

2023 Convention & Annual Meeting

Slate of Officer Nominees Presented by the NLDC

Vacant, President Elect

Christy Carroll Highfill, Vice President of Child and Youth Advocacy

Vacant, Vice President of Communications & Student Programs**

Vacant, Vice President of Membership and Outreach
Gail Phillips, Secretary

Vacant, Treasurer

Eligible members who wish to run against a slated nominee must submit the proper notification by April 1st. See page 15. Eligible members who want to run for a vacant position must follow requirements—see page 15. ***Caveat—see page 15 about this position.*

Download the Registration Packet

Find the convention registration packet at

https://tnpta.org/convention/registration_packet_2023.pdf

Inside the packet, find information about:

- ◇ Registration Costs and Form
- ◇ Hotel reservations steps
- ◇ Accrediting voting delegates from your unit, and much more!

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Message from the President

It is March already!

This newsletter portrays PTA in action: proposed resolutions to guide future advocacy efforts of the Tennessee PTA that will be voted on by convention delegates, proposed bylaws that makes the structure of Tennessee PTA more responsive to the general membership that will be voted on by convention delegates; a slate of officers who are nominated to guide the future of the Tennessee PTA to be voted on by convention delegates, and have I mentioned, Convention! Units sending voting delegates to the state PTA convention is an important part of the PTA connection! Last day to register and to reserve a hotel room is April 7, 2023.

Personal TMI and Reading

The position statement by the board of directors, published in this and the February newsletter, pulled at my heartstrings. If this rigid law was in place way back when I was in third grade, I would have been retained. Not because I wasn't trying. Not because I wasn't smart enough. Not because I was some dumb country boy like my unsupportive elementary principal thought of me. I had an unknown learning disability: dyslexia.

I know there is more help now with learning disabilities but there is always that chance that some student, someone's child, is caught without knowledge of their situation and are evaluated on one, singular test and not the whole potential. I never received any help for my dyslexia because it wasn't discovered until years later after high school. But I was smart enough to compensate. For example, a year after third grade, I was reading comprehensively and spelling with accuracy.

Placing the future of a third grader on one, singular test is not right. It certainly does not look at the student as a whole person. That is why I stand behind this position statement.

We are PTA! PTA Advocates!

Dwight Hunter

President, Tennessee PTA

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**Tennessee PTA Position Statement on Tennessee Learning
Loss Remediation and Student Acceleration Act
(T.C.A. § 49-6-3115)
Third Grade Reading Retention Legislation**

The Tennessee PTA works to ensure that all students can be successful. The current third grade retention law, while working to ensure that students are capable of meeting standards, creates an environment where a singular test (i.e. TCAP or TNReady), and not a student's tracked growth or potentially their full capabilities, determines their educational outcomes and progress in school. We believe that the exceptions to retention set forth in the current legislation do not meet the full spectrum of needs a student might present or provide enough flexibility to prevent a student who is capable from being retained.

The Tennessee PTA Board of Directors believes that legislation regarding student retention should work to meet the needs, skills, and abilities of each student and must be based on multiple measures including student growth and achievement. The board of directors also believes that this legislation should return the ability for students, parents, teachers, and schools to make decisions for each student on an individual basis. The board of directors deems that local education agencies are best suited to craft individual retention policies that promote the success of their students. The Tennessee PTA Board of Directors asks that the third grade retention legislation be amended to ensure that decisions are made individually and based on a student's capabilities, and not as a collective in order to ensure the success of every student.

Tennessee PTA and our board of directors will continue to focus on our mission: To make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

Adopted by the Tennessee PTA Board of Directors on January 21, 2023

Leadership Committee: Training at Leadership Academy

Hello from your Leadership Committee Chair!

This year we held two Leadership Academy sessions instead of just one. The first one was in Knoxville on February 11th and the second one was in Brentwood on March 4th. Thank you to the Cedar Bluff Library and to the Brentwood John Holt Library for their meeting rooms!

