

National PTA Convention Education

Core Workshops Speaking Opportunities

Seeking speakers through Call for Leaders process

MISSION: ADVOCACY

1. Lead a Diverse Coalition for Your Cause*

Track: Mission

Audience: Experienced

Topic: Advocacy

CALL FOR LEADERS: Leaders who succeeded at coalition-building with like-minded organizations.

Supercharge your PTA's advocacy efforts by partnering with like-minded individuals and organizations! Working in diverse teams can expand your view of what's possible, strengthen your voice and speed up the pace of change. In this workshop, we will define the steps of coalition-building and examine how PTA leaders can use them to work effectively with others toward a common goal. Participants will leave prepared to:

- Identify and attract the right partners.
- Lead your coalition with purpose.
- Define roles and responsibilities of each coalition member.
- Navigate diverse perspectives with grace and integrity.

2. Transform Stories Into Influence*

Track: Mission

Audience: All

Topic: Advocacy

CALL FOR LEADERS: Leaders who excel at storytelling and influencing decision-makers.

A great story can soften hearts and change minds. In this workshop, we will discuss the qualities of powerful stories and use examples to illustrate specific techniques that influence and inspire. You will have the opportunity to practice telling stories to persuade a policymaker or school decision-maker about an issue that matters to you. Walk out of this workshop feeling confident in your ability to:

- Uncover what appeals to your audience, especially policymakers and school decision-makers.
- Connect your cause to shared interests or motives.
- Incorporate the techniques you've learned into a compelling story that makes a difference.

3. Build an Inclusive Team Ready to Advocate*

Track: Mission

Audience: Experienced

Topic: Advocacy

CALL FOR LEADERS: Leaders who effectively built teams focused on PTA advocacy efforts.

A diverse and inspired team can take your advocacy efforts to the next level! In this workshop we will discuss how to select team goals and policy priorities, and then examine steps for recruiting a diverse team that is excited to take on the task. We will identify the different roles of participants, team members and leaders. Finally, we will explore inclusive ways to recruit new team members and assess their individual strengths and interests to keep them engaged for the long term. Expect to leave this workshop better prepared to:

- Communicate your focus in a way that inspires and attracts a diverse team prepared to tackle big advocacy goals.
- Employ best practices in inclusive team building and management.
- Leverage individual team members' strengths to make the greatest impact on decision-makers.

4. Experience Excellence in State Advocacy*

Track: Mission

Audience: Experienced

Topic: Advocacy

CALL FOR LEADERS: Leaders who achieved recent state advocacy wins.

The Every Student Succeeds Act provides a great opportunity for states to tailor their education systems. That means it is more critical than ever for PTA advocates to make their voices heard, to ensure that state decision-makers listen to students' needs and work to close achievement gaps. In this workshop, we will explore examples of successful state advocacy that show the impact of PTA advocacy plans in action. Participants will then have the opportunity to discuss the process of influencing policy with colleagues from other states. Expect to leave this workshop with a host of practical tips and strategies, and better prepared to:

- Create effective strategies for influencing state policy.
- Connect with advocates from other states for long-term support and collaboration.
- Model your advocacy plans after the success of others.

5. Know the Difference This Election Season: Policy Not Politics—Issues Not Candidates*

Track: Mission

Audience: All

Topic: Advocacy

Call for Leaders: Leaders who led voter registration campaigns or successfully advocated during election season.

PTA welcomes people from all walks of life and political affiliations, who all care passionately about the same thing: kids! In this workshop, we will examine the delicate balance we need to strike to effectively speak up for all children during election season while maintaining our nonpartisan stance and our 501(c)3 (tax-exempt) status. Our advocacy experts will explain how PTAs accomplish this by staying focused on *issues* rather than individual candidates. We will explore ways to shift your focus to voter engagement by brainstorming how your PTA unit could celebrate National Voter Registration Day in September. Participants will leave feeling confident in guiding their PTAs to:

- Stay nonpartisan and focus on child advocacy issues during election season.
- Encourage voter registration among child advocates who care about PTA's issues.
- Celebrate and promote National Voter Registration Day.

MISSION: FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

6. Navigate Special Education Policies & Practices*

Track: Mission

Audience: All

Topic: Family Engagement

CALL FOR LEADERS: Leaders or parents who have successfully navigated special education policies and practices.

Navigating the special education system—with its maze of jargon, services and eligibility processes—is daunting under the best of circumstances. For families caring for a child with newly diagnosed special needs, it is easy to feel lost and overwhelmed! In this workshop, we will explore special education policies and discuss the best practices for engaging families with special needs in PTA. You will have the opportunity to connect with other PTA leaders who are passionate about special education and leave this session prepared to:

- Plot a course to the best services and resources available for your own child and other children.
- Access a network of people you can turn to for help when you encounter roadblocks.
- Ensure an inclusive PTA experience for all families.

