



A Message from Colorado PTA President Staci Ruddy

Please click on the links below to access messages from Colorado PTA President Staci Ruddy <https://youtu.be/7PKTMvnx2wY>



Keep Your Unit in Good Standing!

- Please remember if your fiscal year ends June 30, your financial review is DUE NOW!
- Please submit your 2021-2022 Officers List to Colorado PTA as soon as possible! We want to ensure you don't miss out on important communications.
- Please remember your first membership submission is due by **October 1!**

Spread the Love of PTA and Share the Opportunity to Join Us!

Visit and Join Colorado PTA as a Supporting Member (non-voting) using our QR code:



Details about these due dates and instructions on how to submit these required documents are available HERE: <https://copta.org/officers/>.



Save the Date!

Reflections Training

Sept. 14, 6:30-7:30 PM
via Zoom, contact
office@copta.org for
information

Health Wellness and Safety Committee

Sept. 15, 10:30-12:30 PM
via Zoom, contact
HWS@copta.org
for information

Denver Council fall training

Sept. 25, 9-11:30 AM
via Zoom, contact
denvercouncilpta@copta.org
for information

Jeffco Council fall training

Sept. 18, 8 AM-2:15 PM
via Zoom, contact
info@jeffcopta.org for
information

Support the Arts – Support Your Students! Through the National PTA Reflections Cultural Arts Program 2021-22 Theme: “I Will Change the World By...”



“I found I could say things with color
and shapes that I couldn’t say any other
way – things I had no words for.”

– Georgia O’Keefe

National PTA Reflections is America’s oldest and largest arts education program of its kind. The program was developed in 1969 by Colorado’s PTA President Mary Lou Anderson to encourage students to explore their talents and express themselves. Since then, the Reflections Program has inspired millions of students to reflect on a specific theme and create original artwork. Why is arts education so important? It not only cultivates imagination, self-expression, and creativity, but it also plays an important role in the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. It also helps students process their thoughts and emotions – which is so important to mental health – especially now.

Each year, students in Grades Pre-K through 12 and “Special Artists” are recognized for bringing the theme to life through film production, dance choreography, literature, music composition, photography, and visual arts (2D and 3D).

Students advance through their schools, regions/councils, state, and national reviews. It is a way for everyone to create and for student artists to express themselves and be recognized.

Consider the following:

- **Participation in the arts can level the playing field for underserved students.**
- **Participation in the arts develops the whole child.**
- **Participation in the arts connects families and schools to one another and to their communities.**

For more information and resources, go to Colorado PTA: copta.org, National PTA: PTA.org/Reflections, or contact reflections@copta.org

Important Reflections Dates...

- Training for Reflections Chairs/Potential Chairs: **Sept 14, 2021, 6:30-7:30 p.m.** via Zoom. (Training video is also available on the CO PTA website.)
- School turn-in dates: Determined by your school/council PTA.
- Region turn in date to State (online submission): Dec 9, 2021.
- Council turn-in date to State (online submission): Jan 21, 2021
- State Awards Ceremony: Mar 13, 2022



KEEP THE HEART OF PTA BEATING with ADVOCACY in SEPTEMBER

As students go back to school in September, we need PTA members to remember that our mission is to make every child's potential a reality by advocating for all children. Here are the things you can do now to help accomplish our mission:

Register to vote!

This fall's ballot will impact things that are important to PTA: school board elections and statewide ballot issues affecting school funding. It is essential that all eligible PTA members are able to vote. To register to vote or to ensure that you are already registered and your registration is up to date – go to www.GoVoteColorado.gov.

