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# the VOICE

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## President's Message,

Well, Mother Nature has really handed it to many of us this week! Between the week-long evacuation process, flooding in NC and parts of VA and yesterday's tornadoes, I know this has been a rough few days. Our thoughts and prayers remain with all of you affected by Hurricane Florence and we hope the recovery goes smoothly and quickly.

Here are my top three tips for this issue:

1. **Get out the vote!** If you haven't yet conducted the Proposed Legislation Program (PLP) vote in your unit, you still have time! All the information you need to conduct the vote was sent in August but is also available on our [website](#). This is an important vote for members to indicate they support new positions and our legislative direction. Return your vote tallies to your District Director by **October 10**.
2. **Host a candidate forum!** Election season is in full swing and you can help your members get to know their candidates. PTA's can play an important role in voter education, registration and engagement. Imagine having your local, state, even national candidates available to answer questions from your members! For more information about hosting a candidate forum, including logistics, plans and even questions, please [check this out](#).
3. **Set those goals!** It's not too late to define your goals for this year - we can help you meet them. Consider setting a goal for membership, grant applications, new programs, even number of members at meetings! If you haven't registered yet for the PTA DIY Kit for Membership Growth - do that [here](#).

Again, please take care of yourself and each other if you are in communities affected by the storm. We are thinking of you and are here to help if you need anything!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sarah".

Sarah



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## National PTA Back-to-School Week - This Week!

Back-to-school is practically a holiday for PTAs around the country—and this year we're celebrating in a BIG way! Mark your calendars because we've designated Sept. 17-21 as [National PTA Back-to-School Week](#).

Each day of the week we will highlight and share tips and resources for the amazing people who support our children's learning and success. And we're excited to announce that we've teamed up with Office Depot to make all of this happen!

- Tuesday, September 18 – Parents
- Wednesday, September 19 – Students
- Thursday, September 20 – Teachers
- Friday, September 21 – Office Depot Day

Back-to-School Week will feature a comprehensive webpage with a wide variety of resources, announcements on grant recipients and new grant opportunities, classroom surprises—and so much more!

Be sure to visit [PTA.org](#) and use and follow [#PTABacktoSchool](#) as we rev up plans and promotions. I've also attached three "Save the Date" [graphics](#) you can use on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to help spread the word.

We want you to celebrate with us! Together, we can make the 2018 National PTA Back-to-School Week and 2018-2019 school year a huge success for PTA leaders, parents, teachers and students. Enjoy the rest of your summer and get ready for an exciting back-to-school season.

## Are YOU the Next Arts in Education Chair?

Virginia PTA is currently seeking applicants for chair of the Arts in Education committee. This person will be responsible for developing and implementing our Arts in Education programs including Reflections. If you are committed to insuring that the arts are incorporated into our schools and curriculum, you could be our next chair! \*note - this term ends in May, 2019.\*

For more information and to submit an online application: <https://www.vapta.org/nldc-pta-nomination-form>

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## PTA Launches PTA CONNECTED!

Parenting in the digital age is complex. [PTA Connected](#) strives to help children act safely, responsibly and thoughtfully online. National PTA has been a partner to parents on digital parenting topics for over 5 years, exploring in-depth the issues that are on the minds of today's families, and connecting parents with tools, research and supports to make the best decisions for their children.

Please have a [look at these grant opportunities, programs, experts, tools and ideas](#) to help us all build and grow as a digital community.

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## Is Your School a School of Excellence? Application Ends October 1

By enrolling in this program, your PTA and school administrators are making a year-long commitment in identifying and implementing an action plan for school improvement based on PTA's National Standards for School-Parent Partnerships. For more information and to enroll in the program go to National PTA [School of Excellence](#)

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## Membership Database News and Updates

The year has started off great and it is exciting to see so many of PTAs using the database with great success! Over 6,352 members from Virginia have joined online and more are being uploaded by local leaders daily.

Those of you using the database likely know that we sent a manual out to you. As a reminder, National is regularly updating the manual based on your feedback, so be sure to go to [National PTA Membership Database Page](#) for the most up-to-date version.

As a way to improve service to our PTAs, we are starting to copy District Directors and Council Presidents on some of the email communications with units regarding the database. The intent is let the local leader know that there is a team supporting them- and to help the District and Council leaders understand when a unit is having trouble and/or making great strides!

Last year, National attempted to send membership cards out. This was not successful and they have discontinued that effort. Please reach out to [info@vapta.org](mailto:info@vapta.org) with your PTA name and you will receive a template for printing your membership cards via email in return. Or, a member can log on to their National PTA account and get their card electronically.

### Database Tips

- **Spreadsheet**
    - Make sure you are using the new template for this year.
    - Leave membership\_name column blank.
    - When entering the number of members, please be sure that there is a membership option with that same number in your dues structure.
    - Remember that you do not need to include the 0s at the start of your unit number if applicable.
    - The only columns in red are required however we strongly recommend that you submit email addresses, too.
    - If you have family members that use the same email address, please only enter that email address on one member.
  - **Reports**
    - Your remittance from National is for online joins and donations.
    - When reconciling your online joins and donations, be careful to enter the dates for the week prior to the transmittal date- the week runs Monday – Sunday.
  - **Dues**
    - The deadline for your first dues payment November 1st.
    - Include the Unpaid Member Invoice (link found on details page).
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Visit our Website

Virginia PTA | (804) 264-1234 | (804) 264-4014 | info@vapta.org | www.vapta.org

STAY CONNECTED

