A Message from Colorado PTA
President Staci Ruddy

Hello PTA Family!

By now the school year is in full swing! Many of you are well into planning and activities for the year. As we enter election season, please consider hosting a candidate forum or other activity to help inform voters on ballot measures and other issues important to your school and community. Remember while PTA cannot support or oppose candidates, it is absolutely appropriate to support or oppose ballot measures. Please make sure you check out PTA’s Guidelines for Advocating on Ballot Issues, and let us know if you would like additional assistance for your PTA pertaining to elections.

While you are considering this resource, please take a look at the other items we have to offer! Did you know Colorado PTA has a Principals Handbook? This electronic resource is filled with wonderful information created to assist our Principals with all things PTA. We also have a Local Unit Handbook, geared towards helping support your officers and committee chairs in their duties. Whatever your needs, if Colorado PTA does not have a resource, it is likely that National PTA does, so please let us know what you are looking for and how we can best support you!

With the fall also comes the first meeting of the 2022-23 Colorado PTA Nominating Committee, which will work on identifying nominees for our 2023 officer elections. We have numerous elected and appointed positions that we will be looking to fill and would love to have you join us! If you are interested in serving in any capacity with Colorado PTA, please email office@copta.org.

As always, thank you for all you do to make every child’s potential a reality!

Save the Date!

CALENDAR
Oct. 6 – Bylaws Committee meeting at 6:30 p.m.
Oct. 10 – Legislative Committee meeting at 6:30 p.m.
Oct. 13 – Convention Committee meeting at 7:30 p.m.
Oct. 26 – Health, Wellness, and Safety Committee meeting at 10:30 a.m.
Oct. 26 – Jeffco Council PTA’s QPR training – Pre-registration required at jcpta.org.
Oct. 29 – National PTA’s session on the new Standards for Family-School Partnerships
Colorado PTA has taken positions on 4 state ballot issues

It’s that time of year in Colorado! The air is starting to cool, the leaves are changing, the Blue Book has arrived, and very soon ballots will be appearing in our mail boxes. It’s time to VOTE!

**PROPOSITION 121, STATE INCOME TAX REDUCTION — OPPOSE**
- Proposition 121 reduces the state income tax rate from 4.55% to 4.40%. In 2022–23 this measure would reduce state General Fund revenue by an estimated $638 million.
- PTA believes that every child must have access to a well-rounded, high-quality free public education, to ensure that they have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Public education must be supported through sustainable and adequate funding.
- Therefore, we oppose any reduction in funds that go into the State General Fund — which Proposition 121 would do. Colorado already significantly underfunds our public schools, and a reduction in tax revenue would make it worse.
- Prop and Ballots – SUPPORT

**PROPOSITION 123, DEDICATED REVENUE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMS — SUPPORT**
- Proposition 123 takes 1/10th of 1% of taxable revenue in Colorado and exempts it from the TABOR revenue limit, requiring the money to be allocated in specific ways related to affordable housing.
- PTA believes that all children residing in the United States have the right to shelter. Funding affordable housing will help ensure that all our children and their families have access to shelter.
- Increasing access to housing encourages diversity in our neighborhoods and schools, benefiting all students.
- Having more affordable housing available will enable teachers to live in the school communities they wish to work in.

**PROPOSITION FF, HEALTHY SCHOOL MEALS FOR ALL — SUPPORT**
- Proposition FF creates the Healthy School Meals for All program. This program would make school meals free for all public school students regardless of family income, starting next school year.
- In 2024–25, the program would also provide grant funding to purchase local products, increase wages for employees, and provide training, equipment, and technical assistance.
- Proper nutrition is imperative to the health, development, and academic achievement of children, and students receive a significant portion of their daily nutritional needs from school meals. PTA is dedicated to children’s health, well-being, and educational success. A key part of PTA’s advocacy is to enhance the nutritional health of our nation’s children and families.
- PTA prides itself on being instrumental in the original passage of legislation at the national level that created the school lunch program over a century ago. It was one of the first pieces of legislation that PTA advocated for at the national level.

**PROPOSITION GG, ADD TAX INFORMATION TABLE TO PETITIONS AND BALLOTS — SUPPORT**
- Proposition GG requires that any citizen-initiated ballot measure which changes the state income tax rate include a tax information table on the ballot and circulated petitions. The table breaks down the average changes in taxes owed across specific income categories.
- Supporting public education is central to the mission of PTA — to make every child’s potential a reality. A good way to go about this is to educate our families and communities on public school needs and public school finance issues. The transparency ingrained in Proposition GG does just that — requiring Colorado voters to be informed about how proposed ballot measures would directly affect their tax responsibility and would impact state tax policy.
- Proposition GG enables voters to make a more informed decision at the time of signing a petition and while voting.

**YES on Proposition 123**
2022-23 Reflections Theme: “Show Your Voice!”

Give your students a chance to “show their voice!” 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 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 on Reflections, go to Colorado PTA or National PTA.

