

the VOICE

January 15, 2017

**Virginia
PTA**
everychild.onevoice.®



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President's Note,

Let's talk about communicating. There are so many platforms and tools we can use to get the word out nowadays. I've seen many PTAs go to the next step beyond sending out their own print newsletters and e-newsletters. PTAs are now using social media to reach their members. Parents, caregivers and community members are more crunched for time and depending on social media to plan and access information when it fits their schedule. PTAs can use social media for new ways to engage parents, teachers and their community and can build participation and bring their community to their next event. They can start conversations, highlight events, and share what PTA is contributing to their children and schools.

Start your PTA account on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest and share your responsibilities for posting and updating with your leadership team. National PTA advises us to "establish a clear social media policy. Who will have access to post from the "official PTA" account and what will you comment on? Will your unit use social media mainly to promote events and your positions, or will you take an active role and voice in the education debate in your community and state?"

There is great communication - and not so great! Read the "[Top 10 Mistakes to Avoid in Communicating with Your PTA](#)", it's one of many great articles in National PTA's *One Voice Blog*.

Virginia PTA has social media tools that can benefit you and your PTA. We regularly post reminders, ideas and news on our Facebook page. On Facebook go to [Virginia PTA](#) and like the page. You'll be in touch with the latest tips and information.

Grow your PTA by growing your toolbox of communication tools!

Chat with you soon!

Sincerely,

Jane
Grow!

Legislation Training and PTA Day at the General Assembly January 29 - 30, 2017



Don't miss it - register now for our annual legislation training and PTA Day at the General Assembly! Please join us for an afternoon training session on Sunday, 1/29/17 as we prepare you to meet with your legislators on Monday, 1/30/17.

This is a great opportunity for students and parents alike to bring their ideas and concerns to our state legislators - as well as lobby for or against important bills during the 2017 session. It's only \$5 for adults and FREE for students. Learn, meet, advocate!

[Register today!!](#)



VAPTA MEMBER LINKS

- [Bylaws Library](#)
- [Dues Remittance Form](#)
- [501\(c\)\(3\) Letter](#)
- [Officer Contact Form - Print and Mail](#)
- [Officer Contact Form - Online Submission](#)
- [Take Action VA](#)
- [Contact VA PTA](#)



NATIONAL PTA



NATIONAL PTA RECOGNITION

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 - [Shirley Igo Advocate of the Year](#)

News

- [One PTA - Annual Report](#)
- [Stakeholder Engagement in Every Student Succeeds Act](#)

One Voice Blogs

- [Advocacy](#)
- [Arts in Education](#)
- [Communications](#)
- [Education News](#)
- [Every Child in Focus](#)
- [Family Engagement](#)
- [General](#)
- [Health & Safety](#)
- [Membership](#)
- [Money Matters](#)
- [Laura's Corner](#)

PTA Members ONLY



Get exclusive PTA Member discounts and savings.

[PTA Benefits Flyer](#)

Submit Citizenship Essays!

We the People...Why Vote? Today's political climate requires us to reflect more and more on our civic responsibilities. Do you ask, "does my vote count and does it really matter if I don't vote?" Answer these questions and more as you submit your entry in the Citizenship Essay Program. **Deadline is February 1** to your [District Director](#). More information see the [application and instructions](#).



Let's Get Cooking -- Healthy!

Virginia PTA is pleased to provide again this year a program exclusive to PTAs/PTSAs - Power Plates. It encourages students to practice healthy eating habits by submitting their recipes. It is open to students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 12. There are five categories: breakfast, lunch, snack, dinner entrée or side dish, and dessert. Visit the [Power Plates page](#) for the official rules and entry form, **deadline is February 24**.



Do YOU know a Super Teacher?

Can your child's teacher do amazing things? Stupendous things? Do they inspire kids to leap, learn and soar higher than ever before? Then your child may know the most amazing of all super heroes - a Virginia Lottery Super Teacher - and we want to hear all about them!



Between now and February 13, 2017, you have the opportunity to send your child's teacher into this year's league of Super Teachers! How do you get in the game? Visit www.vasuperteacher.com and you're just a few clicks away from submitting a nomination and helping honor one of Virginia's best teachers.

Prizes for the eight winning 2017 Super Teachers include \$2,000 from the [Virginia Lottery](#) and \$2,000 in classroom supplies from [The Supply Room Companies](#).