Pictures from the February 11th Leadership Academy in Knoxville



More Leadership Training!

Virtual Statewide Leadership Training

Make plans to attend the virtual statewide leadership training (SLT) on Tuesday, May 9! There will be two times to choose: 11 AM Eastern or 7 PM Eastern (10 AM and 6 PM Central).

Save the date, May 9 and your preferred time, and look for the Zoom registration link.

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Update your Officers and MemberHub Admins!

Download the officer information form at:

<https://tnpta.org/news/officerinformationform.docx>

When updating new officers in MemberHub also add the president and other designated officers as an admin in MemberHub. This provides a smoother transition!

Directions from the form:

Please update the president's information in MemberHub and complete this form and return to the Tennessee PTA no later than June 15. We need this information to better serve you and to make sure you receive all information from the State and National PTA. (If you do not have all of your chairs elected at this time, please send what you have and notify Tennessee PTA when they are available.) Type or Print all information.



Make plans to attend Our Journey Through PTA 2023 Annual Meeting & Convention!

Register and pay online at <https://app.memberhub.gives/tncon2023/Campaign/Details>

Deadline for group rate hotel reservations and for the \$50 registration fee is **April 7, 2023!** Don't miss out on a chance to vote on officers, to vote on bylaws, and to vote on resolutions. Have your unit send a voting delegate!

Each local unit in good standing will receive one Voting Card for the unit president or designated alternate (if registered as a convention delegate). Each unit will receive an additional voting card for every 50 members.

2023 Membership Increase Awardees!

Congratulations to our Gold Units!

Units listed in alphabetical order

Units move up in Status as Membership Dues are turned in!

Gold Certificate Status At Least a 20% Increase in Membership!

Apison Elementary School PTA
Arlington Middle School PTSA
Bailey Station Elementary PTA
Beaumont Elementary PTA
Bonny Kate Elementary PTA
Collierville Middle School PTA
Daisy Elementary School PTA
East Hamilton Middle School PTA
Green Magnet PTA
John Allen Elementary School PTA
Lake Ridge Elementary School PTA
Liberty Bell Middle School PTSA
Loftis Middle School PTA
Lookout Valley Elementary PTA
Marvin Wright Elementary School PTA
Montgomery Central Elementary PTA
Nolan Elementary School PTA
Norman Binkley PTA
Oak View Elementary School PTA
Rivermont Elementary School PTA
Rose Hill PTA
Sterchi Elementary PTA
Soddy Daisy Middle Community PTA
South Side Elementary PTA
Sullivan Gardens K-8 School PTA
Sycamore Elementary PTA
Tennessee High School PTSA
West Collierville Middle School PTA

Awesome!

Congratulations to our Units that have Achieved Silver Status!

Our Silver level units can still move up to Gold status!

Silver Certificate Status At Least a 10% Increase in Membership!

Crieve Hall Elementary PTA

Nashville Head Magnet PTA

New Hopewell Elementary PTA

Northside Elementary PTA

Rosebank Elementary PTA

Schilling Farms Elementary School PTA

Soddy Elementary School PTA

Wallace A Smith Community PTA

Congratulations to our Units that have Achieved Bronze Status!

Bronze Certificate Status At Least a 5% Increase in Membership!

Collierville Elementary PTA

Towne Acres Elementary PTA

West Hills Elementary PTA

Wolftever Creek Elementary PTA

Woodland Elementary School PTA

Congratulations to our Units that have Achieved +1 Status!

These units have increased membership by at least +1.

Avoca Elementary PTA | Crosswind Elementary PTA | Emerald Academy PTSA

Ruby Major Elementary PTA | Thrasher Elementary PTA

Proposed Bylaws for Consideration at the 2023 Convention & Annual Meeting

Proposed Amendment One:

To Amend Article VII, Section 5, Officers and their Elections to change non voting advisory member to voting member of the board of directors.

