

District 37 Dialogue

National Congress of Parents and Teachers
Illinois PTA – District 37 Publication – Back to School: 2010

Nicole Fentem, Director

www.ilpta-d37.org

Michele Sheppard, Editor

From Our Director

Welcome back! I hope that you had a relaxing and fun summer.

Thank you for joining us at our District 37 Packet Orientation held in early August. I truly hope you went home feeling you gained valuable information that will help you ensure success for PTA this year. Your honest feedback on this year's orientation is appreciated; as we did for this year, we will be using your feedback to enhance next year's event. Please be sure to share all the information you gathered with your PTA board and members. The president (or attending representative) is the only person to receive this packet, your chairmen and members will be looking to you for these resources.

As you plan the PTA work for this school year, please remember to consider these three important items. First, we are working for ALL children not just your child or those only inside your school's four walls. However, your being involved will definitely help your child the most. Second, the PTA Objects/Purposes are the basis for all that we do. Do the programs and events that you have planned align with the PTA Objects/Purposes? Lastly, the PTA belongs to all its members. Do you know what your members expect from the PTA? What programs and events do your members value? Make your PTA meeting a welcoming place.

By now, all units should have their audits completed, goals and theme created, and budgets proposed. If you have not completed these tasks yet, please add these items to your "urgent" list and work on them as soon as possible. Remember: a PTA budget is based on the PTA goals which must support the mission and objects of PTA.

As you begin this school year's activities, be sure you have a membership booth set up. Do your best to engage families and make them a part of PTA. Remember membership is everyone's business. Include membership in all your PTA and school events. District 37 has a new membership goal for everyone this year! See the membership page for details.

Finally, I want to invite you to celebrate being "Wild About PTA!" at the District 37 Annual Meeting with us. It will be at The Seville, 700 S. Barrington Road in Streamwood on Monday, October 18. Registration and a cash bar begin at 6pm. The meeting will begin at 6:45pm. This year is an election year for District 37. Our District 37 Director for 2011-2013 will be elected and we will be honoring those units that stand out in our District as a result of applying for the Local Unit Honor Award. Please join us for a fun night to commemorate all that you do for children and families. Remember that reservations are due no later than October 1. More details including the formal invitation are forthcoming via email soon.

My board and I are available to help at any time, do not hesitate to contact us.

Have a great year and remember to thank all your volunteers because their support makes your job easier!

Nicole

Nicole Fentem
Illinois PTA District 37 Director



TREASURER – Barb Quinn

Starting the Year on Firm Fiscal Footing!



The role of the PTA treasurer can seem a bit overwhelming, but here are a few helpful hints to get you started on a firm fiscal footing:

- Be sure the PTA's audit has been completed before you present the fiscal year budget to the membership;
- Prepare a budget that considers the goals, programs and past practices of *your* PTA--draft a budget that is considered by the PTA board for recommendation to the membership and adopted by a simple majority vote;
- Deposit all funds immediately in a bank approved by the PTA board members;
- Create an effective check and balance system for financial safeguards. We recommend a few precautions that are easily instituted, including: bank statements be mailed to the president rather than the treasurer for review prior to reconciliation; never signing blank checks; counting receipts by at least two (2) people, then verified by the treasurer; basing financial reports on a calendar month rather than an arbitrary time period (i.e. meeting to meeting); and creating a year-end annual report showing receipts and expenditures by budgeted line items rather than checks issued.

The treasurer often assumes the responsibility of chairing the Budget & Finance committee, and should be prepared to draft and present the actual budget along with any changes or amendments to that budget. Remember, only the membership has the authority to revise the budget.



An area that often creates some confusion is the collection of membership dues. Here are a few tips that may be helpful:

- the treasurer and membership chairman should work together to assure accuracy in membership records, including the names and addresses of all members;
- distribution of membership cards is vital--it is the members' receipt and recognition of voting rights within the PTA;
- dues includes the local, state and national portion of dues, while only the local portion is considered income to the local PTA;
- dues **must** be remitted to the Illinois PTA state office postmarked by October 1st and monthly thereafter - membership is an ongoing activity!

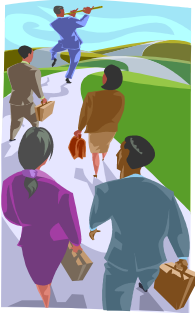
District 37 is here to help--we can answer questions, provide advice and/or assistance! Call or e-mail when you need us.