Thanks to the Virginia PTA for its tenth year of partnership and for helping us to honor 72 outstanding educators. We hope you're ready to join this game - the play action will definitely be worth it!

Nominating Committee and Election Training

Does the thought of running an election make you nervous? Do you know how to give your nominating committee the best start as they search for the future leadership of your PTA? **We have tools to help you!**

- "[Nominations and Elections](#)" is a detailed PowerPoint training, including how to handle some of the common issues that can pop up. Your District Director (and Council, if you are lucky to have one in your area) have access to the activities that complement this training.
- "[Nomination Committee and Election Step by Step Guide](#)" gives you an overview of the entire process, from start to finish.
- Check out our [Training Library](#) includes a special section for [Nominations and Elections](#).

For more info, contact the your [District Director](#) or Amy Harbert at vp@vapta.org.

Why Attend the Annual Conference?

- **Meet State & National PTA leaders** as well as keynote speakers and experts in the field of PTA
- **Participate** in motivating and informative workshops
 - **Exchange ideas** & successes on fundraising, membership, programs, current issues, advocacy & leadership, to name a few
- **Develop** leadership skills
 - **Learn** the ins & outs of PTA
 - **Create** a helpful list of contacts as you network with PTA leaders from around the state
- **Advocate** for your members, parents, teachers and students
 - We will address **state bylaws and the election of state officers** this year. Voting delegates have the opportunity to directly impact the focus and direction of our organization on a statewide level
- **Celebrate with fellow PTA leaders!**
 - Revel in student talent and local unit awards and other achievements as we recognize outstanding work from around our great state of Virginia!
 - There's always FUN, fellowship and laughs at Annual Conference!

Mark your calendar, confirm your PTA budget, check the conference page on our [website](#) often for the latest information and join us July 13-15, 2017!



Voice of Membership

Are you working on a winter membership drive? One of the many benefits of being a PTA/PTSA member is the opportunity to recognize your members through awards.



There are many Membership Awards available including a 25% Male Membership Award and 25% Student Membership Award (for PTSA's) just to name a couple. Please review the [Membership Toolkit](#) for the list of awards and application. Remember these awards show value to your school and your members. Contact Donna Colombo at vpmembership@vapta.org with questions.

Help Your Students Win Money for College!



Students can ring in the new year with a chance at money toward higher education through Reading Makes Cent\$.

This reading program, designed for K-5 students, covers financial concepts through engaging children's books. Participating students could win one of fourteen Virginia529 inVEST college savings accounts, funded with an initial balance of \$529.

To participate, a student must read five books, complete a Reading Challenge form, and send it to Virginia529 by March 31, 2017. From all entries, Virginia529 will select 14 students to win an inVEST account.

Librarians benefit from Reading Makes Cent\$, too. Just for participating, librarians receive three free books for the school library and have the chance to win an additional \$500 worth of books. If your child's school is not yet participating, please reach out to the school librarian and share this program's details!

Read official rules and see additional details at readingmakescents.com.

Virginia PTA Scholarship Applications Due!

Virginia PTA is proud to offer \$1000 scholarships to graduating Virginia high school students based on a demonstrated commitment to and engagement in, community service, plus academic achievement and financial need.

Let your graduating seniors know the deadline to submit their [scholarship application](#) to Virginia PTA is by **Monday, March 1, 2017**.

Harp Domene Diversity and Inclusion Award 2017 Deadline: Friday, March 17, 8 pm EST

The Jan Harp Domene Diversity and Inclusion Award recognizes PTAs that best demonstrate outstanding achievement in the areas of diversity and inclusion, as well as efforts to end discriminatory practices.

The award will be presented to one state PTA, one district/council PTA and one local PTA at the Annual National PTA Convention, June 22-25, 2017, in Las Vegas.

Information can be found on [National PTA's website](#).

Mary Lou Anderson Reflections Arts Enhancement Grants 2017 Deadline: Friday, March 17



The National PTA Mary Lou Anderson Reflections Arts Enhancement Grant provides up to **\$1,000 in matching funds** to support local PTA arts projects within their school communities.

Funded projects will increase access to learning opportunities in the literary, media, visual and/or performing arts for at-risk or undeserved audiences. Arts projects must actively engage families and community partners to strengthen family-school partnerships.

For [more information](#).

Federal Student Aid

If your child will be in college between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018, it's time to apply for financial aid. Start by filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®). To learn [more details](#) about the program.



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