

School of Excellence Program Leader Quotes

Selected quotes from 2021-2023 National PTA School of Excellence Program Leaders about the School of Excellence program and impact on PTAs and school communities:

Alaska

"This program is a fantastic way to stay on track with a common goal in mind. It helped keep us accountable and on track with the many programs our PTA sponsors throughout the year." — Tina Baldridge, Rabbit Creek PTA

California

"It is easy to get derailed and forget about the main purpose of a PTA, and the School of Excellence program is a wonderful way to get PTAs grounded and focused." — Brenda Sillas, Adobe Bluffs Elementary PTA

"The School of Excellence program helps you take stock of how you are helping your school and then helps you think creatively on ways to improve your school engagement." — Holly Woesner, Dapplegray Elementary School PTA

"The focus areas and objectives are helpful in program development. The survey assists in gaining areas for improvement. The National Standards for Family-School Partnerships and Four I's of Transformative Family Engagement provide important guidelines to support family engagement. The School of Excellence program provides an opportunity to achieve a higher level of excellence for our students." — Elizabeth Fluck, Delevan Drive Elementary PTA

"PTAs should participate in the School of Excellence program to build, improve and strengthen the family-school relationship. We find that many families do not realize the importance of their PTA and with the baseline survey, it provides valuable information to see which areas need more focus. It also helps build relationships between PTA and families in hopes for more participation either with volunteering or joining as a PTA member." — Mimi Chen, Irvine Unified School District Virtual Academy PTA

"It gives you the tools to learn more about your school community and how the PTA can be an active participant in school and family communications." — Wendy Diaz-Antonio, Patrick Henry Middle School PTSA

Colorado

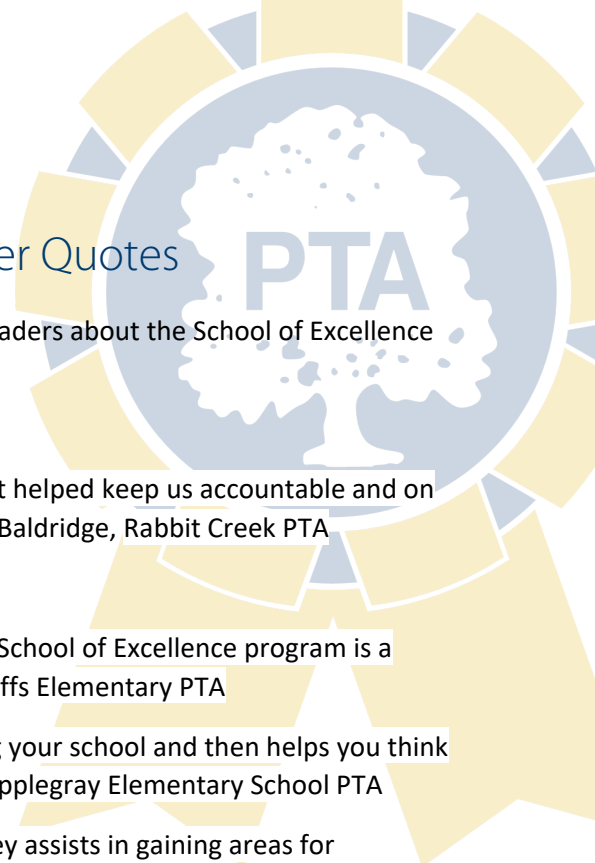
"It helps the PTA narrow the focus of their goals for the year and helps to bring the school community closer through the process." — Barbara Dawson, Chinook Trail Elementary School PTA

"The School of Excellence program helped to bring individuals together from different backgrounds (parent, teachers, admin) to work toward a shared goal of improving our school." — Sarah Driller, Puma Pride at Firestone Charter Academy PTA

Connecticut

"School of Excellence helps to strengthen the school PTA partnership. It provides a way to start some conversations about PTA's role in the school and how we can foster change." — Bridget Kauss, Meadowside PTA

"It is all too easy to spend 100% of time and resources on programs and community events. The School of Excellence program guides PTAs to create informative plans focused on long term strategy and impact that grows annually and focuses on achieving long-lasting targets of success." — Angela Caes and Meredith Schuchard, Redding Elementary School PTA



Florida

“(The program) allows the PTA to identify its own strengths and weaknesses, and then gives us the tools to develop programs that build on strength and address those weaknesses.” — Catherine Paladino, Bob Martinez Middle School PTSA

“School of Excellence helps educate and empower the PTA and schools to do the right work. Not only does this program give a valuable set of tools that can help any school improve best practices, but it helps build relationships with families as well.” — Angie Smith, Davidsen PTSA

“I believe all PTA teams should participate in the School of Excellence program because it keeps you focused on what you would like to get accomplished and speaks to our mission.” — Pamela Korithoski, Howard Bishop Middle School PTSA

