



PTA campaign turns up the volume

California State PTA members and leaders have been raising their voices on behalf of children as legislators negotiate the state budget. PTA representatives played a big role in events supporting funding for education and other children's services at the Capitol and elsewhere this spring.

At the annual convention, delegates participated in the filming of a flash mob video. President Jo A.S. Loss spoke at a kickoff rally for "State of Emergency" activities at the Capitol on May 9. Many PTA leaders and members, including President-elect Carol Kocivar and Director of Legislation Debbie Look, participated in rallies and media events in cities up and down the state.

In addition, PTA members continue to communicate with their local legislators about the vital need to prevent deeper cuts to education.

To find out more about what you can do, visit the Cut\$ Hurt Kids page on the PTA website.

Convention draws more than 4,000 – and the Governor

Governor Jerry Brown joined thousands of parents and PTA members from across the state on April 28, to kick off the 112th Annual California State PTA Convention at the Long Beach Convention Center.

"Schools are the future, and you are the voice of those schools, so we've got to hear from you," Brown told the delegates.

More than 4,000 people attended convention, and the Governor's presentation drew even more as dozens of reporters and TV cameras showed up to cover his remarks.

It was a great start for an event with many highlights, including inspiring speakers such as a California Teacher of the Year, more than 75 workshops, performances by young artists, the election of officers, and the adoption of resolutions and legislation policies that guide the association's advocacy and public education efforts.

"PTA leaders and volunteers make a difference in the lives of children every day," President Jo A.S. Loss

told attendees during the opening meeting. Convention is the place where PTA leaders and members become even more effective and impassioned about the crucial work they do all year long.

Convention is also a place for networking, for making new connections and renewing friendships. And there's always time for laughter along with the work. The Big Beach Ball mixer even included dancing and games. Sleep in for PTA supported PTA health grants while raising awareness of the benefits of sleep. On the convention floor, there was an impromptu rally supporting the association's "Cut\$ Hurt Kids" campaign, complete with a special song just for the occasion.

Plans for the 113th annual convention are already underway. It will be held in Anaheim, May 9-12, 2012. (Don't worry, you'll be home in time for Mother's Day.)

Read more about this year's convention, starting on page 5.



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Generosity lives on in gift to scholarship fund

On October 15, 2010, California State PTA received a gift from a very special friend, Dr. Ralph E. White. Dr. White passed away on August 12, 2010 at the age of 100, but left an “enduring legacy,” as pointed out by his former colleagues at St. Joseph Hospital in Orange. He was affiliated with St. Joseph Hospital for 70 years, first as a practicing physician and, after his retirement, years as a volunteer.

Both Dr. White and his wife, Eleanor, contributed more than 24,000 hours of volunteer service over the last 32 years of his life.

As California State PTA members we can take special pride in the way our association helped a young Ralph White to set out on his path to become a truly accomplished and generous adult.

He was a senior in high school in the early 1930s in Santa Ana, in Southern California. Wondering how he was going to afford a college education, he applied for and received a California State PTA scholarship. That allowed him to start his studies, first at Santa Ana College and then Whittier College for undergraduate and pre-med classes. Dr. White then attended the University of California, Berkeley, to obtain his medical degree.

Dr. White did not forget this early assistance. Many years later, he singled out the California State PTA and its scholarship as the reason he was able to attend college and fulfill his dream of becoming a physician. In keeping with his generous spirit, Dr. White left a donation of \$25,000 to the Scholarship and Grant fund of the California State PTA. This act of

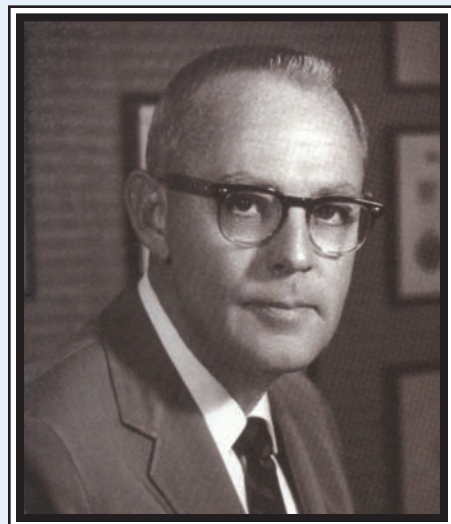


Photo courtesy of St. Joseph Hospital

Dr. Ralph E. White

kindness will help other high school seniors to fulfill their dreams.

