

**Colorado  
PTA®**  
*everychild. onevoice.*



## A Message from Colorado PTA President Staci Ruddy

Please click on the links below to access messages from Colorado PTA President Staci Ruddy and Colorado PTA Membership Director Keri Lee welcoming you to the 2021-2022 school year.

- Welcome: <https://youtu.be/g7ehEdqJ3Hc>
- Membership Madness: <https://youtu.be/i2ZieoI1CKU>

### Local Leader Alert!

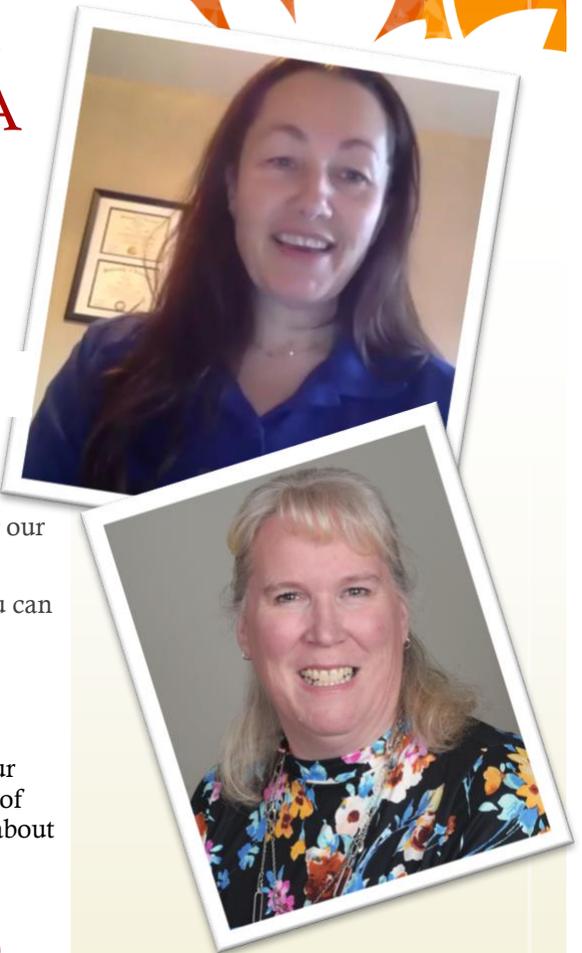
Please submit your officers' names to Colorado PTA through [MemberHub](#) or our Officers List form [HERE](#).

It is also time to submit your annual financial review to Colorado PTA so you can keep your unit in good standing!

### Need Help?

Colorado PTA Treasurer, Michelle Winzent, can answer questions about your financial review [michellewinzent@copta.org](mailto:michellewinzent@copta.org). Colorado PTA Vice President of Field Service, Jamie Kulp, [jamiiekulp@copta.org](mailto:jamiiekulp@copta.org) can answer your questions about being a unit in good standing.

You can always call or email the Colorado PTA office for help and to be connected with the right leader if you are not sure whom to contact [\(303\) 420-7820](tel:3034207820) / [OFFICE@COPTA.ORG](mailto:OFFICE@COPTA.ORG)



## Save the Date!

### Legislative Committee

August 9; 6:30-8:30 PM  
Via zoom, contact  
[amiprichard@copta.org](mailto:amiprichard@copta.org)  
for information

### Health Wellness and Safety Committee

August 11; 10:30AM-  
noon  
Via zoom, contact  
[HWS@copta.org](mailto:HWS@copta.org)  
for information

### El Paso Council fall training

August 28; 9-2:45  
Sunnyside Christian  
Church, contact  
[KarenHobson@copta.org](mailto:KarenHobson@copta.org)  
for information

### Jeffco Council fall training

Sept 18;  
Via zoom contact  
[info@jeffcopta.org](mailto:info@jeffcopta.org) for  
information

## PTA OPPOSES INITIATIVE 25, LEARNING ENRICHMENT & ACADEMIC PROGRESS

The Learning Enrichment and Academic Progress Program (LEAP) is a ballot initiative to provide after-school learning opportunities for children. It would be funded by an increase in taxes on retail marijuana as well as a diversion of revenue intended for public school funding. LEAP would be managed by a private agency with total control over its administration and the use of the millions of dollars that would be appropriated to it.

Colorado PTA opposes this for the following reasons:

### IT IS A VOUCHER.

- It would use public tax money to fund a private agency providing private programs.
- The LEAP funding is not designated for public schools.
- It would violate the provision in the state's Enabling Act that funds from School Trust Lands are to go only to public schools.

