



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Please click on the links below to
access messages from Colorado PTA
President Staci Ruddy.

https://youtu.be/rb03_2j4fNc



Social Studies Standards – Creating Welcoming and Inclusive Schools

No matter our race, our culture, our political affiliation, or zip code, we all want our kids to attend welcoming schools that encourage them to dig deeper into who we are, where we came from, and what we can be. Unfortunately, there are attempts throughout America to spread disinformation and censor student learning about the complexities of our nation's past and present.

The good news is that here in Colorado, our legislators passed a law to adopt state standards that are more inclusive and representative of all groups. The committee has completed their work, and now the Colorado State Board of Education will consider the recommended improvements to our Social Studies standards that include the perspectives, history, culture, and social contributions of Americans in all our diversity, including Indigenous Peoples, Latinos, African Americans, Asian Americans, and LGBTQIA Americans.

[Here's an easy way](#) that you can join Colorado PTA and thousands of others around the state in telling the Colorado State Board of Education that we value comprehensive, honest, and inclusive education for our children:

<https://www.greateducation.org/petitions/>





Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Action

PTA is an organization that recognizes diversity and values differences and similarities among people through its actions and accountability. PTA welcomes members with different age, ethnicity, gender, language and culture, and socioeconomic status. National PTA's [website](#) includes resources for reaching out to all the diverse families in each school and community. When PTAs respect differences and then develop meaningful priorities based upon their knowledge, they genuinely represent their communities. When PTAs represent their communities, they gain strength and effectiveness.

We strongly encourage you to take advantage of the DEI resources available through National PTA. The materials for creating a DEI action plan can be found in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#). You might also be interested in National PTA's [Notes from the Backpack](#) podcast, which is designed for millions of parents and decisionmakers

they influence. Especially for DEI, check out the one entitled "Supporting Students of Color."

Colorado PTA is pleased that **Denver Council PTSA** has been presenting a series of [forums on DEI](#). They plan to put on a DEI training for the Council leaders in early January and do another public forum in February. Look for more information on their [Facebook page](#).



Share how your PTA
has championed
diversity & inclusion
for a chance to
WIN \$1,000!

[Find Out How](#)

EDUCATION FUNDING – THINGS NEED TO CHANGE!

By Lisa Weil, COPTA Director At-Large

Wondering about 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 things better. 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:

"'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 PTA

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. In addition to providing great information and ways to make a difference, **this presentation applies toward PTA Officer training requirements.**

[Sign up today!](#)

Diversity In All Aspects of PTA

Suicide Prevention

The Colorado Suicide Prevention Commission's Youth-Specific Initiatives Work Group made a recommendation recently to **support Black, Indigenous, and Youth of Color (BIPOC)**. In Colorado, as well as nationally, health disparities among BIPOC populations lead to a lack of access, services, care, and research regarding behavioral health. Economic and racial segregation impact access to education, employment, and health care. In the United States, injustice and segregation contribute to lasting mental health impacts.

Because suicidal despair, attempts, and deaths by suicide impact all races, ethnicities, cultures, and communities, it is imperative that suicide prevention efforts support all populations. Racial disparities in healthcare are well-documented and show a significant and lasting impact on a variety of health outcomes, including national suicide-related indicators, such as suicidal despair, suicide attempts, and suicide deaths. According to the 2019 Healthy Kids Colorado Survey, approximately 45 percent of Colorado youth attending public high schools identify as a race/ethnicity other than white. High percentages of BIPOC students indicate feeling sad or hopeless and/or making at least one suicide attempt.

Goals for Health, Wellness and Safety in 2022

The Health, Wellness, and Safety Committee of Colorado PTA has set the following goal for this school year:

Establish a HWS committee member connection with a PTA unit in an at-risk school in each COPTA region.

Contact **Jamie Kulp**, Vice President of Field Service, for more information about which region your school is in and how to establish a HWS committee.



Colorado PTA Suicide Prevention Resources

"I Matter" is an initiative that provides **three free counseling sessions** for all Colorado youth under 18 who may be struggling during these challenging times. The program is funded through the Colorado Department of Human Services and the Office of Behavioral Health through June 30, 2022:

<https://www.imattercolorado.org/>.

