



# RUNNING YOUR PTA ... *Made Easy*

California State  
**PTA**<sup>®</sup>  
*everychild. onevoice.*

online  
**Toolkit**

## **What's the *Toolkit*?**

The California State PTA *Toolkit* is a resource for you and provides guidance, instruction and ideas to ensure a successful term as a PTA officer or chairman. The *Toolkit* is available at [toolkit.capta.org](http://toolkit.capta.org) to view online or print by chapter. Look for the *Toolkit* logo in this publication to locate helpful *Toolkit* sections.

**T**hank you for the time you have chosen to give to your PTA and school community. Being a PTA leader can sometimes feel a little overwhelming and complex. But knowledge is a powerful tool. And the relationships and support you receive from your council, district and state PTA will be invaluable. Seek them out!

This resource provides simplified summaries of the PTA basics that all PTA board members should know. It covers meetings, recruiting volunteers, finance, membership and more. Reading this guide will enhance your experience as a PTA leader, and provide you with information on key topics. Familiarize yourself with the *Toolkit*, PTA bylaws, the *Insurance Guide* and other resources available to you.

Find job descriptions in the *Toolkit* to help you understand your position, but remember the job is what you make of it. A positive attitude is everything and can help you achieve success.

Thank you for helping to make a difference for every child.





## Why Your Leadership Matters

Your involvement helps make a real difference in the lives of children and families today and tomorrow.

## A Tradition of Making a Difference

For more than a century, PTA has reminded our nation of its obligations to children, and provided resources and important information to parents and educators. Whenever the education, health, safety or well-being of young people is threatened, PTA members are on the forefront of working to resolve those challenges. PTA has been instrumental in the passage of important laws and guidelines that we sometimes take for granted today, such as:

- ▶ Creating a separate criminal-justice system for juvenile offenders
- ▶ Enforcing labor laws that protect children
- ▶ Building kindergarten into the public-school system
- ▶ Supplying federally funded hot-lunches – that now feed more than 30 million children a day
- ▶ Supporting school-bus safety regulations
- ▶ Creating the content-rating system for television programs.

Many of these concerns may not have been addressed if PTA members did not take up the cause!

PTA has never been shy about tackling tough issues – from talking about sex education as early as 1916 to supporting HIV/AIDS education programs in the 1980s to supporting LGBTQ youth in the 2000s.

### **More recently ...**

California State PTA's support for changes in how schools are funded and how parents are involved helped contribute to the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) law passed by the California State Legislature and signed by the governor in 2013. In 2018, a new law was passed to add research-based family engagement guidance and practice into the California Education Code that was sponsored by California State PTA.

Additionally, California State PTA has taken the lead in advocating for multiple measures as part of California's education accountability system and advancing efforts to ensure all students have access to a full curriculum that includes the arts.

### Speaking Up For All Children

Decisions that affect our children, youth and families are made every day by local, state and national policymakers. In a democratic society, every citizen has the right and the responsibility to participate in shaping those decisions.

As the largest children's advocacy association in California, PTA is uniquely qualified to work with policymakers to secure laws and policies that place the highest priority on the education, health and safety of all children and youth.

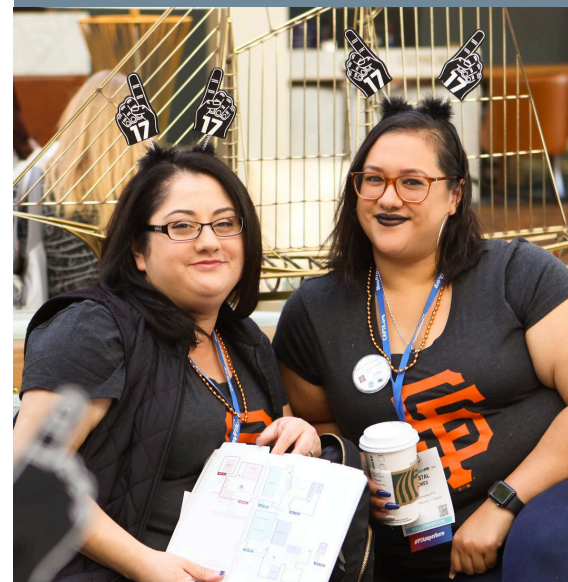
### **OUR MISSION**

The mission of the California State PTA  
is to positively impact the lives of all children and families.

## PTA Power

- ▶ **Leverage volunteer power:** PTA organizes hard-working and dedicated volunteers. Parents are ready and willing to help implement school improvement programs if you know how to ask them.
  - **Improve communication:** Frequently, one of a PTA's responsibilities is coordinating the production of a school newsletter and other publications that keep the entire school community informed of current events, issues and accomplishments. PTAs also offer speakers on issues of interest and concern to families.
  
- ▶ **See measurable results:** More than 85 rigorous academic research studies conducted over 30 years prove that children do better academically when parents are involved. Grades are higher. Test scores improve. Attendance increases.
  - **Discover more dollars:** Local PTAs are self-funding. By inviting the entire school community to join, they generate membership fees and organize volunteers to offer programs. Local PTAs also organize fundraising events to support programs and community-building events.
  - **Tap into proven programs:** Local PTAs have access to research-based, ready-made programs with proven success records such as the Reflections Art Program and the School Smarts Parent Engagement Program. Additionally, a variety of resources on health and safety topics, family engagement, summer learning and science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) are available online.
  