Currently Reads: The Immediate Past President shall serve for a term (2 years) as a non-voting advisory member of the Board of Directors and as a non-voting advisory member of the Executive Committee.

Proposed Amendment One, if adopted, would read as: The Immediate Past President shall serve for a term (2 years) as a voting member of the Board of Directors and as a non-voting advisory member of the Executive Committee.

Rationale:

The immediate past president is the chair of the State and Local Relations Committee and all committee chairs are voting members of the board of directors,

Proposed Amendment Two:

To amend Article VII Section 1 to drop one vice president and rename the remaining two vice presidents: Vice President Advocacy and Vice President Membership. This motion if passed at our Annual Meeting would go into effect on July 1, 2023.

Currently Reads:

The elected officers of the Tennessee PTA shall be a President, a President-elect, three (3) Vice Presidents, a Secretary and a Treasurer.

Proposed Amendment Two, if adopted, would read as:

The elected officers of the Tennessee PTA shall be a President, a President-elect, a Vice President of Advocacy, a Vice President of Membership, a Secretary and a Treasurer.

Rationale:

There is a need to reduce the number of members on the executive committee for a smaller board of directors.

Proposed Amendment Three

To amend by striking Article IX, Section 4. Vice Presidents in its entirety and replace it with a new Section 4: Vice Presidents. This motion, if passed at the Tennessee PTA Annual Meeting, would go into effect on July 1, 2023

Currently Reads

Article IX: Duties of Officers, Section 4 Vice Presidents:

a. The Vice President of Child and Youth Advocacy shall be responsible for coordinating the work of the standing and special committee chairmen as determined by the Tennessee PTA Standing Rules, shall serve as chairman of the Education Committee, and shall encourage a continuous appraisal of the quality of education in public schools.

b. The Vice President of Communications and Student Programs shall be responsible for coordinating the work of the standing and special committee chairmen as determined by the Tennessee PTA Standing Rules, shall serve as chairman of the Student Awards Committee, and shall assist the state, councils and local units with programs that promote PTA Purposes and Policies.

c. The Vice President of Membership and Outreach shall be responsible for coordinating the work of the standing and special committee chairmen, and Region Directors as determined by the Tennessee PTA Standing Rules, and shall assist the state, councils, and local units with membership and outreach.

d. Perform such other duties as may be provided for by these bylaws, the standing rules, prescribed by the parliamentary authority, or directed by the Board of Directors, or Executive Committee.

e. The Vice Presidents, in this order, Vice President of Child and Youth Advocacy, Vice President of Communications and Student Programs, Vice President of Membership and Outreach, shall preside at meetings in the absence of both the President and the President-elect.

Proposed Amendment Three, if adopted, would read as
Section 4. Vice Presidents

a. The Vice President of Advocacy shall be responsible for coordinating the work of the standing and special committee chairmen as determined by the Tennessee PTA standing rules or by the Tennessee Board of Directors and shall encourage a continuous appraisal of the quality of education in public schools.

b. The Vice President of Membership shall be responsible for coordinating the work of the standing and special committee chairmen as determined by the Tennessee PTA standing rules or by the Tennessee Board of Directors and shall promote, recruit, and oversee membership.

c. Perform such other duties as may be provided for by these bylaws, the standing rules, prescribed by the parliamentary authority, or directed by the Board of Directors, or Executive Committee.

d. The Vice Presidents, in this order, Vice President of Advocacy, Vice President of Membership, shall preside at meetings in the absence of both the President and the President-elect.

Rationale

This will align with the reduction in vice presidents made in motion 2.

[Proposed Amendments to the State Bylaws continue on pages 10 and 11]

Continued: Proposed Bylaws for Consideration at the 2023 Convention & Annual Meeting

Proposed Amendment Four

To amend Article XII, Section 4 by striking the words “through their division chair” after “The chairmen of standing committees shall submit plans of work”.

Currently Reads

The chairmen of standing committees shall submit plans of work through their division chair to the Executive Committee. If a chairman fails to submit a plan of work, that chairmanship shall be declared vacant.

