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Did you

know . . .

. . . that attendance at State Convention is a proper -- and encouraged! -- use of PTA funds? For more information, [click here](#)

Aid to school:
Drawing lines



News item: The PTA at Lowell Elementary School in Tacoma, WA, raised \$16,000 to save the jobs of three kindergarten teacher's aides whose positions were threatened by budget cuts.

*The Associated Press
July 26, 2009*

PTAs have struggled for years to strike a sensible balance between supporting their children's schools and giving material aid that is the legal responsibility of the school board.

Whether it is classroom electronics or whiteboards, sound systems for the auditorium or playground equipment, PTA leaders are constantly cautioned against letting the local and state government off the hook for adequately funding the public schools.

One "down side" to providing material aid is that it can widen the gap between prosperous and poor schools and systems. Indeed, to avoid the rich-get-richer scenario, school board and superintendents make it clear that a PTA's "gift" to the school is not wedded forever to that particular school.

School officials can, and sometimes do, transfer material gifts to even out opportunities for all kids in the district.

But it is hard to stem the enthusiasm of a new kindergarten parent who wants only the best for his or her

Dear PTA Member,

In the old days, when illnesses were becoming widespread, the policy was to close the schools, public gathering places (like libraries) and sometimes businesses. No more.

Healthy children belong in school. Sick children need to stay home. That's one of the messages that Virginia state Health Commissioner Dr. Karen Remley brought to the PTA's recent Leadership Training Conference.

The advent of the H1N1 ("swine flu") virus has health officials across the nation planning for new ways to help the public prepare for the spread of this virus. Dr. Remley says that is, in part, because this virus appears to target children and youth as well as pregnant women and those who work with children and youth much more often than the elderly population.

The federal [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) reports that Virginia is continuing to see H1N1 outbreaks. Though the number of new cases declined as it warmed over the summer, epidemiologists predict a resurgence of novel H1N1 as the weather cools and people move indoors.



Dr. Remley urged parents, teachers, school divisions and employers to plan now for how to react to widespread cases of the virus. For instance, parents can set up "sick-room co-ops" where children can group together to recover from the virus at several homes over a week. That will minimize workplace disruptions when multiple parents have sick children.



This also helps prevent spreading the virus when sick children return to school too soon. Dr.

Remley also stressed the importance of hand washing and respiratory etiquette. "Teaching children to wash their hands and cough into their sleeves may seem old fashioned, but these are things that truly help reduce the spread of infection."

Immunizations for the novel H1N1 virus are in development now; the earliest likely release date is mid-October. Last Wednesday, a CDC panel issued new vaccine recommendations that focus on children and families.

The latest information from health officials -- including tips to minimize H1N1 exposure -- will be available on the [Virginia Department of Health's web site](#) as well as that of the CDC.

Saturday Advocacy event postponed

The Virginia PTA Advocacy Conference scheduled for Saturday has been postponed. The Virginia PTA is committed to holding an Advocacy Conference that

child. And it's harder still to motivate parents and teachers to advocate for better funding at the school board meeting or General Assembly committee.

Much harder than selling candy or wrapping paper.

And local schools are facing the same unprecedented economic downturn as families and private industry. It's hard to argue with the adage "drastic times call for drastic measures."

So what do you think? Where should PTAs draw the line between funding the niceties or extras and giving the government an easy excuse to slough off their responsibilities?

Send your feedback to us by posting it our [web site](#). Include your name and town and, if applicable, age(s) of your child (ren). Try for 50 words or fewer. Comments of 75 words or more will be edited for length. Feel free to send suggestions and ideas for future Feedback features to public_relations@vapta.org. You can also comment on past Feedback topics at he [same site](#).

better suits our members' schedules, and the Legislation and Education committees will be meeting to discuss a better date for the conference. Please stay connected to our advocacy efforts through the web site and be on the look out for information about PTA Day at the General Assembly, which is scheduled for Monday, Feb. 1, 2010.

Kathy Burcher, chairman

Legislation Committee

legislation@vapta.org

Stella Edwards, chairman

Education Committee

education@vapta.org

Resolutions sought on statewide issues

Concerned about alcohol in energy drinks marketed to youth, members of the Virginia PTA Health & Safety Committee last year proposed a resolution for PTA delegates to the 2008 state Convention to consider adopting. After some wordsmithing and debate last fall in Roanoke, the resolution passed.

Then it moved up the food chain. In June, national PTA delegates adopted the [Virginia-proposed resolution](#) with neither change nor debate.

To prepare for Convention 2009 in Fredericksburg, the Virginia PTA Resolutions Committee is asking members to propose resolutions of statewide interest on which they wish the state PTA to take a position.

This is an opportunity for members to address problems, situations or concerns that affect children and youth statewide and to urge action for solutions.

All resolutions must be postmarked no later than midnight 60 days before Convention -- Sept. 12 -- for the Resolutions Committee to consider forwarding to this year's Convention for a vote.

Emergency resolutions (for events that became public knowledge after the deadline) must be submitted in person to the Resolutions Committee by 6 p.m. on the first day of convention -- Nov. 13 -- and may be brought up for a convention vote with the consent of two-thirds of the delegates.

Guidelines for submitting resolutions can be found in the [Resolutions Library](#).

Please send the resolutions by the deadline to:

Virginia PTA
1027 Wilmer Ave.
Richmond, VA 23227

fax 804-264-4014

email: resolutions@vapta.org

Officer slate announced; Convention votes

The Nominations & Leadership Development Committee has proposed the following slate of officers for a vote by delegates to the Virginia State PTA Convention 2009, Nov. 13-15, at the Fredericksburg Expo & Conference Center:

- President-elect -- **Anne Carson** of Glen Allen, currently Field Service Committee chairman

- Vice President -- **Brenda Sheridan** of Sterling, currently Membership Committee chairman
- Treasurer -- **Phyllis Ayers** of Hampton, currently Secretary
- Secretary -- **Robin Grove** of Christiansburg, currently Bylaws Committee chairman

A nominee must have served at least one term on the Virginia PTA Board of Managers to qualify for an elected officership. The term for each elected position is two years; no second term is possible in the same job.