“The School of Excellence program is a wonderful way to survey the families of our schools and get their feedback for ways to make improvements. It has been so beneficial to see where we may be lacking and the areas at which we are excelling.” — Cory Stevenson, Lennard High School PTSA

“(School of Excellence) helps PTA focus on the needs of the school community, The School of Excellence program should be used by all PTA teams as it helps keep the focus on the needs of the school community.” — Mary Keinath, Nautilus Middle School PTA

“The School of Excellence program is a great learning experience to truly evaluate what your school needs.” — Melanie Gibbs, R.C. Lipscomb Elementary PTA

“The School of Excellence program helps you assess the needs in their community they may not be aware of. This is a great program to help understand what your community is really in need of and help you support the work you do.” — Ami Granger Welch, Robinson High School PTSA

Georgia

“Our PTSA had a wonderful experience with the School of Excellence program. Reviewing the Standards allowed us to create an effective roadmap to improve our engagement with families and communicate more effectively.” — Tammy Stanley, Forest Park High School PTSA

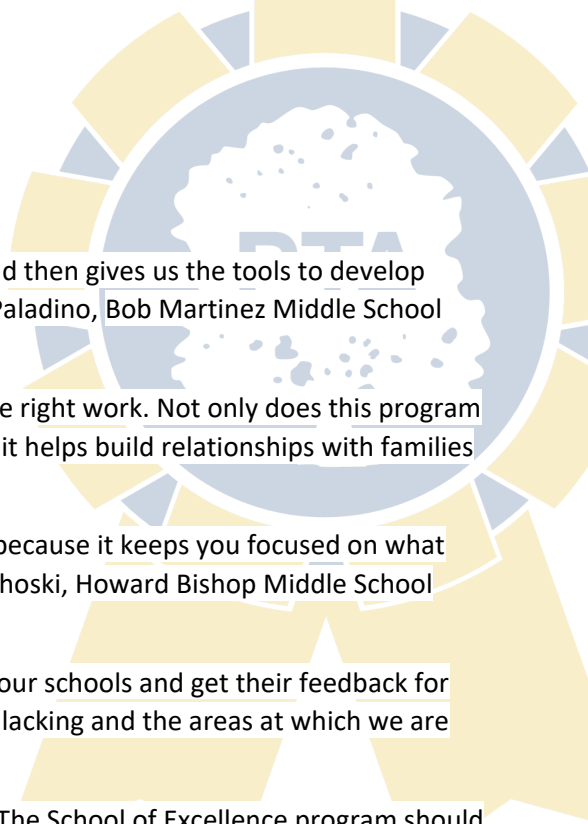
“(School of Excellence) is a great way to evaluate what you are really doing as a whole and how to make a change by focusing on one area at a time that can be attainable.” — Scott Steinbrenner, Little River ES PTA

“I believe School of Excellence provides a standard of excellence in the state and nationwide, which is important to the overall structure, image and brand of the PTA.” — Christy Duncan, Nickajack PTA

“The School of Excellence program focused our goals and led to more meaningful events and direct interactions with students and their families.” — Sarah Iwanski, Sand Hill Elementary School PTA

“School of Excellence helps to improve your school and PTA. This is always important. This program also allowed us to better interreact with parents we do not normally interact with to get feedback and ideas.” — Lisa Taylor, Suwanee Elementary PTA

“The program helps keep your PTA focused on the right goals.” — Kimberly Wolf, Webb Bridge Middle School PTA



Illinois

“All PTA partners should participate in the School of Excellence program because it is a fantastic way to implement new and beneficial programs for your school community. Chances are you are already doing magnificent work at your school. The program formally recognizes your PTA for this work!” — Trisha Anderson, Hoover Math, and Science Academy (Elementary) Hoover PTA

Kansas

“Anytime you can stop and take a look at what you need to improve at your school, it's a positive thing and that's what the School of Excellence program does for our schools.” — Tiffonie Dirks, Shawnee Mission East PTSA

Kentucky

“The School of Excellence program was helpful in identifying what the issues were that had been and challenged our assumptions.” — Robin Weiss, Dupont Manual High School PTSA

“The School of Excellence program gives a great plan to follow to have had the opportunity to partake in a program that can make a difference to your families.” — Autumn Neagle, J. Graham Brown School PTSA

Maryland

“(The program) provides an opportunity for you to focus your efforts on a particular area instead of trying to do everything at the same time.” — Laded Brooks, Capitol Heights Elementary PTSA

“I like how School of Excellence helps the PTA and administration collaborate and connect.” — Lisa Scata, Clemens Crossing Elementary School PTA

“School of Excellence helps provide a clear and needed framework that truly embodies PTA's mission make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.” — Lima Abdullah, East Silver Spring Elementary School PTA

