

PTA Over ALL the Others Why PTA is best!

PTA has a long and successful history as the oldest child advocacy organization! PTA is a network of independent PTAs from around the country. This network works together as a membership association to carry out the mission. Joining any PTA gives you membership to the network, including the resources, the support and the ability to make a real difference in the lives of all children.

Course Resources/Handouts: Download [The Value of PTA Membership](#), [How National PTA Supports Your Child and Your School Community](#), and [PTA Myths and Truths PDF](#)

Section 1: PTA is Awesomely Unique

1. **PTA has a Rich Legacy and a Long History:** PTA's mission is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children. PTA is the oldest and largest child advocacy association in America. For over 125 years, National PTA has worked to better the lives of every child in America. When you belong to PTA, you are part of a network of millions of parents, caregivers, students, teachers, administrators, business leaders and policymakers who work together to ensure every child reaches their potential. When you join PTA, you become part of this legacy. How old is PTA? More than 125 years old! Act: The National PTA website does a great job sharing this rich history, [check it out!](#)
2. **PTA is a Membership Association:** A membership association is an organization that brings together individuals with shared interests. Members pay dues to belong to the association, which provides them with various benefits such as advocacy on behalf of the members, networking opportunities, access to resources, and professional development. Being a membership association is how PTA is structured to carry out the PTA mission. This means that membership is literally how the PTA mission is advanced, and membership is therefore critical to success. People throughout the association are working towards a shared mission on behalf of all children. Act: Review [The Value of PTA Membership](#)
3. **PTA is a Powerful Network:** The PTA mission motivates a very powerful PTA network around the country, structured for maximum impact. Issues affecting our children almost always extend beyond individual schools. This powerful PTA network works seamlessly to collectively influence the decisions that affect children not only at their schools, but also throughout districts, states, across the nation, and even on U.S. military bases overseas. All PTAs play a critical role in advancing the PTA mission. This is unique to PTA. Local PTAs are individual PTAs around the country, usually associated with a school but not always. Some local PTAs are called PTSAs – the S stands for students. Local PTAs can also be associated with a community, or special interest like Special Education PTAs (SEPTAs). Local PTAs ensure every child has representation and family voices are heard. State PTAs: State PTAs support all PTAs throughout the state. State PTAs advocate for state policy and funding affecting children. State PTAs maintain relationships with decision makers and community members throughout the state to provide input and to ensure families have a voice at this level. National PTAs: National PTA support all PTAs throughout the country. National PTA advocates for federal policy and funding affecting children. National PTA maintains relationships with decision makers and community members throughout the country to provide input and to ensure families have a voice at this level. When you join a local PTA, you become a member of all the following. The PTA you paid, Your state PTA, National PTA, Act: Review [How National PTA Supports Your Child and Your School Community](#).

Section 2: Resources and Benefits Galore

1. Advocacy

PTA is a membership association focused on advocacy. PTA advocates for the education and wellbeing of all children at the local, state, and national levels - amplifying voices in the decision-making process and addressing issues at all levels.

Why does membership matter for advocacy? The size of our membership is equal to the strength of our voice! When millions of members advocate for change, it speaks loudly. When PTA advocates to decision makers, the number of members represented translates to the number of constituents asking. The more members a PTA represents, the more decision makers listen.

What is collective impact? The PTA network includes all the PTAs across the country and overseas, truly being one voice for every child, greatly increasing the potential for positive outcomes. This unique structure allows the greatest impact. Decisions affecting students are made at the federal, state, and local levels. What happens at one level, greatly effects all the other levels and all students. PTAs work collectively! Having efforts at every level allows issues to be fully addressed. Groups functioning outside the PTA network are on their own to address issues at all levels, which is nearly impossible.

Did You Know? Many of the benefits our children receive today, such as universal kindergarten, child labor laws, the National School Lunch Program, and a juvenile justice system, were accomplished because of the PTA's advocacy work to better the lives of every child mission.

National PTA's advocacy priorities [here](#), resources [here](#)

2. Membership Tools

Being a PTA means you have access to 400+ free membership tools that will make integrating membership into everything you do super easy!

Check out National PTA's Membership Tools [webpages](#), lots of helpful tools. [Reasons YOU Belong](#), [Recruitment Tools](#), [Membership Minute](#), [Membership Mania](#), [10 PTA Membership Myths and Truths](#)

3. Programs, Funding and Center for Family Engagement

Being in the PTA network has benefits! Did you know that simply by being a PTA, you have access hundreds of free resources? Dozens of free [programs](#) and resources ready to go! Access to the [Center for Family Engagement](#) and tons of quality [family resources](#). Millions of dollars in [funding](#) to help build PTA capacity and skills! [Cost savings](#) from national retailers and other PTA partners!

4. Support and Leadership Development

The support you need to be successful is only a click or phone call away. An entire network stands ready to support each other as together we advance the PTA mission. These are just a few of the resources available to you at the National level. Check out your [state PTA's website](#) for state specific support. [Local leader kit](#). Leadership development through [online learning courses](#). Regular updates and advice in the form of [e-newsletters](#), PTA.org, and [Our Children magazine](#). [Local Leaders Facebook page](#). National PTA's social media platforms ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [X](#))

Section 3: PTA is Different than the Others

Having a better understanding of how PTA is different from the others will allow you to be more compassionate and persuasive in your conversations. It is important to understand why people might want a different option and why PTA is the best option. It is also important to understand why PTA is ultimately the best!

- **Flexibility:** Every PTA is an independent 501c3 govern by the same state nonprofit laws and federal IRS regulations that all nonprofits must follow, even the alternatives. Alternatives might appear to offer flexibility, but they too are bond to the same laws and regulations.
- PTA just makes it easier because the laws and regulations are shared, and your state PTA is there to offer support and guidance. Every PTA is free to do what matters to its members and each PTA sets their own membership dues.
- **Structure:** A difference between PTA and the other parent groups is in the organizational structure. Both can have the same goals and commitment to support, improve and advocate for their school communities but PTA has the structure to make the greatest impact by going beyond the school building.
- **Leadership Opportunities:** PTA supports leaders throughout their nonprofit leadership journey. Local PTA leaders often continue making a difference for all children by becoming PTA leaders with other PTAs, at the district, state or national PTAs.
- **Leadership Support:** PTA helps develop and educate volunteer leaders to effectively run a nonprofit, advocate for the issues important to their community, support teacher and student success and engage families in their child's education.
- **Affiliation:** PTAs are affiliated with national and state PTAs and have procedures and practices in place to help them be successful, while following all state and federal nonprofit laws.
- All PTAs belong to a network that provides support, guidance, training, funding opportunities and a community of like-minded people.
- **Collective Impact:** PTAs work together across all levels towards a shared mission, therefore deepening impact. There is strength in numbers!
- **Holistic Support:** PTA goes beyond fundraising and social events, offering resources, programs, and initiatives that address various aspects of a child's well-being, including academic support, health and wellness, and extracurricular enrichment.

While other parent groups may share some of these qualities, PTAs are often recognized for their structured approach, longstanding presence in many schools, and focus on fostering collaboration and advocacy for the betterment of the entire school community. Download the [10 PTA Membership Myths and Truths](#) document at the beginning of this course, this section will be a breeze. We hope you love PTA as much as we do! The network of dedicated volunteers and the history of improving lives for all kids is something uniquely PTA. If you are interested in starting a PTA, please reach out to [your state PTA](#) for support. If you are interested in joining a PTA near you, you can right now. Click [here](#) to find a PTA near you. We look forward to you becoming part of the PTA legacy.