

This is the **Indiana PTA Good News Alert** that goes out every Sunday night throughout the year. **Please feel free to pass this on to your PTA contacts!** We are looking to highlight PTA's and Council's across the state that are excelling at membership, projects, or just have a great idea to share! We also hope this keeps you up to date on deadlines and events for Indiana PTA.

INDIANA PTA UPDATE

AN INDIANA PTA LEGISLATIVE ALERT: PUBLIC HEARINGS ARE THIS WEEK!

Indiana PTA received this email from the Indiana Association of College Teacher Education (IACTE) and the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents. This topic is of interest to many of our PTA units and members and we wanted to get you this information. **THERE WILL BE THREE HEARINGS OVER THE NEXT TEN DAYS THAT YOU MAY WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN OR AT THE VERY LEAST, GET THE PETITION BELOW TO YOUR INTERESTED MEMBERS SO THEIR VOICE CAN BE COUNTED ON THIS ISSUE.** There was also an interesting editorial in the Fort Wayne Journal Gazette on this topic this weekend. Here is a link to that editorial:

<http://www.journalgazette.net/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2009310249943>

The public hearings on this issue will be on:

- **October 27, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. at the Rochester High School**
- **October 29, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. at the Scotsburg Middle School**
- **and November 2, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. at the Indiana State Library**

To participate in the meetings, you must sign-in, you will have 3 minutes to speak and you must present a written copy of your comments.

An electronic petition through which individuals may voice their opposition to the Rules for Educator Preparation and Accountability (REPA) has been prepared in collaboration with IACTE and members of the Coalition. The REPA Coalition of Education Groups met on October 1st and agreed to support the distribution of this electronic petition. You are encouraged to respond AND to forward the petition below (simply cut and paste) to groups in your local and professional community. Current plans are to present the results of the petition at the public hearing in Indianapolis. Please help in sharing information about REPA and voicing individuals' concerns.

Thank you - Jill Shedd, IACTE Executive Secretary

[PETITION TO BE DISTRIBUTED]

Dear Indiana Citizen—

Below is a petition in which individuals can voice that they **DO NOT SUPPORT THE CURRENT PROPOSED RULES FOR EDUCATOR PREPARATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY (REPA)**. We encourage you to send your own response AND to forward this electronic petition to individuals throughout your local and professional community. To voice that individuals **DO NOT SUPPORT REPA**, all they need to do is send an e-mail to repapetition@yahoo.com. **RESPONSES MUST BE SENT NO LATER THAN MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2009.**

Please click on the email address repapetition@yahoo.com, copy the following sentence into the email body; indicate whether you are a parent, concerned citizen, student, teacher, school administrator, etc. and enter in the subject line "REPA Petition".

I HAVE READ THE PETITION FROM THE REPA COALITION OF EDUCATION GROUPS AND I DO NOT SUPPORT ADOPTION OF THE EDUCATOR PREPARATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY RULES (REPA) AS PROPOSED.

The proposed Rules for Educator Preparation and Accountability (REPA) include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) New teachers will have to know their content well, BUT the amount of coursework in their content area they would be required to take may be reduced and their study and knowledge about children and learning AND their classroom experiences will be extremely limited.
- 2) Teacher preparation programs and new teachers WILL NOT BE HELD to ANY rigorous state or national standards.
- 3) Individuals could become new teachers by ONLY participating in an on-line program, passing a test, AND having no experience with kids or in classrooms.
- 4) Current licenses will be eliminated. Senior teachers may be required to take exams to renew their licenses. Some current teachers may NOT be able to renew their existing licenses and to keep their current classrooms/positions.
- 5) Individuals with no classroom experience could be licensed to become school superintendents to run school corporations.

I DO NOT SUPPORT THE MAJORITY OF THE CURRENT PROPOSED RULES, given that THE PROPOSED CHANGES ARE NOT ROOTED IN BEST PRACTICES OR NATIONALLY-RECOGNIZED RESEARCH. The General Assembly should appoint a **Legislative Commission** entitled **Educator Preparation, Licensing and Accountability** to align with national standards.

NOVEMBER 15TH IS AN IMPORTANT DATE FOR INDIANA PTA AND YOUR PTA

There are several items due by November 15th to Indiana PTA to be a "Unit in Good Standing." Your November 15th Membership Dues Remittal must be postmarked by that date, you should have your Annual Financial Report turned in by then, your website award application is due on that date, and your Indiana tax forms (the NP-20) and IRS tax forms (990) are due then.

It is especially important to get your taxes turned in as some PTA units have gotten letters and their tax exemption and non-profit status could have been in jeopardy. If your unit chooses not to file their tax form (the 990), your PTA could receive penalties of \$20.00 per day for each day overdue. Penalties could reach \$10,000 or 5% of gross receipts for the year. If you have not filed the Indiana tax form, the NP-20, in over three years, your non-profit status may have been cancelled. We do not want this to happen to your unit. It is not as hard as you would think to get your taxes filed for your unit. You need to get this done and the November 15th date is just around the corner. If you have questions on this, please contact your Field Service Representative or the Indiana PTA office as soon as possible so we can help you with this. Thank you to Julie French from the Indiana PTA office for reinforcing and getting more information on this to the Board of Managers.