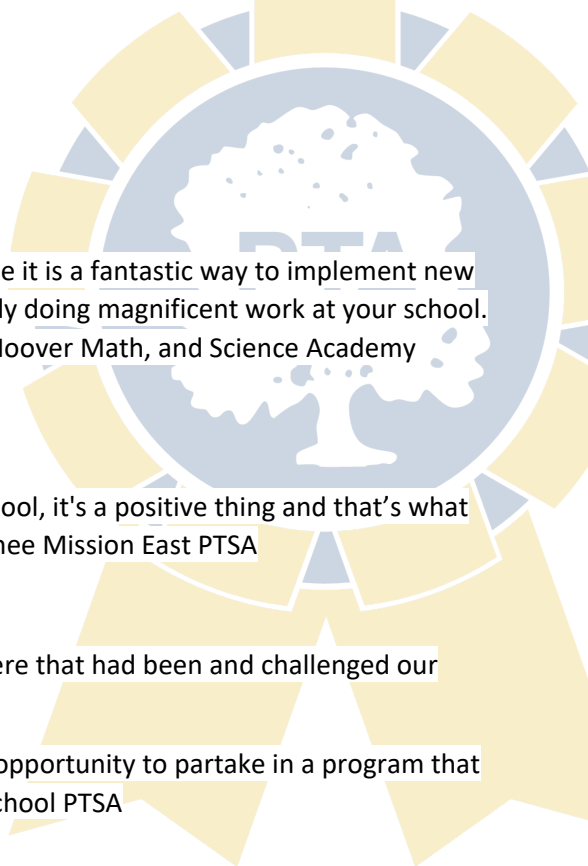
“The School of Excellence program fosters a greater collaboration between the PTA, school and administration, the program also prioritizes working together to improve the school for the benefit of the students and the entire school community.” — Ellen Bockelman, Lisbon Elementary School PTA

“The School of Excellence program is extremely helpful in finding a common focus and identifying the needs of your school, particularly for new boards with little experience in planning. I think the "roadmap" could be enhanced by adding some documents like plan of work and after-action report templates.” — Laura Mitchell, Wheaton High School PTSA, INC

“The School of Excellence program provides everything you need to begin the journey to improve the teacher, parent, student partnership and positively impact student success. At the completion of the program, you will see a significant improvement in these areas.” — Aliese Bowers, Yorktown Elementary PTA

Michigan

“The School of Excellence program gives pride of recognition to the PTA for putting in efforts to serve the school community. It is a voice that is heard by the local community for speaking up for every child.” — Triman Jagdev, North Farmington High School PTA



Missouri

"School pride. Community pride. A School of Excellence classification shows the community that your school is fantastic. It is a straightforward way to improve your school. You get someone to hold your hand through the process and have the chance to build relationships with school admin and families. It is fabulous." — Sarah Schroeder, Ruth Oliver Walker Elementary PTA

North Carolina

"School of Excellence is an opportunity to evaluate communication in the school community. It gives insight to areas that we need to improve and others that we know we are doing well." — Stephanie Fisher Kennedy, RJ Reynolds High School PTSA

"I think that it really helps to focus the PTA on some key goals for the coming year." — Kathleen Malley, Southwest Elementary PTA

"It is a great format to set goals from and allows a forum for PTSA to bring together their school and parents to collaborate on specific goals with a national connection." — Allison Parker, Spring Valley Elementary PTSA

Nevada

"School of Excellence helps each school to understand where their school stands and what area they can best address to improve the environment for their students, teachers, staff and parents. It provides a very measurable way to know whether your efforts are succeeding as well." — Stacey Johnson, Keith & Karen Hayes Elementary School PTA

New York

"The School of Excellence program encourages PTAs to take a deeper look at the school community as a whole and find ways to collaborate with the school to improve outcomes for students and families." — Beth-Anne Diodato-McPhillips, Country Parkway PTA

"I love that this program brings to light areas that are overlooked by the "involved" and helps to bring all families along to become engaged with our school!" — Candy Ditkowski, Hamburg Central PTSA

"School of Excellence really gets to the heart of why we PTA. You do not have to be an executive board member or have a budget to be able to be effective in your school. You must often jump through hurdles to overcome some of the difficulties in getting to your goal, but once you know the hurdles, you can learn to work around them." — Ivy Reilly, Lynbrook South Middle School PTA

"The program provides a guideline for what a PTA should be doing for their school. Knowing how best they can build relationships with families and the school staff is a fantastic way to be the most effective in the PTA roles." — Syreeta, Jackson, Ogden Elementary School PTA

"It is a great learning experience for any PTA. No matter what the outcome I found it helpful. It is a wonderful way to see and get insight from parents, teachers and everyone else." — Danielle Shingler, William E DeLuca PTA

Oklahoma

"School of Excellence ensures you are on track to reaching your overall goals as a PTA." — Katie Cruz-Long, Adams PTA

"We always strive to be the best and to do everything we can to support our families, teachers, staff and community. This is a wonderful way to do that. It also helps you learn new ways to keep families involved." — Tatiana Polin, John Rex Elementary PTA



