

fast **FACTS**

New York State PTA

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Attachments:

Legislative Briefs... Sept. 2008
Formal Report of the Nominating Committee
Proposed Amendments to NYS PTA Bylaws

NYS PTA Calendar:

September 2008

16: Step Up for Kids New York

October 2008

18: PARP Conference – Long Island

6-10: PTA Start the Art Week

17-18: The Earth Summit 2008-
Syracuse

31-Nov 2: National PTA Emerging
Minority Leaders Conference
2008

November 2008

PTA Healthy Lifestyles Month

7-9: NYS PTA Annual Convention,
Rochester, NY

September 2008

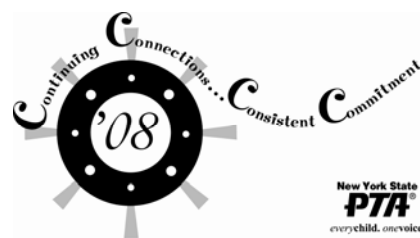
PTA Back-to-School Webcast... Sign up now (and send a question)!

The back-to-school season is an exciting time for parents and their children. It's also a time when parents have a lot of questions and concerns about school supplies, new clothes and backpacks or perhaps moving to a new school or have apprehensive children entering a new grade. That's why PTA is offering this webcast for parents and families that address these issues by offering tips and advice on how to make the back-to-school season an enjoyable one. The webcast will feature Jan Harp Domene, PTA national president; Chuck Saylor, national president-elect; and Byron Garrett, PTA national CEO. Any parent can send questions in to be answered on the webcast. Please keep questions simple and short. Remember creativity is a plus! You can submit questions conventionally via e-mail to forum@pta.org OR you can post a video question on the [PTA YouTube](#) channel (select "Send a Message" in the "Connect with nationalpta" box).

Convention 2008

Registration for the 2008 NYS PTA Annual Convention has been sent to all unit and council presidents. It can be accessed on our website, www.nyspta.org. Attend this exciting event which is being held in Rochester, NY November 7-9, 2008.

CALL TO CONVENTION



Delegates from Units, Councils and Regions Are Invited to Attend:

THE 112TH ANNUAL CONVENTION of the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc.

NOVEMBER 7-9, 2008

Rochester Riverside Convention Center
Rochester, New York

Maria L. DeWald
President

Patricia E. Hyatt
Secretary

Find out wwwwhat's happening at www.nyspta.org

- ▲ Annual Officers' Contact Information Sheet (Form A) Electronic Submission
- ▲ Form C Information and Form
- ▲ Membership Card Confirmation (Yellow Form)
- ▲ Take Action - Take the Next Step to Advocacy
- ▲ 2008-2009 Reflections Program Packet
- ▲ Reflections Theme Search 2010-2011
- ▲ Region Reflections Deadlines
- ▲ NYS PTA 2008 Convention Delegate Registration
- ▲ Fast Facts - current and past issues
- ▲ Advocacy Newsletter - current and past issues
- ▲ Legislative Briefs... - current and past issues
- ▲ NYS PTA 2008 PARP Conference Registration
- ▲ July 2008 Report on the Regents Meeting
- ▲ 2008 Emerging Minority Leaders Conference - October 31-November 2, in Oak Brook, Illinois, Information
- ▲ Advocate in Action Award
- ▲ Growth Through Leadership Award Phase Two
- ▲ Honorary Life Membership Distinguished Service Award
- ▲ Recognitions for Special Volunteers - Golden Oak and Diamond Awards
- ▲ Always check for what's new on the Home Page; click on TODAY's PTA NEWS

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One Wembley Court
Albany, NY 12205-3830

518-452-8808 * 518-452-8105 FAX
Toll-free: 1-877-5NYSPTA (1-877-569-7782)
<http://www.nyspta.org>

Maria DeWald, President

Three Hours to Program Success

We know that planning programs for the year and making sure they are successful can be overwhelming. One way to help make sure you achieve success is to use PTA Three for Me. Three for Me asks parents to dedicate three hours of their time to their PTA and school, and is a proven way to increase family involvement and volunteer hours. The program also helps match family volunteers to specific school needs. Be sure to ask parents how they would like to get involved. You'll never know the possibilities if you never ask. For information and resources to get started, go to three4me.com.