Barb Quinn, Treasurer, District 37
847.985.9078 bquinnpta@aol.com

DATES TO REMEMBER

- September 1, 2010 – Road to Success, 6 PM registration
School District 25 Office, AH
- September 2, 2010 – Money Matters, 6 PM registration
School District 25 Office, AH
- September 7, 2010 – Presidents Course 6 PM registration
School District 25 Office, AH
- September 8, 2010 – Volunteers and Membership,
6 PM registration
School District 25 Office, AH
- October 2, 2010 – Candidate Forum
Arlington Heights Village Hall, AH
- October 18, 2010 – Fall Conference Dinner, 6 PM
The Seville, Streamwood
- March 11-14, 2011 – Illinois PTA Convention
Marriott, Schaumburg

LEADERSHIP – Tom Goodrich



Welcome to the 2010-11 school year! I am Tom Goodrich and I'm excited to continue as Leadership Chairperson again this year for District 37.

To start out the year we are offering the following training courses:

Date Course

What it is and Who should attend

Sept. 1 PTA Road to Success

This course explains the who, what and why of PTA. This course is for everyone!

Sept. 2 Money Matters

Learn how to develop and approve a budget, how to conduct an audit, how to keep records as well as the Federal and State Government Do's and Don'ts.

This course should be attended by Treasurers and Presidents or anyone who wants to learn more about the financial side of PTA.

Sept. 7 President's Course

Now that you have stepped up to be President, learn what it takes to do the job well! This course will give you the information needed to manage your PTA, and have a fun and exciting time doing it.

Sept. 8 Volunteers and Membership – How Can We Increase Both

How do we locate and motivate our volunteers? How do we increase our membership? How do we engage our school community to do more for our Children? This course is for everyone!

All the training courses will be held at the Arlington Heights District 25 Administration Building (1200 S. Dunton, Arlington Heights, IL 60005). Registration is from 6PM to 6:30PM, classes are from 6:30PM to 9PM. Please send me an email if you plan to attend.

Throughout the year, I will be offering other helpful leadership information. If you have an idea, please contact me. Is there an area of leadership we should offer training on? If so, tell me your idea and we can make it reality. I am here to help make us stronger leaders.

Tom Goodrich

District 37 Leadership Chairperson
(847) 519-1992 Home
(847) 951-1992 Cell
tgoodrich@ync.net

"Unless you try something beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow."

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

NEWSLETTER – Michele Sheppard

As you begin the year and decide how and how often you are publishing your newsletter, remember that keeping your membership informed is your primary goal.



If you publish an online newsletter, how do you handle those members that do not have access to the internet? Have you considered providing hard copies to those parents?

Are you providing your membership with all the information that they need to be informed participants in your PTA? Some PTAs have reduced the number of issues that they are publishing due to costs. While fiscal responsibility is necessary, have you considered the possibility of producing a shorter newsletter rather than fewer editions? Timely information is very important for your members.

The last item to consider is who receives your newsletter? While a newsletter is a member necessity, consider providing the information to all the families so that they can see what your PTA is doing. If they don't know what the PTA does, they will never get involved. Copies of your newsletters should also be sent to the District Director, District Newsletter Chair, as well as your school district administration and school board.

MEMBERSHIP

"Membership is everyone's business." We hear this in training all the time, but do we see it really happening? Do you have a membership committee or just a membership chair? Is every chairman thinking about membership as part of their committee plan or implementation of the activity they are running?

If every unit recruited members to equal the membership cards received this year, we would have over 26,600 members in our District alone. We are one of the biggest Districts (measured by units and members) in the state. With this in mind, I urge you to strive for two-way communication with the District Board. In addition to sending our newsletters 5 times a year, this year we will be contacting all membership chairs through e-mails at least that many times with our goal of it being monthly. We also have an additional training set up on September 8th for membership.

Did you know that the number of members we have district-wide dictates how many Reflections projects we are allowed to award and send onto the state level for judging? This directly affects our children; the more members, the more we give them the best opportunity for their creativity to be seen beyond their backyard. However, last year as a whole District 37 membership went down 5.9%, the information has not been confirmed, but this may be the year that we have to cut down the number of projects we are allowed to send onto the state level for judging. This is just one tangible reason that membership is important. Throughout this year our hope is to help each other educate our community about the true value of being a PTA member; please help us fulfill this goal. Currently, our District has a large voice in Illinois PTA action and we would like to maintain and increase that voice.

