

What Does Leadership Development Mean to You?

By Antoinette Darden-Cintron, Leadership Development Coordinator

What does leadership development mean to you?

We asked members this question at the 2016 Summer Leadership Conference in Utica.

The leadership development committee wanted to know what our members thought of leadership in the NYS PTA.

Two comments stood out:

“Leadership development is to expand and broaden your capabilities and share them with others, who will do the same to create new leaders.”



“Leadership development is many different training opportunities and resources.”

These two examples are great points to what leadership development is, and I believe we all have a responsibility to develop leaders.

Whether you are a PTA president, an officer, or a member of your local unit, our members and our leaders are one in the same.

You are the life blood of this association.

You can also help develop leadership in others or become a leader yourself.

We can all learn what it takes to build leaders at all levels of PTA.

Leadership is not about personality. Leadership is about how we behave.

Leadership is an observable set of skills and abilities we all have.



“I believe we all have a responsibility to develop leaders.”

Click [here](#) for a great example of leadership development that we can use at all levels of PTA!

Our success as an association relies on our ability, as both members and leaders, to grow and fulfill our mission and vision.

Fulfilling our mission and vision hinges on membership growth and leadership development.

You, as a valuable member-leader, are critical to the success of both your local PTA and NYS PTA.

Thank you for your service, membership and leadership!

Click [here](#) for more details.

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MESSAGE FROM BONNIE RUSSELL, NYS PTA PRESIDENT



Bonnie's Corner



NYS PTA President Bonnie Russell shares "Back to School, Already?" in her "Voice of NYS PTA" blog post.

Click [here](#) to read her message.



MESSAGE FROM LAURA BAY, NATIONAL PTA PRESIDENT



Laura's Corner

National PTA President Laura Bay shares a back to school message and talks about family engagement in education in a recent "One Voice" blog post.

Click [here](#) to read her message.



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President:

Bonnie Russell

Editor:

Aimee Tweedie

Advisor:

Judy Van Haaren

New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc.

One Wembley Court, Albany, NY 12205-3830

Phone: 518-452-8808

Toll Free: 1-877-5NYSPTA

1-877-569-7782 • Fax: 518-452-8105

Web: nyspta.org

Email: pta.office@nyspta.org

Take Your Advocacy to the Next Level – Become a Key Advocacy Partner

By *Susanne Smoller, Legislation Coordinator*

PTA advocacy focuses on speaking on behalf of children, youth and families to schools, communities and government.

Want to take action to make a difference? Check out our new Advocacy Calendar [here](#). The calendar has many advocacy-related activities that you and your PTA can use.

The NYS PTA/ert membership email includes our “[Advocacy Newsbriefs](#)”, your one-stop advocacy shop.

Now is also the time to think about becoming a Key Advocacy Partner (KAP).

You, as a Key Advocacy Partner (KAP), show interest and commitment to NYS PTA's mis-

sion, to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

You should also be willing to:

- Attend training sessions
- Take part in Lobby Day visits to the legislators in Albany, NY
- Become part of a NYS PTA Advocacy Action Network and join conference calls to discuss issues, legislation and action plans
- Partner with your unit, council and region legislation chairs
- Share and report information and alerts with your unit, council and region



- Attend state events, network meetings and training when asked
- Help the Advocacy Team identify strategies to engage grassroots members
- Bring advocacy training to your unit, council and region
- Encourage and help your local unit and council visit lawmakers in their local offices

PTA regions appoint KAPs. You would represent your region at the training advocacy day in Albany and Lobby Day on February 12-13, 2017 in Albany. Look for registration information in future communication.

There are also opportunities for units and councils to send Local Advocacy Partners (LAPs) to the advocacy training and Lobby Day at their own expense.

Are you attending Convention in November? Please attend the Post-Convention Advocacy Workshop. We will go through steps to advocate for positions voted on by Convention delegates.

If you can't make it to Convention, [Where We Stand](#) is a great resource. You will find NYS PTA's positions on issues like education, safety, health and more.

Any questions on advocacy or legislative issues, please contact me at legislation@nyspta.org.

Click [here](#) for more details.



The “T” in PTA Matters!