International Walk to School October 8, 2008

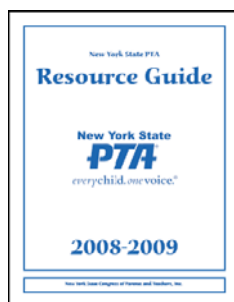
International Walk to School is an international event where communities from over 40 countries join to walk and bicycle to school. The National Center for Safe Routes to School serves as the national coordinating agency for walk to school activities in the U.S. Safe Routes to School Programs make it possible for students to safely walk or bike to school and make our communities more inviting. They also help further key PTA priorities: health and wellness, environmental health and child safety. Federal funds are now available to each state Department of Transportation to establish Safe Routes to School Programs. Learn what's in your state and get involved. Consider kicking off a campaign encouraging your PTA and school to establish a Safe Routes to School Program. Registration is free and available to individuals or organizations holding a Walk to School event. To register a Walk to School event, please visit www.walktoschool.org/register. Registered schools will be displayed on an interactive U.S. map on the U.S. Walk to School Web site, where neighboring communities, media and other organizations will be able to view participating schools. By registering, Walk to School organizers have access to a variety of downloadable materials, including certificates, press release, templates for printing stickers and a frequent walker punch card. Registrants can be eligible to win prizes for their school, and can also subscribe to receive a weekly Walk to School e-newsletter with tips and resources on holding a Walk to School event.

For more information on Walk to School activities in the U.S., please visit www.walktoschool.org. To see photos from last year's event, please visit www.iwalktoschool.org/photos/index.htm.

Clarifying Information on Dental Certificates for Students Entering School

Education Law §903 has been amended regarding dental health certificates for students entering school. The Regents recently adopted regulations (link to <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/2008Meetings/June2008/0608emscd1.htm>) which will take effect on September 1, 2008 concerning the dental health certificates.

Beginning on September 1, 2008 and thereafter, schools will be required to request, or ask, if a student has a dental health certificate at the same time that a health certificate is provided to the school. Students are permitted to attend school, however, even if they have not provided a dental health certificate; the dental health certificate is not required for school attendance. The Department of Health is also creating a list of dentists who will provide examinations for free or at a reduced cost.



Resource Guides

Have you received your *Resource Guide*? All unit/council presidents should have already received their *Guide*. If you have not it means that you have either not sent in your insurance payment and/or paid for last year's membership. Did you send in your Form A? If any of the above were not cleared up, your *Guide* and the 2008-2009 membership mailing have been held. Furthermore, future mailings will also be held. Please clear up any issues. Contact your region director if you have any questions.

Autumn in NYS

As we close our windows in the autumn, it is a good time to think about indoor air quality and testing. Over ½ of New York State's bedrock has the highest rating for radon emission with most of the rest of the state having moderate to high levels. Radon is a radioactive gas given off naturally by underlying bedrock and can seep into homes through cracks and sump pumps in the foundation. It is toxic to humans and creates lung diseases. The following websites will help you find out more about your specific area and how to test your indoor air.

<http://www.nyradon.org/> and

<http://www.epa.gov/radon/index.html>

Increase Family Dinners; Decrease the Risk of Drug Use

The more often children eat dinner with their families, the less likely they are to smoke, drink, or use drugs, finds research by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University. That's the basis for CASA's [Family Day—A Day to Eat Dinner with Your Children™](#), a national movement to inform parents that the parental engagement fostered during frequent family dinners is an effective tool to help keep America's kids substance free.

In recognition of the importance of Family Day, celebrated this year on September 22, the PTA national organization is a Family Day partner. As a PTA leader, you can:

- **Spread the word.** Visit casafamilyday.org to access free resources on *Family Day* and talking to kids about substance abuse.
- **Encourage student participation.** This year, CASA is sponsoring a placemat coloring contest for students. Watch casafamilyday.org for more information.
- **Have a healthy dinner with your family on September 22!**

For more on the research about the impact of frequent family dinners, visit casacolumbia.org.

Rally to Make Children a State and National Political Priority

Step Up for Kids New York is a [special](#) day for child-friendly organizations and individuals to join together in every state capital to call upon presidential, congressional, and statewide candidates to address the needs of children and discuss their plans for meeting those needs. New York's event will be hosted on **September 16, 2008, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.**, on the steps of the New York State Capitol. The event is free, but registration is requested. For more detailed information: <http://preventchildabuseny.org/pdf/step-up-for-kids-overview.pdf> and <http://stepupnewyork.eventbrite.com/>.