Proposed Amendment Four, if adopted, would read as:

The chairmen of standing committees shall submit plans of work to the Executive Committee. If a chairman fails to submit a plan of work, that chairmanship shall be declared vacant.

Rationale

With the reduction of Vice Presidents, committees will no longer be assigned a division under a Vice President but instead will report to the Executive Committee.

Proposed Amendment Five

To amend the last sentence in Article VII: OFFICERS AND THEIR ELECTION, Section 6. Vacancies by adding the phrase “or at a called special meeting of the membership” and by inserting the word “either” between filled and at.

Currently Reads:

A vacancy occurring in the office of the President shall be filled by the President-elect. A vacancy occurring in the office of the President-elect shall be filled at the next annual meeting.

Proposed Amendment Five, if adopted, would read as:

A vacancy occurring in the office of the President shall be filled by the President-elect. A vacancy occurring in the office of the President-elect shall be filled either at the next annual meeting or at a called special meeting of the membership.

Rationale:

Currently, a vacancy in the office of president-elect cannot be filled until the next annual meeting. The proposed amendment provides more flexibility to fill a vacant president-elect position through a called special meeting of the membership.

Proposed Amendment Six

To amend ARTICLE XXII: Amendments, Section 1 by inserting the word “either” between amended and at, and inserting “or at a called special meeting of the membership” between meeting and by and insert “or special meeting of the membership” at the end of Section 1 after meeting

Currently Reads:

Section 1. These bylaws may be amended at an annual meeting by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting provided the amendments have been approved by the Board of Directors and notice of proposed amendments has been provided to constituent organization thirty (30) days prior to the opening day of annual meeting.

Proposed Amendment Six, if adopted, would read as:

Section 1. These bylaws may be amended either at an annual meeting or at a called special meeting of the membership by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting provided the amendments have been approved by the Board of Directors and notice of proposed amendments has been provided to constituent organization thirty (30) days prior to the opening day of annual meeting or special meeting of the membership.

Rationale:

Currently, bylaws can only be amended at an annual meeting. At the last annual meeting, a lack of a quorum present prevented a vote on four of eight bylaw amendments presented in April 2022. Those four amendments were the first four amendments voted on today. This proposed amendment will provide more flexibility to amend the state bylaws through a called special meeting of the membership.

Proposed Amendment Seven

To amend Article VIII Committee on Nominations and Leadership Development, Section 1 by inserting before the number five (5) “three or”.

Currently Reads:

Section 1. A committee on nominations and leadership development consisting of five (5) members shall be elected by ballot at the fall Board of Directors meeting in odd-numbered years. (Refer to Article XIII, Section 1.)

Proposed Amendment Seven, if adopted, would read as:

Section 1. A committee on nominations and leadership development consisting of three (3) or five (5) members shall be elected by ballot at the fall Board of Directors meeting in odd-numbered years. (Refer to Article XIII, Section 1.)

Rationale:

Currently, the Tennessee PTA Board of Directors is a small group and it is difficult to find five people to serve on the committee who meet all the criteria as stated in Article XIII, Section 1. This would allow the Board of Directors to elect a full committee without ignoring the stated criteria and going against the current bylaws. Further, local units and councils are allowed to use three or five members for their Nomination and Leadership Development Committees allowing boards to be flexible as needed.

Resolutions for Consideration at the 2023 Convention & Annual Meeting

The following four resolutions will be brought before the Voting Delegates for consideration to be adopted as resolutions for the Tennessee Parent Teacher Association.