- ▶ **Boost children's well-being:** PTAs focus on the whole child, including nutrition, health and well-being.
  - **Inform and engage parents:** Involved parents understand the challenges schools face and become part of the solution, inside and outside the classroom, locally and legislatively.
  - **Help all children succeed:** Education reforms such as the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), student assessments as part of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) system, and California's State Standards offer a huge opportunity for parents to shape the vision for their children's education and make it happen. Your voice matters! California State PTA is here to ensure the important voice of parents is heard to help all children succeed!

Membership in PTA is open to everyone. Every PTA is self-governing and sets its own dues, but is also supported by a regional, state and national structure.





CaliforniaPTA

Just now - All over California



Doing good things for kids since 1897! #PTA4Kids  
#PTAproud #FamilyEngagement #PTAConvention



13,873

555 Comments

## Keep Your PTA Focused by Setting Goals

Setting goals for your unit helps you work smarter in planning and organizing the PTA year. It supplies a road map for board members to stay on track as a team:

- WHY?** Goals set direction, and provide focus, purpose and accountability. Goals help groups to be more efficient and more effective.
- WHO?** Goals should have wide appeal. Goal-setting provides opportunities for input that promote feelings of ownership in your school community.
- WHAT?** A goal is a destination. It should be a written, relevant, attainable, observable, broad statement of a desired end.
- WHEN?** Goals should be established early, reviewed often and updated if needed.

A sample goal might be *"Sunshine PTA will increase parent engagement by offerings programs of interest at each association meeting."*

Learn more about goal-setting at [capta.org](http://capta.org). An Internet search for goal-setting can also lead to helpful tips.



## Establish Ground Rules

In addition to goals, the board should establish ground rules to work together effectively.

These are some examples of ground rules. Review these before each meeting to set a productive tone.

- ▶ Use ice breakers or an inspiration to put attendees at ease
- ▶ Respect everyone's comments
- ▶ Allow everyone a voice
- ▶ Speak one at a time
- ▶ Discuss issues, not people
- ▶ Try not to repeat
- ▶ Stay on task
- ▶ Don't take anything personally
- ▶ Agree to disagree
- ▶ Put electronic devices on silent.



# Making the Most of Your Meetings

## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP IS THE “ASSOCIATION”

Your PTA members are your association. Membership should approve programs and activities, adopt the budget, ratify all expenditures of funds and adopt audits.

### *Your principal is an essential partner.*

The principal:

- Serves as an advisor to the nominating committee and the executive board.
- Has prior approval on PTA information shared at school and sent home with students.
- Works with the president and board on programs and activities.
- Is a voting member of the board.

## TYPES OF MEETINGS

**Association** – Meeting months are set in the standing rules.

**Attendees:** Members and guests.

**Actions:** Approves programs and activities, adopts budget, and ratifies all expenditures of funds, and adopts audits.

- Elect nominating committee and officers.
- Adopt bylaws and standing rules.

**NOTE:** General association meetings and agendas must be publicized at least 10 days in advance and provide members an opportunity to speak, no matter how many attend. Only members may make motions, discuss and vote. General meetings are held in the months listed in the Standing Rules of your bylaws.

**Executive board** – Meets monthly during the school year.

**Attendees:** Only officers, principals, teacher representatives, and standing committee chairmen attend this monthly meeting.

**Actions:** Ratify appointment of committee chairmen and committee members, review and approve committee recommendations, handle assigned duties, recommend action to the association and authorize expenditures.

The executive board plans and carries out activities, programs and expenditures with prior/final approval from the membership. Understand and ask questions about financial reports.

### online Toolkit

For tips on preparing an agenda, see the *Toolkit* online at [toolkit.capta.org](http://toolkit.capta.org) and type “Sample Agenda and Meeting Planner” into the search.

### Before Meeting

- Verify meeting locations
- Review previous minutes
- Review upcoming (and past) calendar
- Prepare agenda
- Contact those who should present reports.

### During Meeting

- Start on time
- Agree on ground rules
- Review agenda and add items if needed
- Stick to the agenda
- Use parliamentary procedures
- Summarize
- Give everyone a chance to participate
- Restate decisions/ assignments
- End on time.

### After Meeting

- Distribute minutes promptly
- Follow up on assignments.

- The board follows PTA protocol at all times and protects the assets of the association
- The president sets the agenda for each meeting, seeking input from board members
- All board members may make motions (including the principal and teacher representative, if they are members of the executive board)
- All members of the executive board must be members of the association.

**Committee** – Meetings as necessary.

**Attendees:** Chairman, members, president.

**Actions:** Handle preliminary work and recommend actions to the executive board.

### Some notes about votes:

- Voice vote is the regular method of voting on motions requiring a majority vote. If the chair believes the vote will be close, he or she may call for the vote by a show of hands
- A rising (standing) vote is the regular method of voting on motions requiring a two-thirds vote
- A two-thirds vote is required to change any action previously adopted by the group
- The president protects the impartiality of the chair by exercising the right to vote (or by abstaining) only when the vote will affect the outcome (to break a tie vote, or when the vote is by ballot)
- PTA bylaws prohibit voting by proxy. This means no absentee voting. That's why, if a member is unable to attend a meeting, another member may not be authorized to vote on his/her behalf at the meeting.

## BUILD FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

Find ways to make your association meetings more welcoming and inclusive for families from all neighborhoods. This might include:

- Greeters / childcare
- Signs and handouts in home languages / translators
- Name badges / door prizes
- Ice breakers / social time / snacks

Having speakers, a community forum, student panel or program at an association meeting is an effective way to grow family engagement. Build family-school partnerships with topics of interest to everyone on campus such as student learning, safety, health and wellness.

