



## National PTA

Please take a moment to check out the following links from National PTA:

- Help Your Child Learn by Teaching:

<https://ptaourchildren.org/help-your-child-learn-by-teaching-you/>

- Learning Heroes Summer Recharge:

[https://belearninghero.org/summer-stride/recharge/?utm\\_source=toolkit&utm\\_medium=partners&utm\\_campaign=summer2021&utm\\_content=landing%20page](https://belearninghero.org/summer-stride/recharge/?utm_source=toolkit&utm_medium=partners&utm_campaign=summer2021&utm_content=landing%20page)

- National PTA Local Leader Kit:

[https://www.pta.org/home/run-your-pta/local-leader-kit-access?utm\\_source=Informz&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_campaign=PTA%20Kit&zs=Wv3OW&zl=Omx2](https://www.pta.org/home/run-your-pta/local-leader-kit-access?utm_source=Informz&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=PTA%20Kit&zs=Wv3OW&zl=Omx2)

## A Message from Colorado PTA President Staci Ruddy



Colorado PTA President, Staci Ruddy, recorded a welcome message for members in which she explains many of the exciting changes. Please use [this link](#) to access the video.

### Save the Date!

Legislative Committee

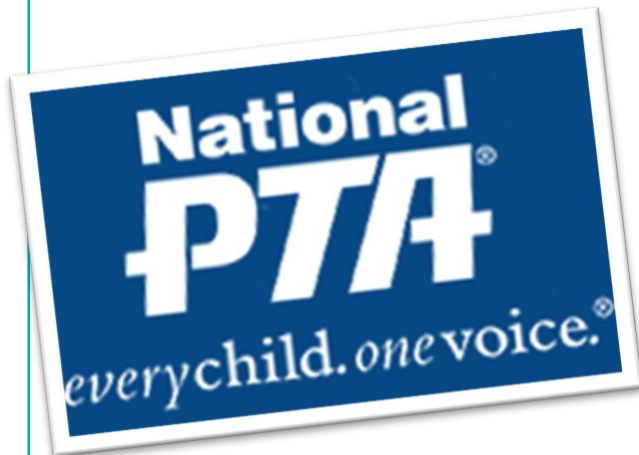
July 12 6:30-8:30 PM

Health Wellness and Safety Committee

July 21 10:30-12:30

Colorado PTA Board of Directors Retreat

July 29- Aug 1



## Mental Health Crisis

One event at the National PTA Convention last month was the Healthy Minds Summit. This kicked off the National PTA's new Healthy Minds Initiative, which contains information, tools, and programs for expanding social-emotional learning and mental health support for families.

PTA has partnered with CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) for this parent framework to imbed social-emotional learning into everyday life.

The Summit began with a presentation of data showing that the vast majority of adolescents showed moderate to severe depression on a mental health assessment, and many have had thoughts of suicide. It is a national mental health crisis, one that caused Children's Hospital Colorado to declare a state of emergency in May, when hospitals were overrun with suicidal kids and others struggling with psychiatric problems.

Adjusting to the pandemic was extremely difficult for children and youth, but re-entering society is also fraught with difficulty. Did you know that 3rd graders have spent one-eighth of their lives in lockdown? Did you know that one-fourth of 7th graders have experienced at least one mental health crisis? The impact of the pandemic on everyone has been dramatic and is expected to have long-term implications.

National PTA is recommending that we all prioritize mental health, wellness, and social-emotional learning. PTAs are encouraged to provide their members with opportunities to have conversations about how they are feeling, to do an "emotional check-in" at meetings. They are urged to have people take a mental health screening or a self-assessment. Some ideas presented at the Summit are as follows:

- Create a Wellness Room in the school, where students who are having a behavioral crisis can go to help calm them, with resources like coloring books, magazines, and comfortable chairs.
- Host a "Health Night" to provide parents with a mental health screening and presentations about coping skills.
- Ensure that parents know who the behavioral health support staff at the school are, including the counselor, school psychologist, school social worker, and/or SEL specialist.

In an effort to improve behavioral health, National PTA is advocating for behavioral health: increasing the number of behavioral health support staff at schools; having schools use positive school discipline policies and behavioral health interventions and supports that are fairly and consistently implemented; and encouraging schools to take advantage of community resources like food banks, family counseling,



## PTA Legislative Committee

The Colorado PTA Legislative Committee followed a total of 55 bills that related to our Legislative Priorities during the 2021 legislative session. Of that, there were 7 bills we opposed and 9 we monitored (“monitor” means that we couldn’t either support or oppose the bill, but it concerned our priorities). We testified on 22 of our top-priority bills. Overall, the outcome for 91% of the bills that we supported or opposed was what we wanted, which gives the Legislature an A- rating in our scorecard.

Here, based on our Legislative Priorities for this year, are the outcomes on the bills:

### 1. PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING – 12 bills

- We supported 7, opposed 3, and monitored 2.
- The bills we opposed were all lost – they were all voucher bills of some kind.
- All the bills we supported passed – they included bills to improve school funding from early childhood through higher education and repair state tax policy.

### 2. SCHOOL/DISTRICT ACCOUNTABILITY – 8 bills

- We supported 6 and monitored 2 (opposed none).
- Of the bills we supported, 2 were lost – one was to suspend all state testing during the current school year (a bill we monitored suspended only some of them) and the other was to make the process for charter school appeals fairer for school districts.

### 3. EDUCATOR ACCOUNTABILITY – 1 bill

- The only bill in this priority area that was introduced was one that we monitored, Educator



Pay Raise Fund; we monitored it rather than support because despite its noble purpose, we didn’t see how it could be funded (and it wasn’t).

