

March, 2008

At a meeting I went to recently on character education, the speaker said that “we are the sum total of our habits” and that in trying to instill habits of character in young people (and adults too) we should emphasize “asset building” or encouraging the positive habits in society and individuals in order to discourage negative forces. He went on to say that most of us **KNOW** what assets society feels are positive, many of us **BELIEVE** in these same assets as right, but that the key is, after all, to **DO** something about that knowledge and those beliefs.



“Know, Believe, Do” can be applied to the PTA world too. For example, when we talk about PTA’s advocacy efforts, which always come particularly into focus during this time of year when Federal and State budgets are being debated, we know what is considered “right” for education and for the most part we believe it (although all of us will at times find ourselves privately at odds with one position or another). However, what do we actually **DO** in terms of advocacy? What do we actually **DO** to make sure we speak for every child with one voice, which includes yours and your PTAs? When you receive your invitation to participate in the NYS PTA Virtual Lobby Day on March 19, though you know the issues are right (or wrong) for education, and believe in the PTA mission to advocate on behalf of those issues, will you also participate and take action? PTA and the students of New York State are counting on you to **DO!**

The same is true for so many issues in your own units, councils and schools, for example, nominating committees, elections, local health and wellness issues, how to spend PTA dollars, and so forth. More to the point, it is not only important to know about what the bylaws say about your nominating committee, and believe it is important to follow those bylaws, but to actually conduct your nominations according to those bylaws. In other words, it is not only important to know PTA “facts” and believe in the mission, but to follow through on “asset building” in your PTA and help us do the same at the state and national level. You are all part of an extraordinary organization. Most importantly, you are also a key to and a part of the future “character” of the PTA. What you **DO** remains critical to assuring our success.

Best regards,

Maria