

District PTAs share...

Best practices that result in strong membership

Membership vice president or chairman at every level:

- elevates membership to executive board level and assures regular discussion of membership issues, programs, incentives and awards, etc.
- provides specific person to take responsibility to contact units and councils on a regular basis and follow-up on membership activities/progress/problems

Effective and consistent communication strategies:

- present a membership report at every district board and association meeting, council board and association meeting, and at unit board and association meetings.
- provide a way to regularly share membership ideas, samples, challenges.
- publish and distribute *The Communicator* articles, available at www.capta.org.
- are welcoming, show appreciation and let everyone know they are valued.
- solicit and use supportive messages from school and district administrators.
- use various media, i.e. websites, e-newsletters, fliers, phone calls, social networking sites, texts, etc.

District membership awards and incentives, reported to councils early in the school year:

- encourage membership growth and participation.
- may offer local benefits or "local value added incentives" to members (two for one at the county fair, tickets to local events, member discounts at local businesses, calendars, directories, magnets with PTA info).

Membership campaigns should stress that:

- there is a need to support our future--our children--by securing the funding and policies that ensure a quality education for EVERY child--and PTA membership is the way to get the job done!
- there is strength in numbers. A well-organized and executed membership campaign can result in a stronger, more diverse PTA.
- according to studies, students do better when parents are involved.
- teachers and administrators recognize that a strong partnership with parents is equally vital to the success of students.
- businesses and community leaders can join PTA to support their community.
- attending meetings and volunteering is not required--members can choose to join just to support the work of PTA.

Ongoing, year round efforts--

- Promote "official membership enrollment" months (September and October) but make sure that membership recruitment continues through out the year.
- Use a new themes at different times, such as "Just Ask . . ." in November.
- Promote a "mid-year" challenge.

Training, learning opportunities and idea exchanges--

- Hold workshops on membership at district trainings and meetings.
- Provide funding/opportunities to attend convention.
- Encourage use of resources: Pocket Pals, brochures, *The Communicator* articles, etc.

Relevant programs and involvement opportunities--

- Encourage interesting programs/events at association meetings.
- Survey community to assess what is of interest and value to your members.
- Sell the value of membership, in addition to participation.

Partnerships with teachers, administrators and staff--

- PTAs with 100 percent staff enrollment sent invitations to them early in the year
- Incentives and recognition are sometimes offered to teachers and staff (i.e. refreshments for meetings, curriculum support, car wash, etc.)
- Prepare letters to teachers and staff from PTA unit president and school principal.
- Share PTA scholarship opportunities for teachers, nurses, counselors.
- Prepare letters to school district staff from council president and school district superintendent.

IDEAS to promote MEMBERSHIP

Ask your principal and/or your superintendent.

Check to make sure that the board members of every PTA are PTA members.

Ask your Mom and Dad, your relatives, your in-laws and teachers.

Ask your PTA buddies from years ago and non-PTA friends to join a PTA.

Working on an alumni reunion? Ask them (as part of the invitation) if they want to be a members of the PTSA.

Encourage a competition between the teachers at neighboring schools.

Buy PTA memberships as a present for a birthday, a graduation, for a new Mom....

Give a membership with the Honorary Service Awards that you bestow.

Ask people to join as you collect signatures for the parcel tax initiative.

Consistent Membership Messages

Membership numbers are a way to measure...

- ❖ How many people know about us
- ❖ How many people agree that PTA meets their needs
- ❖ How many people value what we do and offer
- ❖ How strong and relevant we are as an association

A growing membership is an indication that your PTA is valued by your community.

According to local unit leader surveys...

1. Having a dedicated membership vice president or chairman is one of the essentials to a successful, ongoing campaign, with an emphasis on membership growth and inclusion.
2. Allow members to be as involved as they wish. The number one reason reported for people not joining is that they don't want to be required to attend meetings or to volunteer. Some may want simply to support the work of PTA by being a member.

Without members, our advocacy voice is not as strong and our advocacy efforts have never been more important.

Some common misconceptions about membership:

1. Students can only be members of a PTSA or while in high school.
Students can be members beginning in elementary school.
2. Members have to be parents at the school
Anyone, everyone can be asked to support PTA by joining.
3. Membership drive is over in October when you award the winning class.
Membership campaigns are ongoing and year round.
4. Membership cards are not needed for anything.
Membership cards are required for scholarship applications, to register for convention, to access certain parts of the PTA website at www.pta.org, and to prove you are a member and entitled to vote.
5. Dues are needed and used to fund programs.
Dues should be kept affordable so everyone can join PTA.

Does your PTA represent your community?

Do your members truly reflect the voices and interests of your community?

Who is not represented in your PTA?

Men, people from the variety of cultures and languages existing in this diverse state, local businesses, teachers, grandparents, alumni of schools, school district staff, city council members and other government groups, etc.

Everyone belongs in PTA!