

# PTA<sup>®</sup> in California

everychild.onevoice.

OUTREACH ISSUE

Official NEWSLETTER OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE PTA

MAY 2004

## President's Message...

Dear Administrators and School Parent Leaders:

As president of California's largest volunteer organization, it is with great pride that I invite you to read our special edition of *PTA in California*.

The mission of the California State PTA is to empower and support our members with skills in advocacy, leadership, and communication to positively impact the lives of all children.

We cannot do this alone. It takes the assistance, understanding and support of all our education partners to ensure we achieve success. This special edition of our newsletter offers an overview of the key priorities, programs, and initiatives of PTA as well as ways in which PTA and school administrators can work effectively in partnership to improve the academic achievement of all children.

The California State PTA Board of Managers consists of 130 professional volunteers who represent our over one million members. We provide ongoing and continuous leadership support to our PTA districts, councils and units throughout the state as well as support to administrators who need assistance working with their parent population.

PTA leaders throughout the state are trained to present the National PTA Building Successful Partnerships (BSP) program that focuses on the six core content areas of the National Standards for quality parent involvement. Presenters will come to your schools at no cost.

Each year we hold a convention that is attended by more than 5,000 members. The delegates adopt resolutions that set the direction of the organization as well as receiving further education and training. This year the convention is being held in Long Beach from May 3-6; in 2005 Sacramento is the venue April 28-May 1.

*All children* for PTA means *all children*, whether children are in PTA schools or not. *All children* means that as an organization we have an obligation to reach out to under represented populations, as we have with our Hispanic Initiative Program. As one of three states nationally to develop a successful Protégé and Mentor program we empower, support and train Hispanic parents on how to support their children's education and work with schools as partners. This program began in San Diego and we are replicating the program throughout the state.

Our goal is clear. We want what is best for *all children*. We know that an effective partnership between parents and educators will ensure and enhance the quality of public education for every child.

We invite you to learn more about PTA, to ask us for any assistance, and to join with us for the sake of all children. You may learn more about our organization and programs by visiting our Web site at <[www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org)> or the National PTA Web site at <[www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)>. I welcome any questions or concerns you may have and I look forward to working with you in our goal to speak for every child with one voice, cada niño con una voz.

Carla Niño, California State PTA President



PTA—Making A Difference  
In homes, schools, communities,  
California and nationally!

---

## Operating Authorities

---

Certain authorities are necessary for a group to work in an organized manner to achieve the group's goals. In the nonprofit world, a group wants to have the authority to operate without income being taxed and with the ability to have contributors deduct donations.

The California State PTA has complied with all state and federal requirements to qualify as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Each PTA in California is included in the group exemption issued to the California State PTA upon organization and as long as the local PTA (unit, council, district) follows the requirements as outlined in the bylaws to maintain good standing.

A charter is used to establish the formal existence of a group. Years ago the California State PTA filed "Articles of Incorporation" to formally establish the statewide organization. A copy of the Articles is included in the *Toolkit* on the back of the "Bylaws" section tab. The California State PTA issues a charter to every new PTA to formally establish that group as a part of the organization.

The California Corporations Code sets parameters by which a nonprofit organization is to operate in the state. The organization must enact bylaws to comply with the requirements set in the Corporations Code. The California State PTA continues to seek legal counsel and to update the bylaws for local PTAs to comply with the requirements of the Internal Revenue Service, the California Franchise Tax Board and the Corporations Code of California, as well as State and National PTA requirements for continued affiliation. Each local PTA must use the standard bylaws prepared by the California State PTA, but does not need to seek independent professional advice to insure compliance with these requirements.

While the existence of the various requirements may seem onerous at first, following the requirements provides protection for the individual volunteers, the local school staffs and the organization. The members of the California State PTA Board of Managers are prepared to provide assistance with concerns on these requirements.

## PTA Meetings Held on School Property

The California Education Code §38134 states that the governing board of any school district is to authorize use of school facilities or grounds within its control to nonprofit organizations authorized to promote youth and school activities. PTA falls under this description.

It further states that any school district authorizing use of school facilities or grounds shall be liable for any injuries resulting from negligence of the school district in the ownership and maintenance of those facilities or grounds. Any group using the school facilities shall be liable for any injuries resulting from the negligence of the group during the use. The school district and the group

shall bear the cost of insuring against the respective risks and shall bear the costs of defending itself against claims.

Under this provision, the school district and the PTA are each responsible for liabilities arising from their own negligence in connection with the meeting. Therefore, the PTA is not to be named as an additional insured, indemnified, defended, and/or held harmless in connection with use of school property.

PTAs may contact the California State PTA Insurance Broker, Armstrong/Robitaille, (800) 733-3036, with any questions or concerns regarding holding meetings on school property.

*Finance Commission*

## PTA Resources In Finance

With new PTA financial officers taking office every year, it is extremely important that they understand PTA financial policies and procedures. The Finance section in the *California State PTA Toolkit* outlines the way PTAs should handle cash and receipts. When proper money handling procedures are used, the chance of funds being mismanaged is reduced. PTA procedures, if followed, create a paper trail. This paper trail helps provide the documentation to prove to the membership that leaders are being responsible with the PTA's money. All income and expenses should be recorded, and monthly reports should be presented to the executive board and membership.