PTA SUCCESS STORIES

Price Elementary PTA is gearing up for their first ever PTA Pasta Party and Fall Fair on Oct. 29th. This is a Membership celebration, so the cost of the event is \$1 for members, \$6 for non-members (includes membership) and \$2 for kids. The local pizza shop is helping with the food to keep costs low. We'll have spaghetti, ziti, salad, breadsticks, and lemonade. Additional cans of soda and desserts donated by community businesses will be available for \$0.25 each. In addition to food, we'll also have games, crafts, coloring stations, our book fair, and a story circle - all lead by local college Elementary Ed students working for community service credit. Price has already increased our membership by 50% and we're eyeing a 100% increase after Thursday's event!

Shawnee Middle School PTSA is also holding a dinner this week for Shawnee families and staff on Thursday, October 29th. A "Shawnee Community Dinner" is being held because our PTSA felt that we wanted teachers and families to have a chance to get to know each other better in a relaxed setting, especially since Parent/Teacher Conferences for our middle school won't be held until February. A new caterer, BJ's Catering (who is a parent at our school) is catering an incredible meal of pork loin, baked chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, fresh green beans, roll and dessert and the cost to our families is just \$5.00 per person. This is not a fundraiser for our

PTSA. It is a service to our families. Our speaker will be school board member John Pierce. We have door prizes from Market Day and Debrand's Chocolates. We offered the opportunity to clubs or groups at the school to set up displays about they are doing or to sell anything they would like. Teachers and their families can attend for free as they are sponsored by some of the families that are attending. If all goes well, this will be a semi-monthly event at our school. Our next dinner is actually planned for PTA Healthy Lifestyles Month in November.

A note from Natalie Jones, Southern Region Vice President: "The **Southern Region** is working hard on membership! I have had numerous requests for discount cards. Keep up the great work Evansville!"

We have also heard some really great membership stories coming from all regions. We can't wait to see what the number tell us November 15th! We would love to "tell" your story statewide! What's working for membership in your school? How are your numbers looking so far? Make sure to send in your school's story so that we can recognize your efforts here in the coming weeks! Just send an email to kathie.green@verizon.net and your school can be featured as next week's "PTA Success Story!"

[NATIONAL PTA UPDATE](#)

APPLY FOR \$1897 TODAY!

All **PTA Take Your Family to School Week Award applications** are due by **5:00 p.m. CST, Friday, November 6, 2009**. Use 1500 characters (or less) to tell National PTA what your unit is planning for PTA Take Your Family to School Week, February 7–13, 2010, and be considered for an award of \$1897.

In 2009, award recipient Chestertown Middle School PTA in Chestertown, Maryland, reported that its week of events "was by far the best program that ever took place at our middle school." They involved parents and the community through:

- A community winter carnival and yard sale
- Drive-thru coffee and doughnuts in front of the school on Monday morning
- A cultural arts assembly during the school day
- A spaghetti dinner prepared by a team of dads and held in conjunction with junk box wars and a PTA meeting
- A parent-teacher lunch for all grades that also welcomed parents of incoming students

For more event ideas, planning tools, and the award application,* go to www.PTA.org/FamilyToSchool. All applications must be submitted online.

Awards funded by **AXA Foundation, Proud National Sponsor of PTA.**

* All applications will be subject to competitive review. Local PTAs in good standing may apply. Check your status with your state PTA.

TIPS FOR SAFE TRICK-OR-TREATING AND HALLOWEEN ACTIVITIES

As Halloween approaches, parents should get ready too. The stores are chock full of costumes for wee trick-or-treaters including some that could be a safety threat. Here are some tips from *Consumer Reports* for buying or making safe Halloween costumes:

- Consider buying light-colored or bright garments that are visible to motorists. If the costume is dark, apply some reflective tape that will glow in the beam of a car's headlights.
- Carefully consider the costume's flammability and opt for material that won't easily go up in smoke. If your child wants to be a mummy, don't wrap him in toilet paper, paper towels or gauze. Other fire hazards include big, baggy sleeves, trailing cloaks, and billowing skirts. The Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends purchasing costumes, beards, masks, and wigs that have the "Flame Resistant" label.
- Make sure the costume is short enough so children won't trip and fall.
- Make sure masks don't obstruct your child's vision. Better yet, use FDA-approved facial make-up, instead of masks.

- Don't allow your children to wear decorative, non-corrective contact lenses that are dispensed without a prescription.
- Don't overlook the shoes; they should be sturdy and fit well. Mom's high heels may look great but if they're wobbly and unsteady—in other words, easy to trip over—consider something more well-grounded.
- If a play sword, cane, or stick is part of a costume, make sure it is not sharp or too long. Better yet—skip the sticks entirely. These accessories can easily cause injuries—including serious eye injuries.
- Give your child a flashlight to carry.

For more information on Halloween safety, go to www.PTA.org/safetyalert.

GOOD THINGS ARE HAPPENING IN INDIANA PTA! WE ARE EXCITED FOR THE NEW IDEAS AND PROGRAMS THAT CAN HELP YOUR UNITS!

NOTE: How do I get my school featured in an Indiana PTA Good News Alert? If you have a great story that you would like us to use, contact us directly at the above email or phone number or let your Region VP know and we will highlight your PTA in one of our weekly emails! **Contact your Region VP at: Northwest: Dee Jones (ptadee@yahoo.com), Northeast: Julie Klingenberger (jklingenberger04@comcast.net), Central: Sharon Wise (swise36@comcast.net); Southern: Natalie Jones (twinmama02@yahoo.com).** Also don't forget to check out the Indiana PTA website at www.indianapta.org for some great information and the revamped National PTA website at www.pta.org. The new format for the "PTA Great Idea Bank" could also be really useful for your unit - it can also be found on the National PTA website.