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**A parliamentarian can help your meetings run smoothly.**

The parliamentarian is a consultant to the president. The position is purely advisory as the chair alone has the power to rule on questions of order or to answer parliamentary inquiries. (See job descriptions in the *Toolkit* online at [toolkit.capta.org](http://toolkit.capta.org).)

## Eight Steps to Making a Motion

### Items to Forward to Councils & Districts

- **Fall** – Annual Financial Report for prior year, current-year budget, year-end audit and copies of all tax returns or confirmation of electronic filing.
- **Mid-Year** – Mid-year audit report
- **Spring** – Historian Report with tally of volunteer hours for the year and list of incoming officers (entered into PTAEZ)

**NOTE:** Please update PTAEZ and notify your council and district anytime unit officers change.

At meetings, members present motions to take action for a PTA's plans, programs and activities. Making a motion involves eight, basic steps:

1. Member raises hand or stands and waits to be recognized
2. Chairman recognizes the member
3. The member presents the motion by stating, "I move ... ."
4. The motion is seconded by another member. This shows that more than one person is interested in bringing the business before the group for discussion
5. The chairman restates the motion. This ensures all members understand what is to be discussed
6. Discussion is held on the motion. During discussion, all members participate fully
7. The chairman puts the motion to a vote by stating, "All those in favor say 'aye.' (Pause for vote.) Those opposed say 'no' "
8. The chairman announces the result of the vote to assure all members know whether the motion has been adopted or failed.





# Checklist for a Healthy PTA

Each board member is responsible for ensuring that a PTA stays healthy and remains in good standing. If the answer is 'yes' to the following, your PTA will continue to thrive.

## **Bylaws**

- Are bylaws reviewed yearly and updated (sent through channels for approval) every five years?
- Does the PTA understand and follow PTA bylaws, policies and procedures?
- Is a nominating committee elected each year at least 60 days before the PTA election?

## **Membership Enrollment**

- Is an initial membership campaign held toward the beginning of the school year?
- Are continuing opportunities provided for parents and staff to join? (Membership is year-round.)
- Is membership growing each year?
- Is membership per capita sent through channels at least monthly and by deadlines?

## **Minutes**

- Are minutes and an attendance record kept for all meetings?
- Are all action items recorded as motions, including approval of the proposed programs for the year, the budget, all fundraising activities and all expenses?

## **Annual Reports**

- Are volunteer hours being recorded? At meetings? At events?
- Are annual historian reports, with the number of volunteer hours for the year, filed by the deadline?

## **Leadership**

- Do members of the executive board work well together?
- Does the PTA attract qualified candidates and encourage/mentor new leaders?
- Do leaders attend council/district PTA meetings and take advantage of training opportunities?
- Do leaders communicate effectively with members?

## **Financial Procedures**

- Are financial procedures in accordance with recommended PTA policies and procedures?
- Is a member, who is not a check signer, appointed to review the monthly bank reconciliation?
- Are blank checks never signed and two people always count cash?
- Is the budget approved and actual revenues and expenditures compared at least quarterly?
- Is the insurance premium and the workers' comp form/remittance sent in by deadline?
- Are all checks signed by two authorized officers? And are all expenditures properly authorized?
- Is a Year-End Financial Report prepared after the end of the fiscal year to assist in preparing of tax filings?
- Are tax filings – an RRF-1 and some form of a 990 and a 199 – submitted in a timely manner?

## **Treasurer's Reports**

- Are written reports presented/ filed monthly? Are balances, receipts and disbursements recorded in the minutes each month? Are questions welcomed and replied to with sufficient detail to assure transparency?
- Are receipts provided for each check before the expense is approved/ratified and listed?
- Are the reports presented at both executive board and association meetings?

## **Audits**

- Are audits conducted at least twice a year? And whenever there is a change in check signers?
- Are audits prepared and adopted in accordance with the bylaws and PTA financial procedures?
- Is the audit report, the audit checklist and any recommendations/findings submitted to the district PTA?



## Membership is our Strength

Joining PTA is a great way for families and guardians to support their children. Active and informed members make positive decisions that affect the welfare and education of children and youth locally, statewide and nationally. The more members in PTA, the more powerful our voice.

PTA is a membership association, and people join each year by paying dues. Only members have voting privileges. When you join your local PTA, you also become a member of California State PTA and National PTA. This multiplies the resources and benefits of belonging and strengthens our voice for children.

Everyone can join. Invite all family members, students, grandparents, community members, local business leaders, school staff, school district staff and school board members – and anyone else who is interested in the well-being of children and families. Reach out to alumni and those who have not previously joined.

Each PTA member must get his or her own membership card! One member = one card. Each card can have just one name, and a card should be made for each paid member, not one per family. PTAs using the new electronic membership system, called TOTEM, will have electronic membership cards.

Membership monies are broken down and forwarded through PTA channels. Keep your unit's portion of the dues, as listed in your bylaws, then forward the remaining portion (referred to as "per capita" or money not belonging to the unit) to your council (if your PTA is in a council) or to your district PTA. Make note of your district PTA's (or council's) membership due dates and meet – or beat – them!

Remember to forward "per capita" every month. Don't wait for due dates.

### **Organizing and running a PTA membership campaign**

**can be fun, and easy!** Check out California State PTA's website – [capta.org](http://capta.org) – for easy-to-use tools and resources to help you plan and promote your PTA membership campaign, especially during the back-to-school season.

