



A Message from Colorado PTA President Staci Ruddy

We hope you all enjoyed the summer and some much needed downtime and warm weather. As we begin the start of a new school year, we know you will be busy with lots of activities within your schools and communities. Please try to find some time to attend one of our regional fall training events. These are usually low cost or free to you and part of the benefit of being PTA. For those who are unable to attend, there are numerous training options through National PTA and Colorado PTA – please reach out to your Field Service representative for information.

The Colorado PTA Board, Field Service members, and committee chairs met recently to work on our goal-setting and planning for the year, and we are so excited about some of the ideas we have put in motion! Please watch in coming newsletters for more information. Part of our summer planning always includes some time for team bonding. This year we headed to Painting with a Twist to explore our artistic sides. (See photos later in this newsletter from our time together.)

Thank you to everyone who participated in support of Initiative 63. PTA had a phenomenal representation among the many organizations that worked on this initiative. We are so proud of the momentum you have created and are developing plans to continue our excellent work! You truly exhibited what PTA is all about – grassroots advocacy! We couldn't be more proud!

Our school funding crisis is worse than ever, which many of you see within your schools in the form of teacher shortages, increased fees, degrading buildings, and more. We have had some wonderful interactive presentations throughout the last year that provide an opportunity to share some of what you are seeing in your schools with others. If you haven't yet attended one of these presentations, please contact any member of the Colorado PTA team to schedule a “Perspectives in Change” discussion at your school. This innovative discussion model will help frame much of the future work we do and help your school community understand how they can be involved.

Finally, I want to announce our theme for this year – Be the Change! This theme will serve as inspiration for our Board of Directors throughout all of our planning and work for this year, including our 101st Annual Colorado PTA Convention! We have a new accompanying logo which you will find in the article about Convention. We hope this theme provides our members with inspiration too, as we work together to make every child's potential a reality!

As always, thank you for all that you do!

AUGUST CALENDAR

- Aug. 8 – Legislative Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m., via Zoom
- Aug. 24 – Health, Wellness, and Safety Committee, 10:30 a.m., via Zoom
- Aug. 27 – El Paso Council Leadership Training, details TBA

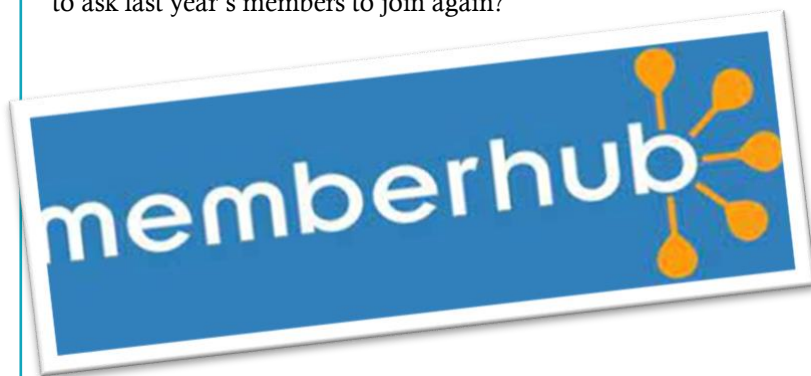
MEMBERSHIP: THE KEY TO PTA'S SUCCESS

Help Growing Your Membership

You know the good work that your PTA does for your community every day—but talking about your accomplishments and inviting others to join you can be hard. That's why the National PTA created the Membership Campaign, **PTA for Your Child**. There is a whole suite of tools to help you promote your PTA's value: [You Belong in PTA](#). Use the customizable and print-and-go flyers and social media graphics to get the word out. Create your PTA's unique value message by following the provided guide and get started telling your school community.

DID YOU KNOW ...

... That a good way to get members for the new year is to ask last year's members to join again?



Learn to Use MemberHub

MemberHub has started to offer a variety of different workshops at different times every week until the end of September. In addition to these workshops, their support team is also holding one-to-one setup calls for new PTA leaders. You can book a time with a member of the MemberHub team to assist you with setting up your site and stores. MemberHub's fundraiser experts will also be available to meet with your local leaders to assist with setting up your fall fundraiser, answer any fundraising questions, and even introduce you to MemberHub's newest platform, MemberHub Givebacks.