See below for this year’s recipients.

139 high school seniors awarded PTA scholarships in 2011

The California State PTA Scholarship and Grant Committee is thrilled to announce the recipients of Graduating High School Senior Scholarships in 2011. A total of \$69,500 was awarded to these young men and women who have chosen to continue their education at some very fine universities and colleges. Congratulations to all of them, and best wishes on their journey. Scholarships are awarded at \$500 each.

FIRST DISTRICT

Augustyn, Luke
Barbe, Meagan
Barron, Victoria
Burroughs, Kristen
Cohen, Sarah
Crane, Aviana
Der, Jennifer
Gregg, Kelly
Hsu, Joyce
Joseph, Pamela
Kondo, Robert Alexander
Kwa, Jeremy
Lankey, Erick
Lindahl, Matthew
Merkley, Andrew
Ng, Joanne
Oghlian, Lisa
Oh, Chang Kyu
Pinto, Christine
Siswanto, Kathleen
Tran, Stephanie
Welker, Johnathan

THIRD DISTRICT

Nguyen, Lina
Paterson, Luke
Rutherford, Jenna

FOURTH DISTRICT

Berk, Jordyn
Bishop, Grant
Buscaino, Brandon
Cardenas, Karissa
Clark, Katherine
DeBella, Anna
Fixa, John
Garcia, Micaela
Gibo, Kasidy
Grabar, Katherine
Halvorsen Jr, Erik
Hensch, Nicole
Justl, Amanda
Kang, Ellen
Laski, Marissa
Mitrak, Danielle
Miyahara, Avery
Park, Annie
Parsons, Cassandra
Paul, Michael
Pimentel, Sabrina
Rabago, Chad
Rezai, Kristine
Ruback, Nicole
Sarkan, Kristianna
Scharmann, Kelby

Vansell, Nicholas
Waterbury, Kaitlyn
Werner, Lindsay
Whelchel, Shannon

FIFTH DISTRICT

Baker, Katharine
Gobaud, Ariana
Greaves, Victoria
Sukenik, Leah

SIXTH DISTRICT

Rohrer, Alison
Sloan, Kimberley
Thompson, Eric

EIGHTH DISTRICT

Campbell, Peter
Reyes, Gabrielle

NINTH DISTRICT

Bush, Cynthia
Donaldson, Haylee
Medrano, Mitchell

TWELFTH DISTRICT

Cherry, Isabella
Ginell, Brian
Harary, Kenny
Lovell, Jessica

Piper, Juliana
Sanchez-Cardenas, Marina
Song, Chenxi
Stevenson, Ariana
Upson, Kelly

THIRTEENTH DISTRICT

Koehler, Makenzie
Parks, Rachael
Spring, Angela
Willman, Kira

FOURTEENTH DISTRICT

Hicks, Hayley
Leal, Harley
Lorenz, Shelby
Pearlman, Stephanie

FIFTEENTH DISTRICT

Chambers, Dalton
Niyathapala, Sensika
Reese, Shannon

TWENTIETH DISTRICT

Kievlan, Cody
Miles, Monica

TWENTY-FIRST DISTRICT

Kingsford, Philip
Mayberry, Emily

TWENTY-THIRD DISTRICT

Arain, Nafisa
Celestin, Tanner
Dominguez, Stephen
Freer, Alejandra
Giehl, Dayna
Howe, Bayley
Jensen, Kerri
Lammons, Mikayla
Meza Duke Doung, Venus
Norton, Chelsea
Petersen, Hillary
Rodriguez, Joey
Vaughn, Jeremy
Wade, Brennan

THIRTY-FIRST DISTRICT

Eyrich, Lauren
Hart, Kathryn
McGrath, Kathryn

THIRTY-SECOND DISTRICT

Anderson, Michael
Dickson, Caitlin
Erickson, Emelyn
Lau, Steven
Leach, Laura
Spranger, Regina
Zylberman, Justin

THIRTY-THIRD DISTRICT

Alvarez, Alyson
Brown, Symone
Corapi, Chad
Erickson, Lane
Garcia, Lizette
Grimes, Jared
Levchenko, Paul-Stuart
Medina Duran, Betsy
Phelps, Eli
Price, Andrew
Pritzkat, Austin
Saldivar, Perla
Teson, Cameron
Toro Jr., Alfonso
Vanden Bos, Maryl
Wiguna, Justin
Youssef, Neveen

THIRTY-FOURTH DISTRICT

Heid, Michael

PERALTA DISTRICT

Enguero, Erin
Kobayashi, Alison
Nespor, Christopher
Ramanathan, Rajeswari
San, Michelle
Truax, Emily

Thanks for the experience of a lifetime

Today's message will serve a dual purpose – to thank those of you currently serving your PTA and to welcome those starting a new term. I know that together we have met our goal of positively impacting the lives of all children and families, and I am confident that those stepping into our places will continue our efforts. We are a formidable force as committed and passionate volunteers with a mission. In this role we answer to no one but the children of our state. I am so proud to be part of the PTA.

