



Membership Matters!

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/q5RJuqXx-Ro>



Need a quick, easy way to access the National PTA's membership information? Use this QR code:



Did you know...

...That you can submit a report with new members every month, and you don't have to wait until the October or February reporting deadlines?

Save the Date!

Put the dates for
our annual
Convention on
your calendar!

Colorado PTA Annual Convention

Friday, April 1 – all day

Saturday, April 2 – all day

DoubleTree - Denver Tech Center



I Belong

FOCUS ON: HEALTH, WELLNESS, AND SAFETY

Colorado PTA has a very strong focus on health, wellness, and safety. Our Health, Wellness, & Safety (HWS) Committee meets monthly and provides resources and tools for PTA units, parents, students, school staff, and communities to promote the mental and physical well-being and safety of all students and to advocate for healthy, safe, equitable, and nurturing school environments.

Meet the Health, Wellness and Safety Team Chair, Dr. Lorrie Odom

Please click on this link to view a conversation about the committee's work this year. <https://youtu.be/8hLqS0AFyFc>



Health Wellness and Safety Resources

Numerous resources can be found on the [HWS section of the Colorado PTA website](#). Resources include downloadable one-page (front-and-back) "Info Sheets" on a wide variety of topics such as School Food and Physical Activity, Internet Safety, Cyberbullying, Gun Safety, Suicide Prevention, Mental Health, Disaster and Emergency Preparedness and School Safety, Transportation and Vehicle Safety, Immunizations, and Substance Misuse including nicotine, marijuana, and vaping.

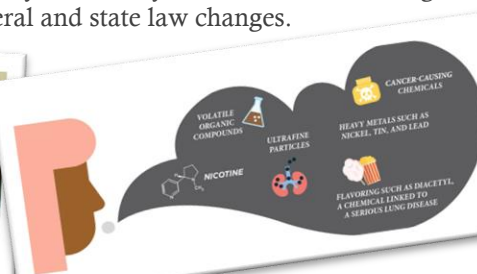
Additionally, at each regularly scheduled HWS committee meeting, new resources and upcoming meeting announcements pertinent to current HWS-related issues are provided to committee members and made available for wider PTA distribution. (See the **calendar** on the home page of the [Colorado PTA website](#) for meeting dates and times.)



Resources in Action

Here are some advocacy activities that Jeffco Council PTA have done, utilizing PTA's resources:

- 2019 – Sent a letter to the Mayor and City Council of Lakewood to advocate for a TRL (Tobacco Retail Licensing) Ordinance in Lakewood.
- 2019 – Spoke at a Study Session of the Wheat Ridge City Council to advocate for an ordinance to establish TRL and to raise the legal age of sale of tobacco products to 21 (T21).
- 2019 – Spoke at a Golden City Council meeting in support of an ordinance to establish TRL, T21, and a ban on E-cigarette flavors.
- 2020 – Spoke at a Study Session of the Wheat Ridge City Council in support of TRL and T21.
- 2020 – Worked with a collaborative including the Jeffco Public Health Department, Jeffco Board of Health, Foothills Medical Society, and Support Jeffco Kids as signers of a letter to the Arvada City Council, City Manager, and Police Chief to encourage them not to opt into Marijuana Hospitality Establishments.
- 2020 – Supported revisions of the Jeffco Public School Health Education policy and guidelines, which are now awaiting approval by the Jeffco BOE.
- 2021 – Sent a letter to the Mayor and City Council of Wheat Ridge in support of an ordinance to establish TRL and T21, in alignment with federal and state law changes.



ADVOCACY CORNER: FOCUS ON HWS

*A founding purpose of PTA is to promote and protect the **HEALTH, WELLNESS, and SAFETY** of our children and youth. Our volunteers work tirelessly with this purpose in mind. You can see this work carried out today through advocacy at all levels of PTA—[National PTA](#), [Colorado PTA \(COPTA\)](#), Region and Council PTAs, local units, and members.*



PTAs promote health, wellness, and safety through everything from organizing coat drives and volunteering as crossing guards to advocating directly with our local, state, and national lawmakers. Some recent actions that support the health, wellness, and safety of our children and youth include:

- Advocating for the funding and promotion of appropriate mental health services for our children and youth by testifying on several bills.
 - COPTA supported [House Bill 21-1119](#), Suicide Prevention, Intervention, and Postvention, a bill that “broaden[s] the state's priorities and focus on suicide and suicide attempts and the after-effects of those actions on attempt survivors, family, friends, health-care providers, first and last responders, educators, and students in schools where a suicide or suicide attempt has occurred.”
 - COPTA supported [House Bill 20-1238](#), Safe & Healthy Learning Environments for Students, a bill that requires the state of Colorado to prioritize evidence-based policies and practices designed to promote school safety and healthy learning environments when awarding financial grants.
 - COPTA supported [House Bill 20-1006](#), Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants, which directed the creation of a program “to support mental health care across the state in a variety of early childhood settings and practices.”
- Advocating for the funding and promotion of public policies that support the physical well-being of our children and youth by testifying on several bills.
 - COPTA supported [House Bill 20-1001](#), Nicotine Product Regulation, a bill that implemented a number of common sense regulations, including increasing the age of sale from 18 to 21 for nicotine products.
 - COPTA supported [House Bill 21-1106](#), Safe Storage of Firearms, a bill that



created common sense public policy “require[ing] that firearms be responsibly and securely stored when they are not in use to prevent access by unsupervised juveniles and other unauthorized users.”

- COPTA opposed [House Bill 21-1038](#), Concealed Handguns on School Grounds, which had it passed would have allowed the concealed carry of handguns within public elementary, middle school, and high schools.
- COPTA supported [Senate Bill 21-255](#), Free Menstrual Hygiene Products to Students, a bill that created a grant program making menstrual hygiene products accessible to students.
- COPTA supported [House Bill 21-1099](#), Policies and Procedures to Identify Domestic Abuse, which requires the creation of policies and procedures related to when a parent or guardian exposes a child or youth to domestic abuse.
- Advocating and providing resources through COPTA's [Health, Wellness and Safety Committee](#).
 - COPTA has developed information sheets on a number of important topics including the following: Nutrition, Homelessness, Transportation/Vehicle Safety, Mental Health, Technology, Disaster/Emergency Preparedness, Substance Use/Abuse, Suicide, Gun Safety, Abduction, and Physical Health.



PTA continues to keep Children's and Youth's Health Wellness, and Safety as a central tenant. This is just a small sample of the work that volunteers carry out in support of this mission.

See also National PTA [Position Statements](#); [Resolutions](#)
See also Colorado PTA [Resolutions and Positions](#);
[Legislative Priorities for 2022](#)

EDUCATION FUNDING – THINGS NEED TO CHANGE!

By Lisa Weil, COPTA Director At-Large

Wondering about school staff shortages, increasing fees, growing fundraising needs, large class sizes, and/or disappearing bus routes? You're not alone.

Colorado PTA is partnering with [Great Education Colorado](#) to inform our members about the causes of funding shortfalls and about simple but critical ways to make a difference. It's all part of PTA's mission: "To make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children."

The first step is learning more. Great Ed and COPTA will be hosting our virtual, interactive presentation called "[Perspectives for Change](#)" in early 2022. Dozens of PTA leaders have already participated in the conversation.

Please let us know that you are interested in attending a presentation in early 2022 by [signing up here](#). We'll get in touch with you soon with dates and times.

Please note: In addition to providing information and ways to make a difference, this presentation **counts toward PTA Officer training requirements**.

"'Perspectives for Change' was an eye-opening explanation of the severe funding challenges that all Colorado public schools are facing, as well as opportunities to change this. I strongly recommend this presentation to any PTA that is working to help bridge the funding and opportunity gaps at their school."

-- Alison Cohen, President, Carson Elementary

CONGRATULATIONS

Autumn Rivera

Glenwood Springs Middle School
Roaring Fork School District



2022 Colorado
Teacher of the Year



2022 Colorado Teacher of the Year

The Colorado Department of Education has announced the 2022 Colorado Teacher of the Year. Autumn Rivera teaches sixth-grade science at Glenwood Springs Middle School in Roaring Fork School District.

Rivera has taught sixth grade at her current school for nine years. She is also an adjunct professor in the education department at Colorado Mountain College. During her more 16 years as an educator, she has worked with students from elementary to postgraduate levels. Rivera is a member of the Colorado Science Conference Planning Committee and the Steering Committee with the Colorado Science Education Network. She is the Region 3 Elementary Board representative for the Colorado Association of Science Teachers and volunteers with the American Association of Chemistry Teachers.

In addition to her work in the field of science, Rivera serves on the Roaring Fork School District Interest Based Bargaining Committee and is her building's advisor for the district's Mentor and Advisor Program. She is the design facilitator for schoolwide events as well as a school track coach.

Colorado PTA is proud to congratulate the 2022 Teacher of the Year, **Autumn Rivera**! It's truly an honor to be a part of the selection process, and we couldn't be more pleased with this year's winner! We are thrilled to share that Autumn will be a keynote speaker at our 100th Annual Convention in April!

