HOW TO PTA IN AN UNCERTAIN COVID WORLD
PTA MISSION

To Make Every Child’s Potential a Reality by Engaging and Empowering Families and Communities to Advocate for ALL Children.
WHAT IS PTA?

- The National Parent Teacher Association is the Largest Child Advocacy Group in the United States.

PTA **Advocates** for All Children on a Local, State, and National Level.
PTA has a Seat at the Table during the Legislative Process and Fights to Improve the Education, Health, and Safety Conditions for All Children.

- PTA works to bring together the families in their school community.

  **IF YOU CAN ONLY DO ONE THING THIS YEAR, JOIN YOUR LOCAL PTA AND ENCOURGE OTHERS TO DO THE SAME.**

- Adding numbers not only lends financial support, but lends more Strength to the PTA's Voice when Advocating for Our Children.
WHY PTA?

VALUES:
• Collaboration
• Commitment
• Diversity
• Respect
• Accountability

DEFINE FOR YOUR COMMUNITY: What value will YOUR PTA bring to your school community this year? How might that look different than in the past?
ADVOCACY

BIG “A” ADVOCACY:
• State and Federal Level – budgets, laws, regulations, etc.

LITTLE “a” ADVOCACY:
• Local Level – School Board, Superintendent, Principal, Teacher
• Budgets, policy, rules, standards, expectations, calendars, schedules,
• How are you going to help parents have a voice in decision making at the school & district level this year? How will parent feedback be incorporated in to plans now and in the future?
• Coach parents on “effective” advocacy – be clear & concise, stay relevant & realistic, offer suggestions & solutions.
• Stories give data “soul” – use both to help state your case.
Structure of PTA

You are part of a large family!

**Member (THAT’S YOU!)** – approx. 33,000 members in CT

**Unit** – 219 across the state

**Council** – 12 (always open for more)

**State** – 26 board members + 1 office manager + PT office assistant

**National** – 3.5 million members! Headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia
PTA in PANDEMIC TIMES

BUDGET/FUNDRAISING: What items in your budget may need to be reallocated (i.e., funds for bussing to fieldtrips)? What items/support could your school use this year (i.e., items for outdoor learning)? How might fundraising look different? Do you want to save vs. spend this year?

COMMUNITY BUILDING: What activities are currently on your calendar that need to be reimagined? How can you build community from a distance? For additional ideas, refer to the CT PTA Family Engagement workshop in the training section of our website.
https://www.ctpta.org/president-and-treasurer

ADVOCACY: How are you going to help parents have a voice in decision making at the school & district level this year? How will parent feedback be incorporated in to plans now and in the future?
MEMBERSHIP

The big question PTAs have to answer this year is “WHY?”

Why should I join?

What is in it for me?

What is in it for my child?

What is in it for my school?

PTA has to show the value FIRST. Gain trust. Toot your horn. Build community.

Families are looking for connection to their school communities, especially now when there is little to no physical connection to the school.

PTAs can be that connection - the link - between the family and school.
MEMBERSHIP

Be creative with your fall membership drive...

• Set a goal. A number, a percentage of the school, increase from last year, etc.
• Contest: Which grade can get the most members in one week?
• Contest: Who can get a member from the farthest away?
• Ask teachers, principals, other staff, school board members, the Mayor, city council, police chief – you never know who wants to join PTA until you ask!
• Make membership part of a package – i.e. spirit wear bundle: for $20 you get a t-shirt and a membership.
• Have a system for check payments (work with your school secretary, open a P.O. box – do not use personal home addresses).
• Offer incentives – National PTA has several discounts members qualify for. You can always add your own.

• https://www.pta.org/home/About-National-Parent-Teacher-Association/Benefits-of-PTA-Membership/Save-Money-with-Member-Offers
How to Make Joining PTA Easy

Now more than ever, people want to connect with each other and know what is happening at their child’s school. Your PTA can fulfill the universal need to connect and belong, during this dark time. You should seek to not only renew current members, but to reach out to new audiences, grow your PTA and build an even stronger community. Actions, such as reaching out just to check in on someone’s well-being, build real engagement with current and future PTA members.

Read more on the National PTA One Voice Blog…

http://onevoice.pta.org/how-to-make-joining-pta-easy/
MEMBERSHIP

Your membership drive is going to look different this year. People are going to need to see the value in PTA to join (that’s where the WHY comes in). An online platform to join will be helpful.