New York State
PTA
everychild.onevoice.®

2008 PARP Winner!



On behalf of this year's NYS PTA PARP Awards Committee, we'd like to announce that congratulations are in order! The **Dickinson Avenue PTA's "Reading Roundup"** program, from Suffolk Region, has been selected as this year's winner of the **New York State PTA Parents as Reading Partners (PARP) Award!**

Their western themed PARP program encouraged students to read and learn in a fun and exciting manner. It involved not only parents and students, but teachers, staff, their school board, their student government, their public librarians and local businesses. In addition, this motivating program was well-planned and well-received by all. Teacher comments show the appreciation of their school community and indicate the strong expectation of further achievement in the future.

We would also like to congratulate each of the regions who submitted their winning applications. There were so many creative programs with original ideas and success stories to share. We are proud of each of them for their hard work and their tireless efforts to involve their communities in encouraging a love of reading together. We wish all of you continued success in the future.

"Fall Into Reading!"

The Long Island PARP Conference is being held on a new day - Saturday, October 18, 2008, at a new location - the Hyatt Regency Long Island in Hauppauge. Registration begins at 8:00am and the conference will take place from 9:00am – 2:00pm. There will be workshops for those just starting out and for those looking for fresh ideas, then a selection of local region award winning program presentations and lunch. The 2008 PARP Conference theme is **"Fall Into Reading!"** Our Keynote Speaker, Michael Sullivan, will share practical, proven, and sometimes off-beat suggestions on how to turn boys into lifelong readers. PARP pins and PARP Resource Books will be available for purchase as well as reading-related exhibitors available for your programs. We invite you to enjoy a day of workshops and exhibits to help you plan your PARP program for the upcoming school year.

The PARP registration form is available at www.nyspta.org. You may pre-order your PARP Resource Book, for pick-up at conference only, on the registration form, saving shipping and handling charges. The pre-registration deadline is September 26, 2008. On-site registration is available.



Membership Card Confirmation - Action Required!

All units should have received their membership cards. Every unit must confirm the number of cards received at www.nyspta.org as soon as possible, but no later than September 30, 2008. You will find the link on the left side of the home page. Click on "Membership Card Confirmation" and enter the requested data. If you do not have internet access, you may return the yellow form included with the membership cards to the NYS PTA office.

If you have not received your membership packet, please contact your Region Director immediately. Not sure who your Region Director is? Go to <http://www.nyspta.org/directors.php> or call 1-877-569-7782.



Five Easy Ways to Increase Membership in Your PTA

1. Ask prospective members to "support the PTA" with a purchase of a membership, instead of asking them to "join the PTA."
2. Invite school board members and their spouses to join your PTA.
3. Set a goal and share it with the school community through a visual display. Update the display to show the progress you are making toward your goal.
4. Give special coupon incentives with membership - one free popcorn at movie night, one free book at the used book swap, discounts off plays, musicals, dances, athletic events, etc.
5. Sponsor a contest — Have students write a sentence or paragraph "My family joined PTA because..." Hang entries around a membership table at open house.

Remember to have fun with membership! People want to be part of a group that knows how to have fun!!!

Middle School Update

The New York State Middle School Association (NYSMSA) has put out 7 Essential Elements, which are really overarching best practices in a middle school program. For more information, please go to <http://www.nysmsa.org/associations/611/files/EssentialElementsFAQ.pdf> There is a lot of great information available at this website, including the Regents Policy statements that describe what middle level school programs should be.

Month of the Young Adolescent

October is declared to be the Month of the Young Adolescent. This effort is initiated by the National Middle School Association (NMSA) to bring together a wide range of organizations to focus on the unique and important needs of children in this age range (10-15). To learn more about this significant initiative and effort, go to <http://www.nmsa.org/moya/> or contact the National Middle School Association at 1-800-528-NMSA

National PTA Partnering to Fight the Flu!

NYS PTA joins National PTA in its campaign to educate – motivate – vaccinate against the flu. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is recommending that all children aged 6 months through 18 years get vaccinated against influenza. The program provides local schools with educational materials and resources to conduct on-site school influenza (flu) vaccination clinics to help protect children and their families from contracting this potentially deadly virus. All units were sent informational material about the program. NYS PTA has been assured that units will be indemnified if they decide to sponsor a clinic to whatever degree they choose. Whether participating in this partnership or not, every unit will hopefully be supporting this effort in some way. If you have questions contact Mary Ward, Health and Wellness Chair, at health.wellness@nyspta.org. You can find additional information at www.pta.org and/or sign up for a clinic at that site.

The single best way to prevent influenza is to get an influenza vaccination each year.



New Communications Program for all NYS PTA Units, Councils and Regions

For more information and to sign up, send an email to Julia Sheffler at jsheffler.nyptaunits@justbetweenfriends.net.