



Alaska PTA News

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In This Issue

President-Elect Note
2008 Alaska PTA Convention
Summary
What is VIP Membership?
Legislative/Advocacy - A
Local Unit's Work
Programs Update
HUGS
Healthy & Safety
2008-2009 Officer's List
Leadership Saturday

Alaska PTA

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Alaska PTA

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A Note From Our President-Elect

A pivotal time

It is now that time of year when local units are gearing up for their elections and outgoing local PTSA/PTA officers are getting ready to pass the torch.

As each local unit begins this process, I challenge each of our unit leaders to do more than just hand over the books. It is my hope that each of you will be willing to mentor the new officers who are coming in. Mentoring is a valuable practice that will give your new officers the support they need to start the year successfully. It takes a little time, but that little bit of time invested at the beginning will save a large amount of time in the end when new board members do not have to learn by trial and error.

So what is mentoring? The definition for mentor is: a wise and trusted counselor or teacher. In other words you begin to teach the new officers all that you have learned while you were in the position. This does two things. It allows for the next group to have the opportunity to not make the same mistakes again and secondly it allows building off of the success of the past group in order to achieve even greater successes.

The next step of making sure the torch is passed well is for each outgoing officer to ensure that AKPTA office has the new list of incoming officers! We build our strength when we can stay in touch through communication. We will be sending several electronic training and newsletters throughout the transitional period and over the summer.

We celebrate that this year we were able to reach out and contact many of you in the local units directly and that our membership increased for the first time in 4 years. We could not have achieved this with out the great effort of our local units, so we thank each of you for a job well done.

We also ask that you continue to ask others to join. It is my personal vision to see every adult of our great state join our organization. Why you might ask? It is very simple just read the guest article under Legislative/Advocacy below to see the importance of what PTSA/PTA'S have done and continue to do. Education is everyone's business and its success is vital to how our community will grow and prosper. AKPTA is the largest, over 9,000 members strong, and the oldest advocacy group in our state that has been working to strengthen education. Let us keep signing up individuals to help us in this great cause. Together we will

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*Need to get in touch with the
Board of Managers? It's easy!!
Simply click on the link listed
below on the net or enter the
online link into your computer
and you will.... **Contact Us***

Alaska PTA Home Page
<http://www.alaskapta.org/>

Alaska PTA Blog
*Look for updates, changes and
announcements on the*

Alaska PTA Blog

National PTA
<http://www.pta.org/>

Leadership Saturday
1st Saturday of the month
10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the

ALASKA PTA OFFICE
555 W. Northern Lights, Suite 204
Anchorage, AK 99503

**If you are interested in
working with the Board of**

succeed.

Sincerely,
Mary Schrage
Alaska PTA President-Elect



2008 Convention Summary

What a wonderful time we had in Fairbanks. Julie Doll did a tremendous job at planning and carried out the logistics of it all with flawless precision. Thank you Julie!

2008 Convention was a success in every way. It is my hope that every local PTA unit puts into the 2008-2009 budgets the cost of convention. It is a wonderful place to meet highly professional individuals who can assist you with many differing issues. Parents of the 21st century are professionals who happen to be parents. There are very few parents any more who can say they are: "just a mom" or "just a dad". This networking among professionals: whose noble cause is to strengthen education, was an honor to participate in.

Members of local units who came to convention attended workshops on a variety of issues from parent involvement to bylaws. Members from across the state met to discuss issues that are important to all PTAs in both formal and informal settings. Networking and information sharing are big reasons to attend convention. We had an awards reception for our wonderfully talented Alaskan kids who participated in the Reflections art program. Vendors from Alaska and across the country came up to display what is offered to PTAs, including fundraising, community awareness programs, insurance, banking, and investing options for our children's futures.

Stay tuned to our website to track where next years Convention will be hosted. We hope to begin to plan out several years in advance, so if you think your region might like to host a Convention please contact AKPTA office, for details. Nikiski of Region 5 is looking at hosting in 2010! It is our hope Convention can stay on the move around our great state!

Managers. Letters of interest and applications for nomination can be found on the Alaska PTA website:

www.alaskapta.org

or by contacting the [Alaska PTA office](#)

The following Committees need you. With your help, we can do more for all of the children in Alaska:

Click on the links below to check each one out.

[Nominations](#)

[Bylaws](#)

[Convention](#)

[Legislative](#)

[Advocacy](#)

[Lands Trust](#)

[Education](#)

[Environment Health and Safety](#)

[Grants](#)

[Membership](#)

[Parental Involvement](#)

[Reflections](#)

[Ways & Means](#)

H.U.G.S.

Items to be sent to the Alaska PTA office to be a

"HEALTHY UNIT IN GOOD STANDING":

1. [Current Officers List](#)
2. [Insurance Premium Payment](#)
3. [Membership List](#)
4. [Membership Dues](#)
5. [Updated Bylaws \(should be updated every 5 years\)](#)
6. [Annual Audit for the 2006-2007 school year](#)
7. [990EZ form filed if required](#)



What is VIP Membership?

The Alaska PTA VIP unit is a statewide unit, at large, primarily for those who are not members of a local PTA/PTSA unit. The Alaska VIP unit also includes those PTA members who join through our long-standing business partnership with Denali Alaskan Federal Credit Union. Membership is open to any individual, business, organization or coalition member that shares the Mission and Purposes of PTA.

Alaska PTA VIP members receive:

- Membership card giving them web access to *Member's Only* sections of the National PTA website (www.pta.org);
- E-mail subscription to the Alaska PTA newsletter and notices;
- Invitation to Alaska PTA and National PTA events; and
- Membership prices on event registration.