Another resource is the Insurance Loss and Prevention

Guide. California State PTA requires that all unit, council and district PTAs participate in the California State PTA insurance program. This insurance guide explains what insurance coverage is provided. It also advises what programs and activities are permitted. If a mishap takes place during a PTA event or fundraiser, it is possible that PTA could be named in a lawsuit. It is essential that a PTA discuss with the insurance carrier the details of a fundraiser or program as they relate to product liability and personal injury.

PTA has experienced leaders that can answer your question or direct you to the financial information you need. Help is only a phone call or e-mail away.

*Finance Commission*

---

## PTA and Public Education

---

Most people automatically think of public education when they hear the PTA name, a fact that PTA is immensely proud of. PTA was founded to enhance the education of parents and children, to create stronger families and support public schools. PTA has adopted the basic premise that parents are their children's first teachers and helps them develop the skills that they need to assist their children. The PTA has a strong support and training network on the national, state and local levels. Parents learn and strengthen their skills in PTA to influence, aid and change the public schools to improve their students' success.

PTAs are active worldwide in advocating for a better educational system. The organizational focus on children allows PTA to consider all aspects of education with equal weight and to advocate for each child's opportunity to reach his or her potential. PTA hasn't lost sight of this objective for over one hundred years.

Information and access to educational processes and procedures is an expectation of every PTA whether in the national, state or local area. PTA units, councils and districts have multiple exposures to significant information concerning legislative activity, assessment, school safety, and staff preparation. California State PTA has a highly developed communications network, including an outstanding Web site, that keeps PTAs informed of developments in education throughout the state and nation.

The California State PTA represents its members at many national and statewide meetings and with organizations. The

California State PTA is an active participant in the Education Coalition, a coalition of many of the state's educational unions and organizations. As a founding member of EdSource, a highly esteemed oversight organization, the California State PTA holds a seat on their board of directors. There are five state PTA members on the Committee of Practitioners (COPs) on Title I, appointed by the State Board of Education.

The California State PTA Education Commissioners serve on California Department of Education's special education committee, on the board of the Center for the Advancement of Reading, and in career and technical education organizations. Many studies and explorations in education include California State PTA Education Commissioners to represent parent and community members.

PTA's legislative advocates are well known in Washington and Sacramento. They present well-researched and organizationally supported positions to PTA members. They also coordinate support or opposition campaigns concerning legislation that affects students' education, health, and safety. PTA is well respected as a thoughtful and powerful ally or opponent on education issues.

The California State PTA is proud of the depth and breadth of our experience and involvement in education in California. Thousands of PTA members are making a difference by working in public schools, serving on site councils or school boards, volunteering in classrooms, supporting bond campaigns and watching over all children. Each of these people is living the PTA motto—**everychild.onevoice.**

*Education Commission*

---

## Community Concerns Issues and PTA

---

The California State PTA Community Concerns Commission is an issue-related commission that works on issues or problems that originate in the community. Working with various state organizations keeps PTA abreast with current concerns, solutions and prevention methods which we share with our membership.

Our membership, in turn, provides the commission with issues that concern them in the form of resolutions, legislation, or simply by contacting us. Last year a resolution, "Alternatives to Zero Tolerance" was adopted by our convention delegates. It directed us to provide our PTAs with methods and information on alternative ways to deal with substance abuse in the schools. Materials were gathered from our information sources and were provided to our membership through our PTA Web site and mailings.

At the 2004 PTA convention the Community Concerns Commission will provide conference speakers on current topics of concern: Bullying, Peer Relationship Violence Prevention, Child Lures, and Internet Safety.

In the legislative arena, we screen bills presented by the Legislature, following and taking positions on those bills we feel affect our children and communities. The California State

PTA is highly respected by legislators and they seek and respect our input on current legislation. This year we have worked on legislation to provide safe routes to schools, limit children's access to violent video games, prevent students from being questioned by the police at school without parental knowledge or consent and other subjects.

The California Bar Association has produced a new edition of their booklet, "Kids and the Law," which will be distributed to our convention delegates in both English and Spanish. Copies of the booklets are available upon request from the California State PTA office. We also work with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the State School Attendance Review Board, prevention specialists from the California Youth Authority and California Department of Justice and many other organizations interested in child protection and safety. Information from these organizations keeps our parents knowledgeable.

Being a member of your local PTA/PTSA does provide you with a huge support team, ready to assist you with your community concerns.

*Community Concerns Commission*

## PTA and Health

A quick scan of any school site or district shows that there are many children's health issues. Parents are concerned with issues such as sodas or junk food at school, prevention of drug and tobacco use, lack of physical education classes and many other topics. Parents can join together in PTA to strengthen their voices when advocating for solutions which promote healthy lifestyles and disease prevention. PTA informs and educates parents when a critical health issue arises by collaborating with other interested members of the community. Health Fairs, parent education programs at the school and newsletters spread the word about important health concerns.

Another effective way to address health concerns at your school or school district is to work through a school health council. The first step is to identify the school or district person responsible for health issues. Ask whether a school health council already exists (it may be known by a different name) and offer to participate. One may be started where none exists. For further resources on starting a health council, see the March 2004 issue of *The Communicator* (available on the California State PTA Web site, <[www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org)>).

The health and welfare of children is a key concern of PTA.