Resolution One:

Tennessee School Support Organization Financial Accountability Act Resolution

WHEREAS, PTA units in Tennessee operate independently as a 501(c)3 under the umbrella charter of the Tennessee Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc., aka Tennessee PTA; and

WHEREAS, local and council PTA units are democratic bodies that approve budgets by the general membership of each local and council units; and

WHEREAS, local and council PTA units make their democratic decisions on programs, fundraisers, community service, nominations, and election of officers; and

WHEREAS, local and council PTA units are required by the Tennessee Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc., aka Tennessee PTA, to submit annual audit reports, confirmation of 990 tax reports, membership dues, and updated bylaws to the Tennessee PTA to remain in good standing; be it therefore,

RESOLVED, that the Tennessee Parent Teacher Association affirms the rights and responsibilities found in Tennessee Code 48-58-101 through 48-66-202, the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act, to be the controlling legislation for the Tennessee Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc., aka Tennessee PTA, and its local constituents represented by local and council units; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Tennessee Parent Teacher Association calls upon the members of the Tennessee General Assembly to provide relief to all PTA units by deleting the phrase "parent teacher association" from Tennessee Code 49-2-603, section 4(a).

Resolution Two:

Tennessee PTA Resolution of Support of Educators

WHEREAS The Tennessee PTA believes in the power of education and educators are the key to the success of every child.

WHEREAS we stand with the teachers in the state of Tennessee as not only an integral part of our organization but realizing that teachers are key to reaching each child's potential.

WHEREAS Tennessee PTA recognizes that teachers are highly and continuously trained to be effective and powerful educators who reaches each child where they are in order to meet their needs.

WHEREAS teachers throughout the pandemic took on additional work to combat the serious constraints of the pandemic and work through learning in a way that had never been imagined before.

WHEREAS Tennessee PTA believes that supporting our teachers and continuously building the family/school partnerships is not only necessary but imperative for all children to thrive; be it therefore

RESOLVED that The Tennessee Parent Teacher Association stands proud with teachers and is committed to continuing to support our teachers and our students together so that we can help ensure a bright future for all.

Resolution Three:

RADON TESTING RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Radon is a naturally-occurring, colorless, radioactive gas formed by radioactive decay of radioactive elements, such as uranium found in soils and rocks all across the U.S., which can move through the soil into the air and ground water; and

WHEREAS, The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that radon causes about 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year; and

WHEREAS, Radon gas trapped indoors constitutes a substantial health risk as a carcinogen and has been identified as the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ranks radon among the most serious current environment hazards therefore, recommends that schools nationwide be tested for radon; be it therefore

RESOLVED, that Tennessee Parent Teacher Association, through its committees, work to inform parents about the concerns of radon exposure and make them aware of low-cost test kits available for their homes; be it therefore,

RESOLVED, that the Tennessee Parent Teacher Association recognizes radon exposure as a health risk to children and adults and encourages councils and local units to educate their PTA members and communities about the dangers of radon and methods for radon testing and detection; and be it further

RESOLVED, that school officials and citizens of Tennessee be encouraged to test for radon in their schools and homes to reduce unhealthy radon levels.

Resolution Four:

Child Nutrition Resolution

WHEREAS, Tennessee PTA recognizes that proper nutrition is imperative to the health, development and academic achievement of children. On average, a child will consume about one-third to one-half of their daily calories during the school day. It's therefore critical that federal school meals programs be adequately funded, and modernized to improve access to high-quality, nutritious school meals for all children.

Continued: Resolutions for Consideration at the 2023 Convention & Annual Meeting

Resolution Four Continued From Previous Page

WHEREAS, food insecurity is linked to lower reading and math scores, falling behind peers academically and socially, and may lead to increased risk of behavioral issues, such as anxiety, hyperactivity, and aggression. Additionally, eating breakfast at school is associated with better attendance rates, fewer missed school days, and better test scores.

WHEREAS, the USDA National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Child and Adult Food Care Program, Summer Food Service Program, and Afterschool Meal & Snack Service, provide important nutritional and financial support to students and families. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, each school day, almost 30 million children participated in the National School Lunch Program and almost 15 million participated in the School Breakfast Program. WHEREAS, a result of the COVID-19 pandemic there has been an increase in food insecurity, persistent workforce shortages, and supply chain issues. Child nutrition waivers issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) during the 2020-2022 school years helped reduce child hunger by increasing school meal participation and played a critical role in supporting school nutrition operations.