### 4. EQUITY – 16 bills

- We supported 11, opposed 2, and monitored 2.
- Unfortunately, both of the bills we opposed passed – one of them gives public money to private entities in the name of providing more equity, and the other bans parents from being in the same room when students receive online instruction. All the bills we supported passed – they include bills to reduce discrimination and expand learning opportunities and Internet availability.

### 5. SAFETY (includes health) – 18 bills

- We supported 14, opposed 2, and monitored 2. Both of the bills we opposed were lost – one would have allowed concealed handguns in schools, and the other would have prohibited any employer or government agency (including health departments) from requiring that employees be vaccinated for COVID.
- All the bills we supported passed – they included additional mental health support and suicide prevention, more gun safety, and better protections for childhood victims of sexual assault, children in child care, and homes with domestic violence.

## Ballot Issues

PTA is opposing all the ballot initiatives that are currently circulating petitions for the fall election. Please **DECLINE TO SIGN** the petitions on these!!!

- Initiative 25, Learning Enrichment and Academic Progress (LEAP) Program – this might sound good, but it uses public funds to support private, outside-of-school programs and diverts revenue from school funding.
- Initiative 27, Property Tax Assessment Rate Reduction and Voter-Approved Revenue Change – this reverses the ballot issue approved by the voters last year (Amendment B) to repeal the part of the Gallagher Amendment that impedes school funding; it would increase the demand for state funding, which would likely force an increase in the “negative factor” that underfunds schools.
- Initiative 19, Requirements for Spending Custodial Money – this would remove the Governor’s ability to distribute federal grant funds and require the Legislature to hold a session and pass appropriations bills every time new funds become available, potentially preventing immediate help for citizens most in need.

# Membership

The National PTA Convention had several workshops providing ideas for PTA units to restore or increase their membership by showing the value of PTA. We encourage you to take advantage of the many resources available on the National PTA website, including these:

- Membership Drives and School Community Support – gives examples of successful membership drives in various PTAs around the country.
- Run Your PTA Local Leader Kit – provides many ideas and strategies for ensuring your PTA runs smoothly and helping you to deal with challenges your PTA might face.
- School of Excellence – participation in this program, even if your PTA doesn't "win" the award, helps you focus on improving family engagement.
- PTA Connected – includes virtual programs that might be of interest to families.
- Reflections – provides an opportunity to take advantage of students' creativity and artistic ability.
- Healthy Minds – can help your school community deal with the stress, depression, or anxiety resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic (and other factors).

Remember: Our new motto is "There is No Wrong Way to PTA" – because PTA is also a verb!

## We are here to support you!

Please join us in welcoming our incoming Colorado PTA Board of Directors, Field Service Team and Committee Chairs:

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President – Staci Ruddy ([staciruddy@copta.org](mailto:staciruddy@copta.org))  
 President-elect – Ami Prichard ([amiprichard@copta.org](mailto:amiprichard@copta.org))  
 Vice President of Convention – Christina Powell ([christinapowell@copta.org](mailto:christinapowell@copta.org))  
 Vice President of Field Service – Jamie Kulp ([jamiekulp@copta.org](mailto:jamiekulp@copta.org))  
 Vice President of Marketing & Communications – Evie Hudak ([eviehudak@copta.org](mailto:eviehudak@copta.org))  
 Secretary – Christena Burnham ([christenaburnham@copta.org](mailto:christenaburnham@copta.org))  
 Treasurer – Michelle Winzent ([michellewinzent@copta.org](mailto:michellewinzent@copta.org))  
 Membership Director – Keri Lee ([kerilee@copta.org](mailto:kerilee@copta.org))  
 Director-at-Large – Lisa Weil ([lisaweil@copta.org](mailto:lisaweil@copta.org))  
 Director-at-Large – Maria Cortés ([mariacortes@copta.org](mailto:mariacortes@copta.org))  
 Director-at-Large – Raleigh Matthews ([raleighmatthews@copta.org](mailto:raleighmatthews@copta.org))



### FIELD SERVICE TEAM

Denver Council PTSA President – JoAnn Fujioka ([denvercouncilptsa@copta.org](mailto:denvercouncilptsa@copta.org))  
 El Paso Council PTA President – Karen Hobson ([karenhobson@copta.org](mailto:karenhobson@copta.org))  
 Jeffco Council PTA President – Kay Slater ([president@jeffcopta.org](mailto:president@jeffcopta.org))  
 Region 1 Coordinator – Christena Burnham ([christenaburnham@copta.org](mailto:christenaburnham@copta.org))  
 Region 2, 3, 5 and 6 Coordinators – VACANT, please contact VP of Field Service ([jamiekulp@copta.org](mailto:jamiekulp@copta.org))

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Bylaws Chair – Marta Murray ([martamurray@copta.org](mailto:martamurray@copta.org))  
 Convention Chair – Jennifer Gallo ([jennifergallopta@gmail.com](mailto:jennifergallopta@gmail.com))  
 Health, Wellness & Safety Co-Chair – Lorrie Odom ([lorrieodom@copta.org](mailto:lorrieodom@copta.org))  
 Health, Wellness & Safety Co-Chair – Martha Tate ([mttate@q.com](mailto:mttate@q.com))  
 Reflections Chair – Nora Brown ([norabrown@copta.org](mailto:norabrown@copta.org))  
 Resolutions Chair – Evie Hudak ([eviehudak@copta.org](mailto:eviehudak@copta.org))  
 Scholarship Chair – Nora Brown ([norabrown@copta.org](mailto:norabrown@copta.org))

PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT TO COMPLETE A VERY QUICK SURVEY TO HELP US TO BETTER SUPPORT YOUR PTA: [Microsoft Forms](#)