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# Annual Report

November 2007

**Maria L. DeWald, President**

# From the President...

Over the past two years, I have used “Connecting the Dots” as the theme for my presidency to encourage our members to build bridges and collaborate with partners, both new and old. In doing so, we believed our volunteers would discover the power of working together to create a more positive and productive future for every child. If we are to connect the dots by building bridges that last, however, we must also learn to appreciate how we can use the power of PTA as a catalyst to build communities that are strong and inclusive. The reality is that we can’t make progress as a true community until we embrace the idea that celebrating our differences will contribute even more to our growth than understanding our similarities, even when doing so represents the greater challenge.



Learning to value all input means honoring and learning from the past but also understanding that letting go can sometimes open the door to a more productive future. When we build on what works, and move on from what does not, by working with new and more people and enhanced or new ideas, we build community. It is not change for change’s sake, but change to build effectiveness and partnership. With that in mind, the changes the NYS PTA has instituted this year are the result of much open dialogue and, hopefully, promise to prepare us for a far more effective future.

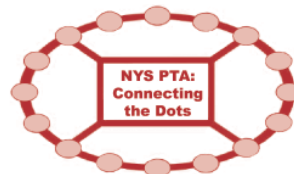
For example, we have embraced technology as a means of not only getting our message out but also for the value of bringing forth new ideas, opinions and view points. We have modified our staffing plan to assure more effective and stable support to volunteers within available resources. We have planned and introduced a new advocacy, education and recognition program (ACT) to help us share our message and introduced two new electronic publications as resources. We have partnered with new organizations whose resources have and will continue to help us build stronger school community relationships. We have worked with community leaders across the country whose thoughts and experiences promise to help us create strategies for using PTA members as community development catalysts in New York State.

As we conclude the celebration of our 110th year, please know that you, the grassroots volunteers who drive our organization, have made it possible to “connect the dots to community” and to make those connections the strong essential catalysts that define the village so necessary to the education of every child.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Maria L. DeWald".

Maria L. DeWald  
NYS PTA President



# Our Mission...

*The New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. (NYS PTA) recognizes that every child deserves excellence in education and quality of life. NYS PTA will maintain its commitment and service to all children and to its diverse membership through increased parent involvement and community awareness, advocacy, education and involvement.*

# Leadership...

Expanding our advocacy efforts through education and recognition

The tagline “*everychild.onevoice.*®” captures the essence of PTA’s mission, beliefs and purpose. Whether the setting is a parent teacher conference, a school board budget hearing or a meeting with an influential legislator, improved quality of life for children is the goal. While we advocate for children in everything we do, our efforts stand the best chance for success when we fully understand the issues and a bit of history. While most of us begin the road to effective child advocacy working with our child’s classroom teacher, we quickly learn that opportunities exist to improve the lives of all children by working with people of like mind to make those improvements happen. The work to make such efforts successful is time consuming, intellectually challenging and at times emotionally draining. In the past year alone, to name a few, NYS PTA committees have worked to: define parent involvement standards in Commissioner’s regulation; maintain an adequate parent role in development of educational plans for children with special needs; understand the threats and health risks associated with childhood obesity; give input on NCLB re-authorization from a parent perspective; insure children’s access to physical activity during each school day; and set requirements for the nutritional content of food served in school lunches.

To recognize the efforts required to research, understand, develop support and promote action on specific issues, PTA has created programs that help to build knowledge, develop advocacy skills and recognize individual, unit and committee leadership efforts that translate advocacy into action. The Golden Circle of Leadership and Growth Through Leadership programs of the past several years have achieved success through an approach that combines training with recognition. Moving forward, the Leadership Development Committee has worked for the past year and a half to prepare the newest generation of leadership award, entitled ACT (Advocacy, Collaboration, Connecting, Communicating and Training), which will eventually recognize advocacy (leadership) efforts at three levels. The award will provide training and encourage a variety of activities that will result in recognition for both individuals and groups. . . and improve the quality of life for all our children.



# Representation...

## Sharing our efforts with others

Two essential but often overlooked aspects of advocacy are visibility and consistency. To communicate its message, NYS PTA representatives must be credible, persistent and above all, visible. A “Virtual Lobby Day” effort, now entering its third year, is becoming part of the message legislators expect from PTA. Participation by PTA volunteers and staff on the Education Conference Board helps to shape the positions of teachers, boards of education, school administrators, and others to include and value a parent perspective. The names and faces of PTA representatives are familiar to NYS Education and Health Department staff, members of the Board of Regents, legislators and the Governor because we participate.