Get connected and register your PTA for our electronic membership system, powered by TOTEM. E-membership makes it easier to join a PTA and renew membership. It gives leaders more ways to manage membership effectively. Learn more at [capta.org](http://capta.org).

### **A PTA's membership numbers are a way to measure...**

- How many people know about PTA
- How many people feel that PTA meets their needs
- How many people value what we do and have to offer
- How strong and relevant we are as an association.

### What's New:

Local PTAs now have an additional way to sign up members and manage membership with TOTEM, our new electronic membership system. By using TOTEM, members can join your unit anytime, anywhere online and receive electronic membership cards.

In addition, with TOTEM, per capita membership dues are remitted to your council and district PTA automatically for any members who sign up online. For more information, visit [capta.org](http://capta.org).

# Volunteer Power: Tips for Recruiting and Engaging Volunteers

- ▶ Make sure your board has set goals that have been publicized to your school community. People are more willing to work toward a goal
- ▶ Ask people! Personally. Be honest when describing a position or project, including the time commitment
- ▶ Match skills and interests to the job
- ▶ Approach a new volunteer with a small project that may only take an hour or two
- ▶ Saying no might not mean forever. Try asking again at a later date
- ▶ Ask the principal and teachers if they have encountered any potential volunteers
- ▶ Be diverse and inclusive! Your board and volunteers should reflect your entire school community
- ▶ If you have a list of potential volunteers, be proactive to reach out and contact them. Offer a job to everyone who volunteers, providing options tailored to his/her interests and availability
- ▶ Don't micromanage! Empower volunteers to develop their own strategies
- ▶ "Thank you" are the two most important words in PTA
- ▶ Make sure each task is manageable
- ▶ Be open to, and encourage, new ideas
- ▶ Consider "virtual volunteers" – those who can help from home
- ▶ Consider the skill sets of different generations.
- ▶ Build a sense of camaraderie and teamwork. *Have fun!*

Understand the difference between recruiting volunteers and recruiting members.

Not all members want to volunteer, but everyone should be asked to support their child and their school by joining PTA. Appreciate whatever level of support people are willing to give.



## Working Together



Here are some tips on meeting the challenge of working effectively as a team when there are different personalities, leadership styles, experience levels, ages and understanding of the association.

- Set goals and discuss expectations
- Agree to ground rules
- Agree to respect differences of opinion
- Build relationships with your board.

**Recognize** conflict. Assumptions and perceptions are often at the center of a conflict.

► Possible causes :

- Strong differences of opinion
- Failure to communicate
- Misunderstanding about goals
- Unfamiliar with policies, procedures or bylaws
- Disagreement as to what has taken place
- A feeling that members have not been respected or heard
- Personality differences.

**Manage** conflict. Do not fear: Conflict can be healthy. How you deal with it makes the difference.

Conflict resolution is a process that often results in positive change and growth for individuals and the association. The key to successful conflict resolution is keeping the focus on the process and desired outcomes, not the personalities.

To manage conflict, protect your neutrality so that you will be seen as a fair and credible facilitator for resolution.

### ***Site administrator and PTA president: partners working together.***

This site administrator and the PTA president represent two important groups in the school: staff and parents.

- Meet regularly at agreed-upon times. Discuss issues, review plans for events and keep each other informed.
- Work out problems or misunderstandings promptly in a direct, honest way—privately. Keep an open mind. Listen to each other.
- Be positive and enthusiastic about the school when working with parents and community.
- Develop a win-win attitude. Celebrate each other's accomplishments.

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Check [capta.org](http://capta.org) and the *Toolkit* for information on team building, collaborating, etc.

## Tips for Principals and PTAs

### How principals describe a responsive PTA president:

- Good organizer
- Has the welfare of children at heart and does not seek personal glory
- Works well with others and gives credit to others
- Friendly, tactful and intelligent
- Knows and upholds school policies
- Delegates responsibility
- Decisive, but not dictatorial
- Presides well.

### How PTA presidents describe a responsive principal:

- Cares for and is concerned about children
- Cooperative, friendly, intelligent and has a sense of humor
- Knows and understands the work of PTA
- Well-trained in his or her field
- Inspires loyalty and confidence of staff, parents and students
- Willing to listen to parents
- Interested in the community
- Active in the PTA.



## Steps to Building an Inclusive PTA

*Adapted from "Respecting Differences Resources Guide," National PTA*

### Gather Information

- All groups in your community should be invited and encouraged to participate in the PTA, regardless of gender, race, national origin, religion, sexual orientation and special needs.
- Ask individuals and leaders from a wide range of groups about how you can cooperate with them, or ask them to serve as advisors (on your board, for a joint project, etc.).

### Understand the Issues

- Invite speakers to hold workshops about cultural, ethnic or religious issues for the PTA board, your membership, parents and students.
- Include current and emerging issues from all communities on your agenda and in your plans.

### Build Awareness

- Be responsive to the language needs of others; provide assistance as needed.
- Remove physical barriers that discourage participation by those with disabilities.

### Make Changes

- Plan meetings and activities that avoid conflicts with ethnic and religious holidays and observances or that make it difficult for working or single parents to attend.
- Work to understand and promote respect for the unique contributions of every person and family. Together they make your PTA an effective voice for all children.

# Document Retention and Destruction Policy

## MODEL PRACTICES FOR DISTRICTS, COUNCILS AND UNITS

### online Toolkit

More information can be found in the Toolkit online at [toolkit.capta.org](http://toolkit.capta.org) and type “Record Retention Schedule” into the search.