Rhode Island

"All PTA teams should participate in this program because it allows you to have a comprehensive view of how your school is performing, it allows you to identify areas of improvement, strengthens the bond between the PTA, faculty and provides you the opportunity to create meaningful and impactful changes within your school community." — Bobbie-Jo Gemma, Warwick Neck PTA

Texas

"It helps bring PTA and school administration together, while also forcing a PTA to take a hard look at their school and make impactful changes. It is easy to do things as they have always been done, but true growth comes when you open your mind and challenge some of the whys." — Amy Groat, Alice E Carlson PTA

"The School of Excellence program allows local PTAs to survey their community, find the needs in their school and align programs and advocacy work to reflect what the members desire. Also, it allows for administrators to incorporate their school goals alongside PTA goals with an easy-to-follow guide!" — Michelle Smith, Clara Love Elementary School PTA

"This framework provides best practices and support for any school PTA that wants to achieve more in any of the focus areas and objectives that the Excellence Roadmap covers. This can help elevate a PTA beyond the day-to-day support of their school, to truly embody the mission of being one voice for every child." — Terri Purdy, Cypress Springs Elementary PTA

"It is a terrific way to connect with the school administration to work on areas in the school that need improvement. The survey really helps show areas that need more work." — Leigh Henry, Frank Tejada Middle School PTA

"School of Excellence has provided guidance and been such an instrumental resource to ensuring our PTA is collaborating with our school leadership toward a common goal." — Nikki Ellis, Good Elementary PTA

"All PTA teams should be encouraged to participate in the School of Excellence program because they will receive a proven and guided set of tools and resources to support activities and results that they will likely be working to improve based on parent, student and staff feedback." — Leah Walker, Lebanon Trail High School PTSA

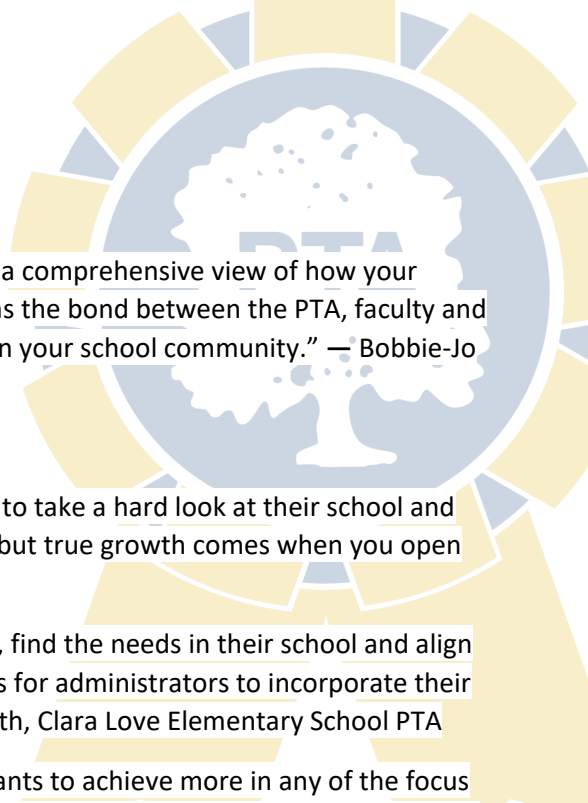
"The School of Excellence program helped our PTA to develop a strategic plan and focus our goals and objectives with our programming." — Cindy Medina, Moore MST Magnet School PTA

"The School of Excellence program can create the kind of school families want. It opens communication where it may not have been before and allows the opportunities for more engaged involvement." — Tamaron Hunt, O.C. Taylor PTA

"School of Excellence gives you the opportunity to see school perceptions from multiple points of view, and to improve family-school partnerships. It's important to see all sides before making plans that don't align with families or the school." — Lauren Harper, Pieper Ranch Middle School PTSA

"The School of Excellence program really helps schools and the PTA to identify areas for improvement." — Melissa Faulkner, Southridge Elementary PTA

"The School of Excellence program give a helping hand to a PTA, also allows for a set focus of goals to help motivate the PTA to work toward building the family-school partnership." — Taryn Raulston, Union Hill Elementary PTA



Utah

“Through the School of Excellence program, we were able to work to improve areas of the school that ourselves and parents had concerns about. The survey helped highlight needs and encouraged administration to instigate change.” — Ami Muhlestein, Lehi Junior High PTSA

“The School of Excellence program provides the framework to improve your school community. It helped us to strengthen our connections and find places where we were not meeting the needs of our member base.” — Jennifer Wadsworth, Westfield Elementary PTA