By *Bonnie Russell, President*

NYS PTA is proud to celebrate **Amy Hysick** as the 2017 New York State Teacher of the Year. Hysick is a science teacher at Cicero-North Syracuse High School in Cicero and currently teaches Regents Biology (Living Environment).

Finalists for the 2017 New York State Teacher of the Year also included:

- Carolyn Dorritie, a math teacher at Port Jervis High School in the Port Jervis City School District
- Nicole Malone, an English teacher at William T. Rogers Middle School in the Kings Park Central School District
- Natasha Murray, a math teacher at Copiague Middle School in the Copiague Public Schools
- Lauren Bakian-Aaker, a fourth grade teacher at P.S. 110 The Florence Nightingale School in Manhattan

Click [here](#) for more information. Congratulations to Amy and all finalists!

Why Convention 2016?

By Laurie May, 2016 Convention Coordinator

Why should you come to Convention?
You will...



- Share your voice and represent your members
- Vote on resolutions brought before the assembly
- Elect your NYS PTA officers
- Attend workshops that will enhance your leadership skills
- Rekindle your passion for PTA
- Explore our exhibitors for fundraising and program ideas
- Hear innovative and inspirational speakers
- Get a new perspective – see PTA in a whole new light
- Make new friends who share your commitment to children
- Be PTA proud of what we do and accomplish together

Why Convention 2016?

Because it is an experience you won't forget!

Come and share in the spirit of PTA!

November 11-13, 2016 in beautiful Saratoga Springs, NY.



Delegates from Units, Councils and Regions
are Invited to Attend:

120th Annual Convention

of the New York State PTA

November 11-13, 2016

**The Saratoga Hilton Hotel
Saratoga Springs City Center
Saratoga Springs, NY**

Bonnie M. Russell
President

Lelen Hoffmann
Secretary

CALL TO CONVENTION

Your Child Can Enter the Reflections Theme Search Contest!

By Amanda Tobias, Reflections Specialist



PTA REFLECTIONS
**Bringing family,
school and community
together
since 1969**

The search is on for the 2018-2019 PTA Reflections theme!

Your child could enter the next state winning theme, or even be a National winner.

Take the Plunge! Speak with your child about entering the 2018-2019 Theme Search!

The deadline is October 21, 2016. So don't delay!

NYS PTA will choose five themes to go to the National level. We will also recognize these five winning themes at the New York State PTA Convention in November.

On February 1, 2017, National PTA will choose one exceptional theme. This theme will inspire

creativity for the 2018-2019 Reflections program.

National PTA's Theme Search judges look for a focused and clear theme, appropriate for all grades, and applicable to all arts categories. Past themes are not considered.

The National Reflections theme winner will receive \$100.

National PTA will recognize the winner at the National PTA Convention in June 2017.

We look forward to receiving your child's entry! But hurry, the deadline is October 21.

Click [here](#) for the entry form, past Reflections themes and more information.

Resolutions and Bylaws: Countdown to Convention

By George Kimble, Bylaws Coordinator and Dana Platin, Resolutions Coordinator

The Advocacy Team is excited to be presenting two new resolutions for adoption this year.

Every PTA is encouraged to send at least one delegate to Convention.

We invite you to be a part of the discussion and the debate. Bring your passion and vow to be a champion for all children.

Click [here](#) to read more about our proposed resolutions.

One of the highlights of this year's Convention is a review and vote on changes to the NYS PTA bylaws.

We invite you to review these changes before Convention, and then vote on their adoption and/or amendment at Convention.

Click [here](#) to review our proposed bylaws amendments.



From the NYS PTA Resource Guide: Delegates should be sent [to Convention] with a "vote of confidence." This means the delegate is required to vote the unit's intentions on the resolution and can evaluate changes that are made on the Convention floor.

Summer Leadership Conference 2016



Did you miss SLC this year? You can still get workshop materials [here](#).

Check out highlights from Twitter and more photos [here](#).