To illustrate my approach to our work, I want to tell you a story about my family. Several years ago when our oldest was turning 21, we were searching for a unique and significant gift. We settled on a silver bracelet from a local artist who had donated to a recent auction for a school bond campaign. She crafted bracelets with words printed across the face. Choosing a message was a daunting task, narrowing down your philosophy of life to a few short words.

This is what we chose:

Love – because the most important aspect of your life is the ability to love and be loved. To touch the lives of others, you must have the capacity to care and show true compassion. Love makes it possible for you to accomplish feats great and small. Love supports you through the ups and downs of life. Love provides the foundation for your passion and drive.

Laugh – because humor is critical for making your impact on the world. People who can find the ability to laugh often can see the optimistic side of any crisis or challenge. Laughter is a universal language that bonds people quickly and is truly inclusive. Having a sense of humor is an art that can be developed.

Learn – because learning means growing, and we never finish grow-

‘Many PTA leaders cite growth opportunities as a major factor in their continuing involvement.’



ing. Learning needs to be part of everything we do, touch and experience. There is always something new out there to hear about, to understand, to try. Learning is a personal challenge that keeps you interesting and forward-looking.

Lead – because someone needs to be able to say the things that people are thinking, organize the group or put thoughts into action. It isn't enough to go through life wishing; life is a participatory activity. And if someone needs to do it, why not you?

I would use these same four “L” words to describe the attitude of our PTA membership and leaders. Each day, your actions show the love that you have for others and your commitment to enhancing the lives of all children. You keep on advocating because you understand that each child is important and that all children deserve the opportunity to develop to their potential. I define this as the ability to love and be loved.

PTA volunteers work and laugh harder than anyone I've ever seen, and we enjoy each other immensely. The laughter balances the hard work and long hours. We are committed to making a difference, but we rely on fun and creative energy to get it done. I'm sure that you've all heard the comment, “Well, you are committed or maybe committable!”

PTA gives you many opportunities to learn something new. If it isn't

policies, procedures and protocols, it might be the facts behind brain injuries, the state budget or research supporting parent engagement. This association is so multifaceted that each day brings a new situation, fact and personality to work with. Many PTA leaders cite growth opportunities as a major factor in their continuing involvement.

Support, guidance and mentoring are all factors needed for creating a leader, and PTA excels in delivering all of these.

I have loved the opportunity to speak for every child with one voice as a PTA member. I am proud to be part of an association that celebrates how important each and every child is. There have been many times when a sense of humor has been my saving grace, rescued me from a ticklish situation or created a bond with someone else. I have created my own style of leadership that is based on laughter and joy with a large dash of just plain hard work. By electing me as your president all of you gave me the chance to stretch and hone leadership talents with an association that has captured my heart.

Thank you for the experience of a lifetime. I wish and hope that you all have wonderful adventures and journeys ahead of you while having the time of your life with PTA.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jo A.S. Loss". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

PTAs recognized for health programs

AWARD	SCHOOL	PTA DISTRICT
PLATINUM	Wingland Elementary	Seventh
GOLD	E.R. Taylor Elementary	Second
	Red Hill Elementary	Fourth
	EARTHS Magnet - <i>Healthy Eating</i>	Twelfth
	John F. Kennedy Elementary	Seventeenth
	Tassajara Hills Elementary	Thirty-Third
SILVER	Davis Magnet	Fourth
	Richman Elementary	Fourth
	Flora Vista Elementary	Ninth
	Myron B. Green Elementary	Ninth
	Pauba Valley Elementary	Twenty-Third
Leuzinger High	Thirty-Third	
BRONZE	Marblehead Elementary	Fourth
	EARTHS Magnet - <i>Physical activity/physical education</i>	Twelfth
	Flory Academy of Sciences & Tech.	Twelfth
	Fremont Intermediate	Twelfth
	Blanche Reynolds	Twelfth
	Sinaloa Middle	Twelfth
	Sycamore Canyon	Twelfth

Eighteen PTAs from across California were recognized for their work to provide a healthy school environment for students. The School Wellness Recognition Program (SWRP) is sponsored by the American Cancer Society (ACS) in collaboration with the California State PTA.