*Health Commission*

## Successful PTA and Principal Partnerships

A successful partnership developed between the school site administrator and the PTA includes recognition of the duties and the responsibilities of each.

The School Principal is responsible for:

- Directing school staff and facilities
- Observing Education Code and school district policies and regulations
- Keeping PTA informed on school programs, problems and needs
- Being informed about PTA policies and procedures
- Keeping channels of communication open

The PTA is responsible for:

- Providing leadership for PTA volunteers
- Planning and implementing PTA programs and activities
- Encouraging school staff to become involved in PTA
- Knowing and observing PTA policies and procedures
- Keeping channels of communication open

Good working relationships can become obstructed by:

- Lack of understanding between the school and the PTA
- Lack of cooperation in planning
- Gossip and cliques
- Lack of communication

*Leadership Services Commission*

---

## Communication Resources

---

What do public relations, newsletters, PTA Web sites, and media literacy have in common? They are all areas of responsibility for the California State PTA Communications Commission. Not all local PTAs have specific chairmen for these areas, but all are involved with a critical thread—communication. Every PTA should get its message out in an effective manner, whether to its members, the community, or a specific group with whom they are working. When PTA speaks out on its activities and concerns, it is building an image and marketing its work.

The California State PTA has many resources to assist local groups in their efforts. The Communications section of the *California State PTA Toolkit* has information to help PTA leaders promote PTA's concerns, including "talking points" about PTA, tips on speaking effectively and working with the media. The *Toolkit* also contains information about how to write press releases and letters to the editor, and general writing and publishing guidelines. Included in the *Toolkit* is helpful information on organizing a press conference and preparing Public Service Announcements, flyers, and brochures. The *Toolkit* also has how-to-do-it "job descriptions" for public relations, publications and Web site coordinators. The *Toolkit* is sent to all PTA units, councils and districts in California.

*PTA in California* is the official newsletter of the California State PTA; it is sent to all PTA unit, council and district presidents and other subscribers. It contains timely information

from the California State PTA commissions and committees. The newsletter is a powerful way the California State PTA informs local PTAs about issues of concern and provides them with resources for further information.

In the area of television and media literacy, the California State PTA encourages parents and children to develop critical viewing skills and limit television watching time. Viewing skills promote discussion among family members who learn to recognize the influence of program content and commercial advertising. Information about media literacy can be found in the *Toolkit*, on the California State PTA Web site, and on Cable in the Classroom's Web site, <[www.ciconline.org](http://www.ciconline.org)>. Cable in the Classroom is the cable television industry's public service initiative and is an allied agency of the California State PTA.

California State PTA's Web site, <[www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org)>, also has valuable information to help unit, council and district PTAs. Legislative alerts and "Sacramento Update" are posted to keep members informed about legislative issues, as well as articles on health, community concerns, parent involvement and education topics, and organizational information to help PTAs run smoothly. Recent issues of *The Communicator*, a camera-ready publication with leadership, convention, program, financial resources and a variety of other useful information can also be found on the Web site.

We encourage local PTAs to make use of these communication resources from the California State PTA.

*Communications Commission*

## Your Advocates in Sacramento

- ad•vo•cate** 1. v. to plead in favor of; defend, support or urge by argument; recommend publicly.  
2. n. one who pleads for or in behalf of another.

PTA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, which never supports or opposes candidates for any elected or appointed office. However, advocacy and action on legislation and ballot measures are an integral part of PTA work and are necessary to carry out the third Purpose of PTA, “To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.” Both the National PTA and the California State PTA, as the nation’s and California’s largest nonprofit children’s advocacy organizations, carry out active and effective legislation programs. How does the California State PTA Legislation Program work?

The California State PTA Legislation Platform, adopted by delegates to the California State PTA convention every two years in even-number years, defines areas of interest to PTA and the scope of legislation appropriate for PTA action. Legislation Policies, adopted by convention delegates in odd-numbered years, guide how action on legislation may be taken by the California State PTA and its units, councils and districts. Legislation policies are implemented through procedures adopted by the California State PTA Board of Managers. Sources of authority and direction for specific PTA positions on legislative bills and statewide ballot measures come from the Legislation Platform, convention resolutions adopted by PTA convention delegates, position statements and resolutions adopted by the Board of Managers, and National PTA convention resolutions and position statements.

The California State PTA Board of Managers fulfills its responsibility for action on legislation and ballot measures through the work of its commissions, committees and the legislation team. The Legislation Committee studies issues and makes recommendations on policies and ballot measures. PTA commissions in the subject matter fields of education, parent involvement, health, and community concerns study issues and determine PTA priorities for action on legislation. The Legislation Action Committee, whose members include the State PTA president, president-elect, representatives of the subject matter commissions and PTA district presidents, and the legislation team, is authorized to take specific positions on legislative bills identified as appropriate for PTA action.

The legislation team is responsible for screening thousands of bills introduced each year by state legislators in Sacramento. The team identifies bills that affect children and youth, works with the chairmen of subject matter commissions to select those bills that fit within current PTA programs and priorities, and prepares background information and authority for each bill. Once a position has been adopted, members of the legislation team are responsible for all further action on the bills, including relaying information on PTA’s position to legislators, and communicating PTA



California State PTA President Carla Niño speaks in favor of Proposition 55 in Los Angeles, December 18, 2003

actions to PTA units, councils and districts. The PTA legislation team includes a director of legislation, two advocates who work on education issues, one advocate each in the areas of parent involvement, community concerns and health, and a federal advocate. The team also has two consultants who provide assistance in researching bills and issues. The California State PTA has no paid staff for activities on legislation. All members of the team are PTA volunteers who serve on the California State PTA Board of Managers.

