PTA

everychild. one voice.
Welcome to PTA in Pandemic Times

Heather Starks,
Minnesota PTA President

Amy Nelson,
Minnesota PTA Vice-President
TOPICS FOR TODAY

• First Things First
• Reopening Schools/Use of School Buildings
• Why PTA?
• Community Building & Advocacy
• Budgets & Fundraising
• Officers & Elections
• Running a Virtual Meeting & Membership
• Set Your Year Up For Success
TOPICS FOR THE FUTURE

TREASURER 101, including FINANCIAL BEST PRACTICES

COMMUNICATION in TODAY’S WORLD

THE BIG ”A” and LITTLE “A” of ADVOCACY

MEMBERSHIP – WHY PTA?

EMERGENCY & UNIVERSAL BYLAWS

OTHER (suggestions welcome!)
FIRST THINGS FIRST

1. Join National PTA’s website: https://tinyurl.com/y6rsamf4

2. Once registered, dig through the Local Leader Kit: https://www.pta.org/home/run-your-pta/local-leader-kit-access

3. Make sure you and your fellow officers are in MemberHub. That way you won’t miss anything from Minnesota PTA.

4. Follow Minnesota PTA on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

5. Ask to join the Minnesota PTA Officers Facebook Group. https://www.facebook.com/groups/MNPTAOfficers
SETTING THE STAGE: Reopening Schools
REOPENING SCHOOLS

Required for In-Person and Hybrid Learning

- Masking Policy
- PPE for direct support student services
- Build routines of hygiene education & practices
- Daily cleaning and frequent cleaning of high touch surfaces throughout the day
- Building level COVID-19 program coordinator, with optional student counterpart
- Limiting nonessential visitors/volunteers/external groups
- Discontinue large gatherings/activities that do not allow for social distancing
- Monitoring and excluding for illness

Required for Hybrid Learning

- Social distancing of 6 feet at all times in school buildings
- School facilities at 50% capacity
- Transportation at 50% capacity
- Sufficient staffing levels to meet the requirements of the model
USE OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS

“Nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations should be restricted.”
Minnesota Department of Health 2020-2021 Planning Guide for Schools page 5, Social Distancing and Minimizing Exposure Requirements. [https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/k12planguide.pdf](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/k12planguide.pdf)

“For indoor meetings or events held by an outside organization in school facilities, the seated entertainment and meeting venue guidance must be followed, and a preparedness plan must be developed and shared on your district or school's website. The occupancy limits are set at 25% capacity, not to exceed 250.”
USE OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Contact your district about their policies for outside groups using district facilities this year. It’s unlikely schools will be open for groups if district is in a full distance learning model.

For PTA meetings & events:

  Consider outdoor venues when possible (note, movie licenses typically do NOT cover outdoor viewing).

  Explore other venues/opportunities in your community or virtual options.

Be ready to create a preparedness plan:
https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/all-businesses.jsp
SO NOW WHAT?
WHY PTA?

MISSION: To make every child’s potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children. (Every Child, One Voice)

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? What does a successful year look like?
COMMUNITY BUILDING & ADVOCACY
COMMUNITY BUILDING

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?

FOUR "I"s of Family Engagement:
- Inclusive
- Individualized
- Integrated
- Impactful
COMMUNITY BUILDING

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?

FOUR “I”s of Family Engagement:
- Inclusive
- Individualized
- Integrated
- Impactful
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 (as long as no money/prizes are involved)
  • School Spirit Days
  • Yard/Window Decorating

• https://mnpta.org/resources/events/

• Watch your ratio: for every one Fundraiser, you should have two to three Community Events/Services.
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:
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.
BUDGETS & FUNDRAISING
FINANCIAL BEST PRACTICES

• Prepare and approve a budget prior to or at the first meeting of the fiscal year.

• Budget may be amended at any meeting with a majority vote of membership in attendance.

• Executive board may approve small changes in budget, if allowed in your standing rules.

• Treasurer shares revenue/expenses report at every meeting.

• At least one non-officer reviews and signs monthly bank statement.

• Bank statements should be mailed to the school, never to a personal residence.
FINANCIAL BEST PRACTICES

• Bank accounts reconciled every month (or at least prior to every general meeting).

• Two signers on all checks (required by Universal Bylaws).

• No checks may be written for “cash” – if cash is needed, it must be withdrawn from the bank.

• If cash withdrawn for an event, a petty cash form is filled out by two counters/signers before and after the event.

• Never take cash home.

• When checks received, immediately endorse “For Deposit Only”

• Require receipts for reimbursement.
BUDGETS

- Members drive the budget – not the exec board, not the principal. You will need membership to approve initial budgets and any amendments. Small amounts may be approved by your executive board (example, up to $250) if spelled out in your Standing Rules.

- If you did not approve a working budget last spring, you will need to do that first thing this fall. Some items to consider:
  - Overall goals: spend rate, save rate, fundraising rate
  - Line items that may no longer be needed (ie. bussing for fieldtrips) and need to be saved or reallocated.
  - New or reallocated line items [ie. pandemic supplies – supplement (ie. outdoor learning) DO NOT supplant (ie. masks, shields)]
  - Revenue Shifts – be realistic about your ability to fundraise
FUNDRAISING

– Do you need to get out of any contracts?
  • Look at the fine print – can they convert to a different model? Is there a penalty for cancellation?

– Can you convert from in-person to distance?
  • Ship-to-Home (products), Participate from Home (ie. Read-A-Thon)

– Are your fundraisers no longer appropriate for your community?
  • What has the economic impact been on your school’s families? Are they financially not able to contribute this year?

– Do you need to look at grants or other sources of revenue?
  • https://grantadvisor.org
  • Local businesses (especially those not hurt by COVID-19)
Q: Can we raise goods or money to help the families in our community affected by COVID-19?

A: Yes, with the restriction that all goods or money collected must be available equitably to all families in your school community. A few options:

- Collect goods for donation to a community support non-profit organization or encourage members to donate directly. (example: food for a food shelf)
- Collect gift cards for grocery stores or other businesses that would benefit those in need. Avoid Visa/American Express gift cards.
- Solicit funds through a Go Fund Me (or similar) that is connected to the PTA bank account. Solicitations must clearly state the purpose of the donations and how they will be distributed.
Minnesota PTA’s “Gift Card Waiver” (linked above) expired on July 1, 2020. We have a board meeting on Sunday, August 23, 2020 – at that time, we will review this waiver and determine whether or not to renew for this school year. Stay tuned!
eCommerce

PDF from Minnesota PTA Website:

TOPICS INCLUDE:
• Online Statement Review
• Use of Credit/Debit Card
• Online Account Access
• Accepting Payments by Credit Card or Online Payment Collection
• Disputes
OFFICERS ELIGIBILITY

Q: Who can serve as an officer of a PTA unit in Minnesota?

A: Anyone.

This question has come up a lot this year due to previously committed officers changing schools due to the pandemic. The only requirements to be an officer in a local PTA are:

- 18 years old
- Resident of Minnesota
- Dues paying member of the PTA unit

We know that many families will be making temporary transitions to a new school community this year, but intend to return in 2021-22. Previously committed/elected officers may stay in their PTA even if they will not have a student at the school this year.
Minnesota PTA previously gave the guidance that local PTAs whom had contested elections in the spring should wait until fall, because we naïvely thought we’d be “back to normal” by now. Since that is not true, PTAs have three options for remaining officer elections:

1. Meet at the school (indoors or outdoors) or other public location following social distancing measures & procedures to conduct an election. Location MAY NOT be a private home or other non-public area.

2. Conduct the election virtually through programs such as Election Buddy or OpaVote (free for up to 20 votes, $10-$20 for larger groups). Votes must be by verified members but anonymous to everyone but the secretary (CANNOT be done by virtual meeting or GoogleDoc).
3. Emergency Bylaws allow for current officers to stay in place until new officers are elected. If elections are not possible, current officers may extend their term until June 30, 2021.