All Connecticut PTA’s now have a MemberHub account – this can be used for multiple things including membership drives.
(We recognize that not everyone has setup their account yet, but the option is there.)

Remember, ANYONE who believes in our MISSION can be a member – parents, teachers, grandparents, community members
This year, Connecticut PTA has teamed up with MemberHub to provide their valuable online tool to all PTA's in Connecticut …**free of charge**!

MemberHub makes it easier to run your PTA -- engage families, raise funds, stay in good standing, and more. You’ll save hours on admin tasks, so you can focus on connecting with your children and engaging your school community.

MemberHub is valued at $1,200 per year, but your PTA will be getting it for free because MemberHub and Connecticut PTA want to further the PTA mission through easy-to-use technology.
Check out this video to see how Lacy Elementary uses MemberHub and stay tuned for more info!  
[https://youtu.be/z4J-ySCBdDc](https://youtu.be/z4J-ySCBdDc)

If you have issues using MemberHub, contact their support line or join one of their live workshops:  
[https://www.memberhub.com/workshops](https://www.memberhub.com/workshops)

If you have questions about our state implementation of MemberHub, please email office@ctpta.org.

We look forward to helping support you. Thanks for all you do for children in Connecticut!
YOU DON’T NEED A BUILDING TO PTA

P•T•A
VERB /PEE-TEE-AY/
TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD’S POTENTIAL IN ONE OR MULTIPLE WAYS:
1) To invest in your child’s potential.
2) To volunteer for your child’s potential.
3) To advocate for your child’s potential.

https://www.pta.org/home/run-your-pta/membership-campaign?utm_source=Informz&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=PTA&_zs=j7gBX&_zl=AxeB2
NEW RESOURCE FROM NPTA

National PTA is launching additional membership tools!!!

Click the link below to be one of the FIRST to listen to a mini-webinar produced by NPTA!

TOPIC – Virtual Membership Campaign

NOTE – You must be logged into the Local Leader Toolkit to access this resource

Stay tuned for the official launch on Friday 10/2!

https://www.pta.org/local-leader-kit/membership/templates-tools-resources
SET YOUR YEAR UP FOR SUCCESS!

**ANSWER YOUR WHY:** Why are YOU in PTA? What role will your PTA serve this year? What will a successful year look like?

**SPEND A LOT OF TIME ON RELATIONSHIPS:** The principal. The executive board. The members. The non-members. The staff. The students. How can EVERYONE feel welcome, wanted, and valuable in your association?

**THINK ABOUT INCLUSION:** Who has a voice in your PTA? What perspectives are missing? Who has not received an invitation to be a member? Who doesn’t feel valued?

**SET YOUR CALENDAR:** Meetings, events, fundraisers – get as much on the calendar as you can early.

**BUDGET:** If you did not approve a working budget last spring, you will need to do that first thing this fall. This includes choosing fundraisers (or getting out of current contracts), removing/moving line items, etc. Members drive the budget – not the exec board, not the principal.
SET YOUR YEAR UP FOR SUCCESS!

Look out for yourself…

Take care of your mental and physical health – running a PTA is a ton of fun when you are healthy. And in a pandemic, health is key.

“Put your face mask on first before helping others.”

Say no. Delegate. Ask for help. If there is no one available to run an event, cancel it. Yes, it’s hard – but you are not superhuman. Set boundaries and stick to them.

Find the fun: Host remote Happy Hours just for members to get to know each other, or other “get to know you” activities.
YOUR PTA SERVES A VITAL ROLE IN SUPPORTING YOUR COMMUNITY, AND THAT ROLE HAS ONLY BECOME MORE IMPORTANT DURING THIS TIME. TRY SOME OF THESE CREATIVE IDEAS TO BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER, WHILE RESPECTING SOCIAL DISTANCING..

Click Here
Community Building (Online)

Email, Google Docs and remote classrooms can go a long way to serving your students’ academic needs, but what about their emotional ones? Your PTA can support a feeling of community and school spirit even online.

**#TogetherApart:** Support stay at home orders by requesting students and families to post pics of how they are social distancing.

