Purposes of PTA

To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, places of worship, and throughout the community.

To raise the standards of home life.

To advocate for laws that further the education physical and mental health, welfare, and safety of children and youth.

To promote the collaboration and engagement of families and educators in the education of children and youth.

To engage the public in united efforts to secure the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being of all children and youth; and

To advocate for fiscal responsibility regarding public tax dollars in public education funding.

Utah PTA Mission Statement

Utah PTA will help every child realize his full potential and will:

**Advocate:**
Support and speak on behalf of children and youth, and

**Involve:**
Encourage positive involvement in all facets of a child’s life, and

**Develop:**
Assist in developing skills to raise and protect children and youth.

National PTA Mission Statement

The Mission of PTA is three-fold:

To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children;

To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children; and

To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table of Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My Critical Information At-A-Glance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah PTA Legislative Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah PTA Positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Points To Remember</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Legislative Vice President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Legislative Vice President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region Legislative Vice President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region Directors, Council and Local Presidents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah PTA Director of Advocacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Budget Requests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah PTA Leadership Convention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah PTA Business and Resolutions Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah PTA Advocacy Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah PTA Day at the Capitol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet the Candidates Night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Organize a Meet the Candidates Night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah PTA Member-To-Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy Action Plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Utah PTA Legislative Action Committee (LAC) .................. 23
Working with Policy Makers ........................................ 24
Developing / Sustaining a Relations with a Legislator ......... 25
Utah PTA Weekly Bill Sheets ........................................ 26
PTA Guide to the Legislative Process ............................. 27
How a Bill Becomes a Law ........................................... 29
Legislative Bills - An Explanation ................................. 30
Using the Internet for Legislative Advocacy ........................ 31
Procedure for Submitting Utah PTA Resolutions .............. 32
  What is a Resolution? ............................................. 32
  How is a Resolution Processed? ................................ 32
  What is Background Material? ................................ 32
  Deadline Information: ........................................... 33
  Emergency Resolutions ......................................... 33
Reaching Out Beyond the PTA Circle ............................. 34
Caucus and Mass Meetings ......................................... 34
Procedures for Handling Motions .................................. 35
Role of the National Legislative Chair ............................ 37
The National PTA Member-To-Member Network .............. 37
IRS Rules on Lobbying by Nonprofit Organizations .......... 38
State and National PTA Resources ............................... 39
Glossary .................................................................. 40
Utah PTA Facts ....................................................... 41
Be A PTA Professional ............................................... 42
Utah Regions Map ...................................................... 43
What is a Commission? ............................................... 44
Information on Commissions ....................................... 45
My Critical Information At-A-Glance

Local President ______________________ Phone ______________________

Email ____________________________________________

Region # ____________________________ Council____________________

Council President ______________________ Phone ______________________

Email ____________________________________________

Region Director ______________________ Phone ______________________

Email ____________________________________________

Principal ________________________________

School Address ____________________________________________

Phone ___________________________ Fax __________________________

Email ____________________________________________

My Board:

Name __________________________ Position __________________________

Phone __________________________ Email __________________________

Name __________________________ Position __________________________

Phone __________________________ Email __________________________

Name __________________________ Position __________________________

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# Legislative Resources

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*Legislative Handbook – Updated 2018*
The Purpose and Mission of PTA state that a primary focus of PTA is “to speak on behalf of children and youth” and “to secure adequate laws for [their] care and protection...” Legislative work for children and youth must be a unified effort of local members with Council, Region, and Utah PTA officers.

Each member of PTA has an important place in PTA advocacy. Utah PTA and National PTA resolutions are the corner pieces of our work. The Utah PTA Board of Directors and Legislative Action Committee form the framework.

Each Region, Council, and Local PTA has an important part of Advocating for All children.

The following pages provide suggestions and explanations on how to advocate for the children in your school. Your part must reflect your members, yet it must be similar enough to mesh together with other PTAs within the Utah PTA framework.

A change can be initiated when Utah PTA or National PTA recognizes a need and rallies the local PTAs and members to bring about statewide changes to benefit our children. Any member, with the support of their local PTA, can begin the process by submitting resolutions for adoption at the annual PTA Convention.

All Utah PTA Positions are based on PTA Purposes, Mission, resolutions, and existing position statements. Resolutions are adopted at the annual Utah PTA Legislative Business & Resolutions Convention, where the membership is represented.

Other organizations and lobbyists speak for business, the elderly, teachers, higher education, etc. PTA considers and works only for what is in the best interest of all children. With our diverse membership, individuals may be asked to advocate for issues or positions with which they personally disagree. If a person feels he cannot support a PTA position, he may remain silent. It is inappropriate to express a differing position as a PTA representative.
What are the National Standards?

The National Standards for Family-School Partnerships are voluntary guidelines to strengthen parent and family involvement on behalf of children in schools and other programs. The six standards and their quality indicators provide PTAs, schools, and communities with the components that are needed for highly effective family-school involvement programs.

PTA leaders and all those interested in more effective family/school/community connections will find the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships to be a valuable resource and catalyst for action.

What are the National Standards?

1. Welcoming All Families Into The School Community
   Families are active participants in the life of the school and feel welcomed, valued and connected to each other, to school staff and to what students are learning and doing in class.

2. Communicating Effectively
   Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way and meaningful communication about student learning.

3. Supporting Student Success
   Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students’ learning and healthy development, both at home and at school and have regular opportunities that will support their success.

4. Speaking Up For Every Child
   Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

5. Sharing Power
   Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence and create policies, practices and programs.

6. Collaborating With Community
   Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families and staff to expand learning opportunities, community services and civic participation.

Background

Our nation acknowledged the important role of parent involvement through its enactment of the 8th National Education Goal:

Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional and academic growth of children.

Utah PTA supports this goal. The standards were designed to raise the level of expectation about how family-school involvement programs can improve student achievement and life success by engaging families in true partnership with educators and community leaders.

How Were the Standards Developed?

The standards were developed by the National PTA in collaboration with parent involvement researchers and other national leaders. They are endorsed by more than 30 professional education and family-school
involvement organizations. The standards clearly delineate those practices that have been shown to lead to success and high-quality parent involvement programs. The standards were developed to be a practical tool for meeting the threefold purpose of the national standards which is:

1. To promote meaningful parent and family participation
2. To raise awareness regarding the components of effective programs
3. To provide guidelines for schools that wish to improve their programs

How Can My PTA Use These Standards?
Before you begin to develop new or improve on existing family-school involvement programs, form a committee or action team including all of the stakeholders—parents, teachers, administrators, support staff and community leaders. Be sure everyone involved understands the group's purpose: to recognize the importance of parent and family involvement, review the standards, look broadly at current programs or practices at your school and make recommendations about what steps are needed to initiate positive change.

Developing genuine collaboration is critical. The views of all stakeholders should be considered and valued and no one group should control the outcomes. Establishing trust and a true partnership will take time, but the extra effort is well worth the lasting benefits that can be gained. Meaningful change requires thoughtful, incremental steps. Laying a solid foundation can make all the difference in the final outcomes and success of your programs.

Creating an Action Plan
When parents, educators and community leaders make parent involvement a mutual goal, they can begin to work together as a team to create an action plan for reaching and maintaining the standards. Give each step adequate attention to ensure the overall effectiveness of your plan. Set realistic and achievable goals. Remember: Success Breeds Success. Accomplishing obtainable goals and then setting additional ones works better than reaching too high and trying to achieve too much in the beginning.

When implementing your action plan, consider local needs, priorities and the demographics of your school and community. Involve those who will be instrumental in carrying out the plan to help develop the steps or procedures to implement it. This uses a bottom-up rather than top-down team approach which allows for greater support and cooperation from everyone involved.

Family involvement should not be seen as an “add-on” program feature, but rather as an essential component in the ongoing goal of improved student success. In order to be most effective, the family-school involvement plan should be fully integrated into the overall school or program improvement process.