It is very important that certain records be retained. The current IRS letter of determination, the current bylaws and standing rules approved by the state parliamentarian and the articles of incorporation (for incorporated PTAs) should be readily available at all times.

A policy was adopted by the State Board of Directors and Board of Managers November 2016 and meets all applicable state and federal statutes as it relates to document retention and non profit organizations. This policy is intended as a guide for model practices at the local district, council and unit level.

Purposes of the Policy include (a) retention and maintenance of documents necessary for the proper functioning of local PTA as well as to comply with applicable legal requirements; (b) destruction of documents which no longer need to be retained; and (c) guidance for the Board of Directors (the “Board”), officers, and other constituencies with respect to their responsibilities concerning document retention and destruction.

Please refer to the Toolkit online at [toolkit.capta.org](http://toolkit.capta.org) for the complete policy recommended for all districts, councils and units.



# Retention Schedule

## Permanent Storage

### **Accounting & Finance**

- Annual Financial Statements & Audit Reports
- Cancelled checks – special, such as loan repayment
- General ledger

### **Contributions/Gifts/Grants**

- Contribution records
- Documents evidencing terms of gifts

### **Governance**

- Articles of Incorporation & Amendments
- Bylaws & Amendments
- Minute Books, including Association, Board & Committee Minutes
- Annual Reports & Returns to State & Federal Agencies
  - IRS 990N, 990EZ or 990
  - Franchise Tax Board 199N
  - or Form 199
  - Attorney General –
    - RRF-1
    - Raffle reports (if applicable)
  - Secretary of State SI-100 (if incorporated, filed biennially)
  - IRS rulings
  - Licenses and permits
  - Employer Identification (EIN) Designation
  - Any other correspondence with State or Federal Agencies

### **Email**

- Emails considered important or of lasting significance

### **Retirement & Pension Records**

### **Insurance**

- Property, D&O, Workers' Compensation & General Liability Insurance Policies
- Insurance claims records

### **Legal Correspondence**

## 10 Years

- Personnel records
- Employee contracts
- Personal property leases

## 7 Years

- Accounts payable
- Accounts receivable
- Bank statements, reconciliations & deposit slips
- Cancelled checks – routine
- Credit card receipts
- Employee/Business Expense Reports/documents
- Interim Financial Statements
- Grant records

## 2 Years

- Hard copy correspondence and internal memoranda – routine matters
- Electronically stored documents – routine matters

## 12 Months

- Emails - routine



## Spotlight on Finance

### Every PTA board member has a fiduciary responsibility/financial responsibility to:

- ▶ Protect the assets of the association – financial assets, volunteers, reputation
- ▶ Ensure compliance with federal and state laws, and policies and procedures of the association
- ▶ Ensure assets are used to meet the needs of children and PTA members
- ▶ Ensure the association remains transparent to all members
- ▶ Ensure that the association will continue.

### Specific Financial Duties of the President

- ▶ Must sign all authorizations for payment (along with the secretary) and may sign checks as approved by the executive board or association.
- ▶ Upon election of officers, appoint a budget committee.
- ▶ Have all contracts and other legally binding documents approved by the executive board and the association before signing with another elected officer.
- ▶ Make sure all financial due dates are met so that the association remains in good standing with California State PTA.

### Budget Information

- ▶ The budget committee is appointed by the president and chaired by the treasurer (or appointed by the president-elect and chaired by the treasurer-elect if the budget is being developed for the new term in advance of taking office). The committee should include the financial officers, the principal or his/her representative, a teacher, the president-elect and others
- ▶ Goals and programs must be identified before creating a budget. The budget is a guide outlining expected income and expenditures
- ▶ Present proposed budget at the last association meeting of the year to get preliminary approval.
- ▶ Present proposed programs, fundraisers and budget at the first association meeting of the year to get association approval.

Adoption of the budget does not authorize the expenditure of money. Release of funds does not authorize expenditures. Plans must be presented to the executive board and authorized before expenditures are made. The association must still ratify all expenditures.

**REMEMBER:** For every one fundraiser, there should be at least three non-fundraising projects/activities.

# PTAEZ™

PTAEZ™ Accounting Online is a web-based application that has been tailored to meet the needs of California PTAs. It's available exclusively to PTAs in California at a low annual subscription rate.

- Accessible from any Internet connection
- Helps you to generate California PTA-specific reports
- Strengthens financial controls and transparency
- Allows you to collect memberships and sell online with your own webstore
- Guides you to filing Form 990.

Learn more at  
[ptaez.org](http://ptaez.org)



## A Financially Healthy PTA

- Ensures that only current authorized check signers are on the bank signature card.
- Ensures checks are signed by two authorized check signers.
- Ensures blank checks are never signed.
- Only pays bills that have been authorized by the executive board or association.
- Ensures the budget is approved by the association prior to expending funds.
- Ensures financial reports are current and presented at every association and executive board meeting.
- Ensures all monies are counted by two PTA members, one of whom must be an officer or chairman, and that cash verification forms are signed by everyone who counts.
- Ensures the bank statements are sent to the school address or to the address of a board member who is not a signer on the PTA bank account.
- Appoints a non-check signer to review bank statements monthly to ensure there are no irregularities.
- Remits membership funds not belonging to the association monthly.
- Conducts at least two audits per year, in accordance with the bylaws, and presents them to the association for adoption.
- Appoints an audit committee composed of the auditor and, at least, one other member to conduct the required audits and review the books or, alternatively, hires a qualified accountant (paid or volunteer) to prepare the required audits.
- Issues a receipt for any cash donation or transaction. A canceled check is considered a receipt.
- Remits California State PTA insurance premium and Workers' Compensation Form in accordance with council/district due dates.
- Files the appropriate IRS, state forms and an RRF-1 form annually by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the fifth month following the fiscal year end.

