

Why PTA?

PTA is the oldest and largest non-profit volunteer association committed solely to children and youth. Organized in 1897, its basic concern has always been to create a better life for every child. In the process, PTA has united parents, teachers, administrators, legislators and communities in this effort. The concerns have changed and evolved, but the Purposes of PTA have remained the same.

Other groups are often effective, but they are limited and isolated within their own school or issue. Becoming a PTA does not mean you must change what you are doing now. If you have other parent group officers, they can become the officers of the PTA. A PTA or PTSA is a self-governing local unit of National PTA (NPTA) and Florida PTA (FPTA). Thus neither NPTA nor FPTA will audit your books, receive copies of your minutes, nor will they get involved in your fundraisers or programs. However, FPTA is always available to help when requested.

Note: PTA/PTSA units hold a Federal IRS 501(c)(3) status which exempts them from paying federal income tax and with this benefit FPTA is required to keep copies of the local unit's audit, IRS 990 filings, bylaws and current list of officers of each local unit to remain in compliance with both state and federal law. (See Local Unit Compliance and Standards of Affiliation.)

PTA is nonpartisan, nonsectarian and noncommercial. PTA does not endorse any political candidates, religious denominations or commercial enterprises.

Advantages of being a PTA

Structure

Bylaws provide a framework for smooth, consistent operation. The levels of PTA – National, State, Region and County – provide guidance, experienced leadership and support to local PTAs.

Material Available

Officers and chairs have access to a wealth of resources and information, including the following:

- Kit of Materials (Florida) / Back to School Kit (National)
- Florida PTA/National PTA E-newsletters
- Legislation Representation/Updates
- Florida PTA/National PTA websites

Training and Assistance

“You’re never alone in PTA.” There is always someone to turn to for help or advice.

- Leadership Teams provided by FPTA, if requested
- FPTA Leadership Convention (Summer) – workshops for all positions and business meeting of Florida PTA
- State and county PTA officers to call for assistance
- State Office Staff

- Leadership Development Workshops held in many counties
- Reminders to keep your unit in compliance with federal and state regulations (i.e. annual IRS 990 filing)
- Idea exchange from other PTAs

Representation

PTA has no paid lobbyist on the state or the national level. PTA delegates vote at Florida PTA convention on priority items that we present to legislators. PTA speaks on behalf of children and youth in the schools and before governmental agencies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children. PTA serves on important committees at the county, state, and national levels. Our united voice is very effective.

Parent Education

PTA has a well-deserved reputation as a parent educator. Through a variety of parenting materials, we have provided assistance to parents in the complex art of raising children. Some of the concerns addressed are child safety, alcohol and drug awareness, child abuse, TV violence, nutrition, self-esteem, etc.

Exempt Status

Local PTAs fall under the umbrella of Florida PTA in being classified by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) Federal tax-exempt non-profit organization. (Non-profit organizations are not automatically tax-exempt.)

Local PTAs in Florida are not required to:

- be incorporated with the state (groups without affiliation are required) thus PTAs are not required to register annually nor pay the annual fee (Florida PTA the parent organization files).
- register with Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services as part of the Solicitation of Contributions Act, most other groups are required to register and pay a fee each year. Note: County Councils and FPTA are required to register annually.

Dues to Florida and National PTA pay for a wealth of materials, newsletters, programs, training sessions, state office building, postage and much more. There are no lower dues in any other organization, and nowhere can so much be done for children.

In PTA, we have a united purpose, a higher goal. All of us working together can make a tremendous difference...for all children and young people everywhere.