Here's the link to for more information and to sign up: <https://info.memberhub.com/sessions>



Let Us Award You

Every year at our state Convention, we award local PTA units that have made significant accomplishments in gaining membership. Units are eligible to receive any of these awards that apply:

- **Timberline Staff Award:** To the units with more than 50% staff memberships.
- **Mile High Staff Award:** Those units which have a 100% staff membership, which includes all full-time certified and classified personnel working at the school.
- **Aspen Award:** Those units which have a 10% or greater increase in membership or 20 members increase (whichever is greater).
- **White Oak Award:** Those units which have at least 20% or greater increase in membership or 25 members increase (whichever is greater).
- **Red Oak Award:** Those units which have at least 50% or greater increase in membership or 30 members increase (whichever is greater).
- **Acorn Award:** To the newly chartered units from 2021-22 with the largest percentage increase of members.
- **Mighty Oak Award:** To the unit with the highest percentage membership to student enrollment ratio.
- **Rocky Mountain Award:** To the unit with the highest percentage increase in membership over last year.

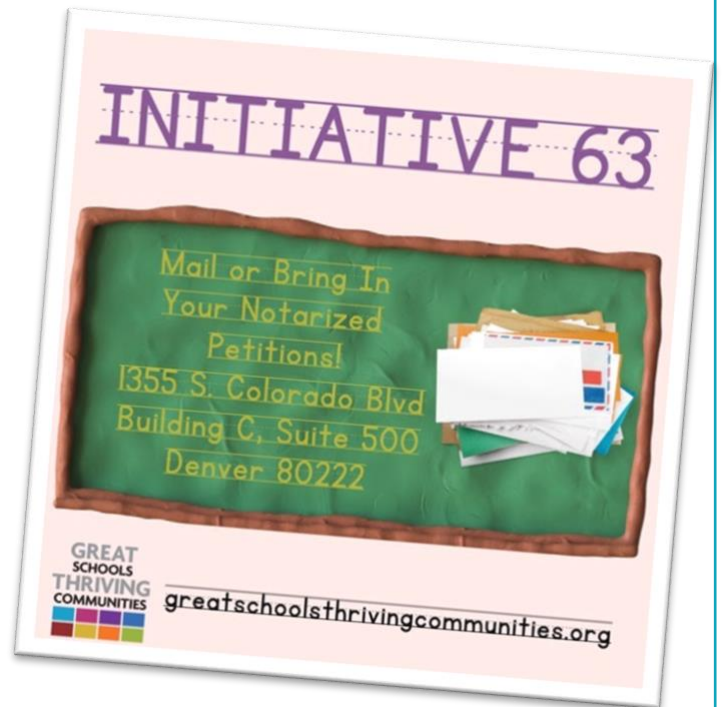


We are very sad to announce that Initiative 63 will not be on the ballot. PTA members made a huge effort to collect signatures, but without adequate funding for paid collectors, the campaign was unable to get the 125,000 signatures necessary.

Altogether, tens of thousands of signatures were gathered in over 100 different communities. We engaged in conversations with people about the importance of school funding and of supporting our teachers. That will be valuable in the future as we continue to look for other ways to improve funding.

It is still vital for us to collect all the petitions and see how many voters supported the effort. If you haven't turned in your petition yet, the campaign would still like to receive it (no need to have it notarized). Turn them in by mail or in-person delivery to:

Great Education Colorado
 1355 S Colorado Blvd, Bldg C-Suite 500
 Denver, CO 80222
 Hours: M-F, 9am-4pm



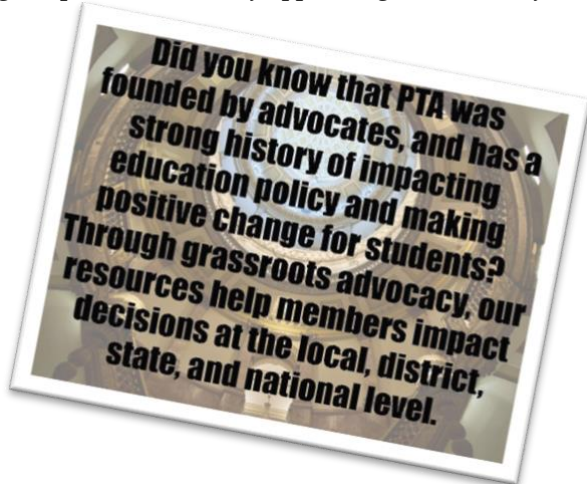
We appreciate the EFFORT of all the PTA volunteers who carried petitions, signed petitions, and educated voters about the funding issues facing our schools. YOUR WORK MATTERS and we will keep fighting for fully funded schools!



