



Why PTA?

As a PTA leader, you may be asked why your school should have a PTA, when some of each membership due does not stay at your school. The following information is provided to help you answer that question.

- 1) PTA is a formal membership organization with a 120-year history of working for children. National PTA is the largest child advocacy group in the United States. Schools that choose to belong to the PTA pay dues to the state and national organizations and abide by state and national non-profit group rules that exist for their protection. In the past, PTA fought for mandatory kindergarten, school lunches, and inoculation programs. Today, membership dues allow PTA to be actively involved in protecting public schools by advocating on behalf of children and families. Such issues include advocating for increased state and federal education funding, for safe schools and a full and robust curriculum that includes the arts, among other initiatives
- 2) PTA is the only organization in Sacramento and Washington DC speaking up for children and families. Teachers have a voice (CTA), administrators have a voice (ACSA), classified staff has a voice (CSEA). Are you comfortable having others make decisions that affect your children without hearing from parents and families? For the price of a Frappachino at Starbucks, you can have that voice
- 3) Some believe it is better to spend the membership money at school for our kids. Who would not like to boost the budget a bit? Might be able to add a couple of more art classes? *One good piece of legislation passed in Sacramento or Washington DC can result in the addition of those art teachers*
- 4) For the most part, kids at your school will turn out ok. Parents have (and will) step up to help fill the gaps at school. But our children will not remain at this school forever and with whom will they share society? Who will they socialize and work with, who will they marry? A generation of well educated and civically engaged contributors to society? PTA believes it is worth the cost of that one Frappachino per year to work towards that goal

- 5) There are a great number of PTA membership perks, including discounts with Google Express, Yoobi, Enterprise Rent a Car, Legoland, California Academy of Sciences, Aquarium of the Pacific, and more. Click [here](#) for a flyer. PTA membership can easily pay for itself
- 6) There are no special PTA rules to run your business. PTA procedures and policies are based on the regulations governing all not-for-profit corporations. The financial rules and regulations governing a PTA serve to promote participation, transparency and trust with its members
- 7) Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is a generic term that represents single school groups that choose to remain independent. 'PTO Today' is an online community, a print magazine, a series of vendor and networking fairs, and online programs/tools
- 8) PTOs do not have umbrella organizations for guidance or support. They recommend you participate in online forums to gather information on how to run your unit
- 9) PTOs must apply for an EIN (employer identification number), register themselves as a 501(c)3 charitable organization, incorporate as a non-profit, apply for state tax exemption, and see to it that they maintain their group's tax-exempt status on a yearly basis
- 10) Tax/financial help. If a PTA unit gets audited by the IRS or Franchise Tax Board, or receives communication from the Attorney General's Office, council, district and state officers are there to help
- 11) Insurance & Loss Coverage. PTA carries excellent liability coverage that protects PTAs against lawsuits in the case of accident or negligence. Our policy also includes bonding insurance for board members in the case of theft. PTA provides support (council, district, state) and specific insurance guidelines that, when followed, ensure that events are covered. In addition to general liability, PTA's policy also provides:
 - i) Directors and officers insurance (protects executive board decisions made)
 - ii) Sexual molestation coverage
 - iii) Employment practices coverage
 - iv) Workers compensation coverage
- 12) PTO Today offers "cafeteria style" access to insurance via their website, with different levels of coverage. Complete coverage (covers property insurance) is \$739/year. PTA insurance is \$228/year (2018). Our insurance broker does not cover PTOs.

- 13) Information. PTA presidents meet with Poway Unified administration, teachers union, and school board members on a regular basis. This access and opportunity for genuine two-way communication is key to making sure that the administrators, teachers and politicians in Poway USD hear the voice of parents and families
- 14) Bylaws. Bylaws are required for non-profit and not-for-profit organizations. Guidance and support are provided by council, district and state in reviewing and updating bylaws every three years or as necessary.
- 15) Training and leadership building. With boards turning over frequently, PTA offers access to consistent training and guidance from council, district and state organizations. Annual leadership conferences held in San Diego every June, regional trainings held in the fall as well as local trainings in the county throughout the year, provide additional training opportunities
- 16) Continuity. Parent volunteers spend only a few years at any given school. Today's parent experts in running a non-profit without any guidance or oversight may be graduating to another school tomorrow. Having permanent and ongoing leadership from council, district and state means that there are always places to turn to for help
- 17) Manuals. PTA provides a host of free online and print resources in multiple languages — extensive how-to books on running a PTA unit — that all are updated regularly. PTO Today offers a Startup Toolkit for \$49.
- 18) Every Child, One Voice. PTA values its role as a voice for all children. The PTA is not a political organization. PTA members across the state and nation have a wide variety of views, political and otherwise. PTA's policy stance on issues is voted on each year at the convention, and all units are invited to attend and have a voice in that vote

If your PTA is considering dissolving your unit, please contact Palomar Council at palomarcouncilpta9@gmail.com before making this important decision, so that your association fully understands the ramifications of doing so. We are here to help!