### IT ROBS MONEY FROM PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

- It would divert over \$20 million annually from interest on the State Land Trust currently going to our underfunded public schools.
- It would compete with public schools for state and federal funds.
- It would demand resources from our already underfunded public schools to help with testing and data collection.

### IT IS MISLEADING.

- While low-income children are prioritized, there is no guarantee that enough would apply, allowing higher-income students to be funded.
- No criteria are established to ensure that the program would address the special learning needs of poor children.
- The proposal does not address how low-income children would be identified and invited to participate, and there is no guarantee of geographic diversity, especially in rural or mountain areas of the state.
- The program would operate with no oversight by the state government.

### IT INTRUDES ON STUDENT PRIVACY.

- It implies that children will not qualify for the program unless their families can provide tax documentation of their income.
- The agency is required to prioritize integration of data with school districts, but data privacy is not guaranteed.

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## You Might Have Heard Recently...

You might have recently heard controversy about teaching "critical race theory" in schools. PTA stands firmly against racism in all forms and the culture of oppression that permeates the United States. As an association that represents all children, we in PTA must listen, educate, and advocate beyond rhetoric and rise to correct inequities and injustices. PTA supports the implementation of diverse and inclusive curricula in K-12 public schools. To learn more about PTA's stand on this issue, see this [Position Statement on addressing racism](#) and this [Position Statement on inclusive curricula](#).

Here are things you should know:

- Colorado is a local control state, and the best way to get to know what's being taught at your school is to get to know your teachers, principals, and school board members.
- Colorado law focuses on inclusion, not exclusion: [HB19-1192 Inclusion of Minorities in Teaching Civil Government](#).
- "Culturally Responsive Teaching" is not Critical Race Theory.

The National PTA provides several resources that can be used when addressing with race with kids:

- Listen to this *Notes from the Backpack* podcast: <https://www.pta.org/center-for-family-engagement/notes-from-the-backpack/raising-kids-who-embrace-race>.
- Explore the wealth of [resources](#) that Embrace Race offers; [16 ways to help children become thoughtful, informed and BRAVE about race](#) is a great place to start!
- Check out National PTA's [diversity, equity and inclusion resources](#), including [How to Talk about Race & Justice in America](#)
- Read "[How to Talk to Your Child about Racism](#)" in PTA's Our Children online magazine.

PTA lost a dear, valued member in July: Jo Ann Fujioka. The association and its members will be grieving her loss for a long time. Jo Ann was active for more than two decades in many different roles in PTA, at both the state and national levels. During her many years of involvement, she served on the National PTA Board of Directors as well as the Colorado PTA Board of Directors and participated on numerous committees. Most recently she was the president of the Denver Council PTSA.

Jo Ann had a long history of involvement in public education. In 2020 she received the Lifetime Achievement Award from Marquis Who's Who, a publisher of biographical profiles. [This article](#) of theirs covers her many achievements and the numerous organizations she was active with, including PTA.

Staci Ruddy, COPTA president, said: "I knew I liked Jo Ann from the first time I met her; how could I not?! – she was a fellow nurse! It only took a few minutes of speaking with her to learn how passionate she was – about children, about diversity and inclusion, and about equitable rights. I am so thankful to have spent the time that I did with her. Her legacy will live on in each of us, and I will do my best to make her proud!"

Kay Trotter, past COPTA president, said: "JoAnn was a wonderful advocate and passionate about her work for children."

Karen Hobson, another past COPTA president, said: "Jo Ann Fujioka was a wonderful role model that showed others how to put passion into action. During my term as President of Colorado PTA, she was the Vice President for Outreach and the Chair of the Diversity Committee. She

orchestrated Colorado PTA's first Emerging Minority Leaders Conference! Her determination ensured we had a dynamic, nationally known speaker and attendees from across the state. I



always appreciated Jo Ann's honesty, experience, and input on events and projects. She cared about the association, and it was reflected in the work she did. I'll miss Jo Ann's smile and will always remember her passion for children and her unwavering determination to advocate for their well-being."

The Colorado PTA Legislative Committee remembers her as a fierce advocate for equity, gun safety, children's health and mental health, and better school funding. She testified many times on bills at the State Legislature on behalf of COPTA. She represented PTA on the Colorado Coalition Against Gun Violence and the 2013 Year of the Child coalition. Jo Ann spoke at several press conferences at the State Capitol, including one on a [bill](#) that PTA supported, although speaking for

herself, for reasons that are apparent when you watch [the video](#).