Finally, one of the most important components of the California State PTA legislation program is **YOU**, the grassroots PTA membership. The team in Sacramento is not effective without the support of the more than one million PTA members who are familiar with issues and resources, know their individual elected officials, and are motivated to take action on issues affecting children and youth. You can be part of PTA’s advocacy efforts by writing letters, making phone calls, joining the California State PTA Legislation Alert list at <[leginfo@capta.org](mailto:leginfo@capta.org)>, and most important, by helping others to understand PTA positions on legislation and ballot measures.

More information on the PTA legislation program can be found in the *California State PTA Toolkit*, and on the Web site, <[www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org)>. Information on the National PTA legislation program can be found in the National PTA’s Annual Resources, and on the National PTA’s Web site at <[www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)>.

Speaking in common concern on issues, PTAs in California and throughout the nation can form a powerful force in securing adequate laws and public policy that is best for the care and protection of children and youth.

## California State PTA Committed to “Bring Back the ARTS”

The California State PTA believes that all students in California public schools should have high-quality arts education programs from pre-kindergarten through grade twelve. Particularly today, at a time of looming budget cuts, the California State PTA stands firm in its commitment to create advocates for quality arts education at every school in the state. Bringing the arts back into our schools remains a top priority for one very simple reason. The arts help children do better in school and in life. Therefore, the arts are critically linked to PTA’s commitment to all children and all families.

Launched in 2000, the California State PTA SMARTS campaign seeks to raise the awareness of parents, teachers, legislators and community decision-makers about the value of arts education in our schools and the importance of the arts in the lives of our children. Most recently, the California State PTA’s traditional concern with arts education for all children has expanded from urging schools to provide art in the classroom to actively advocating to “Bring Back the ARTS” for every child in every California classroom. The organization’s broad-based advocacy efforts not only support legislation in Sacramento, but also grassroots advocacy in local communities. Advocacy efforts include:

**1. Legislative Proposals**—At the state level, the PTA works in the legislative arena to generate support for the arts with advocacy areas related to:

- Arts Education Mandate—the California Education Code should require comprehensive and sequential instruction in the arts for every student in all grade levels and the definition of “core curriculum” should specifically include “visual and performing arts.”
- Arts Assessment/Audits—the California Education Code should provide for voluntary visual and performing arts assessment items to be given to all schools.
- Arts Requirement for High School Graduation—the California Education Code should require that each student take a year of visual and performing arts to graduate from high school.
- Licensure: Arts Teachers—the California Education Code should provide for dance and theatre credentials for teachers.
- Textbooks and Instructional Materials—the California Education Code should require textbooks and instructional materials to include use of arts teaching strategies and imbedding the arts into all disciplines.
- Professional Development—in-service arts education

programs should be provided for elementary teachers, for subject matter teachers and administrators, including assessment and evaluation.

- School to Career/Technology—visual and performing arts should be included in school to career/technology legislation.
- Low Performing Schools—specifically recognize arts education as one of the viable strategies to school reform.
- Master Plan—these legislative steps should be included in the Master Plan for Education.

**2. Advocacy**—Grassroots, district and statewide advocacy continue to be central to PTA’s effort to “Bring Back the ARTS.” The Community Arts Education Project was created by the California State PTA and the California Alliance for Arts Education as a strategy manual to assess support and to advocate for quality arts education in public schools. Currently, Phase II of the project is bringing training to school districts and school sites, thereby providing individual school communities with accurate information about arts education at their site(s) and enabling them to advocate for quality arts programs in their schools.

**3. Communication**—*PTA in California*, the California State PTA Web Site <[www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org)>, and the SMARTS e-newsletter help create a communication network that promotes the understanding of the positive impact of arts education.

**4. Leadership Training**—Information about the SMARTS Campaign is provided online and at all PTA leadership development programs. California State PTA offers conferences and workshops for unit, council and district leaders at its convention in May and as requested throughout the year. Additionally, the Special Projects Committee of the California State PTA works to identify innovative strategies for increasing arts advocacy and promoting arts education for all children.

**5. Partnerships**—California State PTA partners with arts organizations and arts-related allied agencies to increase the awareness and visible value of the arts in our schools and our communities.

The California State PTA believes that quality ARTS education supports student success, now and in the future. By joining with the California State PTA and unleashing the power of the arts in your community, you can make a difference for California’s children. By helping promote arts education you can ensure a brighter future for our students, our communities and our entire society.

---

## Member Benefits from PTA

---

PTA leaders often reference the importance of being a part of the larger organization, of being one of the millions of members and the voice that these numbers provide to assist our advocates in Sacramento and Washington. It is also important to understand the benefits that having a PTA on a school campus provides for the individual child in the classroom, for the individual member, and for the school community. When PTA is active on a school campus, such benefits are more easily and regularly provided.