At our packet orientation, we introduced this year's membership program "Get in the Games!" We hope this program will help all of you keep membership in mind throughout the entire year and in the end allow us all to do more for ALL the children. Each PTA should have a copy of this program which was handed out at orientation, but if you would like your own copy it can be downloaded from our website at: www.ilpta-d37.org. Look in the Membership section.

Get in the Games!



Illinois PTA District 37 Membership Initiative
July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011

Kick Off- Make sure to pay dues.

July, August, September and October
Submit report by November 15, 2010.

Winning unit receives a free registration to Illinois PTA 2011 Convention in Schaumburg.

Tip Off — Get Community Members!

November, December, January
Submit report by February 15, 2011.

Winning unit receives two free registrations to the Illinois PTA 2011 Convention in Schaumburg with a hotel room for Friday night.

Face Off — Get Male volunteers!

February, March, April
Submit report by May 15, 2011.

Winning unit receives one free meal at the 2011 District 37 Annual Meeting in October, 2011.

Grand Slam — Attend Convention!

May and June
Submit report by July 15, 2011.

Winning unit receives two free meals at the 2011 District 37 Annual Meeting in October, 2011.

Help us reach our goal of a 3.7% increase in membership district-wide so we can enjoy an all family game day. More information is available on the District 37 website: www.ilpta-d37.org.

TECHNOLOGY – Brent Fentem



A man has collected information from 100 million Facebook users and distributed it online in a downloadable file. (yahoo.com)

You can save up to 90% off the list price of college textbooks by renting books from online companies or buying used books online as well (shipping charges may apply, of course). (kiplinger.com)

Woman tied to her bed in Atlanta, GA by a burglar used her toes to type a message for help. (ABCNews.com)

The new face of reading? Some e-books now outselling hardbacks (CNN.com)

These are just a few headlines about Technology found on the web this month. Technology, when used appropriately seems to result in good over bad. The reality is that every day technology is advancing and it is a part of life. As parents and PTAs we need to ensure that we understand the technology of today, educate each other and educate our children how to use it effectively. Has your PTA been doing these things?

Some suggestions you might consider are the following:

- Publish texting lingo for parents.
- Host a Cyber Bullying Speaker.
- Create a fact sheet of what is appropriate and not to post on-line, through e-mail or texting.
- Furnish parents with online educational information through links such as: commonsensemedia.org, safekids.com, www.pta.org/topic_child_safety.asp, netsmartz.org, safetynet.aap.org and illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/cyberbullying/. These are a few that came up through a simple web search.
- Bring in a school assembly on the do's and don'ts of social media.

- Summarize findings about social media and cell phone usage and laws regarding technology in your newsletters.
- Inform your community how they can educate themselves better.

So, as you discuss your programs and budget for this school year, keep technology on the list of programs your community might benefit learning more about. Whether we like it or not, technology is part of our society and we need to learn everything we can about it and how to make it work for us and our children positively rather than get “burned” by it through our ignorance.

If ever you would like a particular topic discussed through this Dialogue, please be sure to contact bfentem@ilpta-d37.org and we will do our best to discuss it in an upcoming article.



District 37 Needs A Few Good Leaders!

If you have a passion for Legislation or Membership, the District 37 Board needs you!

Legislation Chair is responsible for coordinating the District 37 legislation events, like candidate forums by working with the district board, councils and local units.

Membership Chair is responsible for promoting the District membership incentive program, working with the district board, creating the program for next year.

In addition to these responsibilities, newsletter articles are required five times a year.

If you have an interest in making a difference for ALL the children and families in District 37, please contact the Director, Nicole Fentem at nfentem@ilpta-d37.org.

LEGISLATION

So YOU are the new Legislation Chairman--NOW WHAT!



You have been given a unique opportunity to be an effective link between *your* members and the Illinois PTA and the agencies that affect the lives and education of *our* children!

There are four main "jobs" you can undertake:

1) **INFORM** your members about what is happening at various levels--not sure where to start? Begin by learning what resources are available to you at a local level, at the state level or the national level. Visit the Illinois PTA web site at www.illinoispta.org and the National PTA web site at www.pta.org; then, share what you have learned with your members using a variety of methods, including your newsletter, website or e-news.