Making Progress
Once the groundwork is laid and all stakeholders understand the value of the partnership, then redefining, reshaping and “scaling up” planned activities and goals maintains the momentum of program change. As noted, family involvement is a process, not merely a series of “one shot” activities or plans carried out and then retired. It is crucial that the standards be implemented in an ongoing pattern of planning, action and evaluation on a consistent basis. Each measurable success fosters a pattern of continual, meaningful partnership.
### Key Points To Remember

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Approach</th>
<th>Take a positive approach and build on the commendable practices that already exist in your school or programs. Accommodate diverse populations. Consider the needs of all families and plan meetings and structure activities to best involve everyone.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involve All</td>
<td>Involve all the stakeholders—parents, teachers, administrators, support staff and community members. Enlist the full participation of those who will implement the program or activity to help design the action plan prior to launching the program.</td>
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<td>Provide Training</td>
<td>Involve school or program support staff, as well as educators and administrators, in the process. Provide program training for parents, staff and administrators as needed to implement the action plan.</td>
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<td>Offer Assistance</td>
<td>Offer PTA assistance. Encourage your PTA members to work closely with the school or program administrators to be an effective team model for implementing the action plan and facilitating family-school involvement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce the truth that family and community involvement is more than fundraising or collecting donations for projects and activities.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Local Legislative Vice President

Duties

Each local PTA should coordinate with the Council and Region legislative contacts to implement Utah PTA programs.

- Submit a legislative budget for approval by your board to be included in the yearly budget (see page 17)
- Be well informed in order to educate your local Board and local membership. *Most legislative information will come to you through your local PTA president.* Make arrangements with your president to receive legislative information in a timely way.

1. Attend legislative trainings at:
   - Utah PTA Advocacy Conference
   - Utah PTA Legislative Conference
   - PTA Day at the Capitol
   - Region and Council Legislative meetings
2. Study legislative information in national, state, region, and council mailings and publications.
3. Follow issues in the media
4. Use *Utah PTA Weekly Bill Sheets* found at [www.utahpta.org](http://www.utahpta.org)
5. Use the Internet as a resource
6. Attend local school board meetings
7. Attend school council meetings
8. Join Utah PTA Member-to-Member network

- Communicate regularly with your local board of directors

1. Request a time at each local PTA board meeting to train and educate your board members
2. Inform your local board about legislative activities and legislative issues
3. Present information on current political issues and Utah PTA positions and priorities
4. Request their assistance with the Utah PTA Legislative Network and train them to function effectively
5. Organize your part of the Utah PTA Legislative Network

- Meet with other local legislative vice presidents in your Council to plan legislative activities

1. Obtain a list of local legislative vice presidents in your council
2. Attend Council and Region meetings as requested
3. Communicate with your council legislative contact to decide how best to plan for your area, remembering that some activities may work best on a region basis
4. Attend Meet the Candidates Nights
5. Attend other legislative activities in your region or council
- Maintain a positive working relationship with policy makers in your school district, and city

1. Legislators  
2. Superintendents  
3. Administrators  
4. School Board Members  
5. Community Council Members  
6. Mayors and city officials

Resources

- Utah PTA Presidents Handbook, Legislative Section  
- Annual Resources for PTAs, National PTA, Legislative Section  
- Our Children (National PTA Magazine)  
- Utah PTA website: [www.utahpta.org](http://www.utahpta.org)  
- National PTA website: [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)
Council Legislative Vice President

Duties

Each Council should have a board member responsible for legislative activity. The council plays a vital role in relaying information to local PTAs and in assisting both the region and local PTAs in legislative activities.

- Submit a legislative budget to your Board for approval as part of the yearly budget (see page 17)
- Be well informed in order to educate your Board and assist local PTAs. Make arrangements with your council president to receive the legislative information in a timely way.

1. Attend legislative trainings at:
   - Utah PTA Advocacy Conference
   - Utah PTA Legislative Conference
   - PTA Day at the Capitol
   - Region and Council meetings
2. Study all legislative information in state and national mailings and publications
3. Follow issues in the media
4. Use Utah PTA Weekly Bill Sheets found at www.utahpta.org
5. Use the Internet as a resource (see page 30)
6. Join Utah PTA Member-to-Member network

- Communicate legislative information to your Board of Directors and local legislative vice president.

1. Request time at each Council PTA Board meeting to train and educate your PTA Board members and locals concerning PTA issues and legislative work. Be well prepared, brief, and to the point
2. Relay information received in trainings and mailings
3. Request assistance of your Board and membership with the Utah PTA Legislative Network, “Meet the Candidates Nights” (see pages 18-20), and other local legislative activities
4. Compile a list of local legislative vice presidents in your council - share with all locals in your council
5. Provide training to local PTAs who are not able to attend Utah PTA trainings and/or to provide additional assistance
6. Relay current legislative information to local PTAs
7. Plan a brief training session for those who are members of the legislative network. Explain the process and what is expected of them. Offer assistance when they have questions about issues or processes
Encourage communication with policy makers.

1. Provide information to contact legislators and school board members—phone numbers and addresses. Your county clerk can provide the information
2. Write letters from your PTA Board of Directors to policy makers on PTA issues, request the approval of the Board, and, if they approve, have them sign the letters
3. Provide issues information in local newsletters
4. You may reprint articles from Utah PTA and National PTA publications. Acknowledge the author, publication, and issue
5. Write your own article indicating how the issue impacts your area
6. Encourage members to vote and to communicate with policy makers about PTA issues

Maintain a positive working relationship with policy makers in your area.

1. Legislators
2. Superintendents
3. School Board Members
4. Administrators
5. Attend or serve on your School Community Council
6. A member of the Council Board should attend school board meetings at least once a month to provide PTA input to the board and relay information to the council and local PTAs
Region Legislative Vice President

Duties

The Region legislative contact, in cooperation with Region Officers, assists Utah PTA and Local Members.

- Submit a legislative budget to your Board for approval as part of the yearly budget (see page 17)
- Be well informed in order to assist Council and local legislative vice presidents.
- Sit on the Utah PTA Legislative Action Committee (LAC) representing your Region
- Make arrangements with regions director to receive all information in a timely manner.
- Attend legislative trainings at:
  1. Utah PTA Advocacy Conference
  2. Utah PTA Leadership Convention
  3. PTA Day at the Capitol
- Study all legislative information in state and national mailings and publications
  1. Follow issues in the media
  2. Use Utah PTA Weekly Bill Sheets found at www.utahpta.org
  3. Use the Internet as a resource
  4. Assign someone from your region to be on the State Legislative Action Committee if possible
- Communicate with Council (or Local) Legislative Vice Presidents
  1. Compile a list of Council and Local Legislative Vice Presidents in your region
  2. Provide training (Utah PTA can assist at your request)
  3. Relay legislative information promptly
- Meet with Legislative Vice Presidents in your region to plan legislative activities
  1. “Meet the Candidates Nights” (see pages 18-20)
  2. Organize your part of the Utah PTA Legislative Network
  3. Other legislative activities in your region
- Maintain a positive working relationship with policy makers in your region.
  1. Legislators
  2. Superintendents
  3. Administrators
  4. School Board Members
  5. Attend school board meetings on a regular basis
Region Directors, Council and Local Presidents

Duties

- Relay legislative information as quickly as possible to legislative contacts and legislative vice presidents. Unlike some information you receive via emails, legislative information must often be acted on quickly for it to have any effect. Plan a way for your legislative people to receive information promptly. You might leave a legislative envelope in the PTA box at school where you deposit information for the legislative vice president to pick up regularly. Legislative information could be mailed or faxed where budgets and facilities permit. You are the link for your legislative people to receive information to act and be informed.

- Provide a regular time in your Board meeting for a legislative report. One of the main purposes of PTA is to be advocates for children. It is as important as the other activities that take place in a PTA. A good deal of information, training, and action can take place in five or ten minutes at each meeting.

- Support child advocacy work in your local PTA. Make it part of your annual budget and plan of work for the year. Encourage and assist legislative contacts and vice presidents in legislative activities. (See page 16)

- Attend legislative training offered by Council, Region, or State

- Make resources available to legislative vice presidents and contacts

Utah PTA Director of Advocacy

Duties

The Utah PTA Director of Advocacy is under the direction of the President and Board of Directors and is responsible for interpreting and implementing the Utah PTA Legislative program and activities. A Legislative Action Committee (LAC), directed and chaired by the Director of Advocacy, is made up of elected Executive Committee members and current commissioners in the PTA areas of focus, as well as appointed members representing all levels of PTA. Activities and actions by the Director of Advocacy are representative of resolutions prepared, presented, and voted upon by the general membership at general meetings in the Annual Advocacy Conference. LAC members represent these positions in their daily activities.

