

The Carroll County Council of PTAs
2005
Council Handbook

Carroll County Council of PTAs is pleased to present you with our 2005 Handbook. Please make use of the many contact sources available. PTA Presidents should know there is no problem they should have to face alone. PTA has a wide network of local, state, and national contacts to provide your local PTA with any help they need.

We, as a council, should learn to depend on one another. It is imperative that we train our officers and interact with other local PTAs. This handbook will provide you with fingertip information on local PTA, State PTA, and Council PTA contacts as well as a complete listing of the Carroll County Public Schools Systems teachers and administrative staff.

As always, please feel free to call me if you have any questions, and if I can't help you I will find someone who can.

And remember, "It's all about the kids."

Ginger Halverson
Carroll County Council of PTAs
President
410-795-6581
wurkin2hardnow@yahoo.com

The PTA Mission

The mission of the PTA is threefold:

- To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in schools, in the community, and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children; and
- To assist parents in developing the skills needed to raise and protect their children; and
- To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.

The Objectives of the PTA

- To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community, and place of worship.
- To raise the standards of home life.
- To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.
- To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth.
- To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education.

Goals for 2004 - 2005 School Year

- Provide training and support to all local PTAs and encourage attendance at State training and conventions.
- Promote the PTA mission statement and objects of the PTA.
- Increase parent, family, and community involvement and expand their roles in all issues involving children in all schools.
- Reach out and support all local PTAs and increase local PTA participation at the Council level through personal contact.
- Continue open communication and sharing of issues between the Carroll County Council of PTAs, and state PTA and the Board of Education.

Important Information and Dates

CCCPTA

Post Office Box 2491
Westminster, Maryland 21157

Our Insurance Carrier is

R.V. Nuccio and Associates - 1 800- 567-2685
Call them with any questions you have concerning our coverage
All policies must be paid in full by May 5th each year.
All payments must be sent to Council by April 5th!

Budgeting

Each local PTA should budget:

- Commercial General Liability Policy \$110.00
- Bonding \$85.00
- Directors and Officers (optional) \$60.00

Council Dues are to be submitted by November 15th each year.

Council Dues have increased for the first time in years as approved by our general membership. This will allow council to provide improved training and networking opportunities throughout the year.

- Council Dues \$100.00
- Audits are due to Council by November 1st each year.

PTA Dues are:

- National PTA - \$1.75
- Maryland State PTA - \$1.50
- State and National Dues should be sent to State PTA in the month they are collected.
- November 1st deadline for all new memberships.
- Final Payment for the year is due by March 15th each year.

F. Y. I. Important PTA Information

Maryland State PTA

Maryland Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc.

5 Central Avenue

Glen Burnie, MD 21061

Phone 410 760-6221

Website <http://www.mdpta.org>

Email mdpta@crosslink.net

National PTA

330 North Wabash Avenue, Suite 2100

Chicago, IL 60611-3690

Phone 312 670-6782

Fax 312 670-6783

Website <http://www.pta.org/index.stm>

Email info@pta.org

What is PTA and our History

The PTA is the oldest and largest volunteer association working exclusively on behalf of all children and youth in America. It is a National nonprofit organization that for 100 years has been dedicated to advancing the well being of children, youth and families, nationwide. The Objects and Mission of the National PTA are displayed in our handbook.

PTAs at local school sites are independent of the school and the school system. Certain elected officers are essential to run the PTA; the President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. The Appointed Standing Committee Chairpersons are necessary to carry out the work of the PTA. Suggested committees are: Membership, Programs, Publicity, Budget and Finance (Ways & Means), Parent Education, Legislation and Hospitality. Each PTA unit's work is determined by the needs and interests of its community.

Historically, local PTAs have made their voices heard regarding funding for the Arts programs, improving school libraries, removal of asbestos from schools, campaigns to build child abuse shelters, providing clothing and food for the needy school children, involving parents of at risk children in the school, sponsored parent education programs and preventive education programs regarding teen pregnancy, AIDS, substance abuse and suicide. The strength of the PTA lies in the ability to implement such programs and projects. Almost a century ago, National PTA Co founder Alice McLellan Birney wrote "the National Congress of Mothers, irrespective of creed, color or condition, stands for all parenthood, childhood and homehood". By working to improve life for all children, today's PTA fulfills that mission.