Virginia

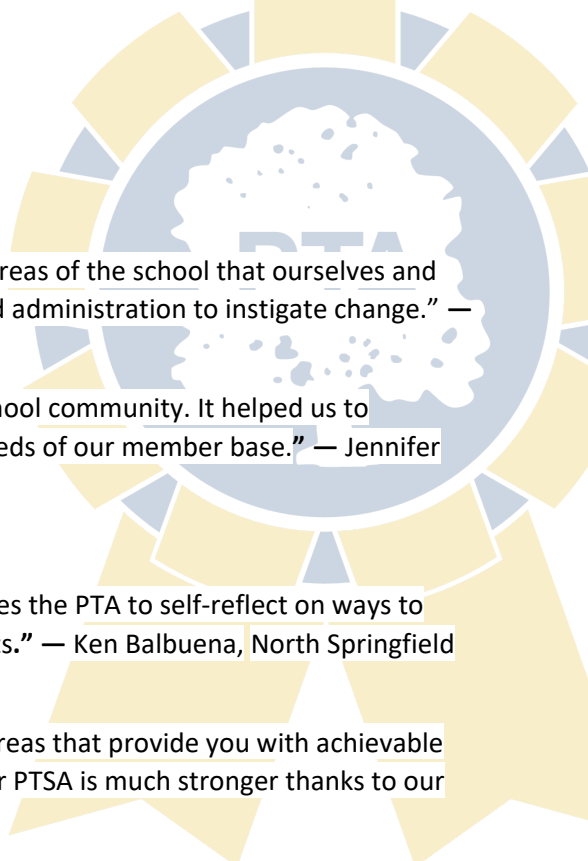
“All PTAs should participate in the School of Excellence program because it forces the PTA to self-reflect on ways to improve and provide meaningful programs to the school and ultimately students.” — Ken Balbuena, North Springfield Elementary School PTA

“The School of Excellence program really helps to focus your attention on key areas that provide you with achievable goals. Thank you so much for sponsoring this program. We learned a lot and our PTSA is much stronger thanks to our participation!” — Benjamin J Pearson-Nelson, Robious Middle School PTSA

“The resources the School of Excellence program gives helps to grow the PTA community within the school.” —Shannon, Vest, Spring Run Elementary PTA

“The School of Excellence program has helped us understand the school and it has so many resources on how to bring it together as a family.” — Mary Jasper, T. Ryland Sanford Elementary PTA

“Participating in the School of Excellence program holds your PTA accountable and sets the standard for the type of programming and events you should be providing for your school and community. It is an achievable accomplishment. The groundwork is there. You just need a willing group of people that want to see your school achieve that goal.” — Lauren Williams, Western Branch Primary School PTA



School of Excellence and PTA Membership

California

Adobe Bluffs Elementary PTA

“Absolutely! Our membership continued to increase from previous years and 51% of families became PTA members.” — Brenda Sillas, PTA President

Ardenwood Elementary PTA

“Yes, we had an increase in membership over last year. We also had more members join throughout the year than we have had in the past as well. That is in part to all our activities at the latter-part of the year when COVID restrictions eased up a bit.” — Ellen Tillman, PTA President

Dapplegray Elementary School PTA

“We hope to see an impact on next year's PTA membership. Truth be told, we have an extraordinarily strong membership base and meet or exceed our membership goals each year. Our PTA had one of the largest numbers of participation in our school district.” — Holly Woesner, PTA President

Delevan Drive Elementary PTA

“Our membership numbers increased this year from 117 to 256.” — Elizabeth Fluck, PTA President

Irvine Unified School District Virtual Academy PTA

“Yes, we saw an impact on our PTA membership. We gained 20 new members since the launch of our School of Excellence Program.” — Mimi Chen, PTA President