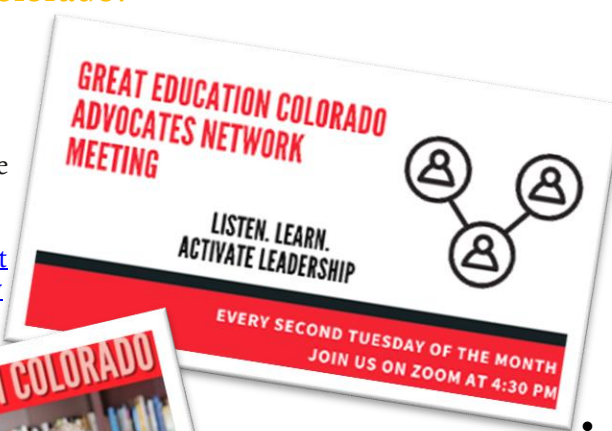


School board elections!

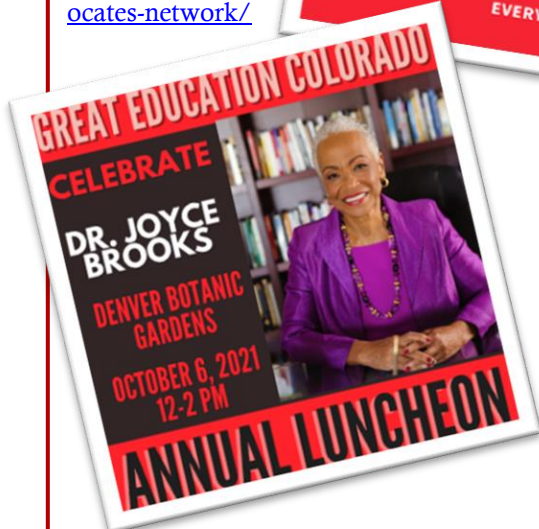
With Colorado's extensive "local control" of policies, curriculum, hiring, and school buildings by school boards in our 178 school districts around the state, it is vital that PTA members pay attention to who is running for school board in their district. Typically the seats on school boards are staggered, so that about half the seats are up every odd-numbered year. As a 501c3 nonprofit organization, PTA is somewhat restricted in what it can do regarding these elections. We CANNOT support or oppose candidates, but we CAN provide information to our members about the candidates who are running. See our [Election Guide for School Board Elections](#) for details.

Upcoming Events sponsored by Great Education Colorado:

Great Education Colorado Advocates Network Meeting, 2nd Tuesday of the month, 4:30-5:30 p.m.
<https://www.greateducation.org/advocates-network/>



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Vote NO on this year's statewide ballot issues!

While there has been no confirmation as of the time this article was written as to whether the proposed statewide ballot issues will be approved for the 2021 ballot, and if so, what their Proposition numbers will be, we believe they are likely to be approved. PTA is opposed to all:

- **VOTE NO on LEAP (Initiative 25, Learning Enrichment and Academic Progress):** See the flyer in this newsletter or the [article in the August edition](#) for more information.
- **VOTE NO on Initiative 19, Requirements for Spending Custodial Money:** This ballot measure would transfer the power to allocate "custodial funds" from the executive branch (Governor, State Treasurer, and heads of state departments and agencies) to the State Legislature. "Custodial funds" means money received by the state provided for a particular purpose, which originated from a source other than the state taxes, such as federal funds and grants. Therefore, in order to access these funds in a timely manner, the part-time Legislature would have to be called back into numerous special sessions at a cost of \$25,000/day; otherwise, the money in the custodial funds would remain inaccessible and unspent until the following January when the Legislature reconvenes. Thus, it may result in reduced or delayed public services such as allocation of grant funding that schools would want.
- **VOTE NO on Initiative 27, Property Tax Assessment Rate Reduction and Voter-Approved Revenue Change:** This ballot measure would reverse the adjustments to property tax assessment rates made by Amendment B in last year's election, which was approved by nearly two-thirds of Colorado voters. The initiative would slash local government revenue by over \$1 billion annually through lowering property tax rates, and in the process [affecting schools](#), police, and fire protection, among other services. It would also create a confusing clash with property tax law passed through [SB21-293](#).

DECLINE TO SIGN Initiative 31, State Income Tax Reduction – Colorado PTA OPPOSES this ballot measure that would hurt education funding!