Eric Robinson
@Erob1968
@NYSPTA Summer Conference2016 group pic...
6:54 PM - 23 Jul 2016 - Utica, NY, United States

Luva Alvarez
@The24hrmom
People volunteer when your PTA provides value-Deborah Walsh
@NYSPTA @LongndgeGCSD @GreecelRPTA #nysptasc16
10:54 AM - 24 Jul 2016 - Utica, NY, United States



Dana Suchow Platin
@DanaPlatin
Love this quote and strive to be the former, instead of the latter!
@NYSPTA @NationalPTA #NYSPTASLC2016 #leadership
2:19 PM - 23 Jul 2016

Cleo Gakshteyn
@CGakshteyn
Having a great time! @NYSPTA #nysptasc2016
3:04 PM - 23 Jul 2016



Kyle M Belokopitsky
@kbelokopitsky
So excited to support arts and music education! Welcome Vitamin L, teens from Ithaca! @NYSPTA #NYSPTASLC16
6:58 PM - 22 Jul 2016

Back to School Health and Safety

By Lucille Vitale, Wellness Coordinator

School is back in session. You and your children are getting used to their new 'back-to-school' routines.

With the start of school comes the long list of things we all need to think about. This list includes the most important, the health and safety of our children.

Things like:

- Are they getting enough sleep?
- Are they up to date on their vaccinations?
- How will they get to and from school each day?
- Are they eating nutritious foods at school?
- How heavy should their backpacks be?
- Are they adapting to their new surroundings and are these environments safe?

- Does the school adhere to a strict anti-bullying policy?
- Is their school meeting all safety standards, during school and after-school activities?

There always seems to be a list of things to think about and remember.

Each new activity they embark on brings a new checklist of safety measures to think about.

The task of knowing all this can be overwhelming!

Check out these helpful articles and back to school tips from:

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics \(AAP\)](#)
- [National Safety Council](#)
- [Back to school: The health, safety list](#)

These resources will help you manage your precious children's health and safety.

Wishing you a happy, healthy and safe school year!



Concerned About Lead in Your School's Water, Cyberbullying or Concussions from Team Sports Participation?

GET INVOLVED IN A PTA WELLNESS COMMITTEE!

By Anne Ehrlich, Health Specialist



Are you concerned about childhood obesity, lead in your school's water, cyberbullying, concussions from team sports participation, texting while driving, Zika or other health-related topics?

Your PTA's Wellness Committee is a place to start!

Committee activities could include guest speakers, educational events, age-appropriate classroom activities, and more.

Is your PTA missing a Wellness Committee? Reach out to your PTA leadership, and ask them to start one. You can volunteer to serve on the committee, or even be the committee chair!

There are great ideas on [NYS PTA's Wellness Toolkit](#) and [National PTA's Advocacy Toolkit](#) for wellness programs that you and your unit may be interested in.

It is not difficult to find ideas and facts on the internet. If possible, avoid commercial sites and choose reliable, fact-based sites, such as the [US Drug Enforcement Administration \(DEA\)](#) and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#),

the NYS [Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services \(OASAS\)](#), etc.

We look forward to hearing about your great ideas and wellness programs.

Click [here](#) for more details.



You Can Join PTA Online!

By *Lori Fontana, Membership Coordinator*

Do you want to become a member of your local PTA?

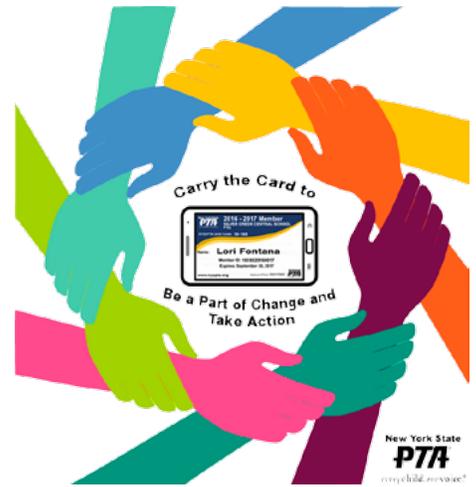
By clicking our [link](#) you can search by your school name and become a member. It's quick and easy!

If your school doesn't have a PTA, you can still become a PTA member by joining the Empire State PTSA [here](#).

[Empire State PTSA](#) is a statewide unit formed for people who may no longer be associated with their local school or PTA unit, or don't have a PTA in their school or community, and still want to advocate for children and youth across New York.

