

Legislation More Important Than Ever

Debbie Vincent

As we face difficult economic times, decisions made by legislators in Sacramento and Washington D.C. directly impact the education and well-being of children and youth in our community. PTA is a child advocacy organization whose legislative mission is to speak on behalf of all children and youth. PTA Legislation chairmen are responsible for demonstrating leadership on children's issues at the local level by educating PTA members, community members, and elected officials about PTA's issues of concern and legislative priorities and goals. The current budget crisis facing the state and nation has placed the quality of education and children's services in severe jeopardy. If California hopes to have a sustainable economy in the future, now, more than ever, PTA members must speak out to let our legislators know that children's issues must be at the forefront of the legislative agenda. Local PTAs should consider creating a position for a Legislation chairman, if they do not already have one on their executive board.

The role of the legislation chairman at the unit or council level is to:

- Become informed of PTA legislative

priorities and current issues, through subscription to online Legislative Alerts and the Sacramento Update; attending the annual California State PTA Legislation Conference; and/or attending legislation workshops at the annual California State PTA convention.

- Review the California State PTA legislative policies and platforms (see Section 4 of the Toolkit).

- Develop an email list of others in the community interested in legislative issues, so that you can share information and solicit action as required.

- Identify local, state and federal legislators, communicate with them on a regular basis and arrange to have PTA representatives visit at least once a year.

- Sponsor candidate forums for school board and/or other legislative positions in your community during election cycles – you may wish to partner with other organizations, such as the League of Women Voters (see Section 4.3.2 of the Toolkit for more information).

- Provide a report on current legislative issues at your regular unit or council PTA meetings and solicit feedback from members on key issues.

- Coordinate local advocacy efforts when requested to do so by your members or California State PTA.

For more information on the importance of PTA advocacy, see Section 4 of the Toolkit. For a full job description for a Legislation Chairman, see Section 10 of the Toolkit. You may also wish to go to the California State PTA website and click on advocacy for more information.

Get involved now so that PTA continues to speak for every child with one voice!

Adapted from California State PTA, *The Communicator*, March 2009



**Summer Leadership
Conference
June 6, 2009
Registration forms
English/Spanish
Inside.**

Spring Service Project

Carol Green

Ninth District PTA wants every child to have a great book to read this summer and you can help. We will be collecting new and used books for children through-out San Diego County.

Spring is a great time to clean out bookshelves, share a favorite book with another child, help the environment by recycling and share the love of reading with everyone.

Bring your books to the Ninth District PTA office between now and June 5th. Books will also be collected at the Summer Leadership Conference on June 6th.

We would like books for pre-school to high school students. Help us share the gift of summer reading with every child.

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Ninth District PTA Salute to Excellence

An Evening Honoring Award Winners

Reflections Gala Honoring Awards of
Excellence, and Awards Presentation of
Membership-Program Books-Directories-
Websites to Follow

Light refreshments will be served.
Sponsored by Ninth District PTA

Thursday, May 21, 2009
Reflections Gala at 5 pm
Awards Event to follow at 7pm
Balboa Park Ballroom
2150 Pan America Rd West
San Diego, CA 92101
RSVP by May 15th

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Council _____ Number Attending _____

Send RSVPs to Ninth District PTA
6401 Linda Vista Rd
San Diego, CA 92111



The Parliamentarian

Sue King

All too often the position of parliamentarian is lined out in association and council bylaws. This position is important to help ensure meetings are run smoothly and effectively. Some association presidents ask the principal of the school to be the parliamentarian. This will make the principal choose his role; principal and advisor to the association or parliamentarian and advisor to the president.

What is a Parliamentarian?

- A parliamentarian is an advisor to the president.
- The role of parliamentarian is purely an advisory and consultative one since parliamentary law gives the chair alone the power to rule on questions of order or to answer parliamentary inquiries.
- The parliamentarian can only speak to the assembly if the president makes such a request.

What Can the Parliamentarian Do?

The parliamentarian shall:

- Attend all meetings of the association and of the executive board and give necessary advice in parliamentary procedure when requested.
- Call the first meeting of the nominating committee, conduct election of chairman and give instructions in procedure, and may be contacted for additional information, if needed, and shall attend meetings of the nominating committee only if elected to serve as a member of the committee.
- Chair the bylaws committee and review bylaws and standing rules annually.
- Be entitled to all rights and privileges of membership including the right to make motions, debate and vote.