### Benefits to the local school community include:

- Volunteer hours that substantially increase the ability of the school to provide more services to students.
- Ability to list PTA member volunteer hours as a positive value when applying for grants.
- Enrichment programs and activities that are not provided for in the school budget.
- Assurance that the California State PTA insurance program satisfies California Education Code concerning liability for use of school facilities by the organization.
- Ability to contact leaders at the PTA council or district for assistance in resolving local PTA problems.
- Opportunity to collaborate with other education, health, safety and child advocacy organizations.
- Opportunity to ask PTA to recommend individuals to serve on committees and task forces to examine issues and seek solutions.
- Opportunity to assist a local PTA in applying for California State PTA grants for parent education programs, translation of PTA materials, cultural arts programs and leadership development.
- Ability to reach parents of students through established PTA meetings and newsletters.
- Opportunity to reach uninvolved parents and promote the crucial communication between home and school.
- Opportunity to meet with parents to discuss local critical issues and concerns, either at a regular PTA meeting or separate parent/administrator meetings.
- Recognition that there is power in association.

### Benefits for the individual student include:

- PTA sponsored field trips, special assemblies and extra enrichment events, items often unaffordable for some families, or beyond the local school district's budget.
- Assurance to parents that PTA-planned activities are in compliance with the California State PTA insurance program, thereby eliminating student activities that are potentially hazardous.
- Use of PTA funds to benefit all students, not just the children of the best fundraisers, officers, teachers or largest donors.
- Opportunity for participation in the Reflections Program to explore and develop creative talents.
- Opportunity to interact with parents and other adults who care about all students in the school and who volunteer personal time to share special skills and talents with students.
- Assurance that no child will be exploited as a means for the PTA to raise funds.
- Assure that the PTA will continue to make sure students do not attend classes in buildings that are unclean, unsafe or unsound. (California State PTA led the fight to pass Proposition 39, which enables 55 percent of voters to decide local bond issues, and the passage of Proposition 47, history's largest statewide school bond measure, and the subsequent bond measure Proposition 55.)

### Benefits to the individual member include:

- Power to determine the organization's priorities, and vote on the budget and expenditures recommended by the executive board.
- Right to attend PTA meetings, ask questions and vote on issues.
- Right to vote in the election of officers, determining the future of the organization.
- Right to express opinions to the local representatives to the PTA council and district meetings, and to the elected delegates to the California State PTA convention.
- Right to seek election to a PTA office.
- Assurance that the California State PTA insurance program includes coverage for general liability, Workers' Compensation, bonding, and directors and officers liability.
- Opportunity to attend training workshops to develop the skills and knowledge to manage the organization whether in person or through the online National PTA e-learning programs.
- Access to information on issues and programs concerning the education, health, and welfare of children and youth.
- Access to material reproducible in newsletters and for programs.
- Availability of specialized PTA assistance for interactions with the Internal Revenue Service, California Franchise Tax Board, Attorney General's office and other governmental agencies to resolve questions on required nonprofit filings.
- Opportunity for personal growth as a parent and volunteer leader.
- Opportunity to apply for scholarships to continue one's education: graduating high school senior, classroom teacher, school nurse, counselor, and PTA volunteer scholarships.
- Access to PTA Web sites for information on issues and concerns that affect children and youth: PTA unit, council and district, California State PTA and National PTA.
- Participation in the shared network to learn of the most successful programs and activities from other PTAs.
- Opportunity to be a classroom volunteer.
- Opportunity to be better connected with the school, the principal and staff, and to learn what's happening at the school.
- Opportunity to be involved at school and participate in activities that enhance the educational environment at your child's school.
- Opportunity to acknowledge that you consider your child's education important and want to be involved. (Research consistently shows that when parents are involved, students achieve more—regardless of socioeconomic status, ethnic/racial background, or the parents' educational levels. Students whose parents are involved also generally have higher grades and test scores, better attendance, and more consistently complete homework.)
- Knowledge that the being part of a large, effective organization can accomplish the goals of that organization.

*Member Services Commission*

## Resolutions: PTA Members Involved in Advocacy

Any PTA member from any unit, council or district of the California State PTA has the opportunity to define the issues and determine the positions on which PTA will advocate before our national, state and local policy makers and local community members. The process involves resolutions that are written to specific criteria and include prescribed background research and are presented to PTA delegates from unit, council and district PTAs for consideration at the annual California State PTA convention.

Upon approval by the convention delegate body, resolutions are used by California State PTA legislative advocates and PTA leaders and members throughout California to inform and educate parents and community members about issues and to encourage and achieve the desired action as directed by the resolved sections of the resolutions. Topics for resolutions are numerous and include education; health; public, personal and school safety; the condition of children, youth and families; parent involvement; media; and state finance and governance; and more.

In order to be presented at an annual PTA convention, draft resolution materials are required by November 1 and final resolution materials are due January 15. Between November and January mentors assist each originating body or maker of proposed resolutions. The California State PTA Resolutions Committee has the responsibility to review the proposed resolutions, to determine if the submitted materials meet the resolutions criteria as defined in the *California State PTA Toolkit* section 2.9, and to submit a recommendation to the California State PTA Board of Managers regarding the submitted resolutions. The recommendation may include presentation to convention delegates, referral to a commission or committee of the California State PTA, or return to the originating body.