This year, our volunteers and staff have represented PTA at conferences of partner organizations; spoken at press conferences in support of school finance reform; joined with the Governor and others, in particular our partner NYSHEPA which is a statewide coalition focusing on the obesity epidemic through school nutrition and physical activity programs; participated in the planning of a November 2006 Childhood Obesity Summit and a December 2006 Educational Conference Board Policy Conference; participated in the selection and recognition of the NYS Teacher of the Year; collaborated with NYS United Teachers (NYSUT) on updates for a new publications for Special Education, Academic Intervention Services and Middle Schools; collaborated with the School Administrators Association (SAANYS) on a School Wellness Policy brochure; worked on the Homeless Advisory Committee to assure homeless children are educated; worked on test and assessments reports for parents; worked on committees to refine various madates ranging from middle school needs to academic intervention services to NCLB to supplemental education services policies; and initiated a partnership with EPIC, one of our two NYS federally-funded PIRCs (Parental Information Resource Centers), in order to enhance parent and family engagement efforts through collaboration, i.e., community building!

Over the past two years, NYS PTA has participated with National PTA in an Emerging Minority Leadership Initiative. NYS PTA has been represented at the National PTA EML Conference with our goal being to replicate a similar effort in New York State in 2008. We have set up our own Minority Leaders Initiative in an attempt to, join with minority leaders nationwide in an effort to involve communities more fully in school programs. National PTA has also assisted New York’s outreach efforts through both its Training Capacity Building and their Community Connections Initiatives. Through these two initiatives, three NYS PTA members have been certified as outreach trainers and a partnership on building New York City interest in establishing PTAs after nearly 40 years of absence continues to be supported. These and other initiatives promise to help us build a richer and more informed community to advocate for our children.

PTA representatives are regular participants in discussions to shape professional standards, recognize effective educators, promote effective childhood vaccination programs, establish after school daycare standards and many other ongoing initiatives. The collective impact is that of an organization whose influence belies its relatively modest resources.

# Support...

## A revised Staffing Model

While NYS PTA prides itself in being a volunteer organization, the size, complexity and scope of the operation make it impossible to pursue our mission without effective staff support. Given the experience of recent history and a series of Executive Committee discussions, the NYS PTA has modified its staffing model to ensure optimal staff support of volunteer efforts. Highlights include:

- Expansion of the Assistant to the President’s role in the areas of staff selection, coordination and performance review.
- Separation of office coordination and events functions into two positions
- Creation of a new, part-time position of Office Assistant

These changes were achieved at minimal change in overall salary and benefit costs. We have hired two new staff since mid September- Nancy Reilly, Office Coordinator and Eileen O’Connor, Office Assistant. Kelly Pugliano, who has been with NYS PTA since March 2007, has been appointed Events Coordinator. Rick Longhurst, Noreen Iacobucci and Pamela Chrysler continue in their current roles as Assistant to the President, Membership Specialist and Communications Specialist. The staff is committed to the new model, the PTA mission and to their individual roles.

# Communication...

## Steps to reaching a broader audience

Achieving the PTA Mission requires ongoing communication that must be timely and must reach as many of our nearly 360,000 members as possible. We depend on three forms of communication to make this happen.

### **People:**

From its beginnings 110 years ago, NYS PTA has depended on person to person contact to spread its message. Leaders within 16 regions, supported by committee chairs and others, combine as a Board of Managers to represent PTA positions to local, state and national policy makers. The structure works but undergoes continuous review to assure that we find more efficient and less costly ways to provide maximum person to person contact within the limits of budget and volunteer time.

### **Print:**

At the core of NYS PTA's print efforts are the annual *Resource Guide* and position statements contained in "Where We Stand". *Fast Facts*, a ten times per year publication and the *NY Parent Teacher*, a four publication per year periodical, round out the regular publications that are distributed to 2000 PTA leaders across the state. However, annually there are always new projects. Topic related brochures and related publications are developed by PTA volunteers, often in cooperation with "partner" organizations, based on need. For example, highly regarded and much used brochures that address health and wellness and special education have been made available in the past year. We produce an "Annual Report" and this year completed a special historical remembrance for NYS PTA's 110th anniversary which offers highlights of parent contributions to improving the lives of children through community involvement from 1897 to the present.