We see paid petition gatherers in front of our grocery stores, at festivals, and in other public spaces all the time. It's how tax policy decisions are often made in our state. But instead of asking you to sign a petition to help our kids and schools as we often do, this time we are asking you to do the opposite: **DO NOT** sign the petition for Initiative 31!

Proponents of this measure are currently gathering signatures for the 2022 ballot. Initiative 31, State Income Tax Reduction, would further cut funding for our schools. Colorado already has one of the lowest rates of income tax in the nation. This ballot issue would reduce the funds available for public schools by about \$400 million annually and give much of it to the wealthiest Coloradans. That's the equivalent of 7,000 teachers!

We know 2022 might seem like a long way off, but successfully challenging a measure like this takes a lot of time and energy. It starts with pledging to *decline to sign* the petition for Initiative 31 and telling your friends, family members, and coworkers about this dangerous measure.



Got Questions?

- Why do we have to keep paying fees and raising money to keep the basics for our students?
- What can we do to make sure teachers can afford to live near where they teach and don't have to spend their own money on classroom supplies?
- What is a mill levy, anyway?
- What happened to the marijuana money?

Advocacy – taking action for all students – is the heart of Colorado PTA. Learning more is a great first step! Our partner, [Great Education Colorado](#), has answers. Colorado PTA relies on Great Ed to keep us informed and prepared to act on the statewide school funding issues that have a huge impact on each and every one of our schools and students. **We encourage every local unit to take advantage of Great Ed's great resources by [scheduling a presentation](#) for an upcoming PTA meeting.**



MEMBERSHIP

Make joining your PTA as easy as possible! Create a QR code that links to your online membership join page or form and then post it everywhere! **Check out this [video](#)** to learn how to create a QR code in less than 60 seconds and then people in your community can join your PTA within 60 seconds of scanning your QR code. **[Watch now.](#)**



Ready to take action?

Add your name to stand up against the outside interests ready to hurt education through our partners at Great Education Colorado:

<https://www.greateducation.org/initiative-31>

Use the toolkit to get the word out:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZEP9rEKOxGiG5-D8_Xq9CETXaZ2hD1pdCA-oxmHsi3E/edit?usp=sharing

Join Great Ed's Advocates Network monthly meetings the second Tuesday of each month to stay on top of this initiative and others impacting public education.

Here are some Back-to-School and pertinent COVID-19 resources for the health, wellness, and safety of your PTA and your school (most listings have resources you can share in Spanish and English):

Back-to-School Health

Back-to-School Do's and Don'ts:

<https://childmind.org/article/back-to-school-dos-and-donts/>
<https://childmind.org/article/que-hacer-y-que-no-hacer-este-regreso-a-clases/>

Back-to-School Anxiety:

<https://childmind.org/article/back-school-anxiety/>
<https://childmind.org/article/ansiedad-por-el-regreso-a-la-escuela/>

Back-to-School (and Work) Anxiety:

<https://childmind.org/article/back-to-school-and-work-anxiety/>
<https://childmind.org/article/que-hacer-y-que-no-hacer-este-regreso-a-clases/>



COVID-19 Safety

Safe Schools During the COVID-19 Pandemic

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Return-to-School-During-COVID19.aspx>

<https://www.healthychildren.org/spanish/health-issues/conditions/covid-19/paginas/return-to-school-during-covid-19.aspx>

Youth Sports: A COVID-19 Safety Checklist

<https://healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Youth-Sports-Participation-During-COVID-19-A-Safety-Checklist.aspx>
<https://healthychildren.org/spanish/health-issues/conditions/covid-19/paginas/youth-sports-participation-during-covid-19-a-safety-checklist.aspx>

Effectively Engaging People Who Are Hesitant About the COVID-19 Vaccine Messaging Guide

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ec8fix11dhHgUJevQUV3X1m7yovsvGif23STPhbhkv0/edit> - Provided by The Colorado Health Foundation, the purpose of this document is to provide organizations and individuals that are engaging hesitant people with suggestions and best practices on how to hold those conversations.



