

August-September  
2008

# IPT

Volume 4, Issue 1

## Newsletter of the Indiana PTA

**Indiana**  
**PTA**

everychild.onevoice.

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### Inside this issue:

Bylaws and Standing Rules	2
Let's Fight Flu Together	2
Juvenile Justice update	2
Get Ready (for Back-to-School) National PTA President (English) (Spanish)	3
Juvenile Justice update continued	3
What PTAs Can Do Around Elections	4
Did You Know?	4
Important Dates and Upcoming Events	4
PTA Deadlines	4

### The President's Corner

by Sonja Canterbury, Indiana PTA President

Welcome back.

Many of you have already begun a new school year and the rest will be following soon. I hope that all of you will embrace the new year with excitement and enthusiasm.

As PTA leaders, you generate interest and participation in your unit. You and your board build the enthusiasm necessary for the successful participation in your PTA. The following are suggestions that may assist you throughout the school year:

- Promote PTA membership at every event with a smile and hand shake
- Each person ask, personally, just One non member to join PTA
- Involve principals and teachers in PTA activities
- Inform parents of meetings and programs
- Inform parents of what your PTA provides for their children – Toot your own horn
- Inform parents of the importance of their involvement in the education of their children
- Help parents understand they have a stake in the education issues affecting children
- Involve students, Middle/high schools, allow them to take an active part in the planning of programs and activities, and provide them with leadership skills

You are probably thinking, this all sounds well and good, but we can't get people to join PTA. Your PTA knows your families and community members. Consider what it would take to motivate them to get involved. Utilize National PTA's Three For Me program. With determination and effort on your part it works.

Remember, PTA membership is open to anyone who is concerned about the education, health, and welfare of children and youth.

Wishing you a great and successful year.



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President .....Jan Harp Domene  
President Elect .....Charles J. Saylor  
Secretary-Treasurer .....Betsy Landers

### Which Issue Will You Choose?

by Sue Switzer, Issues Commission Chairman

PTA is an advocacy organization! Which issue will your unit or council choose to address this year?

- Obesity (Nutrition and Physical Fitness)?
- Student Achievement ?
- Parent Involvement?
- Legislation?

Now is the time as school begins to set your goals, choose an issue and plan. If you need help or additional information and resources, contact the Indiana PTA State Office (317)357-5881. They will direct your request to the appropriate state board member.

### The Mission of the PTA

- To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children;
- To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children;
- To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.

### The Purposes of the PTA

- To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community, and place of worship.
- To raise the standards of home life.
- To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.
- To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth.
- To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education.



97<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Indiana PTA Convention  
April 15<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009

**"Our lives begin to  
end on the day we  
become silent about  
things that matter."**

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

## Bylaws and Standing Rules

by Julie Burke, Bylaws Committee Chairman

It's that time of year again! School is underway or will be shortly. It is a busy time for parents and especially PTA Presidents. As you are preparing for your meetings and all the activities this coming year, don't forget about your unit bylaws and standing rules.

For you new Presidents, the bylaws are important to have at every meeting. They are the guidelines or rules of your PTA Unit. You should have a copy in your President's book. Bylaws are to be updated every three years, so if they were last approved prior to 2005 it's time for review. Bylaws are very easy to update; you will find a model format on the President's CD (just copy and fill in the blanks).

Once completed and passed by your unit make copies for the President, Secretary and for the Indiana PTA. It is important to send a copy to the State Office so we are aware that the bylaws are up to date for any awards that you or your students may be eligible for at convention and also for reference if your copies are lost or destroyed.

Standing Rules expand on your bylaws and are more specific in nature. They provide direction for individual unit functions such as mileage and meal reimbursement, number of delegates at convention, scholarship guidelines and other unit activities that may occur from year to year. Standing Rules can be changed at a PTA Meeting.

If you have any questions concerning bylaws or standing rules you can contact your Council, State PTA representative or attend your Region Leadership Conferences.

## Lets Fight Flu Together

**Let's Fight Flu Together** is an influenza awareness and vaccination campaign designed to urge children, families and members of the community about the risks of and recommendations regarding influenza; and to give them opportunity to get vaccinated against influenza.

PTA is working with Flu Busters, a leading provider of on-site vaccinations, and Novartis Vaccines, to provide convenient access to influenza vaccinations in local communities. Local PTAs are invited to host vaccination clinics on-site at local schools.

With the influenza season fast approaching, receiving an annual vaccination is the best defense in preventing this serious disease. This fall, PTA is asking you to **Educate, Motivate, and Vaccinate** in order to help protect children and their families from contracting influenza — ultimately keeping the whole family in school, at work and healthy!