### **Electronic:**

The New York State PTA website, [www.nyspta.org](http://www.nyspta.org), provides the potential to reach a larger audience more quickly and at lesser cost than our other means of communication. Web site technology, which makes possible an ever expanding service potential, has evolved rapidly over the past several years. Recognizing the value of electronic communication, NYS PTA has replaced several print documents with electronic communications. An *Advocacy E-Newsletter* replaces *Ed News* with comprehensive education pieces in electronic format that all members have access to via listserves. The *Legislative Brief* replaces *What's Happening in Albany* and *What's Happening in Washington*. To further expand the opportunities offered through electronic communication, the Board of Managers has authorized funding that promises to take advantage of the most up to date electronic technology available. The goal is a new website, debuting in March 2008 that will offer expanded service while making the site easier to maintain. On-line surveys, self-generated mailing lists, quality search tools, on-line event registration and PTA store purchases, that several years ago were not possible, may be realities in the near future.



# Celebration...

We honor the past while we celebrate the present

At Convention 2007, we concluded the celebration of our 110th Anniversary year. Through publications, we highlighted some of the many accomplishments for children and families. The compilation of a Resolutions Timeline, vividly showing the real advocacy successes of our organization, has been documented in our 110th Anniversary booklet and is the highlight of our efforts to “tell and celebrate” the PTA story.

While we honor the past, we also celebrate the present. This year, we chartered our first NYC unit since the 1960s, the New Heights Academy Charter School PTA. Our PARP program has a new logo, designed by Eliud Rodriquez, a high school junior from Rochester, NY, whose entry was selected from over 200 submitted. Our Reflections program continues to attract the talents of our most able students with over 36,000 participating across the state. This year we recognized the contributions of Jessica Calzi, a National Award of Excellence winner and Jamie Bernowitz, Ava DiSavino, Josephine Yalovitser and Christopher Osufsen, National Award of Merit winners. In addition, this year we received 881 entries for the annual Theme Search contest!.

We celebrated the achievement of students planning to enter the teaching profession by awarding nine \$3,000 Jenkins Memorial Scholarships for Teacher Education and supported the work of teachers working to improve their craft by awarding four \$1,000 Teacher Fellowships for Graduate Study - in Memory of Richard Gazzola. We celebrated Sarah Burpee of Westchester East Putnam Region as this year’s winner of the Youth Humanitarian Award - in Memory of Stanley Marcus, as well as the many students who build community through their humanitarian efforts. We celebrated J. Irving Baylis PTA, Nassau Region, as our 2006-07 Newsletter Award winner for their efforts in publishing the Baylis Bugle. We celebrated Dickinson Avenue PTA of East Northport, Suffolk Region, for their outstanding PARP Program, “New York State Loves Reading Together.” Finally, many volunteers from all parts of the state were nominated to receive the Leadership Award in Honor of Jane Skrzypek. We celebrated North Country Region’s April Bender as our 2006 state winner, as well as many region winners.

Hundreds of other individuals and collaborative teams are also honored each year as units and councils across the state acknowledge outstanding service with Lifetime Membership and Distinguished Service Awards, as well as Membership Growth and School of Excellence recognitions. Thousands more quietly pursue their advocacy roles with no more recognition than the inner satisfaction that comes from making the lives of our children just a little bit better. Whoever we are and whatever recognition we receive, we can all celebrate in the realization that our individual and collective efforts are important and valued by those we serve.



## In Memoriam

In memoriam: It was with great sadness that New York State PTA noted the passing of friends who were a part of or close to the NYS PTA family:

- Guy Fletcher, husband of Vice President Dr. Maria Fletcher
- Dr. Joseph Monty, father-in-law of Vice President Glenn Levine
- Irene Light, NYS PTA staff member of six years
- Edmund Meyerson, father of Suffolk Region Director Janet Meyerson
- Mary Andrijczuk, mother-in-law of Parenting and Family Life Chair Sue Andrijczuk
- Marlyn (Molly) Griffith, mother-in-law of Twin Projects Chair Julie Griffith and grandmother of Youth Member Kimberly Griffith
- Jean Derr, mother of Presidential Assignee April Jean Holdren
- Michelina Pastore, mother-in-law of Assistant to the President Rick Longhurst