The LAC coordinates Utah PTA legislative activities during the Utah Legislative session and plans and coordinates two Utah PTA yearly, state-wide membership events.

1. Utah PTA Advocacy Conference, usually held in October (see page 18)
2. PTA Day at the Capitol, usually held in February (see page 19). All Utah PTA Board members are invited and encouraged to attend and receive current information on topics of the day and legislative issues, and to develop a familiarity with legislators and the legislative process.
Legislative Budget Requests

Before your PTA executive committee prepares an annual budget, submit a proposed budget to carry out legislative activities for your PTA. List the needs and requested amount and give the list to your president and treasurer. Effective legislative work requires some training and current updates on legislation. Be certain to budget for both, as well as providing a means to meet and communicate with policy makers.

Listed below are items to consider when preparing a budget.

- Utah PTA Advocacy Conference, usually held in October
  - Registration, travel, and accommodations (when applicable)
  - Legislative training for you or your designee

- Utah PTA Leadership Convention, usually held in May
  - Registration, travel and accommodations (when applicable)
  - Legislative Vice President/Contact
  - President/President-elect
  - Other Board members

- Utah PTA Day at the Capitol, usually held in February
  - Registration, travel and accommodations (when applicable)
  - Legislative Vice President/designee
  - President/President-elect
  - Other Board members

- Meetings with legislators prior to legislative session
  - Open house or luncheon to meet legislators
  - Printed materials, invitations, etc.
  - Food, where applicable
  - 3 x 5 cards
  - Small water bottles
  - Pens
  - Table coverings

- Meet the Candidates Night, usually held in even-numbered years
  - Mailings and Advertising
  - Printed information/Programs
  - Rent for facilities, where applicable
  - 3 x 5 cards

- Small water bottles
- Pens
- Table coverings

- Special Advocacy Projects determined by your PTA: Utah PTA Guidelines

  - PTAs, in their advocacy efforts, are often involved in school bond elections or PTAs may advocate to get a crosswalk or crossing guard, etc. PTAs are involved in "Meet the Candidate" events for School Boards and other elected officials. (If there is a "Meet the Candidate" event, all candidates for the positions properly registered for inclusion on the ballot must be invited to the event.)

  - Advocacy efforts often require printing and distribution of materials and community meetings. Before PTAs become involved in any advocacy effort, contact the Principal to determine if the District has any policy in place regarding distribution of material or the use of the school building.

  - Absent District Policy:
    1. If a Newsletter, email, website, blog, etc. are the communication tools of the PTA, it is permissible to use the tool to share information on issues or events regarding any advocacy effort.
    2. Normal distribution methods used for communication are permitted.

NOTE: It is not permissible to campaign for, support or oppose an individual using the name of PTA.
The business meeting is open to all PTA members. We encourage all Board members to attend. Please plan for this in your time schedule.

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!!

During the annual Utah PTA Leadership Convention, a business session is held to move forward any business which the Utah PTA needs to conduct. This may include changes to the Utah PTA Bylaws as well as consideration of new resolutions. Resolutions which have been accomplished or outdated are retired. Each local PTA is allowed five voting delegates to represent their PTA as a whole and one delegate for each 25 members in their local PTA. Delegates will be designated by the local president when submitting the convention registration materials. All business conducted at the PTA Leadership Convention is open to anyone who wishes to attend, but only voting delegates are allowed to speak to or vote on any issues. Voting at the PTA Leadership Convention requires a current voter delegate card and a current membership card.

Business conducted at all meetings of Utah PTA strictly follows Robert’s Rules of Order. A summary of the rules of order of the convention appear in the convention program and are voted upon by the delegates present.

The resolutions passed at the convention (and those passed in past conventions) determine the actions of Utah PTA during the legislative session and at other times. This meeting is a critical time for our membership to ensure that their voice is heard and that the position of their local PTAs and their membership is known on the issues. It is the responsibility of the delegates to be informed as to the will of their membership on the issues being considered at the convention and to then be active participants in moving forward the business of Utah PTA. It is a tremendous responsibility and wonderful opportunity to act in the best interests of children and families of our state.

Utah PTA Advocacy Conference

Utah PTA annually conducts an Advocacy Conference in October, which all PTA members are invited to attend. A short general meeting is followed by workshops of current relevance in Utah PTA’s areas of focus, including community involvement, education, family life, health, individual development, safety, secondary schools, and trust lands. A Utah PTA Business and Resolutions meeting may follow workshops. The conference is under the direction of the Director of Advocacy with the assistance of the Legislative Action Committee, and presenters include Utah PTA Board members as well as outside experts.
Utah PTA Day at the Capitol

Utah PTA annually holds a conference in February, entitled PTA Day at the Capitol, which all PTA members are invited to attend. The conference is prepared and facilitated by the Director of Advocacy, Utah PTA Commissioners and the Legislative Action Committee with assistance from other Board of Directors members.

The conference is held at the Utah Capitol building and activities include a general meeting, updates on bills we are following by Utah PTA Board members, opportunities for attendees to become familiar with Capitol facilities, committee meetings, and sessions of the House and Senate, and lunch with your legislators.

A student track is offered to students of PTSA at secondary schools. They have the opportunity to have a debate and meet with legislators and observe senate and house meetings.

Meet the Candidates Night

Candidates appreciate a forum where they can publicize their views on the issues. PTA can provide this valuable service by organizing “Meet the Candidates Night” programs for communities. It is best, when organizing these events, to combine with other schools and organizations such as League of Women Voters, or your school district, and local chambers of commerce. Consider planning with more than one high school and include the elementary and junior high/middle schools which feed into them. The legislative vice presidents from each local school could serve on the planning committee.

A Region or Council could initiate the plan and include their entire area. Regions should decide, with Councils and local PTAs early in the school year, if they will initiate the activity or offer assistance to PTAs to organize them on a smaller scale.

Utah PTA encourages “Meet the Candidates Night” but leaves it to the discretion of each PTA. Sometimes, in their enthusiasm, candidates may try to force PTAs to have “Meet the Candidates Night” or may want to control the arrangements. It is a PTA meeting and PTA controls and conducts it.
How to Organize a Meet the Candidates Night

- Decide on the group to be involved. It could be a region, the area encompassing several high schools, one high school, or a community.

- Invite the Legislative Vice Presidents from the area to serve on the planning committee.

- Determine the time, date, and location. October is the recommended month.

- Obtain information on candidates for each office through the county clerk. Be sure to include ALL candidates for each office. This is required by PTA’s tax-exempt status.

- Include local and state school board candidates. School boards play a vital role in the lives and education of our children.

- Plan an outline for the evening. The following is one suggestion:

1. Open House
   - Begin 30 minutes prior to the general meeting
   - Allow one-on-one conversation
   - Give candidates a place to display and distribute information in a room or hallway near the general meeting location

2. General Meetings — Plan an agenda.
   - Welcome, greetings, introductions by PTA, flag ceremony, and reverence
   - Moderator explains the rules and process to be followed
   - Opening statements, questions and answers, and summary statements
     a) Opening Statements—two (2) minutes for each candidate
     b) Prepared Questions—one (1) minute response from each candidate
     c) (The committee prepares questions on issues impacting your community. Include some questions on education and children’s issues.) Each candidate should be allowed to respond to all questions pertaining to their office.
     d) Audience Questions—one (1) minute response from each candidate. It is wise to have these questions written on cards (passed out as the audience enters), collected, sorted, and then given to the moderator. This avoids duplication and inappropriate confrontations.
     e) Summary Statements—allow a two (2) minute statement by each candidate.