- Ensure all members of the executive board receive and review the most current bylaws of the association or the council.

How Does the Parliamentarian Assist the President?

- Study PTA bylaws and standing rules, *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* and other parliamentary resources.
- Teach the president, executive board and members how to use parliamentary procedure.
- Listen carefully to all meeting proceedings.
- Keep a running list of members wishing to speak to an issue.
- Answer parliamentary questions as needed.

Adapted from the *Communicator*, California State PTA, May 2008



Reminder: Annual Reports are DUE!

Mary Anne Tang

Council PTA due dates for unit Annual Reports vary – units, please check with your council!

Ninth District PTA due date for unit, council and out-of council unit Annual Reports May 19, 2009!

Now is the time for all historians to total volunteer hours by contacting anyone whose hours have not yet been counted. **Remember to include an estimate of hours for the months of May and June.**

Forgot to keep a running tally of your volunteer hours? Here are some ways to include their hours:

- Calculate the number of board meetings since July 1, 2008. How many hours was each meeting, and how many board members attended? Multiply these two figures, and you have total

hours spent attending board meetings. (You can obtain this information from the minutes of each meeting.)

- Each member of the executive board should also account for his/her position's hours worked during the year (e.g., secretary takes 1½ hours to transcribe/type the minutes for each board or association meeting, then multiply that by the number of meetings).
- Be sure to include volunteer hours for all PTA-related activities such as back-to-school activities, parent education events, classroom activities, phone calls, time spent baking for bake sales, Founders Day, staff appreciation, assemblies. Estimate the volunteer hours for events that will be held

between the time you complete the annual report and June 30, 2009.

Need an Annual Report form? A copy of both the council Annual Report and unit Annual Report are online at the Ninth District PTA website <http://www.ninthdistrictpta.org/> and at the California State PTA website www.capta.org. Click on "Forms" under the "Running Your PTA/PTSA" section on the left. An 81-page PDF file will appear: The unit Annual Report is found on pages 76 and 77, while the council Annual Report is found on pages 78 and 79. If you have any questions, please contact:

Mary Anne Tang
C: (619) 405-4305
H: (619) 216-1375
m.a.tang@att.net

Help for Parents with Kids Struggling in School

Carmen Myers

Is your child a 'shut-down' learner?

Many children who grow discouraged with school, struggle with basic skills, or refuse to do homework might not be learning in the way that's best for them. Dr. Richard Selznick, a school psychologist and director of the Cooper Learning Center in Voorhees, New Jersey, coined the term "shut-down learner" to describe these children, who often appear disconnected and unmotivated ("shut down").

Selznick says as many as 40 percent of all children in America experience problems learning to read and write and many of them are "spatial learners"—in other words, they learn most effectively through hands-on tasks and utilize images, pictures, colors, and maps to learn. But these spatial learners will often struggle to learn through reading and writing.

Identifying shut-down learners and modifying their learning environments can lead to academic success, Selznick says.

The shut-down learner style becomes apparent in upper elementary grades, though warning signs appear in preschool and kindergarten. They include:

- Difficulty with learning letters

- Trouble with playing rhyming games
- Difficulty following directions
- Resistance to early reading activities and instruction

Signals in older children include:

- Weak reading, writing, and spelling skills, which lead to lowered self-esteem
- Increased avoidance of school tasks such as homework
- Strong dislike of reading and writing, little to no gratification from school
- Increasing anger toward school

Shut-down learners often possess incredible talents and succeed in a variety of different professions, Selznick says. Parents can employ several strategies to aid their shut-down learner:

1. **Identify the "cracks in the foundation"** as early as possible. Address skill weaknesses early.
2. **If the cracks are widening**, seek outside help. Don't be passive and wait for the schools to intervene.
3. **Know what you are targeting.** There are essentially two types of reading problems, Selznick says. In the first type, the child has trouble

decoding the words and reading fluently. In the second type, the child can read fluently, but has great trouble understanding what he or she has read. Get clear on what you are targeting. Don't scattershot remediation.

