



# CT PTSA NEWSLETTER

September, 2011

[www.ctpta.org](http://www.ctpta.org)  
[connecticut.pta@snet.net](mailto:connecticut.pta@snet.net)

National PTA recently launched a campaign called Connect for Respect, an initiative to encourage PTAs to hold conversations in their communities on bullying prevention. Together, parents, schools and students can work together to raise awareness of this important issue and create a plan to stop bullying in your communities. National PTA created five tip sheets to help parents understand bullying, to know where to go if there is an issue, or what to do if their child is a bully. In addition, a mini-toolkit has been created to help PTAs plan their own Connect for Respect event in their schools and communities. To download the toolkit and tip sheets, visit [PTA.org/bullying](http://PTA.org/bullying).

## REFLECTIONS-

## DIVERSITY MEANS



### PTA REFLECTIONS

National PTA in making moves towards more electronic participation and towards having more eco friendly programs, has instituted a group of changes to the Reflections program.

The biggest change this year is the formats in music, film and dance/choreography. From this year onward, music entries must come in MP3 format. No other music file format will be accepted. Formats other than MP3 will be automatically disqualified. Film and Dance entries must come to us in Flash Video format, as an .flv file. In the past we have accepted QuickTime, Windows Moviemaker, and other vide versions. These then had to be converted to a single format for judging. Starting this year, only FLV format is acceptable, all other formats will be disqualified. The good news for all those who have previously used other formats, is that there are free conversion softwares available on the internet.

The CT State Local Reflections Chair Guide explains everything and goes over all the changes for this year. A Big TIP we have been sharing with our Reflection Chairs, *fill out the bottom of the student entry form with the local chair name, unit number, etc before you make copies and pass out the form to students. Please make sure we have the contact information for the chair person.*

*If you are new to Reflections, we welcome you. For those who are done this before, welcome back! Look forward to working with all of you this year!*

## Overview: Purpose and Responsibilities of the Treasurer

The treasurer is the authorized custodian, elected by the members, of the funds of the PTA association. It is the treasurer who ensures that the unit finances are properly handled. This is a critical job, since proper handling of the unit's money will keep the unit in good standing, as well as maintain its credibility with the school and the community.

It is imperative that the treasurer maintain accurate records. Without good records, individuals involved with collecting and handling the PTA's funds will not be protected should any questions arise. Standard, accepted financial procedures must be used when keeping records, so that proper audits can be conducted. All treasurers should be bonded.

The ideal candidate for treasurer should have:

- Strong organizational skills
- A background in accounting practices and procedures
- Knowledge of volunteer management and nonprofit accounting
- In-depth knowledge of PTA and its mission and objectives

Your initial tasks as treasurer include:



Making sure that the books have been audited before accepting them.

Verify the completeness of files and records received from the retiring treasurer. Ask about missing records at once.

Becoming familiar with the duties outlined and any references to finances and budget in the PTA bylaws.

Securing the signatures of new officers authorized to sign checks, and filing the signature cards with the bank, if not taken care of by the outgoing treasurer.

Checking on bonding and liability procedures.

Studying this *PTA Money Matters Quick-Reference Guide* and relevant areas of [IRS.gov](http://IRS.gov).

### Contents of the Treasurer's File

- A copy of the PTA bylaws and standing rules, with sections authorizing disbursements marked
- A copy of state PTA bylaws and National PTA Bylaws (and council bylaws if indicated)
- A copy of the budget adopted by the association
- Receipt book to acknowledge money received by the treasurer
- Checkbook to disburse funds as authorized
- Treasurer's account book in which to keep the financial records of the association (may be an electronic file)
- Permanent Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax information, including the following:
  - IRS determination letter of tax-exempt status and copy of application for tax-exempt status
  - Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN), also known as EIN (Employer Identification Number)
  - Copies of filed Form 990/990-EZ, 990-N, 990-T, or other required IRS forms
  - Group exemption number (see "Determination Letter," page 29)
  - Permanent state tax information, such as state sales tax correspondence, state identification numbers, and reports filed with the state, as required
- An up-to-date roster of the members of the association
- **A copy of this *PTA Money Matters Quick-Reference Guide* Audit reports held in permanent file**
- Seven years of cash receipts and petty cash records, bank deposits, invoices, and statements
- General correspondence
- Three years of budgets

**Please Refer to your Money Matters Guide for more information.**



## PTA Family Engagement Programs

Advancing family engagement is the hallmark of PTA's mission. While PTAs have often involved families through fundraisers or one-time events, family engagement activities should move beyond one-time events to meaningful partnerships between families and schools to improve student success.

PTA, in partnership with the National Family, School, and Community Engagement Working Group, defines family engagement as:

A shared responsibility—Where schools and other community agencies and organizations are committed to engaging families in meaningful and culturally respectful ways and families are committed to actively supporting their children's learning and development.

Cradle to career—Continuous across a child's life, spanning from Early Head Start programs to college and career.

Across contexts—Carried out everywhere that children learn—at home, in pre-kindergarten programs, in school, in after-school programs, in faith-based institutions, and in community programs and activities.