Healthy school environments help students achieve their full academic potential and support children in developing healthy habits that can last a lifetime. Health programs can ensure that students receive clear and consistent health messages, accurate health information, and ample opportunities to use them, helping students to be fit, healthy and ready to learn. The programs also touch on healthy choices such as a tobacco-free lifestyle.

Both the PTA and the ACS share the goal of motivating and empowering California schools to step up and create healthy school environments. The program is designed to recognize PTA schools that are making significant improvements in these areas.

The 2010-2011 SWRP award cycle began on April 1, 2010 and ended at midnight on March 31, 2011. At left are the award winners for 2010-11.

Congratulations to all applicants for their work to improve the health of children. Each winning school will receive a recognition award. Applications for the 2011-12 cycle will be available in September 2011.

~ Health Commission

Membership matters: Ready, Set ... Remit! Award established

A **new** membership award for 2011-2012 was announced at the annual convention. PTAs can qualify for the **Ready, Set ... Remit! Award** if membership dues for 30 members reach the state office (through channels) by October 30. PTAs will need to check with their District PTAs (or council PTAs if they are in a council) for their due dates to assure meeting the "in the office" arrival due date.

Certificates will be distributed through District PTAs to qualifying PTA units. Earning this award is a requirement when applying for the PTA Spotlight Award (applications are due February 1 each year). **The Early Bird** and **Chairman's Club Awards** have been discontinued.

The 2010-2011 Local Leaders Survey was completed by more than 1,000 unit PTA leaders this past year and yielded some important information for newly elected boards to consider as they meet and begin to plan for the coming year.

- Having a designated membership chair was considered "extremely important" to the success of membership efforts by 74.7 percent of

respondents, and 18.8 percent ranked it as "important."

- Getting a welcome letter and invitation out to families with the school first-day packet or in the summer mailing to families was considered "extremely important" or "important" by 92.2 percent of leaders.
- More than half indicated that having a membership table at each school event/activity was important to their success.
- Getting teachers involved was considered "extremely important" by 69.8 percent of respondents, and another 22.9 percent considered it "important."
- The most common reason leaders cited for why people don't join PTA is that they "don't have the time" (36.8 percent). "Not wanting to volunteer" was cited as the most common reason by 13.3 percent of leaders; and 7.3 percent indicated "not wanting to go to meetings."
- Among survey respondents, 12.4 percent indicated they do not provide their members with membership cards.

Let's aim to make every PTA member a proud, card-carrying member! A membership card is a proof of membership and must be shown to register for convention, and apply for scholarships and grants. Unfortunately, every year several high school graduating senior scholarship applicants are disqualified because they lack a membership card.

It is also important for us to invite people to support the work of PTA and allow members to be as involved as they wish. Members should not see volunteering and attending meetings as requirements.

The more PTA members your association has, the more you can do for the students at your school, the stronger our collective voice will be and the more power our advocacy efforts will have. A growing membership is a sign you have a healthy PTA that is meeting the needs of your school and community and providing valuable and relevant service.

~ Membership Commission

Convention 2011



From left, Oralia Hernandez and Afy Moul, both from Fourth District, admire the Reflections Program exhibit at convention.

Reflecting on the arts in education

The Reflections Program exhibit stopped a lot of delegates at convention, even as they rushed between workshops. Two who paused to take in the artworks were Afy Moul and Oralia Hernandez from Fourth District's Macy Elementary PTA, in La Habra (Orange County).

The two Reflections chairs admired the student artwork, and they loved what they saw.

"My daughter loves art," Moul said. "We need to celebrate the arts because the arts increase academic performance. The arts are just as important as tests."

Hernandez agreed and said: "Art is everywhere. Students thrive on creativity. TV, games, ads — it is everywhere, though sometimes we don't see it as art."

"Art stimulates the brain," Moul added.

Putting together the knowledge and skills to lead

Convention for Anna Meza was all about learning what she needs to know for her new PTA role.

Meza is the incoming unit president at Corona Fundamental Intermediate School in the Twenty-Third District (Riverside County).

"I haven't held a lot of positions," she explained. "I want to learn the rules and I want to network."