4. **Take the heat out of the interaction.** For most of the struggling kids, the daily ritual of yelling about school is a constant. Nagging and yelling are not working. Why continue?
5. **Find the child's true strength and help him or her embrace it.** Shut-down learners often do not feel very good about themselves and do not see their strengths. Most of these kids are very solid in the visual spatial dimension of ability. While this trait is not often valued in school, they need to learn to value this trait and see its potential.

Dr. Selznick is author of *The Shut-Down Learner: Helping Your Academically Discouraged Child*. For more information, go to <http://www.shutdownlearner.com/>.

Homework Help

PTA.org has articles to assist parents in helping their children with homework and test preparation.

JOIN NINTH DISTRICT PTA IN A "A SALUTE TO EXCELLENCE" THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2009 BALBOA PARK CLUB'S BALLROOM

Ninth District PTA will hold an awards event, "A Salute to Excellence," on May 21.

From 5:00-7:00 p.m., enjoy our Reflections Gala and the wonderful student art projects.

At 7:00 p.m., our awards event will begin. We will be giving awards to units and councils for membership, newsletters, websites, program books, and our Reflections Awards of Excellence winners.

This event is a gift to our members. There will be no charge, but we ask that you RSVP, so we have enough chairs and refreshments for everyone. Units and councils will soon be receiving letters that they should attend, as they are WINNERS! How exciting!

And wear red, white and blue!

Health

Rebecca Hernandez

Below is a list of resources in San Diego County that are available to help individuals and families work through stress, anxiety, fear, career change, job loss, grief, divorce, loss of home and other difficult and life changing circumstances, that are prevalent in our society today.

Strong mental health and well being is an important part of our overall health. Identifying and addressing mental health issues will better equip parents and caregivers to deal with changes and stress in the economy affecting most communities today. Just as the budget will deeply affect our schools, we must in turn remember the economy can adversely affect the daily lives and support systems in place for children and youth.

Sources of help in San Diego County:

- 24-hour San Diego County Access and Crisis Line: (800) 479-3339
- 24-hour National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: (800) 273-TALK (8255)
- County directory for psychiatric care: sdcchip.org/pdfs/MHCSPG.pdf

- Directory of mental and behavioral health services:

sandiego.networkofcare.org

- San Diego County Mental Health Services: sdccounty.ca.gov/hhsa

- San Diego 211 Information, for referrals to housing and social services: 211 or 211sandiego.org

Veterans services:

www.mentalhealth.va.gov

Parents are most likely to discuss alcohol, marijuana, and cocaine use with their children; less likely to discuss inhalants and prescription drugs

Parents are most likely to discuss the risks of alcohol, marijuana, and cocaine use with their children, according to data from the 2008 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study (PATS). The majority of teens (78%) reported that their parents had discussed the risks of using beer, other alcoholic beverages, or marijuana with them. Forty-four percent of teens reported that their parents had discussed the dan-

gers of cocaine and crack use with them. Significantly fewer teens, however, reported that their parents discussed the risks of inhalant (25%) and prescription drug abuse (24%), despite the fact that these substances were the most prevalent substances used by teens, after marijuana. Other substances less commonly discussed included performance enhancing drugs used without a prescription (such as steroids and human growth hormone), ecstasy, and over-the-counter cold or cough medicines used to get high.

NOTES: Abuse of inhalants and OTC cough medicine is defined as using the substance to get high. Abuse of prescription drugs, steroids, performance enhancing substances, and human growth hormone is defined as *use without a doctor's prescription*. The margin of error is +/- 1.3%.

SOURCE: Center for Substance Abuse Research

Common Sense on Music and Your Children

Cathy Roth

Now's a great time to tune in.

Almost nothing comes between kids and their music. But music has really changed, before you get too critical, remember it wasn't all that long ago that people wanted to ban the Beatles! Know what your children are listening to, and listen along with them. After all, music is expression – good or bad – and being open goes a long way with your children.

What is their music?

Downloads, videos, and MP3s. Most of our kids' music now comes via the Internet. No more album covers strewn about their rooms. Social networks like MySpace launch artists, and children link to artists' pages and download songs to their own pages.