PTAs can play a meaningful role in shifting family engagement to be systemic, integrated, and continuous. To do this, PTAs can shift their activities from one-time, random acts to ongoing efforts that focus on capacity-building more outcomes-driven activities.

### Why is family engagement important?

More than 40 years of research has demonstrated that family engagement is essential to achieving student success. When parents play a positive role in their children's education, students perform better in school. Research shows that when parents are involved, students have better test scores and higher grades, enroll in higher-level classes, attend school, pass their classes, develop better social skills, graduate, and go onto postsecondary education. In a groundbreaking study on school improvement, family engagement was identified as a key ingredient for school turnarounds. Five "essential supports" were identified in this study, including family engagement, school leadership, the professional capacity of the faculty, student-centered learning climate, and instructional guidance. Elementary schools with strong parental involvement were 10 times more likely to improve in math and four times more likely to improve in reading than schools weak on this measure.

### Phoebe Apperson Hearst Family-School Partnership Award

National PTA recognizes and celebrates PTAs that demonstrate effective family engagement. One award is given to a PTA for its outstanding work in demonstrating effective family engagement.

### PTA Take Your Family to School Week Grants

Grants of up to \$1,897 are available for PTAs to implement programs and activities to enhance family engagement. Grants are highlighted during PTA Take Your Family to School Week, which occurs in February each year.



## PTA Presidents



### Your First Tasks Step by Step

As a new PTA president, you should immediately:

Contact your state PTA. Let them know who you are and give them a list of your officers, including contact information for each person.

Talk with the outgoing president and officers about the PTA's status and seek their recommendations for the coming year. Thank them for their work.

Introduce yourself to the school staff, including your principal. Offer to work collaboratively this year.

Review the procedure book. If you did not receive a procedure book from the outgoing president, or if you want to be sure yours is complete, use the checklist below.

Make sure that a proper audit of your PTA's books is conducted at the end of the outgoing officers' terms and that IRS reports are filed when due.

Change the signers on the PTA's bank accounts.

*Please refer to your Presidents Quick Reference Guide for valuable President information.*

To be eligible for donations and grants all units and councils need to be in "good standing" with the Connecticut PTSA. The following items must be sent to Connecticut PTSA either via email [connecticut.pta@snet.net](mailto:connecticut.pta@snet.net) or snail mail 60 Connolly Parkway, Hamden, CT 06514

Item	Format	Deadline	Date Received	Notes
Officer Information Sheet	Electronically	July 1st		Must have new form every year even if there are no changes
Dues	Mail w/Reporting Form	Monthly		Dues must be received by Oct. 15 <sup>th</sup> to be eligible for insurance Dues are \$5.50 per member
Review/audit of finance records	Electronically, mail or fax	September 30 <sup>th</sup>		Refer to your Treasures Money Matters Guide
Copy of 990	Electronically, mail or fax	November 30 <sup>th</sup>		
Proof of Insurance	Electronically, mail or fax	November 30 <sup>th</sup>		This is for Units who do not take Insurance through CT PTSA
Bylaws	Electronically, mail or fax	Every three years		Bylaws should be reviewed and updated if needed. If no update is needed then an email stating so should be sent.

# Hot Topics

## Adding more value to PTA

Hot Topics will be either a webinar or a conference call to help you better run your PTA/PTSA/ SEPTA and to answer your questions. Each topic below will be offered 3 times a week. Pick the time that best suits your busy life. No need to leave your home! Schedule with times and dates will be posted on our website soon

**OCTOBER -RS 990's** – Every unit must complete a 990 yearly. This is an IRS regulation. We will be hosting three webinars for you to choose from. We will update you on new tax rules and other IRS information.

### **DATES FOR OCTOBER WEBINARS :**

Thursday, October 13 from 1-2PM, Tuesday, October 18 from 6-7 PM and  
Wednesday, October 19 from 4-5PM.

Registration is now open for this webinar.

To register for any of the above webinars, visit us at [www.ctpta.org](http://www.ctpta.org)  
Instructions will be send via email for anyone who registers .

**NOVEMBER-RESOLUTIONS** – Connecticut PTSA's resolutions and beliefs are what drive our Association. They set the direction of our Association and provide legislators and other educational leaders with our viewpoint on education and children related issues. Learn how to write a resolution.

Questions? Contact us at  
[connecticut.pta@snet.net](mailto:connecticut.pta@snet.net) or  
call us at 203-281-6617



## Grow your Membership with Just Between Friends

Just Between Friends, the official PTA communications and membership management system, can help your unit grow membership and engage parents in your school community to be more involved in your unit's activities. It's easy – use Just Between Friends to communicate with your entire school community; earn revenue share; and manage your membership. *And, Just Between Friends is a FREE, private, secure system!*

### Benefits to your Unit

**Communicate** – send emails, with attachments and automatic reminders, to your entire school community to keep them updated and get them involved. *Plus, your unit can earn revenue just by sending emails through JBF!*

**Manage Membership** - easily enter members, print membership cards and develop membership rosters.

**Create Directories** -JBF is the simplest way to create online or print directories.

### Benefits to your Parents

Just Between Friends is an easy way for parents to manage their family's participation in your unit's activities as well as their other group activities.