PTA's mission is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to **advocate for all children**.

You are advocating for your students all the time as PTA members and leaders. You often provide resources, create a sense of community, volunteer, plan events, and countless other activities that benefit children. As we head into the new school year, it's a good time to think about how PTA advocates and engages with public policy on a broader level.

A great place to start is by appointing an Advocacy Liaison.



What is a PTA Advocacy Liaison?

An [Advocacy Liaison](#)—

- Serves as a link between your local PTA unit and the state PTA often by joining the Legislative Committee and reporting back during your meetings.
- Takes an active interest in programs and policies at your school.
- Becomes familiar with the six national standards for family-school partnership.
- Seeks out other areas of advocacy, including but not limited to —
 - Learning more about specific issues that affect children and youth.
 - Attending school board and/or the district accountability committee meetings.
 - Building knowledge of and engagement with elected representatives.
 - Attending candidate forums, issue forums, and/or public meetings sponsored by elected officials.
 - Signing up to receive National PTA's [Take Action](#) alerts.

Tuesday Webinar: Gun Safety & Violence Prevention

Join National PTA for the special back-to-school webinar for PTA leaders focused on gun safety and violence prevention, with experts from Everytown for Gun Safety and Brady: United Against Gun Violence. The webinar will be held Tuesday, August 2, 8-9 p.m. MDT on Zoom, and a recording will be made available to those who register after the conclusion of the webinar. Reminder: [please register](#).

What are the functions of the Legislative Committee?

Another way to engage is by joining the [Legislative Committee](#) meetings. All PTA members are welcome, and you only have to attend three meetings within the fiscal year to become a voting member of the committee! Join the email list to receive Legislative Committee updates and meeting invitations by completing [this form](#).

[The Legislative Committee](#)—

- Shares information on state and national legislative issues and PTA's positions, and makes this information available to the local units.
- Advocates on PTA's positions to our state and federal legislators and to the general public.
- Brings information and recommendations to the Board of Directors on urgent issues and issues not covered by national or state platforms and resolutions.
- Collaborates with like-minded organizations for the purpose of advocacy on issues of importance to PTA.

The Colorado PTA [Legislative Committee](#) meets on the 2nd Mondays May through December and on the 2nd and 4th Mondays from January through April, during the annual session of the Colorado General Assembly (State Legislature). It meets via Zoom. Contact legislative@copta.org to get details.

Join us at our next meeting on August 8, 2022. We will be discussing our legislative priorities for next year and what to expect on the ballot in November.

National PTA's Advocacy Tip of the Month

For most of August, members of Congress are in their home state or district and available to meet with their constituents. Now is a great time to schedule a meeting or site visit in August with your member of Congress to showcase your school or PTA and highlight National PTA's [priorities](#) and what is important to families in your community. [Check out more great tips!](#)

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



Health,
wellness &
safety

Do You Need Food Assistance Right Now?

The Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) program is a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program administered by the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) which was created to provide food assistance to families with students or young children who had reduced access to meals due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Families can use P-EBT funds to purchase foods based on their dietary needs and preferences from retailers in their communities. P-EBT School Enrollment funds are made available on a P-EBT card. P-EBT Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Under 6 funds are made available on the household's SNAP EBT card where the child received the SNAP benefit for that particular month. Colorado received USDA approval to continue providing P-EBT benefits to families for Summer 2022. Summer P-EBT benefits are tentatively scheduled to be distributed in late 2022.

Eligibility for children enrolled in school:

- The student was enrolled in an NSLP school as of May 2022; AND
- Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price School meals; AND
- The student's district reports student information to the P-EBT program.

Families are encouraged to fill out a Free or Reduced-Price School meal application with their school by **August 15, 2022**, to be considered for Summer 2022 P-EBT benefits.