Through debate on the convention floor, issues are discussed and positions determined by delegates from throughout California. Since 1961, 266 resolutions have been adopted to frame PTA's work within California. Of those resolutions forwarded by California State PTA to National PTA for consideration, twenty were adopted by delegates from throughout the nation as issues deserving attention nationally.

The PTA resolution process brings awareness, educates and unifies individuals on issues of importance for the welfare of children and families. It is PTA membership, leadership, advocacy and outreach that make the "power" of PTA effective in communities, in California and nationally.

*Resolutions Committee*

## Be A Part of A PTA Empowering Experience

Did you know that PTA puts on an informative and empowering convention to help PTA leaders work effectively on behalf of children, youth and families?

PTA's annual convention, attended by over 5,000 people, includes general meetings and over 80 conferences to assist leaders in the work of PTA, provide information on a variety of issues, inspire through informative and motivational speakers, and provide opportunity to participate in decision making on resolutions that determine PTA's positions on issues. The convention also provides opportunity for delegates to meet others from around the state to exchange ideas and enjoy activities. Attendees have the opportunity to visit the exhibit hall where over 130 exhibitors offer a variety of ideas, products and services.

Participants return home with new ideas, improved skills and recharged energy. Convention is an excellent PTA investment, the ultimate leadership experience.

The convention is planned and staffed by volunteers, enabling us to keep costs affordable.

The 2005 California State PTA Convention will be held in Sacramento on April 28-May 1. Check our Web site, <[www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org)>, for updates on convention plans during the coming year and watch *PTA in California*, the official publication of the California State PTA, for more information. Plan now to attend the 2005 convention.

*Convention Commission*

## PTA and Student Involvement

The California State PTA believes involving youth is a commitment of our organization to accomplish common goals and encourage future advocates, community leaders, and responsible adults. In recognition of that commitment the California State PTA Board of Managers includes student members. Whether it is at the local or state level, budgetary and policy decisions have significant impact on programs that serve youth in our schools and communities.

Since youth are directly affected by these programs, involving them in the policy process is critical. The tremendous contributions that youth can make in working with adults will build stronger and healthier communities.

Student members of the Board of Managers prepared and researched a resolution on Youth Involvement for consideration by delegates at the 2004 California State PTA Convention. If it is adopted it will direct PTA action to encourage youth involvement in local and legislative policy making.

*Student Involvement Committee*

# No Child Left Behind: Parents Involved with Administrators and Teachers



Since enacted in 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) has become our nation's most comprehensive federal education policy. The law sets policies and procedures for public education in all states.

In January 2002, President George Bush signed into law Congress' revised and reauthorized version of ESEA, and renamed it the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Currently both names are used, but they refer to the same law.

Through the efforts of National PTA, ESEA expands and formalizes parent involvement to benefit student achievement. The parent involvement provisions were included in the law to ensure:

- Parents receive information in language they understand.
- Parents' participation on decision-making committees is expanded.
- Educators will have access to training on how to work with parents effectively.
- States will evaluate school-level parent involvement practices to ensure they are effective.
- Technical assistance will be provided to schools having difficulty implementing parent involvement activities.

Administrators and parents are encouraged to discuss how your school is meeting the goals of No Child Left Behind. Some questions to ask include:

- What are the administration's goals regarding parent involvement for the current school year?
- What parent involvement resources are available at the school?
- What is the school's budget for parent involvement, and is it sufficient?
- Does the school have a parent involvement policy?

—If so, how can parents obtain it?

—If not, how can parents become involved in helping the school draft and adopt a parent involvement policy?

National PTA urges administrators, parents and PTAs to take the following steps to keep parent involvement a priority in the implementation of ESEA:

- Meet together to discuss increasing parent involvement at your school.
- Discuss collaboration between parents, teachers, and administrators. What opportunities are there for parents to support teachers and serve on school committees?
- Ensure communication between school and home by developing materials in a language and format parents can understand.
- Work with school principals and staff to improve outreach to parents, using technology such as e-mail, Web sites, and listservs.
- Work with administration to calculate and find the funds necessary to implement parent involvement goals and the law's requirements.
- Learn how your school is achieving under the new accountability requirements, and, if applicable, inquire about supplemental service providers for your school.
- Work with school staff to keep parents informed of information in a timely manner.
- Ask about your school's report card, required by the law, to see if parent involvement is listed as an objective. Parents should speak with district officials to encourage such information to be included as a measurable objective on a school's report card.

*Parent Involvement Commission*



## Parents Empowering Parents (PEP) Guide

Originally published in 1991 by the California State PTA, *Parents Empowering Parents* is currently being updated to reflect the National Standards for Parent Involvement and our changing society.

*Parents Empowering Parents*, or PEP, is a resource to assist local PTA leaders to carry out an effective parent education and parent involvement program at their school. Each of the chapters in the guide is based on one of the six National PTA Standards for Parent Involvement:

- Communication
- Parenting
- Student Learning

- Volunteering
- School Decision Making and Advocacy
- Collaboration with Community

The loose-leaf PEP Guide contains information and ideas to:

- Promote PTA leadership in building strong home-school partnerships
- Assist parents with techniques to use in supporting their child's efforts in school
- Enhance parents' skills in working with their own child

The revised PEP Guide is in the final editing process and will be available in hard copy and CD by the Fall of 2004.