If you receive a letter from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the state of California Franchise Tax Board (FTB) or the Attorney General (AG), please contact your PTA district or California State PTA right away and provide a copy of the communication. Please do not call the governmental entities that sent you the letters. They specifically have asked that all help requests start with California State PTA because we have formed working relationships with IRS, FTB and AG and can address your PTA-specific questions Refer to California State PTA website for up-to-date information.

### Tax Filing Support Center for PTAs

With changes in government regulations, PTAs now need support filing taxes more than ever before. Through California State PTA's Tax Filing Support Center, you'll get the tools and guidance you need to help your PTA meet federal and state nonprofit reporting requirements.

The service is available exclusively to PTA leaders and includes:

- Direct assistance for local PTA leaders about what to file and how to file your tax information
- Help resolving problems when your PTA receives a letter from governmental entities such as the IRS or State Franchise Tax Board
- Answers to your questions regarding tax filings that are required for all PTAs
- Guidance to avoid losing non-profit status.

Learn more online at [capta.org](http://capta.org) or email [taxinfo@capta.org](mailto:taxinfo@capta.org) or call **(916) 212-5456**.

A new resource from PTAEZ: Tax worksheets can be uploaded into PTAEZ to safeguard their storage.



## Insurance Information

High quality, group-rate insurance for all PTAs available at an exclusively low rate is one of the greatest advantages of being a PTA. It protects your association from risk, and saves hundreds of dollars annually.

PTA boards should review and familiarize themselves with insurance practices. You may also want to share the information with the school district in your area.

Please contact AIM - Association Insurance Management Inc at **(800) 876-4044** or **(214) 360-0801** or email [capta@aim-companies.com](mailto:capta@aim-companies.com) with questions regarding insurance coverage or activities and events. Some PTAs require additional bonding insurance, which can be purchased directly from AIM Insurance.

Answers to frequently asked questions, application for increased bonding coverage and events planning pages from the Insurance Guide can be found on the California State PTA website at [capta.org](http://capta.org).



**RED** Light – *prohibited activities/events*

**YELLOW** Light – *has conditions*

**GREEN** Light – *approved*

The Insurance Guide is available online on the California State PTA website: [capta.org](http://capta.org).

The guide is also updated each year and mailed to all PTA presidents each November.

**The policy is designed to cover allowable PTA events. Before planning any activities, it is critical that the red, yellow and green light list be reviewed.**

Certain activities and events are prohibited because they are excluded by the insurance policy or because they are dangerous or jeopardize the safety of our children and youth. If the PTA sponsors a RED light event and someone is injured because of PTA negligence, the individual PTA officers could be held personally liable.

# Bylaws and Standing Rules Make it Easier to Run Your PTA

All PTAs chartered in California are governed by three key elements – bylaws, standing rules and procedures.

**Bylaws** define the primary characteristics of the association and how it will function. Unit, council and PTA district bylaws all contain shared characteristics: name, the purposes of the association, how to become a member, officers required and their duties, meetings to be held, parliamentary authority and amendment procedures. Bylaws cannot be suspended.

See the inside back cover, page 23, for a handy **Unit Bylaws Information Summary** ready to fill out for easy reference.

**Bylaws should be reviewed every year and updated at least every five years.**

**Standing Rules** provide details and policies for administering the business of the association. For example, the bylaws state that the executive board will meet monthly during the school year, and a standing rule provides details as to the day of the month for that meeting. A standing rule may not contain any directions or procedures contrary to any provision in the bylaws or the California State PTA Toolkit.

**Procedures** provide guidelines and instructions for handling specific functions of the association. All officers and committee chairpersons should maintain procedure books that detail instructions for their particular positions, and the instructions should be updated annually. Procedures may be changed without membership approval, but they must not conflict with either bylaws or standing rules.

**eBylaws** is a free service that allows units to easily update bylaws online.

To get started, go online to [capta.org](http://capta.org) and request a user name and password to access e-Bylaws.

## Nominating Committees

**online Toolkit**

Check your bylaws to determine in which month the nominating committee is elected for your unit. The committee must be selected at least two months prior to the election meeting. This should give the committee enough time to find a slate of officers and post the slate 28 days prior to the annual election.

See the *Toolkit* online at [toolkit.capta.org](http://toolkit.capta.org) and type “Nominations and Elections” in the search.

**Tip:** Start the year right by giving each board member a copy of your unit’s bylaws. Take time to review the bylaws together. This helps everyone understand the PTA’s responsibilities and the due dates a PTA must keep so that everyone is on the same page.

## Transition and Succession



The smooth transition of outgoing and incoming board members and officers is of vital importance and can determine your PTA's leadership success for years to come. The transition process is the responsibility of both incoming and outgoing officers and board members. It gives closure to those leaving their positions and allows those coming in to be properly prepared. It also provides an opportunity for outgoing members to evaluate their work and efforts while giving suggestions to those new board members on what they wish they had done differently.

### TRANSITION IN A NUT SHELL

- Finish your term and complete all responsibilities. Then step away and let your successor lead
- Invite president-elect to board meetings, council and district meetings as appropriate
- Send new board contact information to your council or district
- Plan to have all board members meet with their successors
- Turn over all PTA materials in a timely manner
- Meet with the president-elect and orient him/her to the unit PTA
- Introduce him/her to school staff and principal.

