tips for Running Your PTA
Your map to success!

In schools and communities, PTA volunteers are recognized as leaders and advocates. PTA includes an ever-changing set of volunteers, and developing leadership skills is an important step toward creating successful activities and programs and managing the business needs of the PTA.

Follow this road map to success when running your PTA over the next few months.

OCTOBER & NOVEMBER

- Hold monthly executive board meetings and association meetings per bylaws
- Remind treasurer to remit membership monthly with proper paperwork
- Attend monthly council meetings (if in council)
- Make sure your federal and state taxes are filed
- Ensure the RFF-1 gets filed with the annual fee
- Review the new insurance guide once it is received in the mail
- Remind treasurer to submit insurance payment and workers compensation form

DECEMBER & JANUARY

- Recruit and elect nominating committee if the next association meeting is later than January
- Get ready for a mid-year membership push
- Ensure treasurer is remitting membership monthly with proper paperwork
- Attend monthly council meetings (if in council)
- Work on council mid-year report and check list and make sure it will be completed in time
- Plan your Founders’ Day celebration, program, awards, etc. for February
Joining PTA Has Never Been Easier!

More than $45,000 members have joined PTA using TOTEM, California State PTA’s new electronic membership system, as of October 1. We heard from leaders at all levels of PTA about what leaders and members wanted in an electronic membership system and worked with developers to create TOTEM. Our members wanted a system that is safe, secure and makes it easy to join PTA. Leaders wanted convenience, easy membership lists and less paperwork. After several months of testing and incorporating feedback from leaders at all levels of PTA, California State PTA is excited to announce the TOTEM electronic membership system is ready for all PTAs!

The new system is available to every PTA in California and directly deposits dues into unit, council (if in council), district and state bank accounts. That means less work for leaders and fewer delays in membership reporting.

THE GREAT NEWS IS: OUR LEADERS ARE LOVING IT!

“Our council has over 1,300 members and two of our units are well over 400 members each, and it’s only the beginning of the school year. This was the best idea ever!”
—Adrianne Hass, council PTA leader

“We love the TOTEM system at West Creek Academy! We have promoted it by including the link in emails, on our website, on our Facebook page and via text. Our families have expressed how easy it has been for them to use, too! Thanks, California State PTA, for bringing electronic membership to us!”
—Leslie Powell, unit PTA leader
We’ve also received suggestions about how to improve TOTEM, and because of your suggestions, TOTEM has added new features.

- Language Support – TOTEM now supports multiple languages including Spanish, Chinese, French, Tagalog, Japanese and Arabic. Visitors with a non-English browser preference will see the pages automatically translated into their language.

- Donor & Donations Report – Associations can now view and export details on all their donors and donations.

- Member Email List Export – Download your full member email list, except for any members who have opted out from the notification settings.

MORE GREAT UPDATES ARE COMING SOON!

If your PTA is not using the system yet, we are happy to help. Email emembership@capta.org if you have any questions, suggestions or success stories.

“"The banking was quick and easy to set up … even for someone who is not computer savvy!”
—Rosemary Baldaseroni, Thirty-Fourth District PTA President

“I am amazed at how fast and easy it is to set up!”
—Abby Fellman, Fourteenth District PTA President

Hundreds of units across California are already using the system and seeing immediate benefits for their leaders and their members. Plus, there are a variety of resources to help you get started including an overview of the basics and detailed how-to training videos through the TOTEM Help Desk. We’re also working to develop a user guide and how-to instructions for step-by-step reconciliation. Learn more at www.capta.org/electronic-membership-system.
PARTICIPATE IN MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGES TO WIN $200 FOR YOUR PTA

Membership is PTA’s strength and our voice. We want all of our local PTAs to have the tools they need to increase membership. Find all challenges and submission information at www.capta.org/incentives-and-awards.

MEMBERSHIP MARKETING CHALLENGE

We’ve come up with 19 ideas to market your PTA. These strategies have been successful and we think you should give them a try. If you complete 10 or more ideas and submit the online form, you will win our Membership Marketing Challenge! Your PTA will receive a certificate and a special ribbon at convention. You’ll also be entered into a drawing to win $200 for your PTA!

Ten lucky PTAs will win the cash prize. Do you have another great membership strategy? Share it and we’ll count that too.

MEMBERSHIP INCREASE CHALLENGE

This challenge is easy – all you have to do is increase your membership numbers from last year! The deadline for this challenge is April 30, 2019.

Each unit that increases its membership number over last year’s number will receive a certificate and pin acknowledging the accomplishment, and will be entered into a drawing for cash prizes. For every 50 additional members the local unit will receive an additional drawing entry. No need to fill out any forms – just remit your membership dues as you usually do and we’ll count the members in the state office by the end of April.

We will be awarding ten $200 cash prizes to local PTAs.

READY, SET... REMIT!