REFLECTIONS IMPORTANT DATES

- School turn-in dates are determined by your local PTA unit. Council turn-in dates are determined by your PTA council.
- Dec. 9, 2022 Region turn-in date to state (online submission)
- Jan. 13, 2023 Council turn-in date to State (online submission)
- Apr. 30, 2023 State Awards Ceremony (tentative)

Get Involved in Convention and Save the Date

Colorado PTA’s annual Convention in 2023 will be on Saturday and Sunday, April 29-30, at the same location as last year, the DoubleTree by Hilton Denver Tech Center, 7801 E. Orchard Rd., Greenwood Village.

We need help to prepare another great Convention! The next meeting of the Convention Committee will be Oct. 13, 7:30 p.m. If you are interested in helping with one of these areas and would like to join the meeting, please email Christina Powell, VP for Convention, at christinapowell@copta.org:

- Exhibitors/Sponsors (outreach to exhibitors/sponsors and arranging the Exhibit Hall)
- Catering (working with the hotel to arrange for the meals)
- Program (creating the Program document)
- Decorations (creating decorations for the tables in the ballroom)
- Registration (checking people in at the event)
- Boutique (setting up the boutique items for sale at the event)
- Credentials (giving attendees’ their credentials card)
- Workshops (helping to arrange for presenters and to get the rooms set up)
PTA’s Health, Wellness, and Safety Committee meets monthly, and all members are welcome to attend. See our calendar for details.

One Chance to Grow Up, focused on helping to protect kids from the dangers of today’s marijuana, has published a helpful resource related to Homecoming Season: Tips for Parents, Caregivers and Trusted Adults: Homecoming Season. https://youthroots.org/youthscan/


Rainbow-colored fentanyl pills that look like candy, apparently targeting children, have been found in 18 states, including Colorado: https://www.dea.gov/press-releases/2022/08/30/dea-warns-brightly-colored-fentanyl-used-target-young-americans. As Halloween nears, parents should be on the lookout and kids should be reminded never to eat unpackaged candy without having parents inspect it first.

As new variants of COVID emerge, updated boosters are intended to provide optimal protection and address waning vaccine effectiveness over time. The Public Health Collaborative has published updated Answers to Tough Questions and a booster dose toolkit, which includes new messaging guidance, graphics, and sample social posts in both English and Spanish.


Voting information

- To register to vote, check your registration, or change your registration, please visit www.govotecolorado.com. If you are registered to vote by Oct. 31, you will receive a ballot in the mail – this must be mailed back, put into a voter drop-box, or delivered to a Voting Service & Polling Center by 7 p.m. on Election Day, Nov. 8.
- You can sign up to track your ballot at https://colorado.ballottrax.net/voter/ - the Ballot Trax system tracks the status of your mail ballot and sends a series of alerts notifying you where your ballot is in the election process.
- Alternatively, you can register to vote and/or vote in person at a Voting Service & Polling Center from Oct. 24 through Election Day (except Oct. 29, Oct. 30, and Nov. 6).
National PTA has announced that it has completed its update of the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships, PTA’s process for building successful partnerships between families, educators, and students. These Standards include three key steps: raising awareness about the power of family and community engagement, taking action to cultivate involvement through specific programs and practices, and celebrating success as schools see increased involvement and its impact.

You are invited to attend this PTA state leader session to learn more about the changes, on October 29, 9 a.m. MT. Please register if you would like to attend this informational session using this link: https://pta.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0sdumuqD0rG9YjAwJc2GksPMV_AXL2g506

“Since its initial release in 1997, the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships have contributed to greater awareness and capacity for improving family-school partnerships across the country and internationally,” said National PTA President Anna King. “Right now, we are focused on updating the Standards to provide better support for schools and their communities as they continue to address changes in educational and family engagement trends, as well as shifts in community demographics over the last two decades. There is also growing evidence that strong parent-teacher relationships—and intentional strategies to address equity in family engagement approaches—lead to increased academic success for our children.”

National PTA’s Center for Family Engagement (CFE) spearheaded the revision efforts. CFE has assembled an Expert Advisory Group (EAG) of family engagement experts to help guide the process and provide invaluable insight and data. The EAG consisted of Dr. Karen Mapp (Harvard Graduate School of Education), Dr. Steven Sheldon (John Hopkins School of Education), Dr. Margaret Caspe (NAFSC & NYU Steinhardt), Dr. Soo Hong (Wellesley College), S. Kwesi Rollins (Institute for Educational Leadership), and Lacy Wood (American Institutes for Research).

“National PTA appreciates the wealth of expertise the EAG advisory committee offers. We have also partnered with grassroots leaders that will help us connect with and learn from communities that have historically been under-represented or mischaracterized as ‘hard to reach,’” said National PTA’s Executive Director Nathan Monell.