**A Taste of Normal:** Use your PTA Facebook page to help your school continue to deliver morning announcements (weather, birthdays, daily math problems and more) on Facebook Live.

**Virtual Spirit Wear:** Encourage your community to share their school pride by taking a pic in their school gear and sharing to your PTSA’s Facebook.

**School Spirit Week:** Similarly, ask your families to post different pictures online according to a new theme each day—crazy hat day, PJ day, crazy sock day, etc.

**Bust Boredom:** Lift people’s spirits! Send out daily challenges (fitness, crafts, etc.) or provide virtual morale boosters (funny pictures, inspirational quotes, etc.)

**Let’s Read Together:** Pick a book for your community to read together. Have the principal, your PTA President or a great volunteer record themselves reading and share the video online.
Community Building (Online)

**Make Space:** MAKE SPACE: Put the “social” in social isolation by hosting a virtual meet-up for your families on Zoom or Google Hangouts.

**The Great Outdoors:** Getting a few minutes of fresh air and sunshine can be critical for mental and physical health, particularly for children. Remind your families to don their masks, stay at least six feet from others, and participate in one of these fun challenges.

**Chalk the Walk:** Have families get outside in the fresh air to draw pictures or write positive messages on their driveways or on the sidewalk. Then families can walk around the neighborhood, get some exercise and enjoy all the art and messages. This activity could be neighborhood or community-wide.

**We’re Going on a Bear Hunt:** Host a neighborhood scavenger hunt! Ask school families and community members to place a teddy bear or bear pictures in a window, front yard, in a tree, etc. Kids and families can get outside, get some exercise and hunt for the bears while practicing social distancing. Tell families to post online how many they found!

**Themed walks!** Think of an Idea: A I PTAs held a shamrock walk for St. Patrick’s Day. Families drew and cut out shamrocks and put them in their windows. Families could walk around and find shamrocks.

This idea can be adjusted for other occasions, like emojis and signs for Teacher Appreciation Week!
Do not let all your PTA’s prep work go to waste! If may take a little creativity, ingenuity and flexibility, but you can (and should) try to host some of your beloved events online!

- **Virtual Talent Show:** Give kids the chance to show off their hobbies and special abilities!

- **Virtual Career Day:** Inspire kids to keep studying so they can become their heroes.

- **Virtual Graduation Celebration:** Missing milestones can be tough. Collaborate with your school to do something for your High School Seniors.

- **Online After School Programs:** Some after school programs sponsored by your PTA might be able to be moved online with the help of your enrichment program vendors.

- **Online Reflections!**: Encourage your PTA students to start working on their Reflections submissions. This year’s student-selected theme is *I Matter Because…* Contact CT PTA for more information on running PTA Reflections Program!
Three Tips for Facilitating Virtual Meetings

1. Remember the Personal Touch

One of the biggest challenges of an online meeting is that you can’t read attendees’ body language when they’re connected virtually. But this doesn’t mean that virtual meetings should feel less inclusive or personal.

Make sure participants are introduced at the beginning of the meeting and encourage all attendees to participate. Live chat can be a great feature for virtual meetings. As you begin the meeting, you can use it for an icebreaker activity, asking participants to share something interesting about their location or line of work.
2. Stick to an Agenda

Sharing an agenda with participants ahead of time helps everyone understand the tasks, goals, and intended outcomes of the meeting. While this is also important for in-person meetings, it is even more essential when participants are virtual because it can be more challenging to manage participants’ different personality and communication styles. An agenda is a useful tool for doing this.
Three Tips for Facilitating Virtual Meetings

3. Be Prepared

Online meetings require some additional prep work. Consider assigning simple premeeting tasks to individual participants and sharing materials ahead of time. As with most meetings, doing some advance work for a virtual meeting helps spark conversation and gives everyone an equal opportunity to prepare to contribute.

Also, be prepared for when things go wrong. Online meetings rely on technology tools that can be unpredictable. In the prework, advise attendees what to do if they have technical issues logging into the system you’re using. If tech glitches arise during the meeting, be ready to do a little troubleshooting, but keep it short. Don’t make your participants sit for minutes on end while you try to remedy the problem. If the problem persists, be prepared to reschedule.
There are several options for videoconferencing software; Zoom, GoToMeeting, Microsoft Teams, Google Meets.
RELATIONSHIPS:  SPEND A LOT OF TIME ON RELATIONSHIPS!