- Prepare and send invitations to every candidate and request an RSVP

- Advertise the event through local newspapers, businesses, churches, and schools. Be sure to invite the entire community
Follow-through with arrangements
1. Make arrangements for building use and room set up
2. Arrange for a moderator. A moderator must act professionally. Editorial comments are inappropriate and could violate the PTA tax-exempt status
3. Arrange for time keepers and time cards to help candidates judge their time
4. Arrange for people to assist in question card collection and sorting
5. Contact candidates who have not responded to the RSVP

After the event follow up with a thank you to all candidates who participated

Additional suggestions:
1. Have a youth chorus perform at the beginning and end to bring parents to the event. Be sure they are old enough to be respectful of speakers.
2. Provide a short introduction of candidates with breakout sessions to meet candidates in “your own geographical area.”
3. Choose locations that are not too large. Try school cafeterias, small auditoriums, or classrooms instead of high school auditoriums.
4. Meet before the school year begins to plan a basic outline of the activity.
5. Make reservations with the school (or other facility) in September and include principals (or their designated representative) in all planning meetings.

Contact Utah PTA office for further assistance: 801-261-3100

Utah PTA Member-To-Member

Utah PTA networking for what’s best for our kids

Every member of Utah PTA can belong to the Member-to-Member network. As a member, you will receive interim up dates, advance notice of legislative events, and updates as well as “call to action” during the session. You will have the opportunity to really make a difference in the lives of our children as you act.

When an Alert goes out TIME IS CRITICAL. Every member of the network is vital for the process to be effective. The constituent contacts with legislators are very effective when you have established a relationship with your legislators. The legislative network is activated by the Utah PTA Director of Advocacy and the executive committee which begins the process by e-mailing members of the Member-to-Member group. This email will be very specific as to what action the PTA has determined (based on our resolutions) is needed.

This should be a short, simple assignment, not a long, arduous task.

We ask that you contact your legislator or committee members with information and action desired. Talking points will be sent with the alert and we ask that you read them so that you understand the issue and then in your own words make the contact.
Advocacy Action Plan

The following action items help you set the stage for effective advocacy:

- Determine the Issues. Know the pros and cons of your issue and what information is a valuable, forthcoming, or lacking.

- Build a Volunteer Network. Change occurs as a result of grassroots. Determine where you are likely to get support and what you will need to bring these supporters on board.

- Organize Around Goals. Break issues into short-term, sustainable goals: They should be action-oriented, clearly defined, and focused on what can be accomplished.

- Identify Targets and Tactics. Describe the goals and objectives for each activity you plan to undertake, the audience it is intended to influence, and the range of potential outcomes.

- Build Coalitions—Maximize Resources. The more people working on your issue, the greater the chances of getting what you want. Coalitions can maximize support and increase your strength.

- Develop a Message that Resonates. Message is the disciplined delivery of PTA core beliefs that inform the public how the issues affect their families and communities.

- Use the Media. Develop relationships with media by becoming a credible source of information, staging newsworthy events, releasing information, and always telling the truth and share facts.

- Communicate with Decision Makers. The more decision makers you contact and persuade with your message, the better your chances are of achieving PTA priorities.

- Use Utah PTA and National PTA Resources. There is a wealth of information Utah PTA and National PTA have available for your use.

- Put it all Together. Create a written plan in which you identify PTA goals, organizational capacity, target audiences, potential allies, opposition, and the activities to be pursued.

- Get Out There and Just Do It!

(Adapted from National PTA's *Guide to Effective Advocacy*)
The Utah PTA Legislative Action Committee (LAC) consists of the Utah PTA Executive Committee, Utah PTA Commissioners, and appointees. We welcome all PTA members who want to be involved in LAC. All members are approved by the Board of Directors. The LAC is a recommending body to the Executive Committee and the Utah PTA Board of Directors.

The LAC meets monthly except during the legislative session, when they meet weekly.

**During The Legislative Interim**

During the time between regular legislative sessions, LAC members are assigned to attend legislative task force, state committee, and coalition meetings. LAC members represent Utah PTA on many committees, are assigned to commissions, and speak for PTA issues and positions under the direction of the Director of Advocacy. Members of LAC bring pertinent information back to the LAC. Issues are explained and discussed so that strategies to obtain desired outcomes can be determined. The recommended positions may be to “support”, “oppose” or "reserve position" of draft legislation in order to move PTA work along. Positions on proposed legislation are recommended to the Utah PTA Executive Committee and Utah PTA Board of Directors and are referenced to current resolutions.

**When The Legislature Is In Session**

Utah PTA Commissioners, with the assistance of LAC members, monitor every committee meeting in which children's issues are discussed and attend “floor time” in both houses whenever they are in session. Every bill is reviewed by the Director of Advocacy, and bills requiring PTA attention are assigned to a Commissioner. The Commissioner, with the help of LAC members, follows the bills and recommends positions. Recommended positions are discussed and voted on by LAC members. The Executive Committee will ratify, or not, the positions in an executive session following each LAC meeting.

Utah PTA takes official positions on bills only after they are officially printed and numbered. Official positions are based on PTA Purposes, mission, existing positions, and resolutions approved by the delegates at the annual Utah PTA Leadership Convention and Advocacy Conference (see page 17). Legislation can change quickly and often does between discussion drafts and numbered bills, thus making a change of PTA position necessary as well.

To serve on the LAC, contact the Utah PTA Director of Advocacy through the Utah PTA office.
Working with Policy Makers

Policy makers who represent you are interested in your views and opinions. PTAs inform policy makers about PTA priorities and positions and request support of those positions.

It is important to remember that policy makers respond best when treated with dignity and respect. You will not always agree with a policy maker on all issues. Remember it is important to maintain a positive working relationship.

- Educate yourself and understand the issues.
- Introduce yourself early and in person, if possible.
- Be friendly and maintain contact. Do not wait for a crisis.
- Understand the pressures being applied from many different groups.
- Avoid cynicism about public officials.
- Try to be positive. You can be positive and assertive without being combative.
- Listen to their point of view.
- When you disagree, focus the disagreement on the issue not the individual.
- Be practical and reasonable in presenting your arguments.
- Be consistent and loyal to your position.
- Be discreet, trustworthy, and dependable.
- Be patient. Change sometimes comes a piece at a time and often requires years of education before a need is recognized and action taken.
- Always thank public officials and contacts for their time and service.
Developing / Sustaining a Relation with a Legislator

Know that legislators are people, just like the rest of us!

Schedule an appointment to introduce yourself to your legislator in his/her own local district office. Take a PTA specific brochure and a business card if you have one. Follow up with a “thank you for the visit” letter.

Put your legislator on your PTA mailing list. Send him/her copies of your publications, brochures, pamphlets, etc.

Do your homework: Know the issues of importance to your legislator. Know his/her committee, special awards, history of involvement with your facility for the past several years, family make-up, business dealings, etc.

Offer to help your legislator:
- Provide research materials on issues
- Give testimony on legislation
- Conduct voter registration drives
- Set up “meet the candidate” nights
- Bring constituents to the Capitol

Things your legislators can do to help you:
- Sponsor bills helping the children of the State
- Send out copies of bills
- Judge special events at your school
- Appoint you to long-term legislative committees

Visit your legislator at the Capitol

Never stop trying to develop a positive relationship with your legislator. If he/she is defeated, immediately start all over again with the newly elected legislator.
Utah PTA Weekly Bill Sheets

Utah PTA Weekly Bill Sheets are a listing of bills Utah PTA is following during the current session, and the PTA position taken on each bill. This and other legislative information can be found on the Utah PTA website: www.utahpta.org.

When the session is over in early March, a final report, including the list of bills PTA followed and the final standing of each bill, will be posted on the Utah PTA website. The format is as follows:
The Utah State Legislative Session begins the third Monday of January and runs for 45 days, ending in early March. Hundreds of bills are introduced each legislative session. Each bill will go through at least some of the steps described below. You have a chance to make a difference and let your views be heard when you understand this process.

A bill is the first step in changing or making law. The ideas for bills can come from a citizen, legislative interim committee, individual legislator, task force, state or local committee, corporation, the Governor, a state agency... there are many possibilities.