The Alaska PTA VIP unit has a little over 800 members and is also known as Region VII. Region VII Vice President Lynn Hohl facilitated a meeting of VIP members attending the Alaska PTA convention in Fairbanks in April. Members present were in agreement to reach out more to VIP members in the future with membership renewals based on the actual month the member joined rather than an annual cycle. Members also agreed to strengthen our relationship with Denali Alaskan Federal Credit Union and assure all members of Alaska PTA are aware of Denali's continuing statewide support and benefit to local units. Denali Alaskan recently debuted Alaska PTA checks and other special offers for PTA units. If you have any questions about the Alaska PTA VIP unit or what Denali Alaskan offers PTA units, please contact Lynn: region7vp@alaskapta.org.



Legislative/Advocacy

Guest writer for this issue: Gloria Hanrahan, Wendler PTSA President

Health & Safety

It is that time of year when bicycles come out and our children begin enjoying a variety of outdoor activities. We want our children to be safe and avoid injuries. Please take a moment to remind your children of the safety equipment they should utilize for each of the activities that they participate in. Safety equipment, be it lifejackets for water activities, helmets for bicycles or roller-skating, are important and do save lives. In addition to teaching our children the proper use of safety equipment, lead by example; your actions speak volumes to children. Let's all get out there and play!

2008-2009 Officers List

Please send in your new officer's list as soon as you know who your new officers will be. That will help us start off the 2008-2009 school year in August with the most up-to-date information. You can download a blank officer's list from our website www.alaskapta.org

Leadership Saturday

Leadership Saturday is this coming Saturday, May 31, between 10:00 - 2:00. Come in to the office for resource materials and face-to-face help from a member of our Board of Managers. The end of the school year is just a few weeks away! Come in to make sure you are on track to end the year with everything in order. Bring your new officer's list, get help with board transitions, audits, budgets, responsibilities for the summer, and starting off the new school year in August. We hope to see you there!

While we know, as parents, we are fundamental to the development and welfare of our children, let's not forget the profound role the PTA has played over the past century. As we move towards the end of the school year, Wendler will be having the 8th Grade Celebration on May 14th. This event, put on as a combined effort between Wendler and the PTSA, is something I personally had difficulty supporting. When you have difficulty seeing where you are going, it's useful to look back to find an answer. So, I looked and this is what I found.

My grandmother was a live-in maid at the age of 11. My husband's grandmother was an immigrant from Slovakia and was cleaning the boarding house, where she and her father lived, at age 9. Neither woman had more than a couple of years of elementary school education. But in 1904, the PTA resolved to work to end child labor so that kids could go to school, rather than labor to put a roof over their head. So the next generation of children could do a little better.

My mother and mother-in-law left school at 15 and 14, respectively, to work in a factory boxing saltines and a bakery. It was the Depression and their fathers could not find work. In 1938, the PTA resolved to make it possible for all children to have 12 years of schooling and to increase pressure on employers not hire a child before they hired the child's father. So the next generation of children could do a little better.

As that next generation of children, my husband and I have been able to do more than just a little better. In two generations, our family has gone from being non-English speaking child laborers to having graduate degrees, which enable us to have a secure and comfortable life. This is powerful and it only happened because of publicly supported elementary and secondary schools, publicly supported State universities and people willing to speak out on our behalf through organizations, such as the PTA.

As my own child moves on up to high school and the opportunities available, I realize we have families at Wendler who are experiencing their own first generation who can reap the benefits of a publicly supported education. I truly believe they can accomplish whatever they choose, if they utilize the educational system available to them. And for this, we will celebrate. We can celebrate our children's achievements, but we should also celebrate the commitment of the people who have chosen to work with our children and the organizations, which continue to make public education possible. As we celebrate, Wendler PTSA resolves to continue to do our part to make it "a little better" for the next generation.

In addition: Wendler PTSA helped move to the forefront to make it "a little better" for the next generation the following.

Advocacy Area—Safety, Health, Wellness (Family Assistance)

Rationale—Wendler PTSA believes in building healthy families and healthy communities, and we all have an important role to play in making sure parents; schools, and communities have the support and resources they need.

Action—Formal Advocacy to ASD School Board to ensure that all students have equal access to food during the school day. Policy of non-access has been officially changed. PTSA still has responsibility to make sure ASD follows this new policy and parents are notified.

On behalf of the AKPTA Board of Mangers Gloria we thank you for Wendler PTSA's outstanding work in Advocacy. Thank you for sharing this unit's success with us. Local units who would like to submit articles may do so by sending them to the AKPTA office. Reminder for all unit leaders: please plan on attending the Annual Legislative Conference, where the Legislative Agenda is set for the entire state, and the annual Fly-In to Juneau, where we advocate for our issues from each local units perspective who are in attendance!



Programs Update

As the school year winds down, your PTAs are busily planning and carrying out many end-of-the-year activities. We hope that you have hosted some powerful programs this year and would love for you to share your ideas with other units in the state. Did you know that there is an Alaska PTA recognition for successful programs? On the forms page of the Alaska PTA website you will find a Program recognition form through which you can share your good ideas with other PTAs in the state and be "published" in next year's Convention handbook.

This year I have attempted to give you timely information about programs, awards, and grants that are available. If you've gone on the Alaska PTA website, you will see that there is a variety of information on the programs page that can be helpful to your units. When you start setting goals

for the next school year, take a few minutes to look there; I am confident there is something that will be of help to you. The Programs Handbook has been updated and has information to help you plan and carry out successful events from beginning to end.

It has been a pleasure to work with you this year, and I look forward to continuing for another year. Best wishes to you and your family for a safe, active, memorable summer!

Nancy Copping
Alaska PTA Programs Chair

