

Monday, December 4, 2017



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the **VOICE**

President's Message,

So when last I wrote you, we were talking about change. Now, though, let's talk about the purpose of change - to produce results.

If you are following us on Facebook and reading the VOICE, you have likely seen announcements about our Annual Meeting and Advocacy Training. But in JANUARY?! Let's start with your questions.

Yes, this is our regular annual meeting that typically happens in July. This is the meeting where we will conduct the business of the association and offer a wide variety of training, with a focus on advocacy.

No, it is not meant to confuse but it is disruptive. We know this. And we appreciate your willingness to see what we have in store! Change can sometimes be disruptive.

Yes, we have reasons. Advocacy is at the core of the PTA mission. Our state legislators meet from January to March. Our PTA Lobby Day - or Advocacy Day - is scheduled for January 29. Our goal is to get as many PTA members as possible, from around the state, to attend PTA Day. In order to give you all the tools you need, we developed this advocacy training meeting. Since advocacy is what WE do and what YOU do, every day, we are putting some muscle behind our goal of building a state full of PTA advocates.

Yes, we will be offering all the high level PTA training you love from the July meeting. And even more!

Yes, this is change. Change to produce results - for you, for your unit, for our association. We want to make it easier for you to meet and really talk to your legislators. We want you to be empowered to make real change in our state education system and in your neighborhood schools. We want you to know just what to say and do when you see your school board member in the grocery store - or when your child needs services - or when your teachers explain their challenges. We want you to meet other PTA advocates who want to make change.

Yes, this should be part of your budget. We are making this meeting as affordable as possible while still accomplishing our goals and achieving the results you want. For more details, read on below and [click here](#).

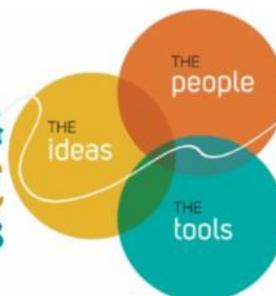
Please join us on Saturday, January 27 & 28 to participate in the business of PTA and to learn how we PTA - then stay for our Advocacy Day on Monday, January 29 to put it all into action for PTA's around the state. Can you imagine what it would be like to see hundreds of PTA members descending on the Capitol, asking to be heard, telling their stories, demanding change? It would be awesome and powerful and seriously, let's do this!

Every child. One Voice. Be the voice. Register, attend, network, advocate.

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

Sarah

2018 Virginia ANNUAL MEETING
PTA & ADVOCACY CONFERENCE
everychild.one voice.® **JANUARY 27-28, 2018**



**Annual Meeting & Advocacy Conference is Coming Up Fast --
You Still Have Time to Register!!**

You may wondering what this new event is, how does it impact your local PTA unit and what more can your leaders accomplish at another gathering. The answer is *PLENTY!*

The primary purpose of the **Annual Meeting** is to conduct the business of the association – vote on bylaws amendments, pass resolutions and set the legislative priorities. This is an opportunity for delegates to influence the direction of Virginia PTA for the next year.

Advocacy makes a difference for our children! Policymakers make important decisions that affect education opportunities for current and future generations of children, and each of us can influence these decisions.

Learn more about the potential of thoughtful and effective public policies, and how each of us can use our voice to make a difference.

Conference workshops and round table talks provide a great selection of hands-on learning and training opportunities to enhance your leadership skills and learn more about issues affecting children and families. Check out some of our Feature workshop topics:

✓ Feature Workshops

- Advancing Adequacy and Equitable School Funding During the 2018 Legislative Session
- Empowering Parents in Special Education
- Nutrition and Physical Activity: What Parents Can Do
- Fighting Childhood Hunger with School Nutrition
- Parents for Healthy Kids: New Resource for Parents
- Civic Engagement: How to Organize a Candidate Forum
- Advocacy Training for Healthy Schools
- Increasing STEM Literacy through Family Engagement
- Civic Engagement: High School Voter Registration Drive Challenge
- WATCH D.O.G.S.: Building Family and Community Engagement Through Fathers and Father-figures

Don't miss the EARLY BIRD online registration deadline, available until December 20th , so hurry and register [NOW](#) for a \$30 savings from regular registration! Remember to make your reservation at the Virginia Crossings Hotel & Conference Center. Discount rates available for \$93 until January 5, 2018.

Register [NOW](#) to get all these great savings! Click [HERE](#) for hotel accommodations.

See you in Richmond!



The start of a new school year has come and gone and everyone has begun preparations for the holidays. Virginia529 wants to remind families this is also the time to enroll in the Prepaid529 plan. Prepaid529 gives Virginia families the opportunity to prepay the cost of tomorrow's college tuition. Rather than waiting to see what your loved ones' tuition bill will amount to, you can embrace peace of mind by prepaying their tuition with Prepaid529.