A bill must be introduced by a current member of the legislature. Often a Senator or Representative is asked by an individual or a group to “sponsor” a bill. Analysts and attorneys in the Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel write the bills requested by the legislators. If a Senator sponsors the bill, it is a Senate Bill (SB); or it is a House Bill (HB), if sponsored by a Representative. The SB (HB) appears before the bill number and is used when referring to a bill. A Senate Bill must pass in the Senate before it can go to the House and a House Bill must first pass in the House.

As the legislative session begins, bills are “introduced” (the number, sponsor, and title are read) during floor time. This is called the “First Reading” of the bill. Actions “on the floor” are those that take place when the House or the Senate is in session and members of each body are assembled together in their respective chambers. Citizens may view proceedings from the gallery or online.

The ‘gatekeeper’ process of assigning bills to committees is performed by the Rules Committee. The House and the Senate each have a Rules Committee which determines which bills will be heard and when bills come to the floor. They also determine the order in which they are heard. This committee differs from other committees in that it is exempt from requiring agendas to be posted 24 hours in advance and no public testimony is allowed.

Most bills result in laws that will cost money to implement. All bills are given a “fiscal note” by the office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst. Legislative leadership usually sets a dollar limit on bills with fiscal notes. Bills which exceed the limit or have large fiscal notes tend to be held from final voting until late in the legislative session. In the final days, the state budget is being set and members of each chamber declare their priority bills. Those bills are released for floor debate.

It is difficult to get a copy of a bill before it has been “numbered.” After they are printed by the legislature’s printing office, you can get a copy on the legislative website (www.le.utah.gov). As bills are amended they are printed on a different color, and a current date and time are added to avoid confusion. The website is updated regularly as well.

The first formal consideration of a bill is in a Standing Committee. When a bill goes to a Standing Committee, the Chair of each Standing Committee has the power to decide which bills will be heard, when, and in what order. Bills can be moved to the top of the Standing Committee agenda by motion of a committee member, but the motion has to be passed by a majority. Schedules for these meetings can be found online at www.le.utah.gov. The agendas (which bills they will consider) must, by law, be posted at least 24 hours in advance. These agendas are found near the Senate and House Chambers.
Any citizen may request the opportunity to speak on a bill in Standing Committee meetings when the bill is on the agenda. Most committee chairs will ask for input from the public, but you could also make your request to the committee chair before the meeting. Sometimes, sign-up lists for public input are provided when substantial public input is anticipated. **Only members of the Utah PTA Legislative Action Committee, under direction of the Utah PTA Director of Advocacy may speak for Utah PTA.** Any citizen can speak for themselves.

If a bill is “passed out favorably” from the Standing Committee, the next step depends on whether it is a House or Senate Bill. The Senate debates and votes on bills brought to them from committee. This is the bill’s “Second Reading.” The House only votes to adopt the Standing Committee’s report on the “Second Reading” without debate. The actual floor consideration will take place later. In both chambers, debate happens in the “Third Reading.” A variety of actions may take place.

A good time to discuss a bill with legislators is just before it comes up in committee (contact committee members) or before debate on the floor (contact any member in the House or the Senate). **This is when Utah PTA usually requests help from PTA members through the Utah PTA Legislative Member-to-Member Network (see page 20).** Your job is to request support for the PTA position and tell them why their support is important to the children they represent. Always be brief, to the point, and courteous.

Any time the House or the Senate is in session, you can send in a message or request to speak with any legislator. The doormen will provide special notepaper for your request and will deliver your note. If your request is to talk to a legislator, be prepared to wait because business is taking place. When House members can get away they will try to come out and talk. Senators usually will request a meeting at a later time.

Messages can be left with telephone operators to relay to legislators. Leave your name, phone number, and a very brief message (House of Representatives, 801-538-1029; Senate, 801-538-1035). You can also speak with their intern.

A bill that passes the body where it originated is sent to the other house, where the process is repeated. Bills amended and passed in the second house must go back to the originating body for approval and final passage on the floor. Once passed by both legislative bodies, bills are reprinted as “enrolled” bills and then go to the Governor for a signature. The Governor has the power to sign or veto. Once signed, the bill becomes law.

Utah PTA compiles a weekly update of the bills PTA is following and the PTA position. The bill sheets are available on the Utah PTA website: [www.utahpta.org](http://www.utahpta.org).

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**Visit the PTA Website for Bill Sheets**

[www.utahpta.org](http://www.utahpta.org)
The bill is introduced by a member of the House or Senate.

It gets a first reading.

The committee considers the bill.

The committee reports the bill to the members of the House or Senate.

It gets a second reading.

If passed, the bill is sent to the second chamber where the process repeats ...

With the Speaker or the President ...

If vetoed, the Legislature may vote to override the veto and the bill becomes law without the Governor's approval.

If passed, the bill may be signed into law or vetoed by the Governor.

If vetoed, the Legislature may vote to override the veto and the bill becomes law without the Governor's approval.

If passed, the bill may be signed into law or vetoed by the Governor.

and action by the House or Senate.
Legislative Bills - An Explanation

In the top right-hand corner of each bill is the number assigned to the bill. HB indicates it is a House Bill. SB means Senate Bill. When the B is replaced by an R it means it is a Resolution. Resolutions indicate intent and are not binding. SSB or SHB indicates the bill is a Substitute Bill (Substitute Senate Bill or Substitute House Bill), which means there has been substantial change made to the original bill.

In the top left-hand corner, Legislative General Council indicates the bill was approved for filing, by whom, and with the date and time.

In **BOLD CAPS** is the “short title” of the bill. When referring to bills it is best to refer to the bill number and short title.

In bold lower case type is the name of the legislator sponsoring the bill and the senator or representative co-sponsoring the bill. Frequently listed below the sponsor are the names of other legislators who are co-sponsors of the legislation.

Next, in **CAPS** is the “long title” of the bill. The long title is a brief explanation of the legislation.

The long title is followed by the bill itself. The main body of the bill may be a few sentences or hundreds of pages. The lines of the bill are numbered down the left-hand column. This facilitates finding the exact location of any wording in the bill by the page number and line. When amendments are made or discussion is directed to a particular part of the bill, everyone can find it quickly and accurately.

Within the bill are a few important items to note:

- When wording is **underlined** it indicates proposed new language to current law.
- When wording has a line **through it**, the language is a proposed deletion.
- When a **bold three part number** such as 53A-17a-124.5 is found, it is referring to a section of the Utah Code or current law. It is referencing a part of the code or the law impacted by the legislation.

Following the bill is a **Legislative Review Note** which indicates any constitutional or statutory concerns created by the legislation.

Every bill must have a **Fiscal Note**. A fiscal note states how much money it will cost to implement the bill and which revenue source or fund will be impacted.
Using the Internet for Legislative Advocacy

The availability of legislative information on the Internet has made understanding legislation and communicating with legislators much easier than it was previously.

A citizen can access bills in their written form, agendas and minutes of legislative committee meetings, and information about legislators, including how to contact all of them on the Utah State Legislative website. You can access the homepage for the Utah State Office of Education and the United States Department of Education as well as The White House and the Library of Congress.

The Utah PTA website offers information about legislation we are following, including weekly updates during the Utah Legislative Session each winter.

Use this wealth of information found on the Internet as a resource and associated E-mail addresses below for direct communication. One word of caution when using E-mail: Find out if your state legislators use E-mail for communication; many do, but some do not. Also, recognize that officials in Washington hire staff to read electronic communication for them.

**Utah PTA**
- www.utahpta.org
- E-mail: kids@utahpta.org

**Utah State Legislature**
- www.le.utah.gov
- E-mail for legislators are on this website address

**Utah Education Information**
- www.schools.utah.gov

**National PTA**
- www.pta.org
- E-mail: info@pta.org

**The White House**
- www.whitehouse.gov
- E-mail: president@whitehouse.gov

**The House (Washington, D.C.)**
- www.house.gov
- E-mail: househip@hr.house.gov

**The Senate (Washington, D.C.)**
- www.senate.gov
- E-mail: webmaster@scc.senate.gov

**Department of Education (Washington, D.C.)**
- www.ed.gov
- E-mail: customerservice@inet.ed.gov
Procedure for Submitting Utah PTA Resolutions

What is a Resolution?