The president-elect automatically becomes president at the end of his/her term.

Nominations from the floor for officer positions are permitted, if the nominee is qualified and gives advance permission. As a courtesy, nominees from the floor are asked to notify the slated nominee and the state president in advance. This allows the state organization to prepare for a ballot vote, if necessary.

Committee head nominations due Sept. 12

Nominations will be accepted until **Sept. 12** for PTA leaders interested in serving as a standing committee chairman or historian.

Committee chairs are elected by the Board of Managers following Convention 2009, which will be held Nov. 13-15 at the Fredericksburg Expo and Conference Center. Nominees are forwarded with recommendations to the board by the Nominations & Leadership Development Committee.

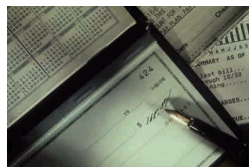
All positions involve a two-year commitment. The historian is a non-voting member of the Board of Managers; all others vote.

The committees whose chairmanships will be filled this fall are Bylaws, Education, Events Planning (a new position), Field Service, Health and Safety, Membership, Parental Involvement, Public Relations, Secondary PTA/PTSA, Technology and Volunteers.

More information, including detailed job descriptions and a nominations packet available for download, is available [here](#).

Nominations & Leadership Development Committee
field-service@vapta.org

For Treasurers: Audit time



For PTAs whose budget year ended June 30, it is important to get the books audited as soon as possible.

Some PTAs hire an accountant to audit their finances; others use an audit committee of PTA volunteers.

Julie Cameron of the **York County Council of PTAs**, Peninsula District, offered this suggestion during Leadership Training Conference's "Great Ideas!" program:

"Our council sponsored an 'Audit Fest' where units

brought their financial records. We spent about two hours auditing someone's books, while they audited ours. When finished, we all went home with our audit complete. This year nine out of 18 units plus our council participated -- next year we hope for more!"

Get forms and instructions from the [Finance Library](#) on the Virginia PTA website. Whether a new or returning treasurer, it is important to read [PTA Money Matters Quick-Reference Guide](#), which is available for download on the national PTA's web site

Mary Swears, treasurer
Virginia PTA
treasurer@vapta.org

Register for Back-to-School Kit



Official PTA Kit-PTA's Big Box of Possibilities began shipping to PTAs that have registered with national PTA in June and will be shipped weekly to registrants through October. For details and registration information, [click here](#).

Six VA school divisions get \$5.7 million

The U.S. Education Department Education is awarding more than \$5.7 million in grants to six Virginia public school divisions to improve American history instruction:

- **Bedford County** - \$743,397 to support workshops and summer institutes to increase the content knowledge of grade 5-12 history teachers.
- **Charlottesville** - \$980,191 to develop a "global perspective" among teachers on key events and periods in American history.
- **Newport News** - \$990,235 for workshops, seminars, field trips and other activities for teachers in grades 4-12 to raise student achievement on Standards of Learning history tests and increase enrollment in Advanced Placement United States History.
- **Norton** - \$1 million for training a cohort of elementary history specialists to provide leadership for history instruction throughout Southwest Virginia.
- **Richmond** - \$996,724 to increase content knowledge of 45 teachers in grades K-12, including a three-year program for 15 teachers to earn master's degrees from the University of Richmond .
- **Virginia Beach** - \$997,954 to increase content knowledge of teachers in grades 4-5 through historical investigation using biographies and primary source documents.

Nationwide, 123 school districts in 38 states were selected to receive 2009 Teaching American History awards totaling \$116 million. Virginia school divisions have received about \$36.9 million since the Teaching American History grant program began in 2002.

For more details about Virginia grants, [click here](#).

Briefly . . .

Participants in fall sports conditioning should review the [Virginia High School League guidelines](#) and to

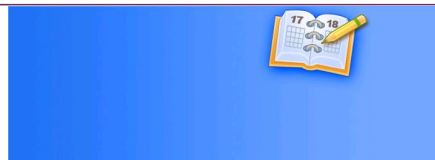
take all necessary precautions when dealing with high heat and humidity. It is important, in all practice situations, to have plenty of water/sports drinks available and to know the basic early warning signs of heat distress. All of these items should be discussed with both coaches and athletes.

Marion Akins, state Parental Involvement Committee chair, presented workshops entitled "A Positive Relationship between Family Involvement and Student Success - The National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships" at the annual Governor's Conference on Education

A [testing scandal](#) at William Fleming High School has cost the Roanoke school system almost \$52,000 in salaries and legal fees so far. According to a team of investigators from the Virginia Department of Education, William Fleming administrators had been secretly altering course schedules for students with disabilities to exclude them from the required Standards of Learning tests at the end of the year.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is sponsoring a flu prevention [Public Service Announcement contest](#). It is open to all U.S. residents and residents of Puerto Rico over the age of 14. Entries must be submitted by Aug. 17.

Save the date!



Friday-Sunday: School Supplies and Clothing Tax Holiday

Aug. 17: Flu contest deadline

Sept. 12: Deadline for Committee Chair applications; Deadline for submitting Convention resolutions.

Oct. 7: International Walk-to-School Day

Nov. 13-15: Convention 2009, Fredericksburg Expo & Conference Center

Feb. 1, 2010: PTA Day at the General Assembly

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