Virginia529 would like to be a part of your next PTA meeting or school event to discuss how the program can benefit the families at your schools. Whether you want to hear more about the PrePaid529 program or all of the other benefits of Virginia529, we'd be happy to speak with your community. If you would like to request a speaker for your next event, have materials sent for your students or would like to learn more about our flexible, affordable tax-advantaged college savings programs, just visit our website at www.virginia529.com/invite.

Citizenship Essay - February 1 Deadline

The deadline to submit Citizenship Essay entries to your District Director is Thursday, February 1, 2018. This Virginia PTA-sponsored writing contest is an opportunity for all students to compete for a cash prize and express their views on this year's theme, ***“What Does it Mean to Dream Big,”*** as related to citizenship. Submit a completed [application](#) and original essay to your [District Director](#) by February 1.

High School Seniors - Do You Want \$1,000

Virginia PTA wants to award you with a \$1,000 scholarship to help with your post-secondary education. Each year Virginia PTA offers scholarships to graduating seniors from Virginia schools with a PTSA in good standing. Scholarships are awarded based on a demonstrated commitment to and engagement in community service, academic achievement and financial need. Let your graduating seniors know that the deadline to submit their completed [scholarship application](#) to the Virginia PTA is Thursday, March 1, 2018.

Membership Database News, Updates, an Upload Tips

THANK YOU for sending in your dues. Did you submit them the “old way”? That is Okay, but you still need to begin using the database! Please carefully read the entire manual before attempting an upload. Like IKEA furniture, the directions could use some improvement so as you read and then work through the process. Please send any suggested edits/additions to the Local Leaders Manual for the database to ed@vapta.org. The better we can get the manual, the easier it will be for new users, making next fall easier on everyone!

Most common problems when attempting an upload and how to fix them:

1. Dues Structure is not set-up. Page 17 of the Local Leaders Manual for the database is where those instructions begin.
2. Not having your membership type on your spreadsheet match *exactly* to your dues structure. The database is very literal.
3. Not using the spreadsheet template in its entirety. For the program to read your information, the headers (top line with column titles) must all be there and in the exact format, even if you are not filling in the column.

Statement from National PTA regarding the Membership Database:

*PTA takes data security seriously. National PTA was specific in selecting a platform built on the Microsoft Azure platform which is considered the most secure environment in the world. Additional information on their security feature can be found **here**: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/trustcenter>*

Your email address will never be sold or shared. As a member of PTA, you may receive occasional updates from your local PTA, state PTA or from National PTA. You may opt in or out of these communications at any time.

Thank You

Your patience and persistence related to the database is especially appreciated. Remember, we are here to help you. Please reach out to ed@vapta.org or info@vapta.org for assistance.

Myra H Legg
Executive Director



Print & Distribute! Thank a Teacher Art Contest Launches Next Month

Are you looking forward to a new year and new opportunities? Well, the Virginia Lottery and Virginia PTA have an exciting opportunity for your students and your schools. On January 2, students can enter their original artwork into the [Thank a Teacher Art Contest](#) for a chance to win individual cash prizes, money for their school's art department and have their design featured on thousands of thank-you notes being distributed across the state during Teacher Appreciation Week 2018. Thank a Teacher is a statewide campaign organized by the Virginia Lottery in partnership with the Virginia PTA and Virginia Tourism Corporation. In its first two years, Virginians distributed more than 70,000 thank-you notes to their favorite teachers.

Planning PTA Programs

There are many programs available for your local unit PTA. It is a known fact that well planned, relevant, timely programs increase attendance at meetings. Be sure to have an objective for your program. Plan the program to meet the desired objective. Also remember that the IRS suggests that for every fundraiser, PTAs should offer three programs.

Read how to [Planning PTA Programs](#) for some helpful tips and information.

National PTA's STEM Initiative: STEM + Families

Virginia PTA is proud to [share](#) that we have 6 of the winners of 65 \$1,000 grants and 1 winner of a Family Game Night package awarded through National PTA's [STEM + Families initiative](#).

OPTIMUS PRIME Spin-off Program & Research Challenge (OPSPARC)

The AUTOBOTS are on a mission and need your help! The Strategic Partnerships Office (SPO) at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center and I want to challenge **YOU** to participate in the OPTIMUS PRIME Spinoff Promotion & Research Challenge (OPSPARC). To learn more about [OPTIMUS PRIME Spin-off](#).

Visit our Website

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

STAY CONNECTED