A resolution is a call for action. It is a statement which may give direction for that action, such as legislative directives and policies or state and local community involvement. A resolution may also memorialize, commemorate, or express appreciation. Local PTAs, Councils, Regions, and Utah PTA commissions and committees may submit resolutions for consideration to the Utah PTA resolutions committee.

How is a Resolution Processed?

The Utah PTA resolutions committee meets and considers all resolutions sent to them that meet resolution submission requirements. Resolutions approved by the committee for state action will be sent to local PTAs and Councils at least THIRTY (30) DAYS prior to the annual conference/convention. The conference/convention delegates will then take action on those resolutions at the annual conference/convention.

Resolutions Must:

1. Be in harmony with the purposes and basic policies of the Utah PTA and National PTA (see Utah PTA Bylaws Article XX Section 1).
2. Address a concern that is statewide in scope and requires state action involving Local, Council, and Region PTAs for solution.
3. Be accompanied by two (2) pieces of background material which specifically supports each “whereas” clause and by a brief narrative summary of that material. The background material should be sufficient to give a person without any previous knowledge of the subject enough information to make an intelligent decision.
4. Be within the ability of the Utah PTA to implement or accomplish (see Legislative Section, Utah PTA Handbook).
5. Be written in a resolution format.
6. Be submitted and approved by a Local, Council, or Region PTA in good standing, or by a Utah PTA commission or committee (the form to submit resolutions is found in the legislative section of the Utah PTA Handbook).
7. State a position not previously adopted by the Utah PTA or National PTA.

What is Background Material?

1. Background material should substantiate each “whereas” and “resolve” clause of the resolution and should indicate that the subject of the resolution was well researched by the submitting group.
2. Reference to each “whereas” must be bracketed in the background material.
3. Background material should be State, not Local, in scope. Background material includes PTA related information such as education, health, safety, and welfare articles or updates, copies of documented research, pertinent laws and articles from publications. Documentation should be from credible sources.
4. The background material should be sufficient to give a person with no previous knowledge of the subject enough information to make an intelligent decision.
5. **Please Note:** Newspaper articles, abstracts, and editorials alone are not sufficient background material.
6. Documentation sources should be included at the end of each “whereas” statement.

**Deadline Information:**

Resolutions must be received at the Utah PTA office no later than June 15 to be considered for action at the Legislative Advocacy Conference in October or November 15 to be considered for action at the Business & Resolutions sessions of the Utah PTA Leadership Convention in May. In the event that the 15th falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or a holiday, the resolution will be accepted on the next business day. Resolutions submitted after the June 15 or November 15 deadline **will not** be presented at the next convention or conference.

Resolutions that do not have sufficient credible background materials will not be considered. Resolutions are strengthened and the people presenting them have an advantage when the background materials have been thoroughly researched. Therefore, it is essential to submit thorough and sufficient background materials with each resolution. **Note:** If a resolution has National PTA intent, it must be submitted with all of the support data necessary to be forwarded to National PTA when it is submitted to Utah PTA. National PTA requires three (3) pieces of background material for each “whereas.” Any resolution with National intent, which passes at the annual convention, must be received by National PTA by November 15th of the following year.

**Emergency Resolutions**

Emergency resolutions may be brought to the annual Utah PTA convention floor if the following provisions for submitting them are met:

1. The urgency of the subject matter shall not have occurred until after the resolutions deadline.
2. Emergency resolutions shall conform to all established criteria for other resolutions.
3. Emergency resolutions need to be submitted to the Utah PTA office 15 days prior to convention to enable the Resolutions Committee to review them.
4. Copies of the emergency resolutions approved for presentation to the convention body shall be prepared for the delegates by the submitting group and distributed to the delegates at the Business & Resolutions meeting.
5. A 2/3 vote of the delegate body is necessary before an emergency resolution shall be considered.

**Official Forms, Cover sheets, and Procedures for submitting Utah PTA and National PTA Resolutions are found in the annual publication, *Utah PTA Presidents Handbook.*
Reaching Out Beyond the PTA Circle

A PTA cannot grow in size or power if it only speaks to members in its own circle. In order to increase membership, financial clout and resources with decision makers, a considerable investment must be made to extend beyond your current circle of influence.

The best place to start is by encouraging current active members to contact friends, neighbors, and colleagues to tell them about PTA projects and advocacy efforts. Other places to recruit would be at back-to-school nights; before- and after-school programs, community groups (such as the faith community, volunteer agencies, civic organizations), and community events. Use of social media is also helpful.

PTA members can also recruit new members as they go door-to-door with petitions or fliers. They can set up phone banks and, depending on the issue, attend other groups’ meetings to recruit. Inevitably, a large percentage of contacts may not be interested in joining PTA or becoming involved in your issue, but at the very least, you will raise awareness about the organization and our successes.

No matter where you are recruiting new members and advocacy volunteers, you must have a goal in mind. Are you seeking to convince people to take specific action, such as voting, calling their school administrators or lawmakers, signing a petition, or attending a local PTA meeting? Be prepared to explain the PTA Mission and how issues impact the community. Listen to others’ concerns and show how National PTA is helping to address them at the local, state, and national levels.

If this sparks an interest, get a commitment to come to the next information meeting or take another specific action. Ask the interested parties for an e-mail address or fax number to put them on your information list. Assign someone to make reminder calls or send e-mails. Have a volunteer waiting to greet all new attendees at meetings. Thank them for taking the first step in making a difference for all children.

Caucus and Mass Meetings

Caucus and mass meetings are held by Republican and Democrat parties in even numbered years. These meetings are held on the local precinct level. The purpose of these meetings is to elect representative delegates to individual party county and state conventions. Often political party positions are also discussed and positions taken on the precinct level. Nominees for all publicly elected positions are elected at these county and state conventions, and official positions directing local party actions are taken. Information on locations of these meetings can be obtained from individual county clerks. Utah PTA encourages PTA members to attend the caucus or mass meeting of their choice to receive information on issues and if desired to offer their service as delegates. PTA officers at every level are encouraged to teach their members about the nation’s political system and encourage their members to become involved in the process through the party of their choice.

NOTE: PTA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit association and does not support candidates or parties. We are a non-partisan, issue driven as directed by our resolutions. (See pages 31-32)
Procedures for Handling Motions

Before an item of business can be handled through the process of voting by the assembly, there are certain steps that must be followed in the making of a motion, debating the motion, and taking the vote.

- **Obtain the floor**
  - Member rises, awaits recognition by the chair, addresses the chair by proper title

- **Assign the floor**
  - Chair recognizes member who seeks the floor

- **Statement of the motion**
  - Member states, “I move that…”

- **Second to the motion**
  - Another member must second the motion. This lets the chair know that more than one member has an interest in the subject.

- **Recognition of motion**.
  - The motion is stated by the chair (this formally places the motion before the assembly). “It is moved and seconded that…”

- **Debate of motion**
  - Members debate the question, following general rules of debate
  - Maker of the motion is entitled to the floor first
  - All remarks are addressed to the chair
  - Debate must be confined to the limits of the pending question
  - Discussion time may be extended or limited by a motion and a two-thirds vote
  - Discussion may give rise to a vote immediately by ordering “the previous question” and a two-thirds vote

- **Vote on motion**
  - Chair puts the question to a vote. Chair calls for both the affirmative and the negative votes to be cast. If a motion has been amended, the amendment is voted upon first and then the motion as a whole, as amended, is voted upon.