# Finance...

## Making wise use of limited resources

As we seek to respond to a rapidly changing world, challenges seem to rise at an ever faster pace. Responding to new needs and concerns, such as declining membership, with limited resources requires creativity and persistence. While these efforts alone may not be sufficient to respond to everything that the future brings us, we have been successful in managing current budgets through the use of competitive requests for vendor proposals, examining ways to reduce mailing costs, successful sponsorship programs, reducing the need for extensive travel and lodging costs through the use of conference calls, working diligently to contain the cost of insurance premiums and creating an investment program that maximizes revenue from invested reserves. A summary of recent financial activity includes:

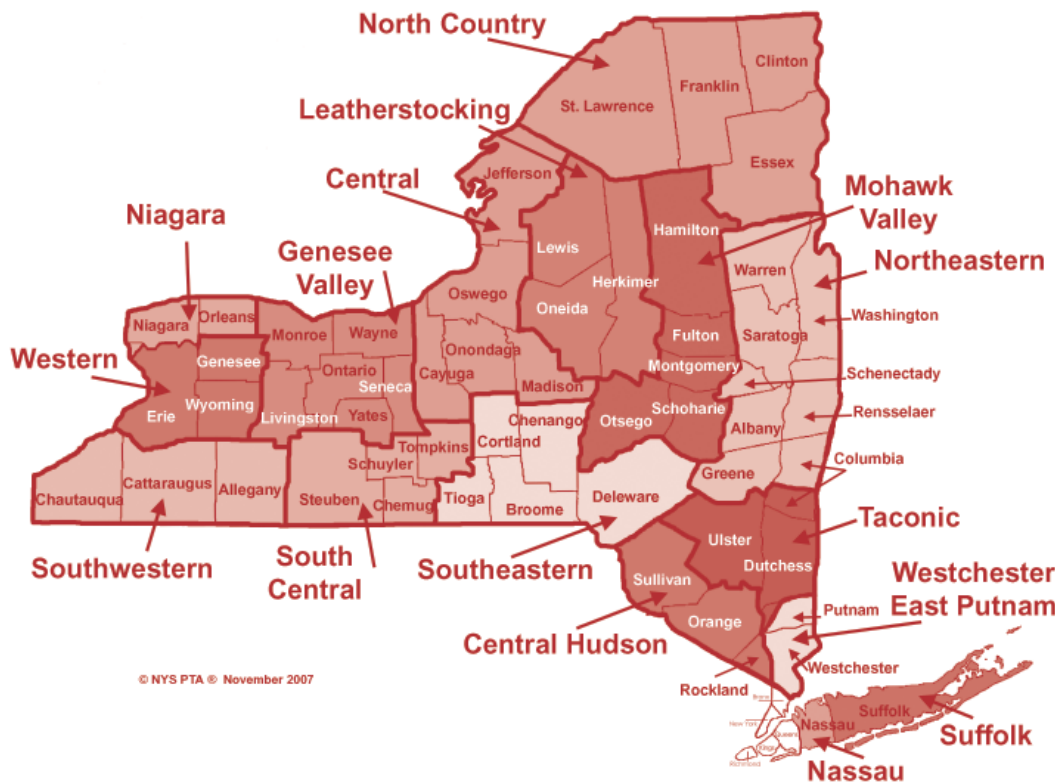
### New York State PTA Revenue and Expenditure Activity