From: PTA Guide to Leadership

A PTA's Rights and Responsibilities

The National PTA Board of Directors has stated that all PTAs have certain organizational rights, as follows:

- To function as an independent, nonpartisan child advocacy group
- To seek enactment of policies and practices that protect children and youth
- To participate within school board policy in the setting of school goals and assist in the review of teaching materials
- To meet with appropriate school officials to discuss matters of mutual concern affecting children

National PTA believes that all PTAs have the responsibility to do the following:

- To protect access to quality education for all children
- To seek information on policies, curricula, and laws that affect children
- To share accurate information with members and the school community
- To know, help, and interact with teachers and administrators
- To accept responsibilities willingly to assure that the PTA is strong and active
- To work both within the PTA and the school in a constructive manner, maintaining respect for democratic procedures and a tolerance for the diversity of opinions
- To work in partnership with school professional to determine appropriate programs and services
- To participate in making decisions affecting policies, rules and regulations

PTA Nonpartisan Policy Summarized

- PTAs may propose, support, or oppose legislation as needed to achieve the PTA Objects, provided that those efforts do not exceed the limitations placed upon such organizations under federal tax laws
- PTAs may **never** support or oppose political parties or candidates

PTA Noncommercial Policy

- PTAs are prohibited under federal law from engaging in substantial business activities that are unrelated to their tax-exempt purposes, which are legally defined as educational and charitable
- PTAs should not endorse products, companies, or foundations
- PTAs should not sell or lend mailing lists
- PTAs may accept and acknowledge contributions of sponsors of PTA programs
- PTAs may accept advertising as long as it does not jeopardize their objects and nonprofit status
- PTAs should familiarize themselves with local, state, and federal laws and requirements regarding licensing and liability before sponsoring or conducting public events

Taken from: the National PTA 1995-96 Handbook

Why We Do What We Do (What does PTA mean?)

With PTA :

- The support of the National, State, Regional and Local Councils are available to you. You can learn from them about new program ideas, legislation, education movements, health and curriculum changes etc. This also means you have access to programs to benefit children and their families, and have many sources of information and new ideas for your chapter.
- Being part of PTA also gives your group access to group liability coverage and bond rates and guarantees your group IRS Nonprofit filing status. You also have access to training about these issues and regulations.
- Being part of PTA means that your PTA becomes part of a large and well recognized group so you can have significant influence on the formulation of laws, policies and practices - educational or legislative.
- When a local unit agrees to align themselves with PTA they are making certain agreements with the National Organization : that they will pay a set dues amount and agree to abide by the National PTA's **“Legally Binding Bylaws”** which govern all PTAs.

Maryland PTA Structure

Local Units

The local unit is **the most important** division of PTA. All the other divisions of PTA exist to serve and support the local PTAs. The procedures and requirements for the organization of the local units are set forth by state bylaws but the local units are self governing. Each local unit's work is determined by the needs of its community and the interests and concerns of its members.

County Council

The County Council of PTAs is a group consisting of local Carroll County PTA units organized under the guidelines of the Maryland State PTA. The Council's purpose is to support the local units by offering support, promoting conferences, leadership training, and cooperative advocacy.

Maryland State PTA

The Maryland Congress of Parents and Teachers joins the other state branches to form the National PTA. Its purpose is again to support the local units by providing support, training, and helping to keep the PTA membership informed of legislation , education trends and other child related issues happening on the State and National level.

National PTA

Represents its many members when advocating for children and is a focal point for funneling child related information to its many members all over the country.

Some of the Most Asked Questions...

What is an Executive Board?

The Executive Board governs in between meetings of the General Membership/ Association. Its purpose is to recommend to the general membership those programs and projects the PTA can pursue in its campaign to improve the well being of children and their families in the community. It is usually composed of the officers, chairperson of the standing committees, a faculty representative and the school Principal.

The Executive Board duties are to approve plans of work for the officers and committees as authorized in the Bylaws, and to transact necessary business between general meetings. They disseminate information from the National and State about issues that affect children and families.

Being on the Executive Board (i.e.: being an Officer or Committee Chairperson) Means you are willing to:

- familiarize yourself with the organization
- practice parliamentary procedure
- disseminate information to other committee members and be the contact person for that committee, should any questions arise
- work towards the PTAs Goals in the Objects and Mission statements
- participate in discussions fully and abide by majority will
- cooperate with other officers and chairpersons
- help interpret PTA policies to PTA members
- file reports about committee activities
- inform publicity chair of all activities
- keep procedure book and give it to your successor promptly

It does not mean that you are sole responsibility for that committee, that you can't say no to requests or that you can't ask for help ! This is a VOLUNTEER position. If you ever feel overwhelmed, let the President know, and they will try to help.

To understand the role of the PTA Executive Board, think of the PTA unit as a business. The membership approves the budget while the Executive Board manages - organizing the who, what, when and how.

What is Basic Parliamentary Procedure?

This is simply a set of rules for conducting an organized meeting. It lets the PTA accomplish its goals while protecting all members' rights.

The basic Principles are:

- 1- Consider one thing at a time
- 2- Insure justice and courtesy for all and partiality for none
- 3- Follow the rules of the majority
- 4- Preserve the right of the minority to be heard

It is helpful to be familiar with the process so a PTA can make tough decisions together and remain friendly in the process. Remember, the group must cooperate in order to continue to help the children and the families of the school.

Why Be on the PTA Executive Board?

The rewards of PTA service....

A PTA **IS** its members; their energy, resourcefulness and determination. Each PTA is a team. The rewards for this service are:

- Opportunities for improving the quality of life and education for today's young people, to make a difference, to have your opinion heard.
- Opportunities for study and mental stimulation on matters of importance, find out what's happening locally, statewide and nationally.
- Opportunities for new friendships
- Opportunities for meaningful involvement
- Opportunities for growth through leadership

Information from:

Maryland PTA - The President: Personal Responsibilities

National PTA Guide to PTA Leadership

The Easiest Job in the PTA: President

the National PTA Handbook

Piney Ridge PTA Bylaws

What does Carroll County Council offer you?

Meetings

At these meetings we:

Share information from the various Council Members who attend many different meetings throughout the county

Provide opportunities for PTAs to address issues which include but reach out further than their local school community (such as County School policies)

Provide training and speakers on issues and topics that local PTAs have asked for

Provide opportunities for local units to work together and network with each other

Other Services and Resources

Support and assistance for locals in understanding PTA and school policies

Representation of local units interests to the county and state school boards

A Newsletter from Council featuring local units activities, ideas, legislation and other information

Each local PTA will have a Regional Liaison from Council who will be available by phone/email for support, to answer questions. They also would be willing to come to one of your meetings to answer any of your member's questions.

Group access to group liability coverage and bond rates

What do your PTA dues support?

Annual Resources for PTAs manual

National magazine - Our Children - with What's Happening in Washington section

Reflections Program

Training opportunities on leadership, parent involvement, and advocacy topics

Phoebe Apperson Hearst - National PTA Excellence in Educational Partnership national award program

Building Successful Partnerships presentations, training, and materials

Partner programs such as back-to-school events, school bus safety, and critical TV viewing

Award-winning national public website

Specialized national website only for members

Electronic newsletters on PTA activities

Advocacy presence in the nation's capital

Federal legislative updates through website and toll-free hotline

National voice and representation among leading education, health, and child advocacy organizations

National, regional, and state conventions

National PTA assistance to states

National toll-free number for customer service

National staff headquartered in Chicago, IL, and in Washington, DC, offices

There are NO "periods" in PTA or PTSA

PTA is the official registered service mark of the Parent Teacher Association. Please see that letterheads, envelopes, and checks (when ordered) reflect this service mark, as it should appear. The plural of PTA is PTAs.

Being a PTA means:

We usually think of PTAs in a school setting. PTAs are independent of the school and the school system and can be formed anywhere - the workplace, child care centers, apartment complexes, churches - as long as the members are committed to the Mission and the Objects of PTA.