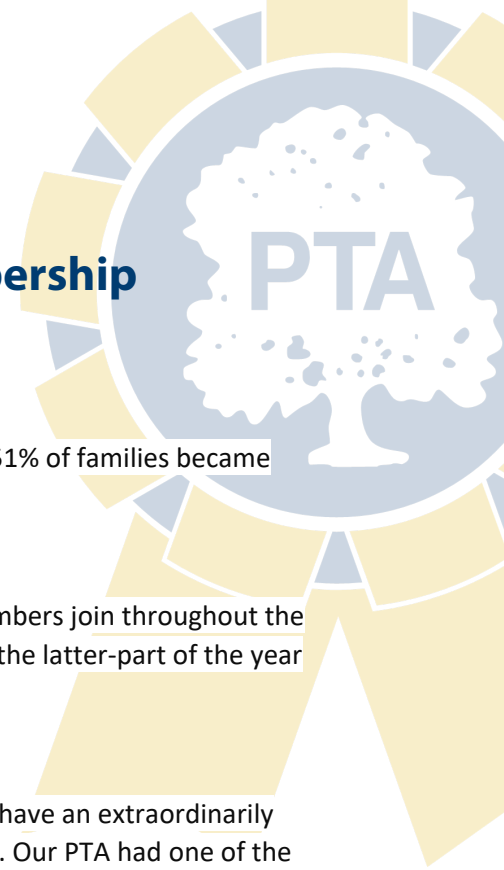
Las Lomitas Elementary PTA

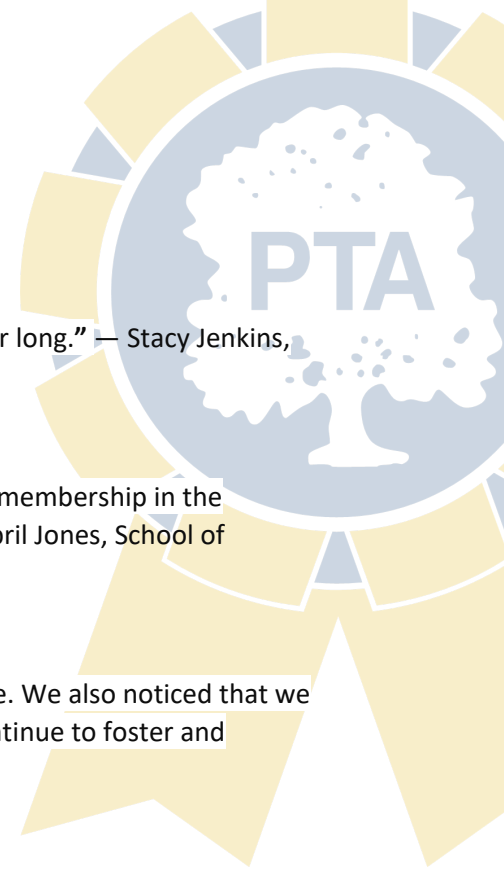
“We saw an impact in volunteerism with the PTA and many parents coming forward with great ideas for next year.” — Erin Tiedens, PTA Co-President

Connecticut

Redding Elementary School PTA

“One of our goals for this school year was to maintain and/or increase the number of families and staff who opted into PTA membership. For the 2020-2021 school year, we had 178 memberships, of which 34 were staff, and in the 2021-2022 school year, we had 182 memberships of which 45 were the staff. We held over 33 PTA meetings, 10 PTA business meetings and six staff liaison meetings. We continued to hold our meetings online and in the evening which led to increased participation from fathers and other family members. We also held six grade level meetups for parents throughout the school year. Over 150 families participated in these live and online meetups which provided a welcoming and informative forum for concerns or questions regarding curriculum and policies.” — Angela Caes & Meredith Schuchard, PTA President





Florida

Addison Mizner PTA

“Yes, our PTA membership was higher than ever and continued to grow all year long.” — Stacy Jenkins, PTA Board Member

Coral Gables Preparatory Academy PTSA

“The PTSA saw a significant growth in its membership in the current year. Our membership in the current year exceeded 290 members compared to 172 in the prior year.” — April Jones, School of Excellence Chair

Pinecrest Elementary School PTA

“Yes. As mentioned in the narrative, our membership saw a significant increase. We also noticed that we have had an increase in male participation, and we are working on ways to continue to foster and engage those individuals.” — Jennifer Sturges, PTA President

Georgia

Suwanee Elementary PTA

“This year, we saw our highest membership ever. Many of these memberships came before we really got into the core of the School of Excellence program, so I would not attribute our membership numbers to the program. Rather, I would attribute them to the way our PTA operated last year, in a year of shutdowns, digital learning and COVID to provide our families with excellent events, continued support, etc. That last year was the first year most of our families understood how important PTA is.” — Lisa Taylor, PTA President

Iowa

Herbert Hoover Elementary PTA

“We saw a 355% increase in membership over 2020-2021 (103 members vs. 29 last year)” — Susie Regan, PTA President

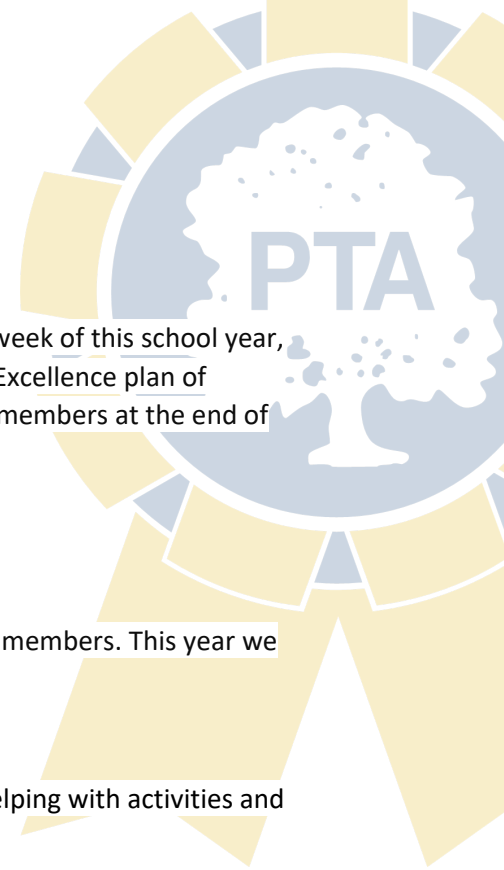
Illinois

Helen Keller Junior High PTA

“Membership increased to 99 members this school year up from 83 members last school year. The Keller PTA advertised joining the PTA in multiple forums and specifically in School of Excellence communications to families.” — Trisha Anderson, PTA Program Chair