*Parent Involvement Commission*

# The California State PTA Hispanic Outreach Initiative

The National PTA launched its Hispanic Outreach Initiative early in 2003 as a pilot program in three areas of the United States. The purpose:

- To reach out to Hispanic parents
- Develop a close home–school relationship
- Work closely with the PTA
- Provide an excellent method by which PTA can reach out to embrace the diversity of California

The first step in that outreach was to develop a Mentor/Protégé program to train Hispanic parents to become leaders in their schools and communities and to encourage them to take a more active role in their child’s education.

Through the Mentor/Protégé program, potential leaders received one-on-one training to help develop them for all levels of leadership in PTA. The key to mentoring:

- Expanding insight
- Identifying needed knowledge
- Expanding the skills of the Protégés

Our journey began in early 2003 by identifying Mentors/Protégés within our target area of San Diego County. Our Mentors:

- Valued the development of their Protégés

- Committed the time and energy needed to establish and maintain a productive mentoring relationship
- Shared their knowledge and experience in PTA
- Coached, guided, listened, and established a rapport with their Protégés

Throughout the year our Protégés received training in leadership, advocacy, communication, attended conferences, and learned how to build partnerships.

In that time our Protégés have developed into dynamic speakers/presenters and have traveled, not only in their target area, but throughout California, meeting with Hispanic parents to emphasize the importance of their involvement in their child’s education.

Because of the Outreach Initiative a greater awareness has been placed on the translation of California State PTA publications into Spanish for easier access by our Spanish speaking parents.

With one year behind us, what is next for our Protégés? Their training and development will continue and the California State PTA plans to expand the program to embrace the many diverse cultures in California.

## National Standards for Parent and Family Involvement

The California State PTA is currently working with the California Department of Education Family Area Network incorporating the “Six Standards of Parent and Family Involvement” into the revision of the California State Education Policies while implementing the Parent Involvement components of “No Child Left Behind.”

In 1998 the National PTA released a publication called *National Standards for Parent and Family Involvement Programs*. Today this publication is widely used to bring awareness and understanding of the need for parents to be actively involved in their child’s education and for partnerships to be developed between the home and school.

- Standard 1) Communication—is the foundation of a solid partnership
- Standard 2) Parenting—parents are a child’s life support system
- Standard 3) Student Learning—parents play an integral role in assisting student learning
- Standard 4) Volunteering—parents are welcome in the school and their support and assistance are sought
- Standard 5) School Decision Making and Advocacy—parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families
- Standard 6) Collaborating With Community—community resources are used to strengthen schools, families, and student learning

Thirty years of research has proven beyond dispute the posi-

tive connection between parent involvement and student success.

When it comes to parent involvement and its powerful influence, the knowledge base is broad and clear:

- When parents are involved, students achieve more, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnic/racial background, or the parents’ education level
- The more extensive the parent involvement, the higher the student achievement
- When parents are involved in their students’ education, those students
  - have higher grades
  - have higher test scores
  - have better attendance
  - complete homework more consistently
- Students whose parents are involved in their lives have
  - higher graduation rates
  - greater enrollment rates in post-secondary education
- Children from diverse cultural backgrounds tend to do better when parents and education professionals collaborate to bridge the gap between the culture at home and the learning institution

Through the inclusion of the Standards, and the collaboration and partnership with the leading California agencies in parent involvement, the California State PTA is focusing on continued success in informing and educating parents of their need to take an active role in the education of their children.

*Parent Involvement Commission*

---

## Reflections Program

---

The National PTA Reflections Program is an arts recognition and achievement program for students, encouraging their participation in four areas: literature, musical composition, photography, and the visual arts. Participating in PTA's Reflections Program is an opportunity for students to explore and learn about various art forms. Artistic exploration and expression enhance and develop intellectual, social and physical skills. Creating art is a valuable learning process. The Reflections Program also helps parents encourage and recognize the continuous self-discovery of their children.

PTA's Reflections Program is designed to enhance rather than replace a quality arts education. It provides opportunities for students to express themselves and to receive positive recognition for their artistic efforts. Parents, teachers and community members all play a critical role in fostering a positive learning environment for children. Supporting the Reflections Program is one way adults can help create that environment.

Participation in the Reflections Program is organized by school grade. Student works are critiqued against others in the same grade division: Primary, Preschool–Grade 2;

Intermediate, Grades 3–5; Middle/Junior, Grades 6–8; and Senior, Grades 9–12. This allows recognition and judging of art works by appropriate developmental age and skill levels.

### 2004-2005 Reflections Program Theme *A Different Kind of Hero*

PTA believes all children deserve a quality arts education and encourages students to pursue artistic expression through participation in the Reflections Program. In its more than 30-year history, the program has encouraged millions of students across the nation and in American schools overseas to create works of art. Each year, the Reflections Program challenges students to create art that supports a specific theme. Students participate in the Reflections Program by submitting entries to their local PTA/PTSA. Any PTA/PTSA in good standing is eligible to sponsor a Reflections Program.

As with any student activity, parent involvement and support are very important. Children must make their own decisions about what to create. By creating their own work, children not only learn about the arts, but more importantly, they learn about themselves. *Member Services Commission*

## Awards for Special People

### Honorary Service Awards (HSA) Program

Did you know that the California State PTA has special awards that may be given to individuals or organizations in recognition for service to children and youth? The awards through this program, the Honorary Service Awards (HSA) Program, are available to honor those dedicated people. These awards may be awarded only by PTA districts, councils, units, and the California State PTA and should be presented by a duly authorized PTA representative at a PTA-sponsored meeting or at functions of allied groups.