As a PTA member, you can take advantage of our member benefits. Check them out [here](#)!

Click [here](#) for more details.



Join SEPTA and Make a Difference

By *Joyce Cattani, Special Education Specialist*

One of the most important things you can do for your child is join your local PTA.

But have you also joined your local SEPTA (Special Education PTA)?

A SEPTA unit is a place for you and your family to meet others who face the same challenges that you do.

SEPTA provides resources and a collective voice not only for your child, but for all children.

But the most important reason to join SEPTA is that your special education family (siblings and extended family as well) has needs that are

unique. You and your family need a safe place where you can linger and talk. SEPTA offers a community that understands you and your child and wants to support you.

SEPTA can also be a place where students who experience difficulties in the classroom can learn leadership skills by becoming involved. Talk about a win-win situation.

So when you join your local PTA, seek out your local SEPTA. If there is none in your area consider starting one.

For these reasons and so many more, SEPTA needs your support now more than ever.

Stress and the Special Ed Parent

By *Joyce Cattani, Special Education Specialist*

It's the beginning of another school year and for most, it represents a fresh start, a new beginning, new teacher, new school, etc.

For special ed parents, it becomes much more. You become a case manager, nurse, therapist, teacher and, most importantly, an advocate. You work with special education teachers and providers. You need to understand the special education system and your rights under the law. All of this leads to stress.

Everybody deals with stress, but for special ed parents it can go to a new level.

Click [here](#) to read more.



Memorial in Nassau

By Pat Assortato, Nassau Region Director

On Friday, September 9, the Baldwin Foundation for Education dedicated a memorial for Past NYS PTA President Sheila Cohen, who passed away last September.

Attending the dedication were NYS PTA Vice President Judy Van Haaren, NYS PTA Secretary Helen Hoffman, Nassau Region Director Pat Assortato, Nassau Region Associate Director Barbara Reynolds, Nassau Region Legislation Events Chair and Baldwin resident Patrice Rachlin, and Nassau Region Membership Chair and Baldwin Council President Colette Carrion.



Taconic Region News

By Stacey Lee, Taconic Region Director

Taconic Region kicked off the year with our Fall Officer's Training on September 24, 2016.

NYS PTA Past President Maria DeWald spoke about the BOCES Arts and Education program and Field Support Coordinator Laurie Becker brought greetings from NYS PTA.

We have a group of members heading up to Saratoga in November for Convention.

We also have a Leg/Ed Breakfast planned for February; this is the first one Taconic will be hosting in many years. We are excited about adding this event and looking to do much more in the future.

Suffolk Region News

By Kathy Vento, Suffolk Region Director

Suffolk Region got off to a wonderful start this September.

We welcomed NYS PTA Executive Director Kyle McCauley Belokopitsky and NYS PTA 1st Vice President Gracemarie Rozea to our Membership kickoff.

They energized our members as we learned our new membership program from NYS PTA Membership Coordinator Lori Fontana. Thank you to all for coming.

On September 16 we offered our Arts and Education program.

We had over 50 artists and performers interacting with our members and their children.

Not only was this a learning adventure, it was a wonderful family experience.

We are gearing up for our Fall Conference October 27, where Kyle will once again make her way downstate as our keynote speaker and

also give a workshop on Hot Topics – Now & Future: Common Core, APPR, testing, where we stand and where we're going.

We will be sending our team to Saratoga Springs for the Annual Convention; we hope to see you there.



And the PARP Winner Is ...

By Stephanie Avidon, PARP Specialist

Congratulations to **Oceanside School #5 PTA** in Nassau Region for receiving the 2016 NYS PTA PARP Award for their program “Reading, Rocking & Rapping.”

Their two-week program for grades 1-6 focused on the power of storytelling in music and how music supports reading and learning.

Read more about their program [here](#).