Hoover PTA

“As a PTA we were able to communicate more effectively with our families across all programs this school year. We did see an increase in membership. We had 312 members in the 2021-22 school year. This number was a significant increase from the 130 memberships in the 2020-21 school year.” — Susie Regan, PTA President



Kentucky

Brenda Cowan Elementary School PTA

“Our PTA's work has made an impactful change to PTA membership. The first week of this school year, we had 101 members, and by strengthening our school presence through our Excellence plan of providing student support through academic programming, we now have 222 members at the end of May 2022. — Chi Ma, PTA Vice President of Programs

Maryland

Yorktown Elementary School PTA, Inc.

“We saw a 61% increase in memberships this year. Last school year we had 57 members. This year we had 92 members.” — Aliese Bowers, PTA President

Wheaton High School PTSA

“We saw an increase of 41% in membership and about 50% in engagement (helping with activities and advocacy).” — Laura Mitchell, PTA President

Mississippi

McWillie Elementary School

“We saw a dwindling number of membership registrations at the beginning of the year as we started to re-enter our buildings but saw an uptick in December through February. We are looking forward to keeping the momentum having a great response in August.” — Sara Cotten, PTA President

North Carolina

Pleasant Union Elem School PTA

“This year, 296 families joined PTA that is 92 more members than the year before, reflecting an increase in membership of 31%.” — Beatrice Setnik, PTA Board Member

North Dakota

Carl Ben Eielson PTA

“We did see an impact on PTA membership. We set a target of 50 PTA members for the school year (~50% YoY increase). We recruited 79 members, 158% of inclusive target recruitment. The breakdown of memberships was split evenly between family and staff members, providing a diverse set of members.” — Mary Brown, PTA Secretary/Treasurer

New York

Meadow Drive PTA

“Last year was our first year participating in the School of Excellence program. This year our PTA exceeded our membership goal. In the 21-22 school year, our membership grew to 357 members. We

also were awarded the PTA Membership All Stars for receiving over five memberships badged this year!” — Jill Henriksen, PTA President

George H McVey PTA

“We were able to reach our membership goal for the year of 479 members and surpass that goal as well before the end of the school year.” — Amy Ramnarine, PTA Vice President

Texas

Arlington High School PTA

“We did see a 20% increase from last year in membership.” — Kerri Ressler, PTA 1st Vice President of Membership

Cypress Springs Elementary PTA

“PTA members are more aware and informed about how to engage in advocacy for students at the local level (our school, our district). Families are more knowledgeable about the other entities that affect our students through their policies and influence, which means that in the future, they can get more involved with advocacy on a larger scale.” — Terri Purdy, PTA President

Dr. Winn Murnin Elementary

“We grew membership by 191 members this year and have 475 members this year. That is the most members our school has ever had since opening.” — Jennifer Taylor, PTA President

Edna Mae Fielder Elementary PTA

“We noticed increased parent involvement on campus and a notable increase in collaboration between families and school staff in support of student’s educational development. The Ron Clark Academy program offered several additional opportunities for parents to be on campus and involved with the children during the school day. We believe this drove additional PTA memberships throughout the school year.” — Amy Verhulst, PTA Council Representative

Joe Bailey Junior High PTA

“Yes—Bailey PTA’s membership grew by 150% over the previous year, with male guardians and students comprising a majority of the growth.” — Leslie Buer, PTA 1st Vice President of Membership

Joe M. Tison Middle School PTA

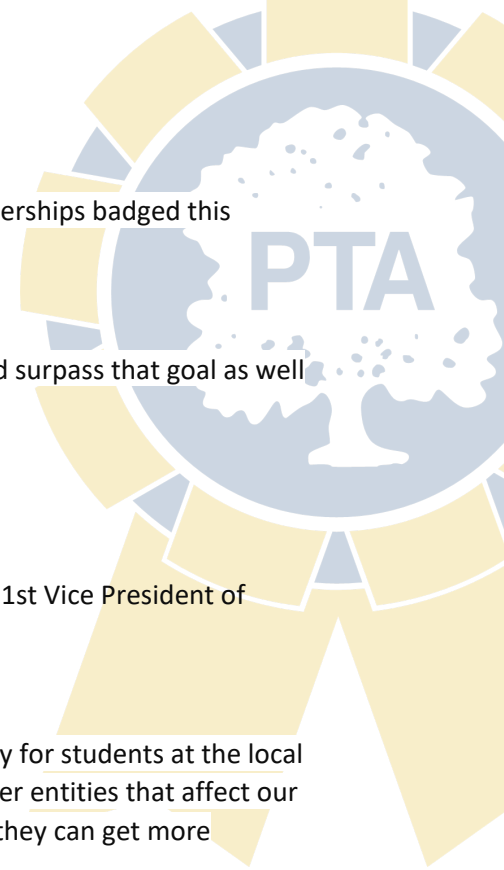
“Yes, we had a 340% increase in our membership this year. We also had 100% of all faculty and staff join PTA this year earning us The Golden Apple Award.” — Hayley Boone, PTA Vice President of Programs