Suicide Prevention

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month! We have several Mental Health and Suicide Prevention handouts, as well as information on how you can help after a suicide attempt has occurred as well as suicide prevention for specific populations. Please take a moment to visit Colorado PTA's website and review some of our amazing resources! <https://copta.org/health-wellness-and-safety/>.

Colorado PTA is pleased to partner with Pikes Peak Suicide Prevention to host two QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) virtual trainings in September. These trainings will occur on Sept. 21 from 5:30pm-7:00pm and on Sept. 25 from 12:00pm-1:30pm via Zoom. Please join us to learn how best to respond to someone experiencing a suicide crisis.

Pikes Peak Suicide Prevention will also host an in-person training on Saturday, September 11 from 8:30am-3:30pm, this training includes free lunch and will be held at Lewis Palmer High School.

For more information, please visit our website or Pikes Peak Suicide Prevention at <https://www.pikespeaksuicideprevention.org/>.



The Colorado Department of Human Services (DHS) announced that Youth Awareness week will be 9/6-9/10/21. The purpose of this week is to emphasize the positive youth voice and to celebrate the influence youth have in our State and local communities. This year's theme is Inclusion and Acceptance. Check out this website for information: <https://cdpsdocs.state.co.us/safeschools/e-updates/eupdatefiles/2021YouthAwarenessWeekFlyer.pdf>

Save the Date for Convention

Colorado PTA Annual Convention
 Friday, April 1 - Evening Celebration
 Saturday, April 2 - All Day
 Sunday, April 3 - Half Day
 DoubleTree - Denver Tech Center



I Belong

Want to have fun helping Colorado PTA put on a great Convention? This is a big one, celebrating our 100th year! Here are some areas where we need help:

- Tech help – editing videos and virtual content; securing a platform for live virtual feed; various other AV responsibilities.
- Workshops – planning workshops and securing speakers.
- Communications - creating content for newsletter articles and social media.
- Belong Box/Attendee bag – securing donations from exhibitors and partners of PTA; preparing bags/boxes for attendees.
- Registration – preparing attendee name tags; doing greet/check-in at in-person Convention site.
- Credentials – communicating with Unit Presidents regarding attendees and voting delegates (time sensitive information).
- Program – developing annual Convention program.
- Keynote Speaker – securing the speaker.
- Exhibitors/Sponsors – assisting in securing exhibitors/sponsors; setting up and checking in exhibitors in the Exhibit Hall.
- Boutique – assisting attendees with purchases during Convention.
- General help.

If you are interested, please contact us
 at christinapowell@copta.org or convention@copta.org.

National PTA Resources

Back to School with PTA

Join National PTA in Celebrating [Back to School Week September 13-17!](#)

We are pleased to share with you that PTA will be hosting a special “Back to Class” virtual town hall Wednesday, Sept. 1 at 1 p.m. EDT in partnership with the CDC, moderated by NBC News correspondent and mom Kate Snow, and featuring CDC Director Dr. Rochelle P. Walensky and U.S. Secretary of Education Dr. Miguel Cardona. Dr. Jill Biden will also attend!

The town hall will be streamed live on [National PTA's Facebook page](#) and can be watched immediately following as a recording on Facebook for those who are unable to join live.

National PTA School of Excellence is a recognition program that supports and celebrates partnerships between PTAs and schools to enrich the educational experience and overall well-being for all students.

Enrollment for the 2021 — 2022 school year opens June, 1, 2021.

Learn more about the National PTA [School of Excellence Program](#).

June 1 to October 1, 2021

internet essentials
FROM COMCAST

Schools can connect their students, staff, and families to the Internet at home through the FCC's Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF).

Partner with Comcast Today >>

NOTES FROM THE BACKPACK
A PTA Podcast

Listen to Notes from the Backpack

Podcast icons for various platforms.



#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**.