Videos appear for free or are available for downloads. Music gets swapped with friends. Most middle school kids know how to burn a CD, download

music, and use file-sharing software (legal and illegal), all of which often bypasses parents completely.

Music is central to play-along and sing-along games like Guitar Hero and Rock Band. Software that allows children to create and compose their own tunes is increasingly affordable, encouraging creativity and expression.

Why music matters

Music is a powerful medium. It can help quieter kids reveal things they normally can't. It can express emotions turbulent adolescents may not be able to voice. It's also at the center of many social interactions and popular-culture movements.

Studies have repeatedly shown that children are impacted by the music to which they listen. Given the power of music and its potent messages, parents need to decide what their children are ready for – and help them decode what

they hear.

Music with explicit content is labeled online, but it's not enforceable. Sometimes what children listen to is age-appropriate, but even those songs can feature racy or violent lyrics, and glorify drinking, drug use, or violent behavior.

Some facts

Children aged 8 to 18 on average listen to music 1 hour and 44 minutes per day.

A 2006 RAND study found that kids aged 12 to 17 who listened to music with sexually degrading lyrics were more likely to have sex sooner.

In a study of college students released in 2003, violent lyrics were shown to increase aggressive thoughts and feelings.

Adapted from California State PTA, the *Communicator*, March 2009

Ninth District
PTA
 everychild.orevoice.

Summer Leadership Conference
REGISTRATION FORM – MARK ONE BOX IN EACH SESSION
 University of San Diego, Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice



Each registrant must complete a separate form to be submitted with payment to Ninth District PTA by Friday, May 22, 2009 at noon.

Sign In/Breakfast: 7:00 a.m.- 8:30 a.m.
 General Meeting(Exhibits closed): 8:30 a.m.- 9:00 a.m.

Lunch: 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
 Exhibits Open: 7:00 – 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Session One 9:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

- 101 Unit President Tools (part 1 of 2)
- 102 Treasurer, Financial Secty., & Auditor Financial Procedures (part 1 of 2)
- 103 What is PTA? A Beginner's Class
- 104 Reflections
- 105 Advocating for Children and Schools (duplicate of 305)
- 106 Showcase of Programs – Ninth District Grant Recipients Share Ideas
- 107 How to Develop a Self-Reliant and Responsible Child
- 108 Council Officer Training (1 of 2)
- 109 Planning Successful Fundraisers
- 110 Bylaws (part 1 of 2)
- 111 El Registro
- 112 ¡Ayuda! Soy nuevo presidente de unidad – Parte 1 (tambien registrarse en #212)

Session Two 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

- 201 Unit President Tools (part 2 of 2)
- 202 Treasurer, Financial Secty., Auditor Financial Procedures (part 2 of 2)
- 203 Supporting Children and Youth in Transition
- 204 Middle School & High School PTA
- 205 Red Ribbon Week
- 206 Planning Successful PTSA Programs
- 207 How to Build and Maintain a PTA Website for Beginners
- 208 Council Officer Training (2 of 2)
- 209 Prescription (RX) and OTC Misuse on the Rise in San Diego
- 210 Bylaws (part 2 of 2)
- 211 La Membresia
- 212 ¡Ayuda! Soy nuevo presidente de unidad –Parte 2 (tambien registrarse en #112)

Session Three 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

- 301 Practical Public Speaking
- 302 How to Have a Healthy PTA
- 303 Minutes: For the Record
- 304 Have a Safe Grad Night, Host a Career Fair, a College Road Trip & Make a College Binder
- 305 Advocating for Children & Schools (duplicate of 105)
- 306 Membership - All You Need to Know
- 307 How to Budget
- 308 How to Manage PTA Conflict
- 309 Disaster Preparedness and Health and Risk Communication
- 310 Introduction to Electronic Bylaws
- 311 Capacitación para los tesoreros
- 312 Reclutando voluntarios en el siglo XXI

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____
 PTA/School _____ Council _____

Make checks payable to Ninth District PTA. PTA checks must have two signatures. You may attach one check for all attendees; each attendee must complete a separate form and select one class from each session, above.