The principal. The executive board. The members. The non-members. The staff. The students. How can EVERYONE feel welcome, wanted, and valuable in your association?

Consider the FOUR "I"s of Transformative Family Engagement:
  Inclusive
  Individualized
  Integrated
  Impactful

Connecticut PTA®

everychild.onevoice®
4 Principles of Transformative Family Engagement

**INCLUSIVE**
Embracing and valuing diverse perspectives.

**INDIVIDUALIZED**
Meeting the unique needs of every family and child.

**INTEGRATED**
Connecting and aligning with the educational system.

**IMPACTFUL**
Empowering families to support their child's success.

To read more about transformative family engagement go to, https://www.pta.org/center-for-family-engagement
COMMUNITY BUILDING

DIVERSITY ASKS: Who is in the room? Who are your members? Do they reflect your school community?

EQUITY ASKS: Who is trying to get in the room, but can’t? What time/day are your meetings? What platform will you use to connect?

INCLUSION ASKS: Have everyone’s ideas been heard? Is this environment safe for everyone to feel like they belong?

REFLECT: Who has a voice in your PTA? What perspectives are missing? Who has not received an invitation to be a member? Who doesn’t feel valued?
COMMUNITY BUILDING

CALENDAR:

• What activities are currently on your calendar that need to be reimagined?
• How can you build community from a distance?
  • Virtual Dance Party
  • At Home BINGO
  • School Spirit Days
  • Yard/Window Decorating

• Watch your ratio: for every one Fundraiser, you should have two to three Community Events/Services.
COMMUNITY BUILDING MATTERS! Reinvent/Rethink how to PTA…

• Pick a hashtag # for families to use all year, or for a particular campaign
• Host a virtual school spirit week
• Offer weekly challenges/boredom busters
  • Make a main meal/side dish for dinner this week
  • Draw a picture of your favorite item in nature
  • Find 30 leaves, Jump 30 times, Count 30 pennies
  • Learn how to say “Hello” in five new languages
  • Create a “Virtual Vacation” – where would you go? What would you see?
• Chalk the walk at school or another public space (parks are fun)
• Encourage neighbors to place items in windows for a theme walk (flowers, teddy bears, snowflakes) or post scavenger hunt (find a street sign with the letter E)
• Virtual Dance Party
• Register for and host a Reflections program
COMMUNITY BUILDING

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT:

“Family Engagement in a Virtual World” Webinar
https://www.pta.org/center-for-family-engagement

Suggestions for a Virtual Community Meeting

Slide Deck:
PTA LEADERS: VIRTUAL RESOURCES & FIELD TRIPS NOW AVAILABLE!

Family Publications has added a new section on Virtual Field Trips, Enriching Programs, Activities & Videos.

Click Here

We have added a new section of “Virtual Field Trips” on FieldTripDirectory.com! Use the activity filter below to search for virtual trips, resources, and distance learning options available nationwide. Explore topics in the arts, science, social studies, and more from anywhere.
Welcome, Local Leaders!

Login with your National PTA Profile to gain access is a comprehensive digital guide designed to help you learn the basics of running your PTA unit. In the Local Leaders Kit, you will find just about everything you need as a local PTA leader, including guidance to help you.

>click here to register
PTA PODCAST: NOTES FROM THE BACKPACK

The latest episode titled “Navigating Online Resources During COVID-19” can help get you organized for the year ahead.

*select episodes are also available in Spanish

Other topics include COVID-19 induced anxiety, handling homework, the mystery of middle schoolers, and more

https://www.pta.org/center-for-family-engagement/notes-from-the-backpack
STAY CONNECTED!

1. Make sure you and your fellow officers have reported the most current contact information for each officer to CT PTA.

2. Follow CT PTA on Facebook and Twitter.

3. Ask to join the Connecticut PTA Local Unit Presidents Facebook Group. https://www.facebook.com/groups/1382929555188235
CONNECTICUT PTA IS HERE TO HELP ANYTIME!

- Call us: 203-691-9585
- Email us: office@ctpta.org
- Fax us: 203-891-6462
- Website: www.ctpta.org
- Password for leaders for forms on our website: lead2020
National PTA is asking, what you need! If you can take the time, complete the survey below!

CLICK HERE, National PTA Survey