Voices for Healthy Kids 2021 Racial Equity Message Guide from the American Heart Association provides key messages and tips for advocates to use to advance the conversation on racial equity, link racial inequity and structural racism to policy, and obtain support for specific racial equity language in public policy:

https://voicesforhealthykids.org/assets/resources/vhk_racial-equity-message-guide-feb252021-1614277588.pdf

Suicide Prevention and Equity information:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/19Aw70aZt5LaTsUwc3zZYrDBN_KI93TEEn/view

Suicide Prevention Commission: Youth Specific Initiatives Work Group Recommendation to Support LGBTQ+ Youth:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1XY7Ib2nohclCY_ZiHoSZ-IY2oJ7WhgzHT

Suicide Prevention Commission recent recommendations on Supporting Black, Indigenous, and Youth of Color:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1ufd5emr4BOCc1vo-1x1G6Ndox72Rvbru>

Additional HWS Resources

Gender dysphoria:

<https://childmind.org/topics/disorders/gender-dysphoria/>

COVID Vaccine - equity, availability,

distribution: <https://www.coimmunizationadvocates.org/who-we-are.html>



Did you know that EQUITY is a central and explicit Legislative Priority for Colorado PTA? Often our discussion in the Legislative Committee meetings also center around diversity and inclusion. [Our priorities](#) include:

- Providing more equity in school funding, by restoring the “factors” in school finance that were created for equity.
- Holding schools and districts, as well as district and school administrators, accountable for the extent to which they allocate resources and staff to promote equity among schools, provide equitable access to classes and resources for students, and ensure that different learning needs of students are met.
- Promoting greater diversity of educators and less student segregation among schools.
- Ensuring that during the pandemic there is equity among schools and districts related to instruction, connectivity, translation, home instruction challenges, and mental/behavioral health.
- Ensuring that schools are teaching history, culture, and civics in a truthful and culturally responsive way.
- Provide guidelines for the new Department of Early Childhood to ensure that it is implemented equitably throughout the state and that both childcare and preschool programs meet the needs of all children.

During the 2021 legislative session Colorado PTA has supported legislation that promotes diversity equity, and inclusion, including:

- [Senate Bill 21-116](#)—Prohibit American Indian Mascots
- [Senate Bill 21-199](#)—Remove Barriers to Certain Public Opportunities

- [Senate Bill 21-255](#)—Free Menstrual Hygiene Products to Students
- [House Bill 21-1010](#)—Diverse k-12 Educator Workforce Report
- [House Bill 21-1067](#)—College Admission Use of National Test Score
- [House Bill 21-1108](#)—Gender Identity Expression Anti-discrimination
- [House Bill 21-1114](#)—School District Provision of Internet Service

Supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion will remain a high priority for Colorado PTA during the 2022 legislative session and beyond.

Legislative Committee

Please follow [this link](#) if you would like to join the email list for the Legislative Committee. Our next meeting is January 10, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. During the first hour of the meeting our partners with Great Education Colorado will be presenting *School Funding 101*. During the presentation we'll explore the federal, state, and local sources of school funding, the manner in which Colorado distributes those dollars, and the impact TABOR has had on districts, schools and students. We will also learn what we can do to increase the adequacy and equity of that funding. Sign up [here](#) if you'd like to attend the presentation but do not want to join the Legislative Committee email list.

Understanding the Process

Follow [this link](#) to find out who is currently representing you at the Colorado General Assembly and [this link](#) to find out who represents you in Congress. Your state and federal legislators may change after the 2022 election due to the redrawing of district boundaries.

See also National PTA [Position Statements](#); [Resolutions](#)

See also Colorado PTA [Resolutions and Positions](#)

Membership Matters

The PTA Membership Campaign Toolkit can be very helpful for your local unit to find new members. Look for it on the National PTA website. It does the following:

- Presents strategies to motivate and drive PTA membership.
- Includes new messaging, collateral materials and templates, and ideas for implementing the campaign.
- Helps parents understand why it is valuable to become a PTA member, based on research from surveys and interviews conducted with current and prospective members.
- Is available in English and Spanish.

DID YOU KNOW...

that you don't have to be a parent to be a member of PTA? Anyone can join and support all kids.



NATIONAL PTA[®] REFLECTIONS[®]

We wanted you to be the first to know — the National PTA's annual Reflections Student Arts Showcase will be held Tuesday, Jan. 25, 2022, at 7 p.m. EST on National PTA's YouTube Channel.

This virtual event will feature a selection of artists and recognize all our national-level winning artists from the 2020-2021 I Matter Because... Reflections year.

RSVP to tell us you'll be attending and we'll send you some fun, free Reflections-themed activities and event reminders so you don't miss a moment of the excitement.

P.S. This is an open invitation!

Please share the RSVP page with your friends and family by using the social share buttons below, so they can celebrate with us, too! Can't wait for the show to begin? View last year's event on our YouTube Channel



[RSVP Here](#)