- **Result of voting**
  - Chair announces the voting result and states what the assembly will do
Practical Parliamentary Guide
A Simple Table of the Most Frequently Used Motions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motion</th>
<th>Second</th>
<th>Debatable</th>
<th>Amendable</th>
<th>Vote Required</th>
<th>Reconsiderable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjourn</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>majority</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amend a pending motion</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes if motion to be amendable is debatable</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>majority</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close nominations</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate limit or extend</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division of Assembly</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>any member</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main motion</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>majority</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point of Order</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>rules by chair</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postpone to a Definite Time</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>majority</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous Question</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question of Privilege</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>majority</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>majority</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconsider</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes if motion to which applied is debatable</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>majority</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer (commit)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>majority</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rescind</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>majority with notice 2/3 without notice</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspension of Rules</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>majority</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take from Table</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>majority</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal of Motion</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>majority</td>
<td>on negative votes only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. A tie vote is a lost vote.
2. Hasty action may be corrected by use of the motion to reconsider: “This motion may be made only by one who voted on the prevailing side.”
3. To stop debate and force the vote, a member should obtain the floor and say, “I move the precious question.” This requires a second and a 2/3 vote.
Role of the National Legislative Chair

- Under the supervision of the National PTA president and in conjunction with the National PTA office in Washington, D.C., the legislation chair is responsible for interpreting and implementing the National PTA Legislative Program.
- Promotes and coordinates National PTA legislative activities
- Works with staff in Washington, D.C. and Chicago
- Chairs the legislation committee• Assists with the National PTA Legislative Conference
- Provides information and training to delegates to national and state legislative conferences and conventions
- Assists State PTA legislative chairs and the Member-to-Member Network

The National PTA Member-To-Member Network

- National PTA’s Member-to-Member Network is the grassroots advocacy system that provides direct contact by PTA members with members of Congress and occasionally with federal regulatory agencies. When such contact is needed, National PTA’s Washington, D.C. office issues, either electronically or via fax, legislative ACTION ALERTS describing the pending legislative issue and the action needed.
- Individuals in the Member-to-Member Network are responsible for communicating with their senators and representatives about National PTA legislative positions. Members are expected to respond to the legislative ACTION ALERTS, which identify specific activities PA members can do to promote the PTA’s position on an issue, as well as background information and talking points.
- To be added to the Member-to-Member Network, register by completing an application that can be downloaded or submitted online from the legislative page of National PTA’s website at www.pta.org/ptawashington/index.asp. You can also sign up by contacting Utah PTA’s federal legislative chair through the Utah PTA office. Periodic updates of the list are mailed to the federal legislative chair and state presidents.
- By joining the network, PTA members will also receive National PTA’s weekly legislative newsletter, This Week in Washington, which reports on legislation, research, hearings or press events, related to issues of national priority.
National PTA is an IRS 501(c)(3) organization and as such enjoys a tax-exempt public charity status (National PTA generally is not required to pay federal income taxes). Because of this status, donors to National PTA may deduct their contributions to the extent permissible under tax laws. To maintain its charitable status, National PTA may not campaign for or against candidates for federal, state, or local public office. Specific rules also apply to the association’s lobbying activities and the amount of money that may be allotted to these lobbying activities.

As permissible under federal tax laws, PTA members may engage in legislative activities on behalf of children and youth and may educate the general public and policy makers about officially adopted PTA positions and resolutions. As long as they remain strictly nonpartisan, PTA members may educate the general public about issues affecting children. PTA is allowed to attempt to influence legislation through lobbying efforts but is constrained by the amount of money it may spend on those efforts.

A charitable organization (such as PTA) is regarded as attempting to influence legislation (lobby) if it does either of the following:

A. Contacts or urges the public to contact members of a legislative body for the purpose of proposing, supporting, or opposing legislation or

B. Advocates the adoption or rejection of legislation.

Most state PTAs are also IRS 501(c)(3) organizations and must follow the same IRS guidelines.


Utah PTA is an IRS 501(c)(3) organization and serves as the umbrella for all PTA levels in good standing in Utah. Thus Regions, Councils, and Local PTAs enjoy the same benefits and are bound by the same guidelines.

A. The PTA shall be noncommercial, nonsectarian, and nonpartisan.

B. The name of the PTA or the names of any members in their official capacities shall not be used to endorse or promote a commercial concern or in connection with any partisan interest for any purpose not appropriately related to promotion of the Purposes of the organization.

C. The PTA shall not, directly or indirectly, participate or intervene (in any way, including the publishing or distributing of statements) in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office; or devote more than an insubstantial part of its activities to attempting to influence legislation by propaganda or otherwise.

Bylaws of the Utah Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc.
Article IV sections a,b,and c.
Utah PTA Resources

Utah PTA Presidents Handbook is a publication issued to each PTA President yearly and contains legislative directives and newly adopted state resolutions and bylaws.

Utah PTA Weekly Bill Sheets are lists of bills Utah PTA follows each legislative session. They are available on the Internet at www.utahpta.org and are updated weekly during the session.

Utah PTA Leadership Convention, usually held in May, provides training and issue oriented workshops for Legislative Vice Presidents.

Utah PTA Business & Resolutions meetings are held at the annual Leadership Convention, usually held in May. At this convention, all Utah PTA business, such as Bylaw changes, resolutions, and position statements are voted on by our membership. Utah PTA Advocacy Conference is held annually in the fall and provides advocacy training and may also hold a business and Resolutions meeting.

Utah PTA Office:
Address: 5192 S. Greenpine Drive
       Salt Lake City, UT  84123
Tele:    801-261-3100
Fax:     801-261-3110
E-mail:  kids@utahpta.org
Website: www.utahpta.org

National PTA Resources

National PTA Annual Resources outlines basic policies and procedures of the National PTA and current PTA resolutions, position statements, and legislative directives. https://pta.org/home/advocacy

Our Children, the magazine of National PTA, contains information on advocacy and children’s legislative issues as well as general interest and PTA related articles. https://www.pta.org/home/family-resources/Our-Children-Magazine

National PTA website (www.pta.org) provides online information about PTA legislative issues.

National PTA Office
Address: 1250 N. Pitt Street
       Alexandria, VA  22314
Tele:    703-518-1200
Toll Free: 800-307-4782
Fax:     703-836-0972
E-mail:  info@pta.org
Website:  www.pta.org
Glossary

**LAC (Legislative Action Committee):** A committee that follows bills as they are discussed during the interim session and through the legislative session. Members sit on commissions and work with the commissioners on the different bills and issues. At LAC meetings, these issues are discussed and suggested positions are voted on and then taken to the Legislative Position Committee for ratification.

**Legislative Contact:** Each Region, Council, and Local PTA should have one person who is designated as their legislative contact. This person would initiate all legislative action for their Region, Council, or Local PTA.

**Legislative Fiscal Analyst:** This is an employee of the state who works with the budget office. Their duties are to oversee and determine a fiscal note on each of the bills.

**Legislative General Counsel:** This is an employee of the state who works with each of the Legislators to be sure that their bill is properly written and ready to be filed.

**Legislative Network:** This is a phone tree or email list by which each Region, Council, and Local PTA contacts their members to let them know of issues which need to be addressed by their members.

**Member to Member network:** This is a network of members who have joined on either a state or national level and wish to participate in contacting their local representatives on issues during the state legislative session and on the national level as the Congress and the Senate meet.

**Nonpartisan:** This means that PTA organizations do not support one candidate or party over another. We discuss issues, not parties or participants.

**Resolution:** These are statements which have been voted on by our members and by which we take our stands on issues during the legislative session.

**Standing Committee:** This is a Committee of Legislators who are assigned to listen to testimony, take public input, and then decide whether a bill warrants full debate on the floor of the House or the Senate.

**PTA Advocacy Conference:** This is the convention which is held in the spring of each year. At this convention all leadership and members can receive training in their positions. New Utah PTA officers are elected at this meeting.

**PTA Business & Resolutions Meetings:** These meeting are held in the May, in conjunction with the Leadership Conference. At this meeting, all business such as bylaws, resolutions, and position statements come before the body of our members for debate and vote.

**Weekly Bill Sheets:** These are a list of the bills which the commissioners have chosen to follow through the legal process. This sheet lists the bill, a short explanation of the bill, the position PTA has taken, and the action on the bill as it goes through the process.
Why be a PTA School?

History: Utah PTA joined National PTA in 1925. Utah PTA is the largest child advocacy and volunteer association in the state. National PTA was established more than 100 years ago to address children’s issues.

Membership: Being the largest advocacy association in Utah, more than 80,000 individuals volunteer and participate in 628 Local and Council PTAs within the state.

Organization: Utah is divided into 21 geographic PTA regions, each served by a Region Director. In large districts, the Region Director works with area Councils. The Council President then works with the local school PTA President. In rural areas, two or more school districts are under one Region Director. Local PTA Presidents meet on a regular basis throughout the school year with Council Presidents/Region Directors. Presidents-elect and Principals may also be included in these meetings. Local PTAs also meet on a regular basis throughout the year in Executive Committee and Board meetings and work with administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and students.