Being a PTA means:

- Receiving materials and information developed for all sorts of programs that can be used in the local school.
- Having a process for functioning as an effective organization.
- That the association is part of the larger community which is following education and children's issues and acting as advocates at local, state and federal levels.
- Participating in a wide range of recognition/awards/scholarship programs at all levels.
- Leadership training is available at the council, state, and national level to make the PTA's work easier, as well as advice as needed
- Having information about current issues for use at the local school.
- Recognition as an association group, which makes a significant difference for children and families.
- Providing services for children, parents, teachers, and staff and bringing those groups together to work for the general welfare of all children.
- Empowering parents and teachers to be advocates and to reach out to other members of the school community.

The PTA can create an effective PTA unit by:

- Understanding the philosophy and the mission of PTA
- Using the Annual Resources for PTAs, which gives PTA policies and practices.
- Establishing PTA goals, activities to support the goals, and a PTA budget supporting the activities and goals.
- Following local bylaws in order to create a sound, systematic management of the unit.
- Spending PTA money on conferences, conventions, training workshops and printed materials.
- Urging board members to attend conferences and conventions.
- Seeking assistance from the Council or Maryland PTA.
- Attending the PTA general council meetings held during the year.
- Reading the newspaper and other periodicals that contain education information.

How about Insurance?

We've got two types: Commercial General Liability and Commercial Crime coverage.

The General Liability is similar to what's covered in the liability section of a Homeowners policy (mind you, this is a non-lawyer/insurance type talking), but from the standpoint of individual/s operating within the scope of their duties and while conducting business as members of the PTAs and Council. There are 3 type coverage for which we are insured:

Coverage A Bodily Injury and Property Damage, which include "damages claimed by any person or organization for care, loss of services or death resulting at any time from the 'bodily injury' ".

Coverage B Personal and Advertising Injury, applies to " 'personal and advertising injury' caused by an offense arising out of your business...".

Coverage C Medical Payments, which pays medical expenses for "bodily injury" caused by an accident.

Numerous exclusions apply, which are generally common sense, i.e., insurance does not apply for deliberate acts with expected or intended damage or injury, when engaged in illegal acts or when there is other coverage. Also, generally it does not apply to individuals who are part of the insured, the PTA officers, etc. This means that you can't sue yourself-members suing their own organization.

The Commercial Crime policy covers "dishonest acts committed by an "employee"", which results in a loss of "money, securities, and property other than money and securities".

There are limits/deductibles for the various coverage that are listed on the declarations pages of the policies.

Partners in Education: The Principal and the PTA

The National PTA
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Teamwork has become the model for success in business and industry. It is the key to success in education as well. Teamwork begins at the local school with a partnership between the principal and parents. When parents and the principal work together, they can lead the way to success for all students.

What does it mean for the PTA and the principal to work as partners? It means that each understands his or her responsibilities, and the other's. It means setting goals and working cooperatively to achieve them. It means respecting each other's opinion-not expecting automatic approval from the other and not withdrawing support if opinions differ. It means reaching out to all parents and school staff to help our children and youth reach their potential.

Two roles of the principal: School official and partner to parents

Official duties

"The principal is the educational leader and spokesman for his or her school and the school community. It is the principal's leadership that sets the tone of the school, the climate of learning, the level of professionalism and the morale of the staff, and the degree of concern for students."

-Statement by National PTA Board of Directors

Though the structure of schools differs from community to community, the main duties of the principal usually include these:

Seeing that the school follows the curriculum guidelines adopted by the local school board or site-based management council. (A site-based management council is a group of people at the local school who have decision-making power for the school. Councils generally include the principal, teacher representatives and parent representatives)

Helping determine teaching structure and the types of teaching techniques in the school.

Being involved in the school's procedures for admission, registration, placement, evaluation, maintenance of students, and when appropriate, due process.

Supervising all school personnel, including training and evaluation, hiring and firing.

Overseeing the school building-its safety, maintenance and security.

Being accountable for budget expenditures. He or she may also prepare the building budget.

Making sure that the school follows applicable local, state and federal laws.

How the principal builds a partnership with parents

It is up to the principal to make parent involvement a school priority. All major studies have shown that parent involvement in education is one of the keys to quality education. The principal can welcome parents to the school by following some of these suggestions:

Being available to the community. Scheduling meetings open to the public at different times-days, evenings and weekends. Inviting parents to set up private appointments to discuss concerns.

Working to make parents feel welcome and comfortable in school-the first step toward parent involvement.

Planning for and encouraging parent-teacher conferences. Showing parents and teachers how to use conferences to build parent-teacher-student teamwork. Making sure conferences are held at times when parents can come.

Being sensitive to how a family's home life may affect how parents feel toward school. For example, a parent who is struggling to keep a family housed and fed may have difficulty concentrating on a child's school problems.

Being active in the PTA and encouraging teachers to participate, too.

Helping the PTA keep its primary focus on education rather than fund-raising. The principal and PTA can work together to solve problems and set goals that will benefit students.

Helping the PTA plan activities to accomplish specific goals. For example, encouraging the PTA board to plan events that promote children's well-being, home-school cooperation, and community betterment. These events often strengthen the school's business and community relationships as well.

Working with the PTA to develop a program for training and using parent and community volunteers, who can help staff enrich all areas of the school.

Helping parents stay informed on current issues in education. Referring parents to helpful books, magazine articles, radio or TV programs. If there is a parent resource center in the school or local library, then suggesting materials to include.

Recognizing PTA volunteers' efforts. Appreciating the contributions of parents.

Encouraging constructive discussions with parents that build confidence in the school's leadership and strengthen parent partnerships.

The two roles of parents: Child's first educator and school partner

Parents share responsibility for their children's education. Involved parents are those who:

Send to school a child who is ready and eager to learn, self-disciplined and prepared to accept the authority of school staff. Parents make sure the child understands and follows school rules.

Supervise homework assignments as needed.

Seek the advice of teachers to understand their children's growth and learning-and share information that will help school staff plan for their children.

Learn about school programs, curriculum, regulations and procedures, and actively support them.

Show commitment to education by attending parent-teacher conferences, open houses, PTA meetings, student concerts and other school programs whenever possible.

Understand and work for the passage of school funding initiatives.

Understand the need for professional development programs for teachers. Attend programs to learn about current issues and trends in education, when possible, to open the way for informed discussion, mutual respect and teamwork.

How the PTA and parents create a partnership with the principal

More and more, parents want to take an active role in their children's education. Being a member of the PTA gives them a way to work together in partnership with the principal. Here's how.

Encourage the principal to speak openly of his or her goals and concerns.

Present PTA concerns and issues to the principal. Develop a forum that allows for frank and open discussion.

Focus on education and how to benefit students.

Work with the principal or site-based management council to set goals. Plan programs that will help achieve these goals.

Be alert to staff and community talents and resources, and draw on them for the benefit of the entire school.

Help the principal promote fair discipline for all children. Volunteer to help write a discipline code for the school if one does not exist.

Work with the principal to develop annual school reports and budgets. PTA volunteers can speak in support of budgets and other issues in front of the school board and local government.

Keep things seen or heard at school confidential. Encourage every volunteer to honor the ethical considerations and legal responsibilities regarding the privacy of students and their records.

Principal and PTA president: Working together

The principal and the PTA president represent two important groups in the school: staff and parents. Here are some suggestions for nurturing this important partnership.

Meet weekly at an agreed upon time. Discuss issues. Review plans for events. Keep each other informed

Work out problems or misunderstanding in a direct, honest way. Keep an open mind. Listen to each other.

When working with parents and community, be positive and enthusiastic about your school.

Develop a win-win attitude. Celebrate each other's accomplishments.

Both positions are difficult at times. Remember the value of humor in keeping things in perspective.

A final word

The PTA and the principal must strengthen their ties in order to support the education of all children.

A working partnership between the principal and the PTA, dedicated to the welfare of all children and youth, can strengthen family life and improve education for all of our children.