Convention was the right place to be. She learned how far-reaching PTA's expertise and interests are and how much that does for students. She also rounded out her skills in problem-solving and how to involve students.

"I am here to get a bigger learning experience and understand more about running meetings," Meza said. She wanted to understand the legal aspects of her job.

She was concerned about the legal aspects of her job and did not want to make mistakes. Attending convention allowed her to learn more about how to successfully carry out her new PTA leadership role.



Anna Meza, incoming unit president in Twenty-Third District, had some mother-daughter time with Andrea Meza at convention.

Convention opens attendee's eyes to PTA possibilities

It was his wife who was always involved in PTA, but after attending his first convention and the PTA's Legislation Conference, Jorge Macias is thinking of running for the unit board at his children's school in Downey, in the Thirty-Third District.

The father of four children — fifth-grade twins, a second-grader and a kindergarten — Macias wants to take back to their school what he's learned.

He spoke excitedly about how PTA works, and the more than 4,000 who came to convention to vote on resolutions and have a voice in how the association operates.

Macias would not be a new volunteer at the school. Every day he is there making the school drop-off area safe. He acts as a mix between crossing guard and a traffic officer.

"Without my help the principal would have to shut down the curb," he said. "I arrive to the school a half hour before the bell rings and then go to work."



At convention, Jorge Macias found a new appreciation for PTA's power as an association that advocates for children.

His reward is that all the children know him and say hello wherever he is.

He believes in volunteering.

Earlier this year, attending the PTA Legislation Conference led him to appreciate the association's power in advocating for children.

"I just did not know how powerful a group PTA is," he said. "I didn't know they are active in Sacramento. It was interesting to discuss the bills and education assessment."

He remembers the way his wife used to come back from convention with new ideas and knowledge, along with renewed commitment. "Now I know why," he said.

Convention participants are all smiling

California State PTA Spotlight Award recipients

The following 2011 PTA Spotlight Award recipients were recognized at convention in Long Beach.

UNITS

Membership and Outreach

William F. Prisk PTA
(Thirty-Third District) Long Beach Council PTA

Family Involvement

Charles F. Kettering Elementary PTA
(Thirty-Third District) Long Beach Council PTA

Student Support and Achievement

Las Flores Elementary PTA
(Fourth District) Capistrano Unified Council of PTSAs

Collaboration

Charles Helmers Elementary PTA
(Thirty-Fourth District) Santa Clarita Valley Council PTA
San Juan Hills High School PTSA
(Fourth District) Capistrano Unified Council of PTSAs

Advocacy

Parkmont Elementary PTA
(Peralta District) Fremont Council PTA

Environmental

Henry W. Longfellow Elementary PTA,
(Thirty-Third District) Long Beach Council PTA

Leadership

Laguna Hills High School
(Fourth District) Saddleback Valley PTA Council

COUNCILS

Family Involvement

Capistrano Unified Council of PTSAs, Fourth District

Student Support and Achievement

Burbank Council PTA, First District

Collaboration

Lake Elsinore Council PTSA, Twenty-Third District

Leadership

Saddleback Valley PTA Council, Fourth District

Advocacy

Lake Elsinore Council PTSA, Twenty-Third District

Membership and Outreach

No council awarded

Environmental

No council awarded





Thank you to our sponsors

The California State PTA is pleased to acknowledge the following companies and organizations for their generous support of our 2011 annual convention. Their investment in PTA enables us to continue providing a top quality convention experience for all attendees.

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Lucile Packard Foundation for
Children's Health

Convention delegates take action

Adopted resolutions will guide PTA efforts

Two resolutions were adopted by delegates at the 2011 California State PTA Convention:

(1) *Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Awareness in Schools*; and (2) *Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education*.



Adopted resolutions help to establish PTA policy, legislation authority, and provide direction in taking action on issues. PTA members from throughout the state, via the votes of their representatives at convention on resolutions and other PTA business, determine the association's priorities.

Please see the packet included in the 2011 Service Mailing that will be sent to all unit, council and district PTA presidents, or the California State PTA website, www.capta.org, for the complete text of the 2011 resolutions, in-

cluding a background summary and information about taking action on resolutions. Printed below are the *Resolved* portions (action steps) of each of the adopted 2011 resolutions. We urge local PTAs and council and district PTAs to participate in the actions called for in the *Resolved* sections. We'd like to hear about your efforts on any of the issues addressed in these resolutions.

Proposed resolutions for presentation to 2012 convention delegates are hopefully already underway; the due

date for draft submittals is October 1. Resolutions may originate from local unit PTAs, council or district PTAs, inter-district committees or the California State PTA Board of Managers. Final submittals are due to the state office by December 15.

Let members' voices be heard through your PTA's action on this year's adopted convention resolutions! For more information, contact the California State PTA Resolutions Chairman at resolutions@capta.org or 916.440.1985, ext 324.

AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR (AED) AWARENESS IN SCHOOLS

RESOLVED, That California State PTA urges its units, councils, and districts to encourage local schools and school districts to support the acquisition of AEDs for the school campus; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the California State PTA urges its units, councils, and districts to encourage local schools and school districts to implement Public Access Defibrillator Programs that include maintenance, testing and designated site staff training requirements; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the California State PTA urges its units, councils and districts to encourage local schools and school districts to collaborate with organizations and foundations to assist with the purchase of AEDs and the implementation of Public Access Defibrillator Programs that include training, testing and records management.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATHEMATICS (STEM) EDUCATION

RESOLVED, That the California State PTA, its units, councils and districts work with policymakers, businesses and educators to support efforts to improve STEM education, enabling more students to acquire skills for access to higher education and employment in the 21st century workforce; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the California State PTA, its units, councils and districts support efforts to identify and eliminate barriers to access to and participation in quality STEM education so that every child, without regard to disability, gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, can succeed, and no subgroup is underrepresented in our state's and nation's STEM workforce; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the California State PTA, its units, councils and districts support legislation for recruitment, innovative training, and professional development for STEM educators; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the California State PTA, its units, councils and districts encourage the integration of science, technology, engineering and mathematics into everyday activities; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the California State PTA, its units, councils and districts increase awareness of opportunities available to students educated in STEM careers; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the California State PTA submit this resolution to the National PTA for consideration at the National PTA convention.

Legislative Policies adopted

Delegates to convention adopted changes to the California State PTA Legislative Policies 3, 5, 7 and 9, at the Third General Meeting. The adopted policies will be included in the 2011 *California State PTA Toolkit*, along with the procedures approved by the Board of Managers. Here are the policies as adopted.

4.2.5c POLICY 3

Any position on legislation adopted by the California State PTA Board of Managers remains in effect, unless after subsequent review, new action is deemed warranted, and is adopted according to California State PTA procedures.

4.2.5e POLICY 5

A unit, council, or district PTA with an interest in a proposed or qualified statewide ballot measure, which pertains to the welfare of children and youth, must determine whether the California State PTA Board of Managers is studying or has taken action, before taking any action locally. Action may be taken locally by following the appropriate steps.

4.2.5g POLICY 7

Unit, council and district PTAs are encouraged to promote the adopted California State PTA position and may be requested to actively support positions taken by California State PTA. While unit, council and district PTAs are not required to work actively for any position, they should not officially oppose a stand taken by the State Board of Managers. Unit, council, and district PTAs need not vote to affirm a California State PTA position in order to take action. Expressed membership disapproval of a position on legislation should be communicated to the California State PTA Board of Managers through regular channels, with a report of the extent of and reasons for the disapproval.

4.2.5i POLICY 9

A district PTA may wish to take action on a state legislative measure that affects only its local or regional area. The district PTA affected must inform the California State Board of Managers before taking action.



Michelle Passwater and her daughter, Sandra, share plans to reinvigorate the PTSA at Lassen Union High School.

Mother and daughter share hopes for high school PTSA

For Michelle Passwater and her daughter, Sandra, the 112th PTA convention will probably save the Lassen High School PTSA.

Both mom and daughter received grants to attend their first convention, and both were energized.

“The high school PTSA was going to dissolve,” said Michelle, who is the incoming president of the high school unit in the Thirtieth District in Lassen County.

Convention provided both mother and daughter confidence and strategies for building the high school PTSA. For Michelle, the first goal is to increase membership.

Sandra sits on the high school board as a student representative. “I am going to tell the students what PTSA is all about,” she said. In fact, she is planning a meeting with the student body president.

The two are transitioning to high school. Michelle is the outgoing PTA president at a K-2 school.

When Sandra talks to other students about PTSA they “think I am crazy,” she said.

Michelle added that PTA is all Sandra talks about.

And while Michelle wants the PTSA to survive because it boosts parent participation and activities for students, there is more: “I want kids to like school and get them more involved.”

Pulling the little ones in a wagon through convention

With grandkids in tow, Bella Vista Elementary School Principal Sandra Vega attended workshops and made connections with vendors in the exhibit hall at the 112th annual convention in Long Beach.

“I am a huge supporter of PTA and sit on the unit board,” Vega said. Her school, Bella Vista Elementary, is in the Thirty-Third District in Los Angeles County. “PTA is so supportive and they do so much.”

At her school, the unit supports the arts with assemblies from the Music Center of Los Angeles County, and pays for field trips and spirit days. Fundraisers include frozen desserts, and a read-a-thon.

Best of all, the two grandchildren are on Vega’s campus two days a week while attending the Montebello Unified School District Adult School Parent Preschool Program.

Attending convention with their grandmother was another positive experience of togetherness, topped off with some great snacks, for the children.

“They had a great time eating their way through convention,” Vega said.



Sandra Vega, right, accompanies grandsons, Jacob, left, and Antonio, right, as their grandfather Max Vega pulls their wagon.

Plan to work smarter as a new board member

Most agree that “if you fail to plan, you plan to fail.” Invest the time now planning and preparing for your new role as an officer or chairman on a PTA board. This will be the key to success.

PTA presidents receive job-specific resources in the service mailing sent in August that they will pass on to you and other board members. Review the information from the president to enhance your skill set as a leader.

Follow up by talking to your predecessor about how and when things were done in the past and what worked best. Both strategies ensure you will be well-equipped to handle your new position.

Mark your calendar to attend PTA training. Local councils and districts often hold job-specific workshops tailored to your needs. Participating in training also connects you to a network of experienced leaders as mentors you can call on during your term.

To initiate and refresh programs for the upcoming year, explore potential new



resources by visiting the California State PTA website – www.capta.org – and the National PTA website – www.pta.org. There are a wealth of ideas for programs and activities to adapt for your PTA.

In addition to preparing for your role, set aside time and arrange to meet as a new board to assess past activities, identify current needs and set future initiatives to map out the PTA year.

Taking this proactive approach, during the summer break, prepares you to work smarter and more effectively as a PTA leader and as a PTA team.

~ Leadership Commission

Protect your tax-exempt status – three easy forms

California State PTA is committed to providing information to help make your PTA aware of the latest state and federal tax requirements. Visit the PTA website homepage at www.capta.org to locate the button entitled TAX FILING UPDATES. Federal laws and new state laws require nonprofit groups, including PTAs, to file tax returns. The list of the new requirements and forms as they relate to PTAs include the federal IRS *Form 990* and others from the State of California Franchise Tax Board and the Attorney General’s Registry of Charitable Trusts.

For PTAs that require specific filing assistance, it is recommended that an accountant or tax professional specializing in nonprofit 501(c)3 organizations be consulted regarding all tax filings.

~ Finance Commission

A new chapter for school libraries starts with new standards

Recently the California State Board of Education adopted *Model School Library Standards for California Public Schools: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*, a document that contains two main sets of voluntary standards – one for students and a set for school libraries.

- **School Library Standards for Students:** These delineate what students should know and be able to do at each grade level to succeed in school, higher education, and the workforce. They also include digital citizenship expectations.
- **School Library Program Standards:** These describe base-level staffing, resources and infrastructure, including technology required for school library programs to be effective and help students to meet the school library standards.



California State PTA participated in focus groups conducted during the development of the standards along with key members of the California School Library Association. California State PTA representatives also testified in support of the standards before the State Board of Education. Comments

provided during the focus groups and before the state board were based on authorities from PTA resolutions and position statements.

The development of school library standards led to new opportunities for PTA to work with the California School Library Association (CSLA). PTA representatives have participated in CSLA conference workshops, and CSLA had a booth at the 2011 annual California State PTA convention.

While the standards are voluntary, they give schools, parents and communities a way to assess and improve school libraries. As resources for schools are scarce, these standards will assist advocates and others to make sound decisions about their school libraries.

~ Community Concerns Commission

Federal legislation would encourage families as partners in raising student achievement

Congressional champions for education in Washington, D.C., introduced the Family Engagement in Education Act of 2011 (S.941/H.R. 1821) in May 2011. The legislation would strengthen family engagement in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which both Congress and the administration have placed as a top priority this year.

The bipartisan bill was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Rep. Todd Russell Platts (R-Pa.) and Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-N.Y.), and in the U.S. Senate by Sen. Jack Reed (D-R.I.) and Sen. Christopher Coons (D-Del.).