Beginning the week of August 18th, local units will be receiving an *Influenza Education & Vaccination Outreach Kit* that provides turn-key materials for you to schedule and host an influenza vaccination clinic at your PTA school. There will be a series of template documents and guides for you to customize and use to build awareness among students, parents, school officials, and local media.

The cost for each shot is \$30.00; of which \$4.00 will be donated to the Local PTA hosting the clinic and \$1.00 to the state PTA. Free vaccinations are available to those that meet the qualifications of the federal Vaccine for Children (VFC) program.

To register your school for an on-site influenza clinic for your students and community, please visit [pta.org/flushotclinics](http://pta.org/flushotclinics) or call 1-866-782-3014. Clinics are available from October through December. It's very important to sign-up early to ensure the best date for your school's calendar

## Juvenile Justice update

from National PTA

*continued on page 3*

On July 31, the Senate Judiciary Committee adopted the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) (S. 3155) with several critical amendments that significantly strengthened the bill. Senator Cardin's (D-MD) amendment was adopted which will completely phase out the Valid Court Order (VCO) exception to the Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders (DSO) core requirement. The current law allows youth with non-criminal offenses (e.g., truants, runaways, and youth who violate curfew) to be placed in a secure detention of for a violation of a valid court order, which reduces their chances of school engagement and academic achievement. Eliminating the VCO will keep non-offending youth out of juvenile facilities and not limit their school access.

Senators Feinstein (D-CA), Kennedy (D-MA), and Whitehouse's (D-RI) amendment was also adopted. Their amendment will provide greatly increased substance abuse and mental health services to youth involved in the juvenile justice system, by creating comprehensive incentive grants in the area of substance abuse and mental health services for which States may apply.

## Get Ready (for Back-to-School)

by Jan Harp Domene, PTA National President

You could say that back-to-school time is the “busy season” for parents (but really, it’s *always* busy season for parents, isn’t it?). With the beginning of the school year comes all sorts of preparation. For parents, it’s getting their kids ready to return to the classroom. For PTA leaders, it’s ensuring that students will be able to learn and families able to participate in the life of the school.

While establishing the programs and policies that will define your coming school year, remember that the underlying intention of all PTA work is to get families, schools, and communities to work together. The *National Standards for Family-School Partnerships* can be your guide as you work with the entire school community in support of student achievement.

This fall will also bring some great PTA programs and events—many of which you can start preparing for now. PTA Start the Art Week will be celebrated again the first full week of October, and followed shortly by the National Student/Parent Mock Election at the end of October and PTA Healthy Lifestyles Month in November. You can learn more about all these wonderful initiatives on [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org), which itself will be an exciting new site just in time for back-to-school this year.

Of course the best way to prepare for the school year is to take advantage of all the resources in the *2008 PTA Back-to-School Kit*. The *PTA Quick-Reference Guides* have been updated, and the *Program and Advocacy Resource Guide* and *Membership Marketing Templates and Tools* CD-ROMs are packed with calendars, handouts, fliers, and more.

PTA is prepared to give you all the support you need for the 2008–2009 school year, and with nearly 50 million students expected to enroll in U.S. public schools—a record-setting number—we’ll need all the help from parents, schools, and communities that we can get. Ready or not, here they come!

## Prepárese (para el regreso a la escuela)

by Jan Harp Domene, PTA National President

Usted podría decir que la temporada del regreso a la escuela es la “estación muy ocupada” (pero, de verdad, *es siempre* una estación muy ocupada para los padres. ¿No es así?). Con el inicio del año escolar llegan todo tipo de preparaciones. Para los padres es, el hacer que sus hijos estén listos para regresar al salón de clases. Para los líderes de PTA el trabajo es asegurarse de que los estudiantes podrán estudiar y las familias estén dispuestas a participar en la vida escolar.

Mientras se establecen programas y políticas que definirán el año escolar que empieza, recuerde que la causa de todo el trabajo de PTA es hacer que las familias, las escuelas y las comunidades, trabajen unidas. *La National Standards for Family-School Partnerships* puede ser su guía mientras trabaja con toda la comunidad de su escuela en el apoyo del éxito del estudiante.

En esta temporada también traeremos grandes programas y eventos en PTA —muchos de los cuales pueden empezar a prepararse desde ahora. PTA Start the Art Week se celebrará también este año en la primera semana de octubre y seguirá el National Student/Parent Mock Election en la parte final de octubre y luego el PTA Healthy Lifestyles Month en noviembre. Usted puede saber más de estas maravillosas iniciativas en el [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org) que por sí misma actuará como el nuevo sitio justo al inicio del regreso a la escuela de este año.