Kimberlin Academy for Excellence PTA

“Yes, we had more families join PTA and we had new families volunteer that have never been on campus before this year.” — Cindy Medina, PTA President

Marcus High Parent Teacher Student Association

“Being back on campus as a whole working towards our School of Excellence goals helped increase our membership 12% from 547 to 614 members.” — Michelle Hernandez, PTA President



Moody High School PTA

“Yes, we have seen an impact with PTA memberships, actually that was one of our goals to increase awareness of the PTA mission and becoming a member, shows strength in numbers.” — Brenda Crawley, PTA President

Nottingham Country Elementary PTA

“We saw a significant increase in PTA memberships this year. Families were eager to get involved and felt welcomed into our school now that many COVID restrictions were lifted, and therefore felt more invested in their child's learning. We are grateful to have increased our membership this year by 77 members from 391 to 468.” — Stephanie Mitchell, PTA President

O.C. Taylor Elementary PTA

“Yes! Our PTA won the Voice for Every Child Platinum Award for having 602 members to be a voice for all 487 students enrolled. We were one of only 41 schools in Texas to achieve this goal” — Tamaron Hunt, PTA President

Virginia

Crestwood Intermediate School PTA

“Over the 2021-2022 school year we saw a growth of 25% in our membership compared to the previous school year. We attributed this growth to many things, stepping up our visibility on social media and our weekly newsletter, but the largest reason for our growth this year is because of our visibility. Our PTA is always handing books and snacks out to the kids; we are always present for the students and their activities around the building. Being able to put a face to the name helped the students nudge their parents, guardians and family members to join our team. We have always been willing to meet the families where they are, so we hold hybrid meetings every month. Even with our virtual students we support them by encouraging their success with Honor Ribbons, and graduation baggies, to just name a few. Our students know that we support every little and considerable success they make, and we will not stop!” — Monique Womack, PTA President

Robious Middle School Parent Teacher Student Association

“Yes. We added new members throughout the year as we engaged students who became members and their parents who both became members, and we gained several new regular volunteers.” — Benjamin J. Pearson-Nelson, PTA President

Wisconsin

Washington Elementary School PTA

“Additional participation increase was documented in a severe increase in PTA memberships, increased from 20 during the 2019-2021 school years to 70+ for the 2021-2022 school year.” — Benjamin J. Pearson-Nelson, PTA President

School of Excellence Principal Quotes

Selected quotes from 2021-2023 National PTA School of Excellence principals about the School of Excellence program and impact their PTAs have on their schools:

Georgia

“The School of Excellence program brings confidence, reassurance and dedication to the community that we are here as a collaborative team to support students.” — Taffeta Connery, Simpson Elementary School Principal

Iowa

“The School of Excellence program is a visible sign of the strong community relationships between the school and families.” — Ceynar Carolyn, Herbert Hoover Elementary Principal

Maryland

“Participation in the School of Excellence program strengthened our partnership and relationship and brought us much closer with a very clear focus on how we could best serve our community! Participating in this program expanded our volunteers in PTA and provided an opportunity for more community members to get involved!” — Debra A. Anoff, Lisbon Elementary School Principal

New Mexico

“The School of Excellence program brings the community together for the common good of the students. There is a specific focus that allows parents to support.” — Crystal Friedman, Double Eagle Elementary School Principal

Texas

“The School of Excellence program provides you with an opportunity to reflect on the impact that PTA has had on our campus. Through the process you can evaluate if your efforts to increase parent/family involvement are successful. The program also provides you with a means of celebrating those successes and being acknowledged for the hard work of all campus shareholders.” — Carolyn Bence, EE and Jovita Mireles Elementary School Principal

“The School of Excellence program has offered viable options to engage the community in the life of the school.” — Xavier Lewis, Collegiate Preparatory Elementary Principal

“The School of Excellence program has helped to set goals as a partnership to improve learning experiences for all.” — Kellie Raymond, Cypress Springs Elementary Principal

Washington

“The School of Excellence program helps schools and teams examine the systems and practices they have in place to welcome in and make connections with parents and families. It brings confidence, reassurance and dedication to the community that we are here as a collaborative team to support students.” — Michael Clark, Rockwell Elementary Principal