	Actual 2005-06	Actual 2006-07	Budget 2007-08
<b>Revenues: General Operating Fund</b>			
Membership	\$ 647,098	\$ 630,917	\$ 625,300
Convention	\$ 77,689	\$ 93,890	\$ 95,000
Summer Experience	\$ 50,192	\$ 47,214	\$ 45,000
Leg/ Ed Conference	\$ 22,970	\$ 19,919	\$ 21,000
Subscriptions & Publications	\$ 1,603	\$ 5,443	\$ 3,400
Gifts, Grants, Sponsorships	\$ 6,277	\$ 3,396	\$ 9,100
Distinguished Service Awards	\$ 5,750	\$ 5,510	\$ 5,000
Investment Interest	\$ 31,460	\$ 39,443	\$ 27,000
PTA Store (net)	\$ 10,238	\$ 6,638	\$ 6,000
Miscellaneous/ Inter-fund Transfer	\$ 2,582	\$ 15,034	\$ 500
<b>Total Revenue General Operating Fund</b>	<b>\$ 855,859</b>	<b>\$ 867,404</b>	<b>\$ 837,300</b>
<b>Expend: General Operating Fund</b>			
Advocacy	\$ 33,763	\$ 28,096	\$ 38,050
Field Support	\$ 78,899	\$ 78,873	\$ 82,932
Communications	\$ 33,845	\$ 32,764	\$ 59,350
Leadership	\$ 126,938	\$ 137,447	\$ 140,200
Structure	\$ 114,735	\$ 110,076	\$ 119,540
PTA Office	\$ 391,417	\$ 387,209	\$ 397,225
Other	\$ -	\$ 48	\$ -
<b>Total Expenditures General Operating Fund</b>	<b>\$ 779,597</b>	<b>\$ 774,513</b>	<b>\$ 837,297</b>
	<b>Actual 2005-06</b>	<b>Actual 2006-07</b>	<b>Budget 2007-08</b>
Total Revenue PARP	\$ 15,888	\$ 17,776	\$ 17,250
Total Expense PARP	\$ 15,088	\$ 18,399	\$ 17,250
	<b>Actual 2005-06</b>	<b>Actual 2006-07</b>	<b>Budget 2007-08</b>
Total Revenue Twin Projects	\$ 51,592	\$ 52,850	\$ 47,650
Total Expense Twin Projects	\$ 43,721	\$ 32,981	\$ 44,900
	<b>Actual 2005-06</b>	<b>Actual 2006-07</b>	<b>Budget 2007-08</b>
Total Revenue Insurance *	\$ 394,369	\$ 394,659	
Total Expense Insurance	\$ 315,064	\$ 317,845	

\* Excess Premiums are placed in an Insurance Reserve to protect against unanticipated insurance losses or premium increases.

An annual audit, conducted by Urbach, Hacker & Young CPAs, rates NYS PTAs financial reports as "unqualified", the best opinion an audit firm can provide.

## Our Regions



## New York State PTA Board of Managers

### Executive Committee:

President- Maria L. DeWald; First Vice President- Mary Ann De Costanzo; Educator Vice President- Dr. Steve Black; Vice President- Michele Conklin; Vice President- Susan Berkow; Vice President- Dr. Maria Fletcher; Vice President- Glenn Levine; Vice President- Susan Lipman; Vice President- Stephanie Fehr; Vice President- Kathy Dowling; Secretary- Patricia Hysert; Treasurer- JoAnn Incalcaterra

### Region Directors:

Central- Bonnie Russell; Central Hudson- Cheryl Lee S. Freedman; Suffolk- Janet Meyerson; Leatherstocking- Region Contact- Donna Imobersteg, Area Consultant- Kathy Dowling; Genesee Valley- Sue Russotti; Mohawk Valley- Lauri Dahlin; Nassau- Gracemarie Rozea; Niagara- Diane Campbell; Northeastern- Bev Cottrell; South Central- Region Contact- Denise Reppert, Area Consultant- Stephanie Fehr; Southeastern- Wendy DelSanto; Southwestern- Linda King; Taconic- Alvin Benson; Westchester East Putnam- Jane Harsha; Western- Etta Czaja; North Country- Carla J. Ingram

### State Chairmen:

Arts in Education- Merle L. Payne; Business Manager- Gail Gligora; Bylaws- June Shults; Education- Tamalin Martin; Environment- Sally Giuffrida; Health and Wellness- Sue Rau; Legislation- Lana Ajemian; Marketing/Public Relations- vacant; Membership- Penny Hollister; *NY Parent Teacher* Editor- Carol Hollenbeck; Outreach- Kathy Dowling; Parent Involvement- Catherine Romano; Parenting & Family Life- Sue Andrijczuk; Parents As Reading Partners (PARP)- Debbie Grayer; Publications- Pam Schmitt; Resolutions- Lana Ajemian; Special Education- Tamalin Martin; Twin Projects- Julie Griffith

### Additional Board Members:

Youth Members- Teresa Florindi and Kimberly Griffith; Immediate Past President- Penny Leask; Presidential Assignees- April Jean Holdren, Mike Meehan, Ron Moore, Mary Quinn-Fullmer; Consultants- Janet Ahola, Richard Ahola, Jane M. Bernhard, Gene Kinney, Rhea Vogel, Penny Whiting

### State Office Staff:

Assistant to the President- Rick Longhurst; Office Coordinator- Nancy Reilly; Event Coordinator- Kelly Pugliano; Membership and Insurance Specialist- Noreen Iacobucci; Communications Specialist- Pamela Chrysler; Office Assistant- Eileen O'Connor

**New York State**  
**PTA**<sup>®</sup>  
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