Tentative benefit issuance schedule:

- September 2021 - December 2021 benefits: Beginning in August 2022.
- January 2022 - May 2022 benefits: Issuance will be announced at a later date.

More information on P-EBT School Enrollment can be found [here](#).

Physical Activity Champions!

[Active Schools](#) and the [University of Northern Colorado Active Schools Institute](#) will be co-hosting a free [Virtual Summit](#) August 1-5, 2022. There will be a total 14 (50 minute) sessions that will unveil a new guiding framework, resources, a national recognition program for PK-12 schools, and a certification program for program-provider organizations.

This summit is intended to offer participants a comprehensive overview of the tools and resources that are available to support an active school environment. Each session lasts 50 minutes and participants are invited to attend all 14 sessions or select those that are most appealing. Please register for the summit using [this link](#). Once registered, you will receive more information about accessing the Zoom platform for each session. Certificates of completion will be provided upon request.



Healthy School Meals

Colorado PTA is proud to be part of the **Healthy School Meals for All campaign**. We care about the health of our children and know that all children learn much better when they are not hungry. Because costs are rising, many families in our communities are struggling to get by. Students should not go hungry because their families can't afford lunch! A simple, but powerful way we can help is to **support the ballot measure this November for Healthy School Meals for All**. You can learn more and join the campaign by following [Facebook.com/SchoolMealsforCO](https://www.facebook.com/SchoolMealsforCO).

Vaccinations for COVID

With 78% of the total population having received at least one COVID-19 vaccination, there remains a gaping hole in those who are vaccinated - the youngest children. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [now recommends](#) COVID-19 vaccination for children aged 6 months and older. This means that approximately 18 million additional children are now eligible to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Here are some resources from the American Lung Association: [5 Reasons Your Child Should Get the COVID-19 Vaccine](#) and [Understanding COVID-19 Variants](#).

Firearms and Suicide

In 2020, firearms accounted for 53% of all suicide deaths. How is this affecting our community? Come find out at one of the following times and locations (in the Colorado Springs area):

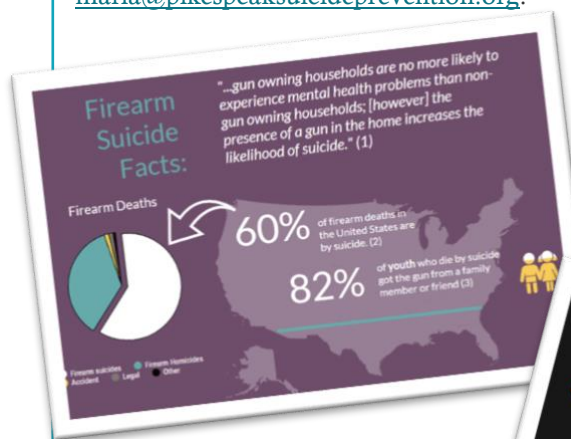
- Wed., August 24 - Workshop 1 (Fountain) 5:30-7:00 p.m.
- Sat. August 28 - Workshop 2 (First Congregational Church - Downtown COS)
- Wed., August 31 - Workshop 3 (East Library) 5-7 p.m.
- Wed., September 7 - Workshop 4 (Monument) 4-7 p.m.
- Thur., September 8 - Workshop 5 (Penrose Library) 4-6 p.m.
- Sat., September 10 - Workshop 6 (Sand Creek) 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

To register, contact Maria Cortes at maria@pikespeaksuicideprevention.org.



Concerns Continue About Kids Using Tobacco

Although the teen smoking rate has decreased 84% in the past 25 years, the recent vaping epidemic has raised new concerns about the effects of tobacco on youth. Tobacco-Free Kids is hosting a free virtual conversation series called "Campaign for the Culture." The next installment, "When the Smoke Clears: Intersection of Nicotine Addiction and Mental Health," is scheduled for August 18 at 3:00 p.m. MST. You can register at [this link](#).