### WHAT'S IN A PROCEDURE BOOK?

If you don't get a procedure book from your predecessor, start one that you can pass on at the end of your term.

- Minutes
- Agendas
- Rosters and contact information
- Publications and fliers
- All State and National PTA resources and publications, training manuals
- All reports (including committee) and financial reports (including tax filings, budgets, etc.)
- Bylaws
- Membership totals
- Calendar information
- Handouts from the convention and trainings
- *Insurance Guide*
- Programs and activities sponsored by the unit/council
- Job descriptions
- Council/District roster and contact info
- Correspondence received and sent during term
- Policy and procedure documents
- Mission statements and goals
- Information specific to positions to make successors' jobs easier.

#### Did you know...?

##### Procedure books

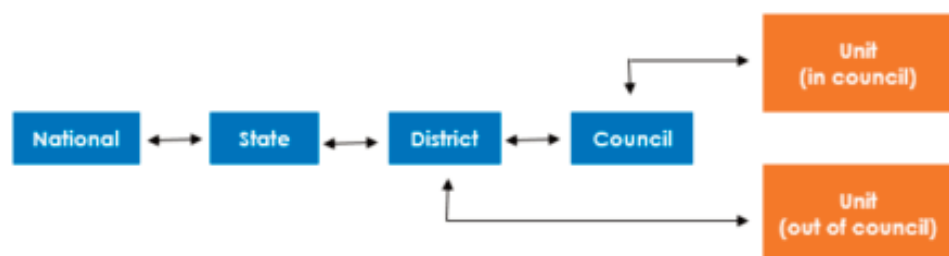
belong to a PTA and are not to be regarded as the personal property of individual volunteers.

**Contact** your council PTA or district PTA if you don't receive materials from your predecessor, if you have any questions or are in need of any support.

# Resources to Get You Started – and stay on track

## DISTRICT AND COUNCIL PTAs

District and council PTAs are available to support the PTA units in their area. Know how to reach them and use them for information and assistance.



## CALIFORNIA STATE PTA

- **Website:** [capta.org](http://capta.org)
- **Toolkit:** A comprehensive manual in English or Spanish available online at [toolkit.capta.org](http://toolkit.capta.org) and in hard copy by request. This is the go-to guide for all things PTA
- **Bylaws:** Each unit, council and district has its own bylaws that include due dates, board responsibilities, meeting requirements and quorums
- **e-Bylaws:** Free online service that allows units to easily update bylaws online. Available at [capta.org](http://capta.org)
- **PTAEZ™ Accounting Online:** A web-based program that enables PTAs to manage their finances and prepare customized reports and tax forms – all online for a low annual subscription fee. Find out more at [www.ptaez.com](http://www.ptaez.com)
- **Tax filing:** There are tax filing requirements for each unit, council and district. Please refer to [capta.org](http://capta.org), under “Tax Filing Support Center” for the latest information. Questions? Contact [taxinfo@capta.org](mailto:taxinfo@capta.org)
- **Insurance:** For information on PTA insurance, visit the California State PTA website – [capta.org](http://capta.org). For questions regarding insurance coverage or activities and events, contact AIM - Association Insurance Management Inc at **(800) 876-4044** or **(214) 360-0801** or email [capta@aim-companies.com](mailto:capta@aim-companies.com)
- **Letter of Determination (501c3 letter):** The letter of determination is normally required for grant and donation requests. The president should contact California State PTA at [LOD@capta.org](mailto:LOD@capta.org) for a copy when the letter is requested

Emails just for PTA leaders contain timely information and reminders about issues, tasks and responsibilities of PTA leaders at any level. Plus, you'll find helpful tips and news to help strengthen your PTA and leadership skills. Be sure to sign up online at [capta.org](http://capta.org).

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- Direct assistance for local PTA leaders about what to file and how to file your tax information
- Help resolving problems when your PTA receives a letter from governmental entities such as the IRS or State Franchise Tax Board
- Answers to your questions regarding tax filings that are required for all PTAs
- Guidance to avoid losing non-profit status.

Learn more online at [capta.org](http://capta.org) or email [taxinfo@capta.org](mailto:taxinfo@capta.org) or call (916) 212-5456.

- **Materials, brochures and awards:** Many materials and brochures are available year-round online at [capta.org](http://capta.org) and can be downloaded anytime. Order forms for select printed brochures and awards are also available in the *Toolkit*
- **Resources for leaders:** Whether you're looking for tools to build membership or tips to create welcoming environments, [capta.org](http://capta.org) has a variety of resources just for leaders
- **Electronic communication updates:** From legislative alerts on specific areas of interest to convention details and training, California State PTA works to keep you up-to-date with the latest information, news and resources on the issues that matter most to parents and PTAs. As a PTA leader, you'll automatically receive our FREE monthly e-newsletters and updates to share with your members, parents, teachers and school communities. PTA members, officers and chairman may also sign up for various e-newsletters online at [capta.org/join/join-our-mailing-list](http://capta.org/join/join-our-mailing-list).

## NATIONAL PTA

Website: [pta.org](http://pta.org)

Various mailings throughout the year are sent to PTA presidents, including:

- **Online leader resources**, including Local PTA Leader Kit and Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit
- **E-news to stay connected** - *Leader Briefing, Local Leader News, Our Children, Advocacy Insider* and *PTA Weekend Update*
- **Access to awards, programs and training opportunities** to help your PTA thrive



# Unit Bylaws Information Summary

INSTRUCTIONS: Use your bylaws to fill in the blanks and create your own quick reference guide.