**Personal Household Page** - When a parent accepts an invitation to join your unit's communications group, they have a private personal online page showing all of their family's events, deadlines and activities related to your unit and other group activities.

**Customizable Directory** - No more looking for different directories to find people. With JBF's customizable directory, parents can keep their school directories and personal contacts all in one place.

**Customizable Calendar** - When your unit emails events and deadlines to parents, the events and deadlines will automatically be posted to the household's calendar. Plus, parents can post personal items to their calendar.

**NEW -- m.JBFnow.com -access your private secure JBF account via your web-enabled smart phone!**

### Enter your Unit Today

If your unit isn't using Just Between Friends, it's easy to get started. Simply visit [www.JustBetweenFriends.com/PTAquickstart](http://www.JustBetweenFriends.com/PTAquickstart) to enter your unit. Then, visit [www.LearnJBF.com](http://www.LearnJBF.com) for lots of how-to information. If you have questions, please visit [www.JustBetweenFriends.com](http://www.JustBetweenFriends.com) and click on "Contact Us" or call 412-561-0600 x 0 and a knowledgeable, friendly Just Between Friends Customer Support Representative will help.

*Fran*

Fran Lytle, Director of Marketing, 412-561-0500 ext. 1005 [www.JustBetweenFriends.com](http://www.JustBetweenFriends.com)

## **CT PTSA is encouraging you to continue membership recruitment efforts throughout the year by offering you some incentives!!!**

The strength of your PTA lies in its membership. Attracting new members and retaining current ones are among the most important duties of a PTA. By increasing your unit's membership, you will energize your unit, increase your volunteer power, strengthen the connection between home and school, and make positive changes for all children. The larger your unit, the more resources you have to speak for every child with one voice.

Use this membership incentive program as a fun way to strengthen your unit, and possibly earn up to \$1000 just by getting your community involved with your PTA, PTSA or SEPTA!!

If you have any questions regarding the program please feel free to contact myself or any of us at CT PTSA.

Thank you, have fun and **GOOD LUCK!!!**

**Melinda Saller**  
**VP Membership Support**  
**CT PTSA**





# Membership Incentive Program

Every individual PTA, PTSA and SEPTA will have monthly goals to achieve.

<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	Most creative and effective MEMBERSHIP DRIVE
<b>OCTOBER</b>	Sign 10 outside members to your unit
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	Increase membership by 10%
<b>DECEMBER</b>	100% teacher and staff participation (certified full time staff)
<b>JANUARY</b>	Most creative and effective MEMBERSHIP DRIVE Second membership drive – theme <b>“New Year, New Opportunities”</b>
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	Invite the elected city officials to join - Mayor or 1 <sup>st</sup> Selectman; Common Council or Board of Selectman; the Board of Education Chair and the Board of Education members
<b>MARCH</b>	Increase membership by 5% from January membership drive
<b>APRIL &amp; MAY</b>	Start your new membership year off by signing 50 members to your unit. You could sign new members or resign current ones

## CASH REWARDS\*

**25% INCREASE IN MEMBERSHIP** from last year. Each unit that increases their membership by 25% from last membership year will be in a drawing for **\$200**

**100% MEMBERSHIP** – Each unit to reach 100% membership will be in a drawing for **\$300**. 100% membership is one member for every student enrolled.

**Each unit to achieve ALL OF THEIR MONTHLY GOALS will be entered in a drawing for \$500**

*\*Unit representatives must be present at the Annual Awards dinner in order to receive awards, and all units must be in good standing with CT PTSA.*



**CT PTSA**

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**OCTOBER FREE TRAINING**  
**HOW TO COMPLETE YOUR IRS 990**  
**Choose the day and time that is convenient for you**

<b><u>Thursday, October 13</u></b>	<b><u>1:00-2:00PM</u></b>
<b><u>Tuesday, October 18</u></b>	<b><u>6:00-7:00PM</u></b>
<b><u>Wednesday, October 19</u></b>	<b><u>4:00-5:00PM</u></b>

**Sign up on our website at [www.ctpta.org](http://www.ctpta.org)**



**NUTMEG STATEWIDE PTA (NSPTA)**

Was chartered by Connecticut PTSA on February 9, 1989 with a grant from National PTA and fifteen founding members.

This statewide unit was established to provide a PTA vehicle for those who are interested in statewide issues affecting the health, education and welfare of children and youth. In 1998, CT PTA named NSPTA, as it's official statewide unit.

**WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF NUTMEG STATEWIDE PTA?**

- Conduct annual enrollment of members.
- Increase awareness of NSPTA through the CT PTSA BULLETIN.
- Present the NSPTA Distinguished Leadership Citation each year at the Annual CT PTA convention.

Provide an endowment to fund a scholarship to graduating senior(s) from PTA/PTSA high schools intending to enter a career in service to children.

**HOW DO I JOIN?**

**Membership fee is \$20.00**

You can also donate to NSPTA in various ways including giving a Gift, Memorial, Living Tribute, Thanksgiving, etc.

[Contact the CT PTSA office for more information](#), or download a membership form.

Download a membership form: [NSPTA Membership Form](#)