Check out their videos:

- [What Do You Read School #5](#)
- [PARP 2016!!](#)
- [PARP 2016 FINALE](#)

Congratulations to the Region PARP Winners:

- **Evans Park Elementary PTA** (Central Hudson Region) – “Swinging into Reading”
- **Perkins School PTA** (Genesee Valley Region) – “Every Story Has A Hero”

- **Huth Road Elementary PTA** (Niagara Region) – “Take the lead. Get a book and read!”
- **Cattaraugus-Little Valley PTA** (Southwestern Region) – “Let’s Take Reading to New Heights”

- **Timber Point PTA** (Suffolk Region) – “Pirates and Mermaid Princesses: Shiver Me Timbers Point, It’s PARRRP”
- **Dodge Elementary PTA** (Western) – “Dodgecraft”



The Skin We Live In

By Milena Din, Diversity Coordinator

Have you ever heard a friend or someone you know tell a story about something they went through?

It is always possible to empathize with someone, but not really possible to feel like another person after something happens, unless you have been through it yourself.

After September 11 my husband would ride the train to New York City and he would get stared at a lot, and people would whisper. He did not know what train riders would say or think.

One day another gentleman riding the train had a box on his lap. The closed box had chemical labels on it. He held the box close. Everyone, including my husband, wondered about the box.

We are curious in nature and sometimes assume WE KNOW something. It is not always easy to know about someone UNLESS we get to know them.

“The skin we live in” every day may be a wheelchair, shyness, an illness, not fitting in, not having enough knowledge about something, not speaking English well or JUST BEING ourselves.

Acknowledging US as individuals is the most difficult thing to do sometimes. That’s why it is important to see US as individual contributors to our FAMILY and our SOCIETY. COLLECTIVELY we do GREAT THINGS.

DIVERSITY is among us all the time, everywhere we go.

Next time you are somewhere like the doctor’s office, the bank, or with your peers at school, pay attention to the uniqueness of your group.

You may know some of them; you may know what they value, their jobs, their heritage, their interests and hobbies.

If you DON’T regularly talk to someone, introduce yourself, even if they don’t know English!

Getting back to the gentleman with the box on the train.

As my husband and others got closer to him, curious to know what was in the box, they saw that the top of the box was slightly open.

It was full of books!

FALL EVENTS

NYS PTA REFLECTIONS ROADSHOW



This two week-long public access art exhibit features the original multimedia artwork of the 2015-2016 NYS PTA Reflections Award of Excellence and Award of Merit students.

Please email pta.office@nyspta.org if you would like to attend!

OCTOBER 15, 2016
Rochester, NY

NYS PTA 120TH ANNUAL CONVENTION



NOVEMBER 11-13, 2016
Saratoga Springs, NY

FALL AWARENESS

OCTOBER

[Domestic Violence Awareness Month](#)

[Eye Injury Prevention Month](#)

[Health Literacy Month](#)

[Home Eye Safety Month](#)

[National Bullying Prevention Month](#)

[National Dental Hygiene Month](#)

[National Down Syndrome Awareness Month](#)

[National Physical Therapy Month](#)

[Sudden Infant Death Syndrome \(SIDS\) Awareness Month](#)

October 2-8 [Mental Illness Awareness Week](#)

October 5 [International Walk to School Day](#)

October 6 [National Depression Screening Day](#)

October 12-20 [Bone and Joint Health Action Week](#)

October 15 [National Latino AIDS Awareness Day](#)

October 16-22 [International Infection Prevention Week](#)

October 16 [World Food Day](#)

October 17-21 [National Health Education Week](#)

October 19 [World Pediatric Bone and Joint Day](#)

October 22 [International Stuttering Awareness Day](#)

October 23-31 [Red Ribbon Week \(Drug Free Youth\)](#)

NOVEMBER

[National Healthy Skin Month](#)

November 19 [Great American Smokeout](#)

November 19 [International Survivors of Suicide Day](#)

DECEMBER

[Safe Toys and Gifts Month](#)

December 1 [World AIDS Day](#)

December 4-12 [National Influenza Vaccination Week](#)

December 4-10 [National Handwashing Awareness Week](#)

UPCOMING DEADLINES

OCTOBER

October 21 [Reflections Theme Search submissions](#) due to NYS PTA Office

October 31 First membership payment due to NYS PTA Office

DECEMBER

December 15 [Jenkins Memorial Scholarship applications](#) due to NYS PTA Office

FOR OUR LATEST INFORMATION, CONNECT WITH NYS PTA:

