

Indiana PTA[®]

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Indiana PTA
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The President's Corner

By Tina Hartman

Welcome back to the 2009-2010 school year. It is important that we keep membership opportunities available at all activities throughout the year. Together we are a voice for all children to get the best education possible.

Keep everyone involved in your local unit by communicating with your members, welcoming them to all events and continuing to be inclusive of all members. As we have a male National PTA President, male involvement will be a high profile topic so get your dads and male role models involved.

Please plan to attend training in your region provided by your Indiana PTA Board of Managers. Allocate funds in your budget to attend the Indiana PTA Convention April 16-18, 2010 where you will receive valuable training and networking op-

portunities (plus it's a lot of fun!)

We have a lot of exciting updates coming your way this year including a new look for the Indiana PTA website and newsletter. While we remember that membership is crucial to the work that we do on behalf of Indiana students, I'm going to leave you with a quote I received from Angela Beal from Stringtown Elementary while following up on how their year was starting . . .

"Alone you are an opinion . . . Together we are a voice!"

Best wishes for a successful year!
Tina Hartman
Indiana PTA President

Indiana PTA Redesigned Website Goes Live!

The Indiana PTA PR/Marketing Committee is proud to announce that the NEW redesigned Indiana PTA website went up September 1st! Indiana PTA is a dynamic association and now we have a website that fits our attitude! You can find our website online at www.indianapta.org. The new, interactive site will give you easy access for everything you need to know about Indiana PTA from our history, our mission, and more! Include us as one of your "favorites" and check back often for updates! A very special thank you goes to **Nichole Thomas** and **Pat Taylor** for all of the hours they have spent reworking our website. Both Nichole and Pat have done an incredible job to bring this vision to life.

We hope you will take a few minutes to look over the website and let us know what you think. This is still a work in progress and will be updated and tweaked often. We would love to hear your input! If you would like to make a comment or suggestion, please go to the "Contact Us" tab at www.indianapta.org.

A Message From Chuck Saylor, National PTA President

America's PTA



If you were unable to join me at the national convention in Fort Lauderdale this past June, let me say once again how incredibly grateful I am that you have entrusted me to be the first ever male National President of PTA. But I owe you even more thanks for your decision to be involved in this association at this time in our history.

We have reached a defining moment, and members committed to our mission have work to do. When faced with the question of whether you, personally, were committed to helping PTA reach out to *all* communities, you have stood up and said, "Yes!" When given a choice between supporting your child and supporting *all* children—even knowing the challenges involved—the decision was clear. Because it's not really one *or* the other: by working on behalf of America's students, you truly are helping your student, your family, and your school.

These can't just be words, however. We are asking you to

follow through in action as well. There is no question that PTA must work harder on its growth and its diversity. The only question is: what will *you* do to help PTA expand into the communities where it is most needed? We need more men to be involved in PTA, and in children's lives. Will you help PTA raise its male membership from 10% to 20% over the next two years? We need better representation in PTA from the very youth we have chosen to serve. Will you help PTAs get more students to join us? We need to improve our service to the families who have members serving in our military. Will you help the families in your community when their loved one gets deployed overseas?

Now is the time for serious people to get engaged. At a time when we need to ask everyone in our schools and communities—especially those who have never been asked before—to become part of the PTA family, we need serious people. Serious people who will embrace new ideas, new methods, and a new look. Serious people who will make PTA the family experience it needs to be: a place where all families are welcome. Please join me as we make our PTA, *America's PTA*.

Charles J. "Chuck" Saylor
PTA National President

Membership is Everyone's Business!

Below are some reasons for joining PTA from a local, state and national perspective:

Local PTA unit benefits:

These will vary depending on what your local PTA unit chooses to participate in. Hopefully involvement at the local level will include:

- Activities that promote greater parent involvement.
- Opportunities for school staff and parents to work together to solve problems and work on issues.
- Increased knowledge about how the school system works.
- Parents feeling empowered to bring concerns to school staff.
- A closer relationship between the home and school.
- Opportunities to meet and work with the parents of you child's classmates.
- Volunteer PTA leaders voted in by the local PTA membership.
- Decisions of the organization made by vote of the general membership.
- Official status as a non-profit 501(c)3 organization.
- Huge discount on insurance for the organization.

Indiana PTA benefits:

- Support from people who've been in your position before.
- Answers to financial questions that come up.
- Two full-time staff for Indiana PTA membership available to answer questions
- Unpaid/volunteer board of directors ready to help.
- Opportunity to attend well-planned, informative conferences which include:
 - ~ Regional Training Meetings
 - ~ Legislative Day
 - ~ Annual Indiana PTA Convention

- Indiana PTA Good News Email with programming ideas, deadlines, and PTA success stories goes out every week
- Representation at various Indiana education issues and partner organizations meetings.
- Someone watching the legislative session and keeping members informed of happenings there that may affect our schools and children.

National PTA Benefits

- Official PTA Kit which includes valuable information/training for local PTA leaders and other tools for running a successful local PTA.
- National Programs such as: Three 4 Me, Reflections, etc.
- E-newsletters for local leaders, parents, State leaders, and a legislative E-newsletter that includes information about current federal legislative issues that involve children and youth.
- An unpaid/volunteer board of directors that comes from the membership.
- Various training opportunities.
- Very informative, up-to-date Website with a "PTA Great Idea Bank."
- Our Children magazine.
- Various discounts at businesses.

The bottom line is this: PTA Membership is the driving force that gives all of us a voice for children in our schools, with legislators, and with educational leadership. On a local level, membership gives you access to resources and volunteers. Membership is vital to the success of a PTA and now is the time of year to encourage parents, teachers, and community members to support PTA!

I am a father of two sons; 13 and 10, and have been involved with the public schools for over 9 years. When my oldest son first started school, I was determined to be an involved father. As a parent and especially a father we want to provide our children with the best opportunities to succeed. I knew the secret to success was a great education and wanted to make sure my sons had every opportunity possible. My wife and I reviewed all our options (private vs. public) and decided on one of our local public schools. We both knew no matter how great the test scores or teachers the number one determining factor in student success is parent involvement. Having two sons it was extremely important to me to establish a strong male role model both at home and in the community. By volunteering time at the school my sons were able to see how much I valued their education.

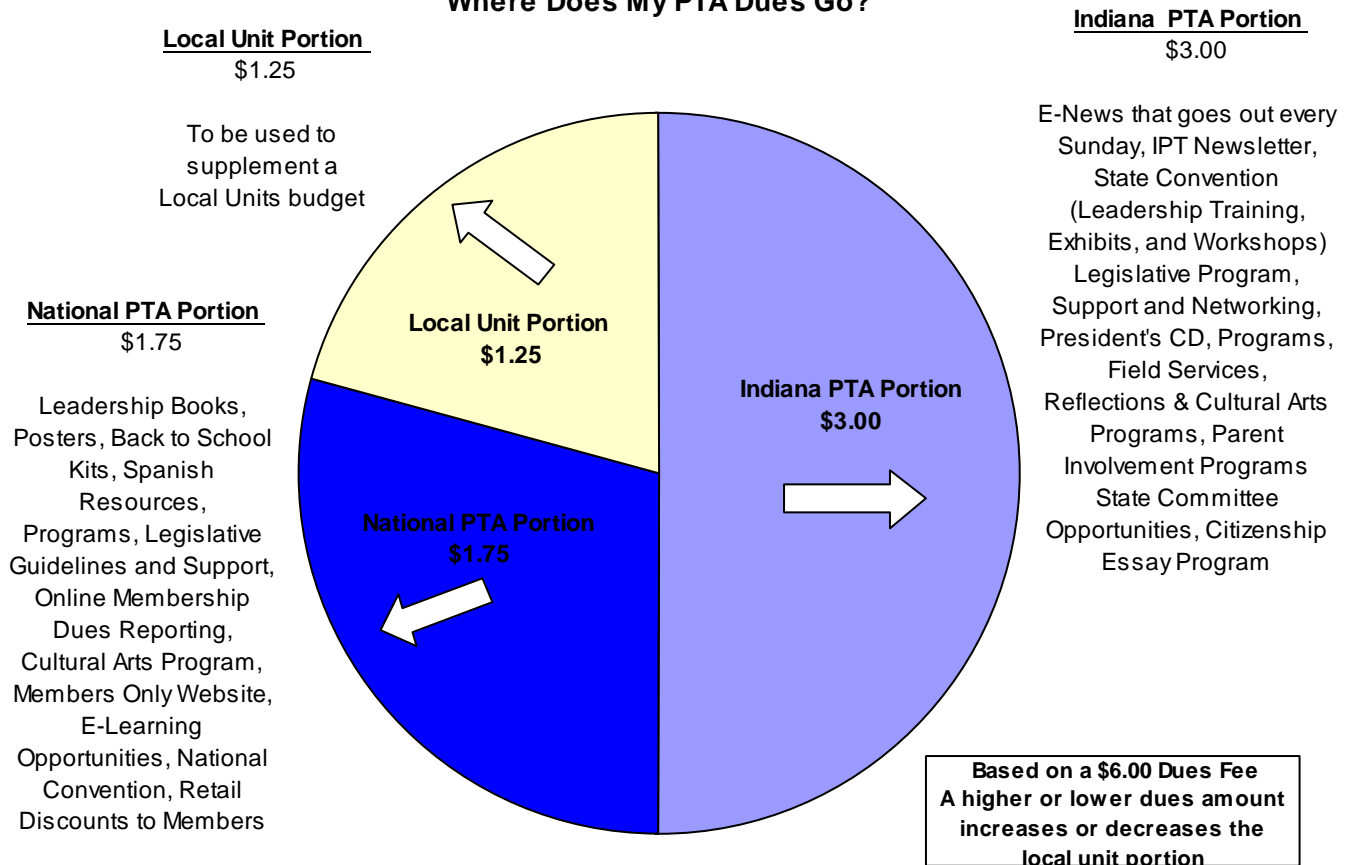
Having a non-traditional job (I work weekends only in the medical field) I have more opportunity to spend time in the schools during the day than most dads. I pop popcorn every other week, run the health committee, conduct vision screening, build games for the carnival, help with sporting events, host dances, and run parent meetings. Most dads are usually working most of or all of the school day and wonder what they can do to help or make a difference. Most PTA meetings are in the evenings and are a great way for dads to meet adminis-

trators and teachers. Fathers who are informed and develop a relationship with their children's teachers can provide better resources for their students and make sure that all aspects of their education are being met. Some fathers may take an extended lunch once a month and come in and eat lunch with their student. Other fathers may take one or two days off during the school year and dedicate that time to an ongoing project or event hosted by the school (Important note some companies may allow employees time off for volunteerism or community service and volunteering in your child's school for a special event would qualify). Parents are asked to be on the textbook adoption committees and on QIT (quality improvement teams) teams. Some of these meetings may be in the evenings. Most dads have access to computers and email during the work day and just knowing that by simply sending an email to your legislators asking them to support education you can have an impact. As a father, take a stand and show your children that you value their education. Join your local PTA and become a father involved. Make a pact to volunteer at your school. Our students especially our male students need strong male roles models who make education a priority.

Tony volunteers at Shambaugh Elementary School, Jefferson Middle School, and for the Fort Wayne Area PTA Council.

Dues Are an Investment in PTA

Where Does My PTA Dues Go?



The Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Tony Bennett, is attempting to revise certification rules for teachers, principals and superintendents. He argues that by eliminating some of the requirements for licensing they would ensure a deeper understanding of the subject they teach. He further argues that the current requirements focus too much attention on teaching methods. He believes that by providing non-traditional leaders (Anyone with a master's degree who passes the School Leader's License test and is approved by the State (Dr. Bennett)) some school districts have a better chance at success.

The PTA has always supported development programs that further strengthen our teachers and leaders. We support programs that strengthen teaching techniques, academic knowledge, human understanding, critical thinking, technology use and parent, family and community involvement. We support well qualified teachers and leaders who have been held to rigorous requirements. We want our teachers to be well versed on teaching methods.

The non-traditional path would require principals and superintendents to hold a masters degree and to pass a standardized test (school leader's license test) and the state would approve or disapprove the applicant based on an individual basis. Dr. Bennett would have final approval. This path

opens up the possibility of a principal or superintendent without any educational background being hired. The PTA supports strong leaders with a vast knowledge base and on the job experience in the field of education.

Please contact your legislators and Dr. Bennett's office and share your concerns. Our legislators are not currently in session but still have access to email and want to hear from you. Please see below for contact information. Thank You for all that you do!

Indiana Legislators:
<http://www.in.gov/legislative/contact/>

Dr. Bennett:
Indiana Department of Education
151 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
Phone: 317.232.6610
Fax: 317.232.8004

Watch this corner in upcoming issues for information concerning Parent Teacher Conferences and Professional Development time for teachers.

Indiana PTA Partner Spotlight

The Indiana Partnerships Center works to empower parents about their rights and responsibilities pertaining to their children's education. The Indiana Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC) is funded in part by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement. Indiana PTA is proud to work with PIRC as a partner.



Membership Deadlines

The first membership dues deadline is **November 15th**. To be a "Unit in Good Standing," a PTA has to have their dues postmarked by this date and sent to the Indiana PTA office. A PTA must also meet this deadline to qualify for any awards this year.

The second dues deadline for the year is **March 15th**.

Did you know?

Indiana PTA has over 25,000 members!

This number is very important when we talk to legislators. Join PTA today to help us be the voice shaping the future for all of Indiana's youth!

Indiana PTA is on Facebook

Indiana PTA is now on Facebook with information, discussion boards, event listings, good news stories, and a great way to keep informed! Become a "fan" of Indiana PTA today! You can become a fan from our website at www.indianapta.org.

The IPT is the official newsletter of the Indiana PTA. It can be downloaded from the Indiana PTA website. Its purpose is to educate, inform and share PTA information with it's members and the general public.

Kathie Green, Indiana PTA Board of Managers
PR/Marketing Chairperson
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