Preventing Suicide with Safe Firearm Storage

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LET OUR PTA COUNCILS HELP YOU PREPARE FOR THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR

Every fall, our PTA Councils hold special events to help PTA members and local units prepare for the new school year. Please plan to attend one of these, especially if you live in Denver, Jeffco, or El Paso:

El Paso Council

El Paso Council PTA is ready to rock the new school year! Because one of our districts begins school on August 1, we already held membership training on July 28!

Our PTA Leadership Training, *Show Your Voice*, is **August 27**. For over 100 years El Paso Council PTA has been showing its voice in the Colorado Springs area!

- Perhaps you're new to your PTA/PTSA board or could use a refresher. Come learn specifics for being president, secretary, and treasurer.
- Perhaps you're new to PTA/PTSA. Come learn what it's all about and why your voice matters.
- Perhaps you're looking for new ideas to bring to your school. Come network with other PTA/PTSAs.
- Perhaps you're looking for community groups to support programs and opportunities at your school. Come visit our exhibitors.
- AND, enjoy a Texas Roadhouse lunch while visiting with representatives from your school district!

Specific details coming soon! Contact Karen Hobson, President, El Paso Council PTA, karenhobson@copta.org, 719-659-9579, with any questions.



Denver Council

The Denver Council is hosting the officers and committee chairs training in person on **Saturday, September 10, 7:30-11:30 a.m.** This opportunity will provide numerous benefits to our PTA/PTSA community. Plus, it fulfills the requirement for 3 elected officers to attend at least one position-specific leadership training annually to maintain your local unit's good standing. [Click here to register!](#)

Jeffco Council

Jeffco PTA will be hosting its Fall Leadership Conference on Saturday, **September 17, 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.**, at Creighton Middle School, 50 S. Kipling St., in Lakewood. All the required officer training will be provided, as well as useful tips for membership and communications strategies, information about upcoming events in Jeffco, and information about current advocacy efforts – all while providing an opportunity to network with other PTA units across Jeffco. Lunch is provided and the Jeffco PTA officers will be offering a town hall style Q&A following the scheduled sessions for open questions regarding running your PTA. See our [website](#) for info.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR EXCELLENCE WINNERS!



Colorado PTA is proud to announce that two of our PTA units have won the National PTA's 2021-2023 School of Excellence award: **Chinook Trail Elementary PTA** in Colorado Springs and **Puma Pride at Firestone Charter Academy PTA** in Firestone.

The School of Excellence program is designed for individual and local PTA units to make a direct impact within their unique school community. By enrolling in the program, individual local PTAs make a yearlong commitment to strengthening family-school partnerships at their schools. With feedback from their school communities, Excellence Teams will identify and implement an action plan for school improvement based on [PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships](#) and [Transformative Family Engagement](#) practices.

Convention 2023

Colorado PTA is already planning our annual Convention for 2023! It will be held at the same location as in 2022, DoubleTree by Hilton DTC. The Convention is our organization's annual meeting, and the one in 2023 will include a couple of very important items – elections for the officers for 2023-2025 and some key bylaws changes. More information is forthcoming.



YOUR PTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS: IT'S NOT ALL HARD WORK!

Every summer, the Colorado PTA Board of Directors holds a retreat to plan for the coming year. This year's retreat was held July 23-25 at the Franciscan Retreat Center in Colorado Springs. At the retreat, PTA leaders get additional leadership training, do goal-setting, make adjustments to the annual budget, and accomplish any other pressing tasks – for example, this year they approved some changes to the Bylaws that will be voted on at Convention.



But it's not all hard work. They do team-building activities. The members of our Board of Directors work together better when they know one another personally. At the retreat, they always do team-building activities and have one activity just for fun. This year it was painting – a guided activity where everyone learned to copy a painting step-by-step. You can probably tell what the painting was!

Seated in front – Christina Powell, VP for Convention; Jan Tanner, Parliamentarian; Dawn Fritz, Public Policy Director; Karen Hobson, El Paso Council President; and Ami Prichard, President-elect. Standing behind them – Evie Hudak, VP for Marketing and Communications; Janette Hagaman, Convention Chair; Jamie Kulp, VP for Field Service; Maria Cortes, Director At-Large; Marta Murray, Bylaws Committee Chair; Staci Ruddy, President; Christena Burnham, Secretary; Keri Lee, Membership Chair; and Michelle Winzent, Treasurer.