MISSION: PROGRAMS

7. Spark, Inspire, Engage -- Fuel Your STEM + Families Initiative*

Track: Mission

Audience: All

Topic: Programs

CALL FOR LEADERS: Leaders who have implemented any STEM event/program

If you have a passion for empowering students to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), then you will want to hear more about the National PTA STEM + Families initiative! Participants in this workshop will have the opportunity to engage in a hands-on STEM activity themselves, as well as review data and hear valuable tips from PTAs who have already planned and hosted a Math Night or Science Festival. We will describe National PTA's STEM + Families grant opportunities and examine as a group the free toolkit and other program materials available to support this program. Through discussion, participants will reflect on how STEM + Families could best thrive in their own communities. At the end of this workshop, you will know how to:

- Locate and use National PTA's STEM + Families toolkit and resources.
- Apply for future STEM + Families grants.
- Design a fun, creative STEM night for your community that will explore, inspire, empower, and educate families about STEM education and careers!
- Anticipate and avoid potential pitfalls, and execute a successful event.
- Apply for future grant opportunities.

8. Lead Your State to Excellence*

Track: Mission

Audience: Experienced

Topic: Programs

CALL FOR LEADERS: Leaders who have promoted, recruited, supported, and celebrated local PTAs in School of Excellence

School of Excellence is a great way for local PTAs to attract action-oriented members who want to focus on the most critical issues affecting our children. In this workshop, State PTA leaders will gather to discuss the impact of the School of Excellence program at the state level. Share your experience and learn how other State PTA leaders are promoting the program, supporting applicants, and celebrating designees. Take time for self-reflection to examine how you might further build the pool of enrollees and designees in your own state. Leave this workshop better equipped to:

- Engage more PTAs in your state to become key partners in continuous school improvement initiatives.
- Showcase PTAs in your state that embrace efforts to improve family-school-community partnerships and help all students succeed.
- Support family engagement efforts at the local level.
- Increase awareness, action and celebration of family and community involvement.
- Model your efforts after the successes and lessons of others.

LEADERSHIP: FIRST-TIMERS

9. Get Your First-Timers Roadmap to National PTA's Convention*

Track: Leadership

Audience: First-timers

Topic: Convention

CALL FOR LEADERS: First-Timer Friends willing to facilitate table discussion, answer questions, guide individual plans and encourage first-timers throughout the event

Welcome to PTA Convention! If you're new here, this is the workshop for YOU. We will preview the must-attend Convention events and help you identify what you hope to gain from this experience. You will have the opportunity to connect with other first-timers and hear from "long-timers" who once wore your shoes. Walk out of this workshop feeling oriented, confident and ready to:

- Design a plan for the weekend based on your personal learning and networking goals.
- Make new PTA friends and have the experience of a lifetime!

LEADERSHIP: PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

10. Pave Your Path from PTA to Professional or Civic Leadership*

Track: Leadership

Audience: All

Topic: Leadership Skills-Building

CALL FOR LEADERS: Leaders who have tips for packaging skills into professional advancement in career or civic leadership

Turn your PTA experience into a better job, a new career, or even an elected office! In this workshop, we will explore the steps that others have taken to transform PTA leadership roles into exciting opportunities in civic and professional leadership. We will map your personal strengths and skills to the opportunities that interest you most, and then examine how to communicate the value of your PTA experience in bullets that show you have what it takes to succeed. At the end of this workshop, you will have the confidence to:

- Add PTA to your LinkedIn profile or resume in a meaningful way.
- Identify the PTA leadership path that will take you where you want to go.
- Seize opportunities to use your PTA skills in new ways.

11. Attract More Parents, Students & Educators to PTA in Middle or High Schools*

Track: Leadership

Audience: All

Topic: Membership

Call for Leaders: PTA leaders -- including youth -- who have increased engagement of parents, students and educators at middle/high school levels

The proven benefits of family-school partnership persist all the way through high school graduation. Yet, many PTAs struggle to keep families, students and educators involved beyond the elementary years. In this workshop, we will explore barriers to PTA engagement in the higher grade levels. You will hear directly from teens about the role they would like PTAs to play, and from fellow PTA leaders about practices that have led to greater support. Discover solutions that will work in your school, district or state. Participants will be better prepared to:

- Focus your middle or high school PTSA on what parents, students and educators care about most.
- Grow membership, volunteerism and engagement at your PTSA.