PTA units that have membership dues for at least 30 members (through proper channels) into the California State PTA office by October 30 will receive a certificate from California State PTA. No application required!

Units remit per capita dues through channels or through the TOTEM electronic membership system for 30 or more members by October 30. Each unit PTA must adhere to the due dates set by their council and/or district PTA. Councils and districts set their own due dates in order to meet the state PTA deadlines. When sending in your remittance to your council and/or district PTA, please allow additional time for them to process and mail checks to the state PTA office. Memberships submitted through the new online system (TOTEM) are forward automatically.
TIPS AND RESOURCES – JUST A FEW CLICKS AWAY

If you are looking for ways to increase membership, tips for having engaging programs or resources on running an amazing PTA, there is lots of help available on the California State PTA website.

You will find resources, sample fliers, posters and marketing materials in many languages with just a few clicks. Scroll all the way down to keep discovering tips and resources, including a few documents to help you set goals.

Setting membership goals helps everyone know where you are going. Studies show that setting goals is an effective strategy to actually achieving those goals. California State PTA has a goal-setting template to help you know where you have been, where you want to go and how to get there. We suggest coming up with an overall goal, monthly goals and special group goals such as men, teachers, community members, etc. View all of this and more at www.capta.org/building-membership.

LOCAL PTA LEADER KIT FROM NATIONAL PTA

Have you visited www.ptakit.org yet? This website from National PTA is your year-round resource to support all of your PTA leadership needs. You will find strategies, tips and turn-key tools to ensure your success.

After registered to access the site, you will receive a DIY Kit for Membership Growth in the mail, which contains everything local PTA leaders need for a do-it-yourselfs membership plan. Supplies are limited, so register today and start increasing your PTA membership!
Providing a healthy lunch provides your child with good nutrition that helps him or her function their best in school and supports a lifelong habit of healthy eating. Provide a variety of healthy and colorful items that look appealing.

- **Grains** – Whole grains give kids B vitamins, minerals and fiber to help them feel fuller longer so they stay alert to concentrate at school
- **Fruits & Vegetables** – A variety of fruits and vegetables helps kids get the nutrients and fiber they need for good health
- **Milk** – Children and teens need the calcium, protein and vitamin D found in milk for strong bones, teeth and muscles. Give them low fat or fat-free milk for even more health benefits
- **Protein** – Meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, peas, eggs, nuts and seeds provide many nutrients including protein and iron
- **Water** – We all need water, but especially kids! Water satisfies thirst and does not have sugar or calories

Now that you’ve been packing your child’s school lunches for a few weeks, here are a few new ideas for fun lunches from Action For Healthy Kids:

- Turkey and cheese roll-ups, plus sliced cucumbers, some blueberries and yogurt
- Refried bean and cheese quesadilla with salsa and chopped avocado, plus a few strawberries
- Slice of whole grain bread topped with pizza sauce, mozzarella cheese, sliced red or yellow pepper, plus a side of carrots and low-fat dressing
- Hard-boiled egg, cubed cheese, carrot sticks, pretzel sticks and hummus
- Give sandwiches a fun twist by turning them into kabobs. Alternate turkey, low-fat cheese and grapes on a popsicle stick
- Stuff pita pockets with your kid’s favorite veggies and spread a low-fat dip inside. Or make a healthy pita pocket pizza by dressing the inside with pizza sauce, mozzarella cheese and turkey, ham or veggies

Your child will look forward to seeing what they got in their lunch box if you turn it into a bento box. Choose a food from each of the five food groups and place them in each section of your bento box. Use silicon baking cups or single serve applesauce cups to create additional sections in your box for a fun surprise!

To learn more about the link between good nutrition and student success, visit [www.capta.org/nutrition](http://www.capta.org/nutrition).
Give sandwiches a fun twist by turning them into kabobs. Alternate turkey, low-fat cheese and grapes on a popsicle stick!

Parents are the most important influence in their child’s lives – and that influence includes food and physical activity choices. As a parent, you have the opportunity to directly influence your child’s behaviors and create a lifelong, healthy eater. Healthy eating and good nutrition start by making nutrient-rich, healthy food choices (foods with large amounts of vitamins and minerals in fewer calories) from all of the food groups. Choosing a variety of nutrient-rich foods as the foundation of what you eat can help you live a longer, healthier life.

Take time – as frequently as possible – to eat together. Children who eat with their families regularly tend to eat healthier and have better nutritional status than those who do not. Family meals don’t have to be fancy or limited to dinner. Eating breakfast together as a family is a great way to start the day. And just sitting down and eating as family is nearly as important as the food itself. Shared meals create time for connection and learning. Family meals are also linked to improved language skills, better academic performance and a reduced risk of substance abuse and behavioral issues. The time spent together during a meal can also be a great time to engage your children about school and ask questions about what they learned.

Learn more at www.capta.org/nutrition.