The COPTA Health, Wellness, and Safety (HWS) Committee remembers Jo Ann's valuable input regarding the epidemic of youth vaping. Jo Ann's experience as a school nurse gave her a tremendous understanding of the dynamics of this issue. Donna Viverette, in charge of tobacco prevention at Jeffco Public Health, said: "*I am so sorry to hear of Jo Ann's passing and your loss of this wonderful friend and advocate for children and families. Her work clearly has made a difference across Colorado. Because of the two of you [Jo Ann and HWS chair Lorrie Odom] and your shared commitment to see something substantial done with respect to youth vaping, Jefferson County became the first Colorado county to declare vaping a public health crisis. That led to a cascade of responses, including some early adoption of policies in our communities and the [school] district.*"

As Cindy Daisley, another past COPTA president, summed it up well: "She will be missed by so many."

*This year has been hard for many of us and we continue to grieve the loss of many loved ones. If you are having a hard time dealing with these feelings or if you could benefit from talking to someone, please contact Colorado Crisis Services.*



### Support Is One Step Away

#### Call

Connect with someone who will listen, understand, and care.

CALL 1-844-493-8255

#### Text

Begin a text conversation at any time. We're here to help.

TEXT "TALK" TO 38255

#### Walk-in

Get support in-person at your closest crisis center.

SEARCH WALK-IN LOCATIONS

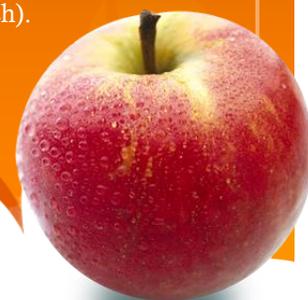
# Health Wellness and Safety

## VACCINATING STUDENT ATHLETES:

A toolkit to encourage student athletes to get a COVID-19 vaccine has been developed by Jefferson County Public Health: [NEW! Toolkit for Student Athletes](#). The toolkit includes materials that can be adapted for specific needs and audiences, such as a sample email letter to students and families, a newsletter blurb, etc. Editable files can be obtained from Nikki Work ([nicwork@jeffco.us](mailto:nicwork@jeffco.us)) or Ashley Sever ([asever@jeffco.us](mailto:asever@jeffco.us)).

## FEEDING KIDS DURING THE SUMMER:

To ensure that children who rely on free or reduced-price meals at school can get the nutrition they need, the USDA worked with states to continue providing free meals to students during the summer. Meals may be obtained and taken home from designated sites. Families can use this tool - [Find Meals for Kids When Schools are Closed | USDA-FNS](#) <https://www.fns.usda.gov/meals4kids> - to find directions to nearby sites as well as hours of operation and contact information. Also, the [USDA National Hunger Hotline](#) remains a helpful resource for people seeking food assistance. 1-866-3-HUNGRY (1-866-348-6479) or 1-877-8-HAMBRE (1-877-842-6273) (for Spanish).



## National PTA Resources

### A Podcast for Parents, by Parents

PTA is working to ensure our public schools provide a high-quality and equitable education for every child to reach their full potential. *Notes from the Backpack* is a PTA podcast designed for millions of parents and the decisionmakers they influence.

Through the unique combination of expert, parent and educator guests, each episode features engaging conversations that offer real-life advice and ideas on how to support children's learning and development—all in parent-friendly language. Listen [HERE](#).



### Back to School with PTA

[Back to school resources for PTA leaders](#)-- Get all the templates, tips and tools you need to make this a winning school year below and at [PTAKit.org](http://PTAKit.org)! Our programs bring families, schools and communities together to build genuine relationships and support student success and their overall well-being.

[Back to school resources for Parents](#)- We know your weekly agenda is complex, with work, managing a household, after school activities and keeping up with homework.

We have everything you need to make this the best year ever! Get helpful parenting, education and family fun tips that will help you guide your child's learning and development—and build genuine relationships with teachers and administrators throughout the school year.

[Back to school resources for students](#) -- PTA is committed to supporting student success in and outside of school. Get helpful education, life skills and family fun tips to help guide you to the best year ever! And share them with your parents and friends!

[Back to school resources for teachers](#)— Find innovative ideas and extensive resources to help you throughout the year. Our programs bring families, schools and communities together to build genuine relationships and support student success and their overall well-being. [Here's a list](#) of ways PTA can support your efforts.

## #PTABackToSchool

**Hey PTA Parents**—Share your 2020 #PTABackToSchool experiences with us! Let us know how you prep for a new school year, how your kids' first day of school went, or how you feel about **#PTABackToSchool**.

Your story may be selected to be shared on our **Facebook page** on Tuesday, Sep. 15 for **PTA Parent Day** during our nationwide **#PTABackToSchool campaign**.