2) **MOTIVATE** your members to take action--this can be in the form of attending a school board meeting to learn about local issues and concerns, learning about the Illinois PTA Legislation Platform, attending a district or state sponsored event, hosting an event like a Candidates' Forum, contacting a legislator or inviting a state board member to attend a PTA meeting to share information with your members.

3) **COMMUNICATE** *your* concerns to the Illinois PTA --you can contact a member of the state board, attend convention, write a resolution or ask the Illinois PTA for advice on how to address *your* concerns.

4) **ADVOCATE** by asking decision-makers at the appropriate level to take some action--this can be a local school board member, a councilman, or trustee, or a state representative, senator or governor, or a federal congressional representative or senator, or even the president. Write a letter, make a phone call, and/or send a fax!

Still uncertain? Think about things that are of interest to *your* members, ask them what is important, keep them informed about things they have identified and ask us how we can help!

Barb Quinn, Legislation Chairman, Illinois PTA

REFLECTIONS – Joan Scovic



Reflections is the National PTA Arts Program that asks children to get creative! Each year, a new theme is chosen from ideas submitted by students across the country. The theme for the 2010-2011 school year is "Together We Can."

A Reflections Workshop for local chairs was conducted as part of the Illinois PTA District 37 Local Unit Packet Orientation event on August 10. If your school's Reflections chair was unable to attend, materials were sent home with your school's PTA president. At the meeting we discussed deadlines, promoting the program, how to package projects, and how to get through all the paperwork. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact one of the following people:

Arlington Heights Council PTA
Reflections Chair
Dawn Walter
dawnwalter25@yahoo.com

Northwest Suburban Council PTA
Reflections Chair
Joan Scovic
thescovics@hotmail.com (847) 991-0093

Schaumburg Township Council PTA
Reflections Chair
Tammy Loch
jerntamfbn@juno.com (847) 884-7730

Please keep the following Reflections dates in mind.

November 12: Deadline for local unit PTAs to submit their portfolios to their council chair.

December 10: Deadline for council chairs and non-council local units to submit their portfolios to the District 37 chair.

I am sure that **Together We Can** help the children in our district create some wonderful artwork! Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Yours in the arts,
Joan Scovic
Illinois PTA District 37 Reflections Assistant

SECRETARY – Michele Sheppard

Source: <http://non-profit-governance.suite101.com/article.cfm/how-to-take-meeting-minutes>



Taking minutes at a meeting is not always a popular activity, but it is an important one. The meeting minutes serve as a record of what action the board of directors has taken. In the eyes of the IRS, courts, and auditors board meeting minutes are legal documents. Nonetheless, there is no single format to take minutes. You can do what makes sense for you and your group. However, following these tips can help make writing meeting minutes easier:

- Remember that meeting minutes are for future and outside readers as much as they are for the people present. Make sure whatever you write down will be clear to people coming into the process at a later time.
- Typing meeting minutes on a laptop can make the process quicker and easier; however, a pen and paper work well, too, and might keep you from writing down too much information.
- Make a note of who is present. If necessary, pass around a sign-in sheet.
- Use the meeting agenda as an outline for the minutes.
- Details do not belong in meeting minutes. Do write down any motions and decisions made and the key findings of any committee reports.
- Use bullet points to make the minutes easier to read. Each bullet statement should represent a different finding, discussion, or decision. Use nested bullets (bulleted statements within a bullet) if appropriate.
- Make a note of issues that were tabled until future meetings; this will serve as an important reminder to the board of things that still need to be done.
- Transcribe or review minutes as soon as possible after the meeting, while your memory of what happened is still fresh.
- Before you submit the meeting minutes, proofread for typos and omissions.

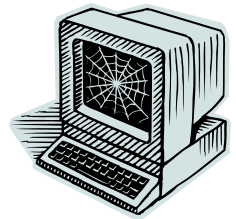
PTA TRAINING FROM HOME

Often our members and leaders are looking for additional training but the date and time of training are not convenient for them. National PTA has been listening and has created a number of e-learning courses over that past few years that can be done in the comfort of your home and even in your pajamas!

Participating in these courses is simple. Log onto **PTA.org/e-learning**. Using the username and password located on the back of your membership card you will be allowed into the course section of the PTA website. What a great benefit of becoming a PTA member. Most of these courses can be applied outside of the “PTA world” as well. Please note that these courses do not replace the courses required in your bylaws that are put forth by Illinois PTA. These courses give an overall perspective; individual state differences are not reflected. However, they are a great resource to utilize when you can’t get out of the house for training. Try them out and let your members know that they are available to them as well. Remember, the more knowledge our members have the more successful we are as a PTA. Check out the list of courses below:

E-Learning Courses

- Conflict Management
- Ethical Leadership
- Grant Writing
- Planning and Goal Setting
- Running a Successful Program
- Reflections 101
- PTA Basics
- Cultural Competency
- Parliamentary Procedure
- Planning Your PTA Year
- Writing and Proposing PTA Resolutions
- Preventing Theft in Your PTA
- Creating and Delivering a Speech
- Creating Successful Family-School Partnerships For Local PTA Leaders
- Creating Successful Family-School Partnerships
- Partnerships For State PTA Leadership



NATIONAL PTA NEWS

Excerpts from **Tips for Safer Routes to School**

Source: http://www.pta.org/topic_tips_for_safer_routes_to_school.asp

By *Russell Houston and Beverly Huey*

No matter how your child gets to and from school, there are risks that have not been well understood or publicized up until now. That's because while injuries and fatalities involving school buses are easy to identify, accidents by other travel modes are often not coded in a school-related category because the purpose of the trip isn't identified or reported.

Frustrated by this lack of information and confusion surrounding the issue, the U.S. Congress directed the National Academies' Transportation Research Board (TRB) to examine the relative risk of death or injury to students depending on the mode of transportation they take to school.

The Statistics

Each year approximately 800 school-age children are killed in motor vehicle crashes during normal school travel hours. This figure represents about 14 percent of the 5,600 child deaths that occur annually on U.S. roadways and 2 percent of the nation's yearly total of 40,000 motor vehicle deaths.

The TRB's report The Relative Risks of School Travel: A National Perspective and Guidance for Local Community Risk Assessment estimates, on a per-mile and per-trip basis, relative risks by mode of travel. The highest rate of student injuries and fatalities on a per-trip basis during normal school travel hours (September 1 through June 15, Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 8:59 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 4:59 p.m.) occurs for passenger vehicles with teenage drivers: roughly eight times higher than the rate for those driven by adults. The second highest rate is for student bicyclists. School buses and other buses have the lowest injury and fatality rates

Reducing Risks

To educate children about traffic safety and implement a successful school safety education program, it's important to understand the abilities and limitations of school-age children. Even with training, young elementary school-

age children cannot be relied upon to make consistent, safe traveling decisions. Indeed, the pedestrian road accident rate has been shown to be a function of age. It's been suggested that the degree of maturity necessary for safe behavior is reached between the ages of 9 and 12.

The TRB report includes a series of risk-reduction checklists with types of actions that could reduce the risks associated with each school travel mode. Schools that have in place risk-reduction techniques can have risk rates below those identified using nationwide data. Parents, as well as schools and law officials, can help. The mission of TRB is to promote innovation and progress in transportation through research.

Checklist for Bicycling and Walking

Is appropriate crossing protection provided at intersections (e.g., crossing guards, signals, special signage)?



Are students trained in safe bicycling and walking behaviors and practices?

Are young bicyclists and walkers supervised or accompanied en route?

Are bicycle helmets required and in use? Is compliance enforced?

Are safe and secure bicycling and walking routes designated?

Are bicycle paths and sidewalks available and in good repair?

Are traffic flow patterns designed to avoid or minimize people-vehicle and vehicle-vehicle (e.g., bus and passenger vehicle) interactions/conflict?

Are students on bicycles required to dismount and walk their bicycles on school property?

Are minimum walking distances realistic, given the associated risks?

Are traffic control devices properly installed and maintained?

More information can be found at the Safe Routes to School National Partnership.

DISTRICT 37 COUNCIL CORNER

Arlington Heights Council of PTAs

DISTRICT 25 INCREASING PTA VOLUNTEERS FOR THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR:

Summer has flown by again and the new school year is about to begin. As we start the school year, we need to remember that many of us are seasoned PTA volunteers and have participated in many school activities and served on numerous committees. It is part of our job as elected PTA officers and PTA committee chairman to encourage our newest PTA members at our schools to get involved. We need to make time at our meetings to introduce ourselves to new members, always remembering our first PTA experience and how awkward we may have felt. Also, when we start the year out looking for volunteers we always seem to have the same group of people around us. Let us try this year to go beyond our comfort zone and reach out to new moms and dads on the playground and at school events. In our experience, parents are much more excited and willing to help when they are asked to help in person than when they receive a phone call from someone they may never have met.

Many of our District 25 schools' PTAs have started Kindergarten playgroups during the summer, so that parents and kids can get to meet each other. The PTA officers are invited to come to these meetings and meet these new kindergarten parents, what better way to network for new volunteers. Enlist school principals and teachers in the recruiting process also, have them let your PTA know of any new students that may start the school year late. Parents moving into a new area or state always are looking for a way to meet new families. Surveying your members can also help you find out important information about your members such as: are the meeting times workable for parents at your school and what they are interested in helping out with. The main point is try to come up with new ideas to make parents feel welcome and then sit back and watch your PTA volunteers increase!

The greatest success we have had in Arlington Heights Council this past year has been to make our officers and PTA Presidents feel welcomed and by

encouraging them to communicate well with each other at our Council meetings. This has made our Council work more efficiently and we have already started seeing some new faces smiling back at us. Welcome Back!

*Sue Coops and Joyce Stenzel
AHC Co-presidents*

Northwest Suburban Council of PTAs

Northwest Suburban Council is looking forward to a terrific year! Over the summer, we sent a survey to incoming local unit presidents to find out which "hot topics" they would like us to address this year and what programs would be most effective for our members. Our first general membership meeting in September will incorporate one of these program suggestions. Also this fall, we welcome District 15's new interim superintendent, Scott Thompson, and present an update of the NWSC website, www.nwsapta.org.

*Tracey Coleman
NWSC President*

Schaumburg Township Council of PTAs

Over the summer the STC booked our location for our Annual Auction. The Auction benefits the STC Scholarship Fund which awards 12 college scholarships to District 54 Alumni and summer scholarships to current students in grades 4-7. We will hold this event on March 4, 2011 at Chandlers in Schaumburg.

The STC Executive committee also met to prepare our budget and set our goals. With 19 of our 27 local units having new presidents this year, we want to continue to provide leadership and open communication with all our local units. We hope to continue to strengthen our relationship between their PTAs and the Council. We plan to promote membership, Illinois PTA training and the Convention as much as possible!

*Kathy Pritscher
STC President*



DISTRICT 37 BOARD

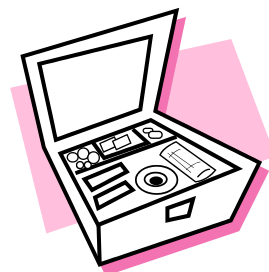
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Membership	OPEN	
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STC	Kathy Pritcher	847-923-5223 Pritpace@aol.com

ILLINOIS PTA NEWS

Source: Illinois PTA Local Unit Packet, Health Resources Great Toolkit

National Health Observances Tool Kits are available at:

<http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/JanToolkit.aspx>.



Live Well, Learn How. Parents, grandparents and family caregivers need to stay healthy in order to provide for their children. One way to increase awareness of this process is to use monthly National Health observances. This website includes over 1,600 health topics from the most trusted sources – from a-z. It is a great source of information and ideas to use in your school community.

The Quick and Easy Guide to Green Cleaning in Schools

- Five Steps to a Healthy School Environment. This FREE downloadable guide is available at the Healthy Schools Campaign website (www.healthyschoolscampaign.org). Answers to the question – How to know if it's green and ways to institutionalize your green cleaning program are included.

The Quick & Easy Guide to School Wellness

is a multi-media how-to guide filled with comprehensive information, practical advice, tools and resources to help you take action. It can be downloaded free of charge at www.healthyschoolscampaign.org. Healthy Schools Campaign has launched a holistic, school-based plan to make wellness a part of every child's school experience. They have provided leadership education to over 150 nurses across Illinois to improve health and wellness outcomes in the school community. PTAs are encouraged to connect with the nurse assigned to your school/school district and find out how together we can work to impact health and wellness in the school community.

National PTA has moved out of Chicago.

Their new address is:
National PTA Headquarters
1250 N Pitt Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