Registration \$30.00 includes continental breakfast and buffet lunch. Total included \$ _____

Mail registration form with payment to **Ninth District PTA**
6401 Linda Vista Road, Annex A
San Diego, CA 92111
858-268-8077

Check this box if you would like to volunteer for early morning set up, translation, registration, or during a workshop time if you are not attending a session. Thank you. Someone will contact you to confirm.

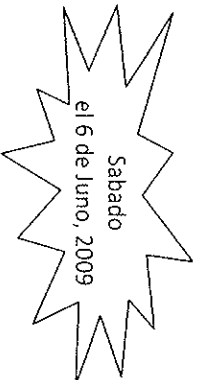
On site registration of \$50.00 includes lunch; however, we cannot guarantee your workshop choices. Keep a copy of this form for your records. You will be notified by email if your choices cannot be accommodated.

El Noveno Distrito

everychild.orevoice



Summer Leadership Conference
FORMULARIO DE REGISTRACION - MARCA UNA CAJA EN CADA SESION
University of San Diego, Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice



Cada Registrante debe completar una forma separado para someter con pago a Ninth District PTA para medio dia de Viernes, el 22 de Mayo, 2009.

Registracion/Desayuno: 7:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. Almuerzo: 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Concurso General (Exhibiciones Cerrados): 8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. Exhibiciones: 7:00 - 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Session One 9:15 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

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312 Reclutando voluntarios en el siglo XXI

Nombre _____ Telefono _____ Correo Electronico _____
PTA/Escuela _____ El Consejo _____

Checke a nombre de Ninth District PTA. Se requieren dos firmas POR CADA cheque de la PTA/PTSA. Se puede someter solo un cheque por todo los Registrantes; Cada Registrante debe completar una forma separado y debe marcar una caja por cada sesion, arriba.
Registracion \$30.00 incluye desayuno continental. Total incluido \$ _____

Por Correo Manda el Registracion con pago a Ninth District PTA, 6401 Linda Vista Road, Annex A, San Diego, CA 92111 858-268-8077

Registracion en la puerta \$50.00 Incluye Almuerzo; como quiera, no hay garantia de su selecciones. Hay que guardar una copia de esta forma para su registro. Se notifican por Correo electronico si no se puede acomodar sus selecciones.

Ninth District
 CA Congress of PTA, Inc.
 National PTA
 6401 Linda Vista Road, Annex A
 San Diego, California 92111-7399

Return Services Requested

Debbie Vincent President
 Judy Williams Editor

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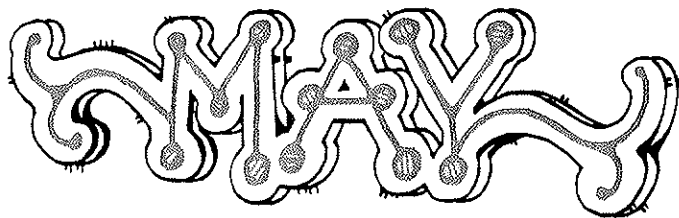
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Spanish Observer Offer:
 For a **FREE** subscription to our Spanish **Observer** (one per PTA) call the Ninth District office: 858.268.8077

The Ninth District PTA does not control and cannot guarantee the relevance, timeliness, or accuracy of the material provided by other agencies or organizations, nor does the Ninth District PTA endorse other agencies or organizations, their views, products or services.

Important Numbers

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 Email.....info@capta.org
 Website.....www.capta.org
National PTA
 Phone.....312-670-6782
 Fax.....312-670-6783
 Email.....info@pta.org
 Website.....www.pta.org



Calendar of Meetings

- May 8 Legislation Meeting 6-7:30 pm, SDCOE room tba, learn about the budget with Senator Denise Ducheny
 - May 19 District Board, 9:30 am, SDCOE, rm. 301
- Due Dates**
- May 19 2009-2010 officer rosters due to Ninth District PTA office. We will accept rosters as soon as elections are held. Use the roster form on our website <http://www.ninthdistrictpta.org/>
 - May 19 Historian's report due with volunteer hours

Save the Dates

- May 21** Salute to Excellence, Balboa Park Club
- June 6** Ninth District PTA Summer Leadership Conference, University of San Diego
- June 26-29 National PTA Convention, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Plan Ahead

- May National Physical Fitness Month, Teacher Appreciation Week