Por supuesto, le mejor forma de prepararse para el año escolar es tomar ventaja de los recursos del *2008 Back-to-School Kit de PTA*. El *PTA Quick-Reference Guides* ha sido actualizado y el *Program and Edvocacy Resource Guide* y *Membresía Marketing Templates and Toll* CD-Roms han sido empacados junto con calendarios, panfletos, volantes y más.

PTA está preparado para dar a Usted todo el apoyo que necesita para el año escolar 2008-2009, y con cerca de 50 millones de estudiantes que, se espera, se inscriban en las escuelas públicas de los Estados Unidos —un número récord- necesitamos toda la ayuda posible de padres, escuelas y comunidades. ¡Listos o no, aquí vienen!

## Juvenile Justice update ... continued from page 2

Senator Grassley’s (R-IA) amendment was also adopted, which will provide more oversight over grants given out by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDDP). These amendments require that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) examine grants disbursed in violation of policies and procedures of OJJDP and, for those grants found to be wrongly disbursed, this amendment will require the GAO to report on the remedial action taken to recover this grant money.

The next steps for JJDPA are for the entire Senate to look at the bill and for the House to introduce their version of JJDPA. Congress, however, has left for August recess and, because this is an election year, may not complete the reauthorization process by the end of the year. The Senate Judiciary Committee’s steps to introduce a stronger JJDPA may prove to be a good starting point for the next Congressional session, if JJDPA is not reauthorized this year. Thanks to all of you who contacted your Senators and voiced your support for juvenile justice.

# What PTAs Can Do Around Elections

It is election time again and many PTA leaders are having questions about what election related activities they can and can't engage in. Local PTA's are non-profit organization and fall under the IRS election guidelines for non-profits. To help you decide what activities your local PTA will get involved in we have provided a few quick can and can't.

## PTA Can:

- ◆ Host a **candidate's forum**: all candidates appearing on the ballot for a given position must be invited to participate and given equal time to respond.
- ◆ Publish a candidate's questionnaire: all candidates must be given the opportunity to answer the questionnaire and responses must be printed exactly as written.
- ◆ Register Voters: volunteers must register all eligible voters regardless of party affiliation or political views.
- ◆ Remind members to vote
- ◆ Educate Candidates on Issues important to PTA

## PTA Can Not:

- ◆ Invite only one candidate in an election to come speak to the PTA
- ◆ Tell PTA members to only vote for a candidate who supports X position
- ◆ Distribute any campaign materials on behalf of a candidate.
- ◆ Where campaign buttons or t-shirts during a PTA meeting

## Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: If I'm a PTA president am I allowed to make any political contributions?

A: Yes, as a citizen you can make political contributions. It is important to make it clear that the donation is coming from you as an individual and not the PTA.

Q: Can our PTA take a position on a local ballot measure or levy?

A: Yes, it is considered direct lobbying because the voters are the decision makers. It is important to remember that working on a ballot measure will count as lobby activities and is subject to IRS non-profit lobbying rules.

Ask your state PTA about any state laws that may apply. For more information about what PTAs can and can't do around elections, here are some helpful links:

Alliance for Justice Non-profit Advocacy Resources

Center for Non-profit Management

Internal Revenue Service

## Did You Know???

### Resolutions Give IN PTA Direction.

At a Central Region training event I was very pleased to be approached by a member wanting to talk about Resolutions. She had attended our workshop at Convention last May and had some ideas. Together we are beginning to gather some research to help. This is the way it works! Concerns can come from members, units or councils to the state organization as resolutions. This is what determines our state agenda. If you attended the state convention you listened as middle school students from Ft. Wayne presented their resolution to provide healthy snacks to students during the school day.

*By Sue Switzer*

### Important Dates and Upcoming Events

September	<i>PTA Membership Month National Literacy Month National Preparedness Month-U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security Library Card Sign UP Month-American Library Association College Savings Month</i>
1 <sup>st</sup>	Labor Day (State and National PTA offices closed)
7 <sup>th</sup>	Grandparents Day
8 <sup>th</sup>	Time Out for Reading Day
11 <sup>th</sup>	Patriot Day
15 <sup>th</sup> -Oct. 15 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Hispanic Heritage Month</i>

### Important Dates and Upcoming Events ... *continued*

16 <sup>th</sup>	Stepfamily Day
17 <sup>th</sup> -23 <sup>rd</sup>	Constitution Day and Week
21 <sup>st</sup>	International Peace Day
23 <sup>rd</sup>	National Good Neighbor Day
26 <sup>th</sup>	Native American Day

### PTA Deadlines

15 <sup>th</sup>	Committee Chair Form Due in Office
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*The IPT is the official newsletter of the Indiana PTA. It can be downloaded from the Indiana PTA website.  
It's purpose is to educate, inform and share PTA information with it's members and the general public.*

Susan Kerekes-Alexander, editor

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