A few notes:

If your Standing Rules do not spell out when officers take office, they default to the start date of the fiscal year (July 1).

The Executive Board can remove an officer who is not doing their job by following the procedure spelled out in the Universal Bylaws.

VIRTUAL MEETINGS
COMMUNICATE/ADVERTISE

• Set a meeting calendar at the beginning of the year. Date, Time, Platform should be known to your members in advance.

• How are you going to let your school community know about your meetings? Through the principal (email, text, robocall) – online flyer – teachers communication platforms – social media?

• Make sure the ENTIRE school knows about your meetings, not just your members. Anyone can attend, only members can vote.

• Set an agenda in advance, and share it before the meeting.

• Encourage members to ”Bring A Friend.”
RUNNING A VIRTUAL MEETING

PICK A PLATFORM: Google Meet or Zoom

Minnesota PTA recommends each PTA get a Gmail Account and utilize Google Meet – it is free with no size or time limit, easy to use, and new features are being added often.

Zoom has extra features, especially in the paid version, that some PTAs may find valuable (ability to record, breakout rooms, waiting room, security codes).

We do not recommend using Facebook Live or other platform that does not allow interaction between users.
RUNNING A VIRTUAL MEETING

SECURITY CONCERNS:
• Do not post your meeting link on a public form (ie. social media) – only include in email or other more secure format.
• If using Zoom, you may use a security code for entrance or keep people in a waiting room until you verify who they are.

VIRTUAL MEETING ETIQUETTE:
• Mute yourself and only turn on microphone to speak.
• Turn on your camera if possible – it helps others stay engaged.
• Use your real name, not a pseudonym.
• Create a clear signal when someone wants to talk – raise hand, ask in chat.
• All votes must be done by roll call.
• Treat the meeting as an intentional space – no offline multi-tasking.
• Be respectful.
RUNNING A VIRTUAL MEETING

MEETING BEST PRACTICES:

- Build relationships.
- Start on time, and end on time.
- Be brief.
- Stick to the agenda.
- Make decisions as a group - VOTE (budget, activities, school climate).
- Give information parents can’t get elsewhere (guest speakers).
Membership is going to be a challenge this year. People are going to need to see the value in PTA to join (that’s where the WHY comes in), and they will need an online platform to do so.

All Minnesota PTAs should have a MemberHub account – this can be used for multiple things including membership drives. (We recognize this hasn’t been the smoothest rollout for our units since we launched in spring 2019 – we are hopeful this year will be better)

Be mindful that ANYONE can be a member – parents, teachers, grandparents, community members (see next slide about creative “asks”).
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!
• Make membership part of a package – i.e. spirit wear bundle: for $20 you get a t-shirt and a membership.
• 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-Offer
MEMBERSHIP

**Dues:** $2.25 National + $4.00 State = $6.25 total per member

**Member – pays dues to unit, price varies. Examples:**
- $5 per member (unit picks up additional $1.25 from fundraising)
- $10 per member
- $15 per member, $20 per family (pays 2 memberships)
- $10 per member, $5 per student

Unit should charge amount to cover “cost of operation” (see future slide)

Most units allow for “scholarships” – both for members to gift AND for members to request.

You may also get corporate sponsorships to cover membership costs.
MEMBERSHIP

Q: What is “cost of operation?”

A: Any cost incurred to operate the unit. Examples:
   - Insurance (all units are strongly encouraged to hold insurance)
   - Childcare for meetings
   - Translation services (in person or print)
   - Meals at meetings
   - Transportation (to support members attending meetings)
   - Printing costs

A unit that charges $15/person would retain $8.75 for operational costs. For 20 members, that is $175.
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 oxygen 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.
REFLECTIONS
National PTA’s Art Program – we had FIVE National winners this year!
2020-21 Theme: I Matter Because…
https://mnpta.org/reflections/

SCHOLARSHIP
On hold this year

ANNUAL CONVENTION
SAVE THE DATE! Saturday, April 17, 2021
@Wilder Foundation in St. Paul
THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?
Additional Information

www.mnptta.org
(952)767-4909
mnptta@mnptta.org