The bill would provide incentives to districts and schools to implement best practices, such as offering parent leadership academies, placing family engagement coordinators in schools, and providing professional development for educators on how to partner with families.

“Consistent family engagement in a child’s education can improve student achievement and enhance educational opportunities,” Rep. Platts said. “The Family Engagement in Education Act moves us towards that goal by empowering families and incentivizing schools and communities to help enhance the education of our nation’s young people.”

The Family Engagement in Education Act would also strengthen the sole federal program dedicated to parent engagement, the Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRCs), to scale-up research-based strategies for engaging families. PIRCs currently serve more than 16 million parents in all 50 states.

For further information, visit National PTA’s website www.pta.org or www.pwrnewmedia.com/2011/national_pta/family_engagement/index.html.

~ Communications Commission

PTA sponsors anti-bullying bill

In March of this year, the president and the first lady called for a united effort to address bullying at the White House Conference on Bullying Prevention.

“As parents, this issue really hits home for us,” said first lady Michelle Obama. “It breaks our hearts to think that any child feels afraid every day in the classroom, on the playground, or even online.”

Estimates are that nearly one-third of all school-aged children are bullied each year. Seventy-nine percent of students who reported being bullied said it occurred inside a school building; 23 percent reported being bullied on school grounds; and 4 percent reported being cyberbullied. In a recent survey of California PTA leaders, 89 percent felt bullying prevention should be a very high priority for PTA advocacy efforts.

The California State PTA responded by sponsoring Assembly Bill 1156 (Eng) that would require training of school site personnel in bullying prevention as a component of school



safety plans. The bill would also allow inter-district transfers for bullying victims.

California State PTA believes every child is entitled to attend a safe school. Effective bullying prevention programs have the potential to change a school’s climate of fear and disrespect into an environment of peace and learning.

~ Legislation Team

PTA’s work starts before kindergarten and continues beyond high school

For most of its history, the PTA has been best known for its focus on issues related to children and youth in grades K-12. PTA also focuses on early childhood and higher education.

The goal is to create a seamless educational journey for students, engaging parents/caregivers in supporting their children from preschool through college.

The Parent Involvement Commission works on early child/preschool education matters, and the Education Commission works in areas of K-12 and higher education.

Higher education budgets were slashed in recent years, just as early childhood and K-12 budgets were.

Parents and caregivers need to be aware that cuts to California’s higher education programs impact all levels of education and our state’s ability to compete in a global market. For instance, one critical blow to public education is reduced funding for teacher-preparation programs. If programs continue to be reduced, where will new highly qualified teachers come from?

This is just one example of how important it is that PTAs work to help leaders and the public see the ways all levels of education are connected, and ultimately affect our children in all phases of their education.

~ Education Commission

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Presidents:

PTA in California is available electronically. Locate the electronic version at www.capta.org, and please forward the link to your board members. Encourage them to subscribe to this and other e-publications through the website. As a service to associations, each PTA receives one copy, at no cost. Additional print subscriptions are \$5 annually.

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PTA IN CALIFORNIA

2327 L Street, Sacramento, California 95816-5014
PH (916) 440-1985 • FAX (916) 440-1986

World Wide Web address <www.capta.org> • E-mail <info@capta.org>

June 2011, Official newsletter of the California State PTA, Volume 73, No. 5. Five issues published annually. Subscription rate \$5.00. Circulation 4,800. ©2011 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: Jo A.S. Loss
Vice President for Communications: Linda Mayo
Editor and photographer: Mark Buchman
Herff Jones Photography
Executive Director: Paul Richman
Media and Communications Manager: Alison apRoberts
Design: Pat Ruiz

The mission of the California State PTA is to positively impact the lives of all children and families by representing our members, and empowering and supporting them with skills in advocacy, leadership and communications.

Adopted October 2009

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 2011

- 1-31 Membership year begins. Map your year round campaign
- 1-31 Complete audits, sign bank cards
- 1-31 Committee work begins – Reflections, Resolutions, School Wellness
- 1-31 National Immunization Awareness Month

August 2011

- 1-31 Promote Join PTA at school walk-throughs
- 1-31 Association adopts audit, year's programs, fundraisers, budget including 2012 convention; ratifies summer bills paid

September 2011

- 1-30 Promote Join PTA
- 2 National PTA Healthy Lifestyle Grant applications due

113th Annual California State PTA Convention
May 9-12, 2012
Anaheim

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