WHEREAS, Research shows that students who participate in the school meal programs consume more whole grains, milk, fruits, and vegetables during meal times and have better overall diet quality, than nonparticipants. However, over the past few decades food served in school meals has become increasingly more processed (heat-and-serve) with less locally prepared whole foods. Concurrently, obesity rates and diet-related conditions such as type 2 diabetes¹ have increased in both children and teenagers.

WHEREAS, proper nutrition, adequate physical activity, and supporting families in finding healthy meal options is the cornerstone of a child's health, well-being and development.

WHEREAS The USDA Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) enables high poverty schools and school divisions to offer free breakfast and lunch to all students in a qualifying school. Additionally, the CEP program eliminates school meal debt, reduces paperwork, and streamlines school meal operations by eliminating the need to collect and process school meal applications and school meal payment; be it therefore,

RESOLVED, that Tennessee Parent Teacher Association, supports and advocates for legislation and wellness policies which:

- Include measurable goals and best practices regarding child nutrition with definitions for locally grown, scratch, and speed scratch cooking.
- Ensure sufficient time for students to receive a meal, at least 20 minutes to consume a meal, and a recess or break opportunity.
- ◊ Increase procurement and processing of locally grown foods, and farm to school programs.

- Expand use of whole, fresh and/or minimally processed ingredients and scratch-cooked meals through funding programs that modernize school kitchen equipment and provide training for school nutrition staff.
- Provide flexibility to prepare and serve meals that recognize diverse student dietary needs and cultural or regional cuisine preferences.
- Provide flexibility such as allowing multi-day grab-and go meal options during school breaks including over the summer months.
- Support the inclusion of students, parents and school-based staff in the development, implementation, and evaluation of school nutrition.
- Support the inclusion of students, parents and school-based staff in the development, implementation, and evaluation of school wellness and school meal programs

RESOLVED, Tennessee Parent Teacher Association strongly opposes the meal debt policies that shame or humiliate students—or prevent children from receiving a full meal equivalent to their peers.

RESOLVED, Tennessee Parent Teacher Association supports legislation that requires eligible schools to participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program. National PTA also supports federal and state funding programs that implement Universal Free School Meals for all students, regardless of income levels.

Information about Running from the floor for Officer Elections

With the announcement of the 2023 Slate by the NLDC, there are two major considerations for running for office if you were not nominated in the Slate.

1. If running against a slated nominee, notification to the president must be given 20 days before the start of the annual meeting. This year's deadline to notify the president if running from the floor against a slated nominee is **April 1, 2023 before 3:30 PM Central Time. Send to president@tnpta.org**
2. If running for a vacant officer position not slated by the NLDC, nominations will be taken from the floor without prior notification providing the nominee has submitted their resume of qualifications at the beginning of the 2023 annual meeting. For ease of filing, resumes shall be submitted to the Convention Secretary.
3. **Caveat:** one of the vacant positions, Vice President of Communications and Student Programs, is being proposed for elimination in a proposed bylaw under consideration by the annual meeting delegates. If that bylaw amendment is adopted, the position will no longer exist starting on July 1, 2023.

Tennessee PTA Board of Directors

President: Dwight Hunter

President-Elect: Dana Price

Vice President of Advocacy: Anita Allen

Vice President of Communications & Student Programs: Larry Davis

Treasurer: Charles Everett

Secretary: Theresa Shaw

Immediate Past President: Kim Henderson

Chair, Family & Community Engagement: Cheryl Floyd

Chair, Membership, Diversity & Inclusion: Charles Scott

Chair, Reflections: Bala Ramachandran

Chair, State and Federal Legislative: Christy Carroll Highfill

Southeast Region Director: Gail Phillips

Memphis –Delta Region Director: Shelica Cox

Tennessee PTA

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Nashville, TN 37212

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