Affiliation: Utah PTA is an affiliate of the National PTA. National PTA is composed of 54 state congresses and more than 20,000 local units in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and the Department of Defense Schools in Europe. State PTAs are the liaison between the local PTA and National PTA, helping each to function effectively and to support and sustain the other. PTAs at the local level are valuable assets to their school communities by providing educational and parent involvement information, resources, events, and activities.

Parental Involvement: In 2018, Utah PTA volunteers reported 1,329,786 hours of service to Utah’s children in their local public schools. If this volunteer service were translated into monetary value, it would be worth $37,951,307.13!

Important Information

Utah PTA also has an exemption from sales tax from the Utah State Tax Commission. State law requires every PTA to pay sales tax on purchases under $1,000 and then request a refund. Utah PTA has established a procedure for applying for the refund. See the Financial section. Contact the Utah PTA Treasurer for more information.

National and Utah PTA Programs
Reflections
Healthy Lifestyles
School of Excellence
Take Your Family to School Week
Teacher Appreciation

Utah PTA Programs
Battle of the Bands (PTSA)
Ribbon Week
Hope for Tomorrow, with NAMI Utah
Healthy Relationships (PTSA)

Conferences and Trainings
Advocacy Conference (October)
PTA Day at the Capitol (February)
Leadership Convention (May)
PTSA Student Leadership Conference (May)

Utah PTA Awards and Grants
Utah PTA Awards
LEAP Award
Membership Awards
Arts Education Fund Grant

Special PTA State Committees
Special Needs

Positions included in Commissions
Diversity & Inclusivity
Male Involvement
Military Families
According to the PTA bylaws, all meetings shall be governed by Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised. In addition, all Board members shall:

- Abide by all PTA rules and meet all PTA deadlines.
- Ensure that the PTA database information (names, addresses, etc.) be for use of PTA Board members only. The confidentiality of hard copies and electronic copies shall be protected.
- Attend all Board meetings and applicable Executive Committee meetings.
- Notify the President as soon as possible if an emergency occurs and they are unable to attend a scheduled PTA meeting.
- Arrive on time and remain to the conclusion of the meeting except in cases of individual emergencies.
- Begin all meetings on time.
- Be allowed a 10-minute break every two hours, returning promptly.
- Remain in a meeting while in session.
- Hold all but emergency calls. Leave the room to answer a call.
- Turn all cell phones to off or vibrate.
- Complete preparation before or after meetings, not during meetings.
- Refrain from holding side conversations.
- Direct all comments and questions through the chair.
- Maintain professional courtesy at all times, including being supportive rather than judgmental, respecting differences of opinion, and listening to others’ ideas without prejudice.
- Give feedback directly and openly in a timely fashion.
- Acknowledge problems and deal with them as they arise.
- Be prepared to present agenda items in a concise manner and focus on tasks and the process and not on personalities or hidden agendas.
- Obtain missed information during breaks out of consideration of others.
- Adjourn at the scheduled time, as per the printed agenda.
- Dress to match the dress of those also attending a meeting when representing PTA.
- Wear name badges when representing PTA.
- Notify President of address, phone number, and email changes as soon as possible.
- Stay at home out of consideration for the health of others if ill and possibly contagious.
What is a Commission?

A Commission is a specific group that develops and implements programs and projects within related areas of concern.

**What is the purpose of a PTA Commission?**

It is to resolve critical school and community issues and concerns identified by the PTA membership through a needs assessment.

**What is the role of a Commissioner?**

It is to act as the presiding officer and facilitator of a commission and to report commission plans to the executive committee.

**Who selects a Commissioner?**

Bylaws will indicate whether the commissioner is elected or appointed with board approval.

**Who selects Commission members?**

Commissioners and/or officers appoint commission members as needed.

**When does a Commission meet?**

The commissioner may determine a meeting schedule. These meetings are generally held outside of regular board meetings.
How to Get Started

- Attend training at state, region and council levels.
- Become familiar with national, state and local commission-related issues.
- Gather resources from past commissioners.
- Organize your commission.
- Identify local needs or concerns:
  - Include current issues on needs assessments
  - Determine areas where teachers or school programs need assistance
- From the needs assessment:
  - Prioritize
  - Set goals
  - Develop a plan of action

Responsibilities of a Local PTA Commissioner

- Become knowledgeable about PTA policies and current issues.
- Know the key people and organizations that relate to your commission.
- Act as a resource on commission issues. Disseminate information and material pertaining to commission concerns to parents, teachers and community.
- Serve on council commission if one is organized.
- Be an active, participating member of the local PTA board of directors.
- Serve on PTA and community committees as assigned by the PTA president or board.
- Organize your commission with teachers, students, parents, and community members.
- Develop and implement programs that relate to commission concerns.
- Keep a record of number of hours spent in PTA work.
- Keep a procedure book to be passed on.
- Advocate for children on commission-related issues.
- Attend appropriate meetings, including:
  - Local PTA Board of Directors
  - Training sessions conducted by Utah PTA, Region PTA and Council PTA
  - All local PTA general membership meetings
  - Utah PTA Leadership Convention
  - Advocacy Conference
  - PTA Day at the Capitol

Responsibilities of a Council PTA Commissioner

- Provide training and leadership for local commission counterparts.
- Act as a resource and provide new ideas and approaches for commission concerns.
- Provide information to local PTA units on policies, goals and objectives.
- Organize council projects, conferences and workshops as needed.
- Conduct council commission meetings.
- Keep a record of number of hours spent in PTA work.
- Attend appropriate meetings.
- Maintain a resource file/procedure book to be passed on.
- Advocate for children on commission-related issues.
Responsibilities of a Region PTA Commissioner

- Provide training and leadership for council commission counterparts.
- Act as a resource and provide new ideas and approaches for commission concerns.
- Provide information to region PTA units on policies, goals and objectives.
- Organize region projects, conferences and workshops as needed.
- Conduct region commission meetings.
- Keep a record of number of hours spent in PTA work.
- Attend appropriate meetings including Utah PTA Commission meetings.
- Maintain a resource file/procedure book to be passed on.
- Advocate for children on commission-related issues.

Who can Serve on a Commission Committee?

Local
- Elected or appointed Commissioner
- Teachers
- School Nurse
- Appointees as needed
- Specialists
- Local Officers
- Students (PTSA)
- Community Members

Council
- Elected or appointed Commissioner
- Local commissioners
- Council Officers
- Appointees as needed
- Specialists
- Local Presidents
- Student Members
- Community Members

Region
- Elected or appointed Commissioner
- Council Commissioners
- Region Officers
- Appointees as needed
- Specialists
- Council Presidents
- Student Members
- Community Members

State
- Elected Commissioner
- Region Directors
- Associate Region Directors
- State Officers (as appointed)
- Specialists
- Council Presidents
- Student Members
- Community Members
Children Learn What They Live

If children live with ...

...Tolerance
they learn to be patient

...Encouragement
they learn confidence

...Praise
they learn to appreciate

...Fairness
they learn justice

...Security
they learn to have faith

...Approval
they learn to like themselves

...Acceptance and Friendship
they learn to find love in the world

...criticism
they learn to condemn

...hostility
they learn to fight

...ridicule
they learn to be shy

...shame
they learn to feel guilty
Resources

Utah PTA

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Telephone: (801) 261-3100 • Fax: (801) 261-3110
kids@utahpta.org

www.UtahPTA.org

Monday - Thursday
9:00 to 3:00
Closed Friday
Closed holidays - Please call before you come to ensure office is open.

Follow Utah PTA

Facebook
Facebook Groups that you can join:
Utah PTA
Utah PTA Super Secondary
Utah PTA Excellent Elementary
Treasurers
Reflections
Community Council

Pinterest
Utah PTA - www.utahpta.org

YouTube
Utah PTA One Voice

Twitter
@UtahPTAOneVoice

Instagram
Utahpta

National PTA

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info@pta.org

www.PTA.org