The HSA program includes the Honorary Service Award, Continuing Service Award, Golden Oak Service Award, Very Special Person Award and donations to the HSA Program. A person may receive more than one of any of these awards. These awards may be given at any time, but many are given at the PTA Founders Day meeting in February.

Funds contributed to the HSA program provide resources for the California State PTA Scholarship and Grant Program. Explanation of the Honorary Service Awards (HSA) Program can be found in the *Toolkit* (Section 7.6.3) and the order forms which explain the cost can be found in Section 9, Forms, of the *Toolkit*, (Award Order Forms).

*Honorary Service Award Committee*

## Scholarships and Grants

One of the finest features of our California State PTA is the Scholarship and Grant Program, which provides help and support for people who are PTA/PTSA members and who are seeking to continue their education.

Grants are available to assist unit, council, and district PTAs and California State PTA commissions and committees to develop and implement programs in parent education, cultural arts, and leadership development. PTA units, councils, and districts may also use grants to translate state or National PTA materials into languages other than English. Scholarship funds are available to graduating high school seniors who have performed extensive volunteer service in the school and community, credentialed teachers, school nurses and counselors for advanced study, and to PTA volunteers with at least three years of PTA service.

This program is funded by contributions to the Honorary Service Awards Program. Upon recommendation of the Scholarship and Grant Committee, the California State PTA Board of Managers approves these funds annually.

We encourage PTA members to apply for and use these funds to their academic advantage as they work toward attaining higher education.

More specific information about availability, application, eligibility, and selection can be found in the *Toolkit* and on the California State PTA Web site.

*Scholarship and Grant Committee*

## Join the PTA Partnership

Do you want to learn more about the California State PTA? Are parents at your school interested in what PTA has to offer? What are your next steps?

Visit the California State PTA Web site

[<www.capta.org>](http://www.capta.org)

National PTA Web site

[<www.pta.org>](http://www.pta.org)

Meet with your local PTA leadership team:

Call (213) 620-1100 ext. 301

E-mail your request to

[<info@capta.org>](mailto:info@capta.org)

For specific questions contact the following at (213) 620 -1100:

Leadership Services – ext. 301

Education – ext. 305

Health – ext. 306

Community Concerns – ext. 304

Parent Involvement – ext. 307

Finance – ext. 309

Advocacy – ext. 311

## This Issue

President's Message . . . . .	Page 1
Operating Authorities . . . . .	Page 2
PTA Meetings Held on School Property . . . . .	Page 2
PTA Resources in Finance . . . . .	Page 2
PTA and Public Education . . . . .	Page 3
Community Concerns Issues and PTA . . . . .	Page 3
PTA and Health . . . . .	Page 4
Successful PTA and Principal Partnerships . . . . .	Page 4
Communication Resources . . . . .	Page 4
Your Advocates in Sacramento . . . . .	Page 5
California State PTA Committed to "Bring Back the Arts" . . . . .	Page 6
Member Benefits from PTA . . . . .	Page 7
Resolutions: PTA Members Involved in Advocacy . . . . .	Page 8
Be a Part of a PTA Empowering Experience . . . . .	Page 8
PTA and Student Involvement . . . . .	Page 8
No Child Left Behind - Parents Involved with Administrators and Teachers . . . . .	Page 9
Parents Empowering Parents (PEP) Guide . . . . .	Page 9
The California State PTA Hispanic Initiative . . . . .	Page 10
National Standards for Parent and Family Involvement . . . . .	Page 10
Reflections Program . . . . .	Page 11
Awards for Special People . . . . .	Page 11
Scholarships and Grants . . . . .	Page 11
Join the PTA Partnership . . . . .	Page 12

**If you are no longer a PTA president, please forward this and all mailings immediately to your successor.**

Articles appearing in this newsletter may be reprinted in PTA unit, council and district newsletters only. Please credit the California State PTA.

### PTA IN CALIFORNIA

930 Georgia Street, Los Angeles, California 90015  
PH (213) 620-1100  
FAX: (213) 620-1411  
World Wide Web address <[www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org)>  
Email <[info@capta.org](mailto:info@capta.org)>

Outreach Issue May 2004, Official newsletter of the California State PTA, Volume 66, No. 5. Issues published annually: Summer, Summer/Fall, Fall, Fall/Winter, Outreach Issue May 2004, Spring, Spring/Summer. 2003-2004. Subscription rate \$5.00. Circulation 6,800. ©2004 California Congress of Parents, Teachers, and Students, Inc. All rights reserved. PTA® is a registered service mark of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

President: Carla Niño  
Vice President for Communications: Dinah Showman  
Editor: Kay Rookhuyzen  
Publisher: Sharon Bartholomew

The mission of the California State PTA is to represent our members and to empower and support them with skills in advocacy, leadership, and communication to positively impact the lives of all children.

*Adopted March 1999.*

CALIFORNIA STATE PTA  
930 Georgia Street  
Los Angeles, California 90015-1322

Nonprofit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Los Angeles, CA  
Permit No. 27408