



# President's Message

**Free State PTA Mission: To make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.**



September 22, 2021

Happy Fall PTA Family, Friends and Supporters,



In conclusion to the National PTA annual Back-to-School Week celebration from Sept. 13-17, let's share those Back-to-School photos whether they were in person or virtually. We know many of you set up informative tables, had QR codes available for membership and were engaged virtually. Please send those shots with your local unit PTA name, and county to [president.fsptamd@gmail.com](mailto:president.fsptamd@gmail.com).



Thank you for your patience with Free State PTA. We are working tirelessly to provide you information on MemberHub, the bylaws template, and Reflections. Stick with us during this transitional time. I know many of you are nervous about what you should be doing but we do have responsive leaders who can help you maneuver. Help is here while students are either in quarantine, attending school virtually or in-person.

Please call us or email.

It has been a relief for many of our children to interact with friends at school and no doubt, an opportunity for our parents to experience some semblance of normalcy. Many parents have been working through the anguish of late busses. Many events that would ordinarily happen later in the year are being pushed forward just in case school operations halt. And there are some events being pushed later in the year in hopes that it will be a safer environment. As PTAs we serve to advocate for our students, families, and communities. Let's continue to show up at local Board of Education meetings because we play a pivotal role in decisions being made.



**Idea for a Meeting** – The pandemic may have altered our plans at the close of the last school year. Outside of elections and approving bylaws here is another idea for a meeting. Representatives from the Maryland 529 Plans are willing to visit with your parents to talk to them about saving money for college. Please contact Francesca Nelson at [fnelson@maryland529.org](mailto:fnelson@maryland529.org) or complete this form [Maryland 529 Request a Speaker Form](#).

**Partnering with Neighboring PTAs** – As students are transitioning and new parent leaders are becoming officers, PTA units volunteering to help. If there is an contact your neighboring PTA and assistance. Let's build that bridge



well as resources to construct stronger community involvement. Let's be there for one another.

often find a lack of members event without enough volunteers, develop a relationship by seeking with one another and leverage ideas as

## Quote of the Day

The only thing more expensive than education is ignorance.

~Benjamin Franklin

**National Hispanic Heritage Month** – National Hispanic Heritage Month is observed from September 15 to October 15, by celebrating the histories, cultures, and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America. The month also celebrates the Independence Day of several Latin American countries, including



Free State PTA is the official state constituent congress of National PTA® in Maryland. Visit the Free State PTA website at [fspta.org](http://fspta.org).



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Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua on September 15th, Mexico on September 16th, and Chile on September 18th. They also include holidays that recognize Hispanic contributions such as Virgin Islands-Puerto Rico Friendship Day that is celebrated in the U.S. Virgin Islands. In your PTA planning find a way to incorporate National Hispanic Heritage Month into your programming, especially considering diversity, equity, and inclusion. <https://www.hispanicheritagemoth.gov/about/>

**Post Office Box** – PTAs may want to consider using an off-school-grounds address for mail so that delivery or receipt of correspondence isn't dependent on school operations.



**Mandated Masking** – Last week the Joint Committee on Administrative, Executive and Legislative Review (AELR) voted on a universal mask mandate in Maryland public schools. The vote was 10-7. This was an approved emergency regulation after the Aug. 26 decision by the State Board of Education's endorsement. The mandate goes into effect immediately. You may review the entire hearing at the following link: [Viewing of Mask Mandate Session](#)

## Show Me the Money

- National PTA offers multiple grants and awards as well as a webinar on how to apply for grants. Please visit: [Awards and Grants for Local Units](#)
- PTA (Nonprofit) Volunteer Grants  
Volunteer grants are corporate giving programs that encourage volunteerism in communities where employees live and work. Through these programs, companies provide monetary grants to organizations where employees regularly volunteer. Research here to see if your employer provides donations to where you volunteer the most (the PTA) and help raise funds for your favorite nonprofit. [Information about Volunteer Grant Companies](#)

## Good Practices

- Healthy Habits Week is Sept. 20-24. National PTA is collaborating with Proud National PTA Sponsor Lysol to promote Healthy Habits Week, an educational effort that takes place every year during the third week of September to teach children healthy habits. *How can your local PTA advocate for healthy habits?*

## Running Your PTA

- National PTA offers guidance on how to run your PTA. Here is a link to a valuable resource: [Run Your PTA Local Leader KIT](#)

## Quick Fact

- The name of the Superintendent of Maryland Public Schools is Mohammed Choudhury.

## CALL US ANYTIME

### Primary Contact

#### Secretary

Jayne Lee  
410-446-1549

#### President

Marla Posey-Moss  
410-746-2746

#### President-Elect

David Griffith  
301-260-5166

#### Treasurer

Katrina Jones  
410-645-0721

#### VP for Leadership

Gerrod Tyler

#### VP for Advocacy

Laura Stewart

#### VP for Membership

Traci Tatum

#### VP for Field Service

Debbie Demery

#### Director-at-Large

Areas with no  
council PTAs

Rae Sinanan-Hill

#### Director-at-Large

Areas with council  
PTAs

Renee DeBiase



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