**Unit Legal Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PTA Council:** \_\_\_\_\_ **District:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PTA Organization Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ Fiscal Year Starts: \_\_\_\_\_ Fiscal Year Ends: \_\_\_\_\_

National PTA ID #: \_\_\_\_\_ California PTA ID #: \_\_\_\_\_ EI #: \_\_\_\_\_

FTB #: \_\_\_\_\_ CT #: \_\_\_\_\_ Incorporated Unit - Corporation #: \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Dues:** \$\_\_\_\_\_ per member | \$2.25 National PTA | \$2.00 California State PTA  
\$\_\_\_\_\_ District | \$\_\_\_\_\_ Council | \$\_\_\_\_\_ (This amount remains in unit.)

**Officers:** President, Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian, Historian & (check all your board positions):

Executive Vice President | EVP serves notice of president's vacancy?  Yes  No

VPs - How many? \_\_\_\_\_  Corresponding Secretary  Financial Secretary  Auditor

**Nominating Committee:** # of members: \_\_\_\_\_ # of alternates: \_\_\_\_\_

Date officers assume duties (month/day - e.g. July 1): \_\_\_\_\_

**Association Meetings** (week/day - e.g. 3rd Monday): \_\_\_\_\_

Months: \_\_\_\_\_

Months: \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Meeting/Election Month: \_\_\_\_\_ | Quorum: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Meetings called at written request of \_\_\_\_\_ (number) of board members

**Board Meetings** (week/day - e.g. 1st Tuesday): \_\_\_\_\_

Amount authorized for unbudgeted items between association meetings: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Special Meetings called at written request of \_\_\_\_\_ (number) of board members | Quorum: \_\_\_\_\_

**Council Membership:** Council Assessment (if any): \_\_\_\_\_ Due to council on: \_\_\_\_\_

# additional delegates for regular meeting: \_\_\_\_\_  Elected OR  Appointed in (month): \_\_\_\_\_

Length of term: \_\_\_\_\_ year(s) | # of additional delegates for Annual Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

**Vice Presidents:** (Add title/role for VPs- e.g. 'Programs Chairperson')

1st Vice President serves as \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Vice President serves as \_\_\_\_\_

3rd Vice President serves as \_\_\_\_\_

4th Vice President serves as \_\_\_\_\_

5th Vice President serves as \_\_\_\_\_

6th Vice President serves as \_\_\_\_\_

**Due Dates** - Send to council/district:

Board Roster \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Budget \_\_\_\_\_

PTA Insurance \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Financial Report \_\_\_\_\_

Adopted Audits \_\_\_\_\_

Gov't Filings: IRS 990 \_\_\_\_\_

FTB 199 \_\_\_\_\_

AG RRF-1 \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Check Signer:** (Elected officer not residing in the same household as president, treasurer, financial secretary, or auditor. Also, cannot be the secretary or auditor): President, Treasurer and \_\_\_\_\_

**Standing Committees** (List committees that function all year):

Membership  Programs  Fundraising  Safety  Hospitality  Family Engagement

# Calendar

**California State**  
**PTA**<sup>®</sup>  
*everychild. onevoice.*

## SAVE THE DATE

### California State PTA Annual Convention

May 15-17, 2020 in  
Riverside

## RUNNING YOUR PTA ... MADE EASY

**California State PTA**  
2327 L Street, Sacramento  
California 95816-5014  
Phone (916) 440-1985  
Fax (916) 440-1986  
capta.org  
info@capta.org

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registered service mark of the  
National Congress of Parents  
and Teachers.

### July 1 – Term Begins

- Attend training and begin a back-to-school membership campaign
- Register your unit for the electronic membership system, powered by TOTEM
- Review bylaws and procedures and sign up online to access e-Bylaws
- Prepare audit
- Change bank signature cards

### August

- Finalize dates, calendar, activities and programs
- Forward budget, term-end audits and Annual Financial Report to council/district
- Continue membership campaign

### September

- Monthly membership dues to council/district
- Continue membership campaign

### October

- Ready, Set ... Remit! Award (30 members by 10/30)
- Continue membership campaign
- Red Ribbon Week
- Scholarship & Grant applications due 10/15
  - Parent Education, Cultural Arts, Outreach, Healthy Lifestyles
  - Continuing Education – Nurses, Teachers, Counselors, Volunteers

### November

- National Reflections Theme Search Entries due 11/1
- IRS Tax Form, California State Franchise Tax Board Form and Attorney General's Office RRF-1 Form - Check your bylaws, for most PTAs the deadline is 11/15 (depends on your FY)
- Forward copies of all filings to your council/district

### December

- Membership – Last day minimum per capita can be received in state office for unit to remain in good standing by 12/1
- Insurance premiums due in state office by 12/20

### January

- Kick off mid-year membership campaign
- Reflections Art Program entries due to state by 1/15
- Workers' Compensation Annual Payroll Report due to state by 1/31

### February

- Graduating High School Senior Scholarship applications due on 2/1
- Founders Day is 2/17

### March

- Begin ordering Honorary Service Awards (HSAs)

### April/May

- California State PTA Annual Convention
- Teacher Appreciation Week

### June

- Roster of officers – units, councils, districts due 6/1 and added to PTAEZ
- Freewill Offering Remittance due
- Annual Historian Report due 6/1

*Except as noted,  
these deadlines are  
in the state office.  
Be sure to check  
with your council  
and/or district PTA  
for their due dates.*

Check [catpa.org](http://catpa.org) for program, scholarship,  
grant and membership incentive challenge due dates.