

**Welcoming Schools
+ Involved Families**

Student Success



PTA Take Your Family to School Week

February 10–16, 2008

**PTA Founders Day
February 17, 2008**

Inside this booklet, you will find

- * An application for an award of \$1,897 for your PTA
- * Family involvement event ideas from last year's award recipients
- * Tips on building family-school partnerships



“Consistent family involvement is one of the greatest factors in ensuring that a child receives a quality education. . . . PTA’s ‘Take Your Family to School Week’ is an excellent way to bridge the gap between schools, families and communities.”

—Gerald N. Tirozzi, Executive Director,
National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2007

“When families are active participants in the education of their children at home and at school, parents can more effectively utilize the lines of communication with their principal and teachers. Attendance at school activities is a valuable way to strengthen and maintain these relationships. . . . Take Your Family to School Week provides schools with an avenue to invite families into the school so that they can participate in children’s education.”

—Vincent L. Ferrandino, then-Executive Director,
National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2007

“I want to thank you for your participation in PTA Take Your Family to School Week. By participating in your school’s activities, you demonstrate your commitment to raise children of achievement, character, and conviction who will help to build the future of our Nation.”

—Margaret Spellings, U.S. Secretary of Education, 2007



Mark your calendars!

PTA Take Your Family
to School Week:

February 10–16, 2008
February 8–14, 2009

Connecting Our Families and Schools Pursuing Our Founders' Vision

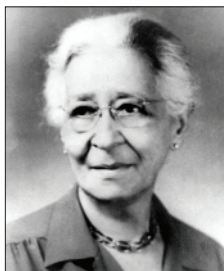
PTA Take Your Family to School Week is easy to implement, but more importantly, the event embodies one of PTA's founding principles: When it comes to children's education, the best way to get involved is to become part of the school community.

When schools open their doors to all families, and parents put aside their other commitments, children get to see that their education is valued, families earn a unique perspective on students' school days, and educators gain a new way to build positive partnerships with entire families.

PTA Take Your Family to School Week, February 10–16, 2008, is just one of the PTA programs revitalizing parent involvement in education. PTA has worked to bring families and schools together since its founding on February 17, 1897. As we celebrate our founders' vision during Take Your Family to School Week—and support its implementation with awards of \$1,897—be sure you take time to connect families and schools on behalf of children, right where it matters most—in children's own classrooms.

Jan Harp Domene

Jan Harp Domene, PTA National President



PTA's founders—Alice McLellan Birney (top left), Phoebe Apperson Hearst (top right), and Selena Sloan Butler (bottom)—led our nation into meaningful parent involvement in children's education.

Tell the PTA national office how your unit plans to celebrate PTA Take Your Family to School Week in 2008 and your unit could receive \$1,897 to support its work. Complete the enclosed application to qualify. Applications must be received in the PTA national office by November 16, 2007.

The Take Your Family to School Week Awards are presented by **PTA Proud National Sponsor AXA Foundation.**

Family Involvement Event Ideas

Featured throughout the following pages are ideas for PTA Take Your Family to School Week events, including glimpses of events planned by last year's \$1,897 Award recipients. Mix and match events to make the most of the week in your school community.

Welcome Wall

Celebrate your school's diversity with a mural. Provide the paints and banner paper and invite all families to illustrate some aspect of their heritage. Hang the mural at a school entrance for everyone to see.

Monday Morning Coffee Drive-Thru

—Matthew W. Gilbert Middle School, Jacksonville, FL

Give parents and guardians a warm greeting along with a doughnut, coffee, and information on the week's activities as they drop their children off for school.

Principal's Perspective

Invite parents to a PTA meeting or informal chat to hear the school principal talk about the school curriculum and the vision for the school. Also have the principal discuss opportunities for families to be involved in the school.



Debbie Elman

Community, Kids, and Parents

—Drake Elementary School, Strongsville, OH

Each day of the week, have a different community business work on a project with a specific grade for about an hour. A local garden center could pot spider plants with 2nd-graders. A cooking school could help 5th-graders make quick and healthy snacks. Invite parents to join in the fun.

Student Talent Showcase

—Morgan Park High School, Chicago, IL

Let kids show off for their parents. Host an open mic poetry night, an exhibition of science and math projects, or a variety show filled with skits, magic, music, and dance.



Cindy Owens

Classroom Volunteers

—David G. Farragut Elementary School, Spain

Encourage parents and guardians to volunteer in their children's classrooms. They can help teachers with special activities or everyday needs. Distribute information on additional volunteer opportunities for the year.

Reading Circles

Ask local authors, librarians, teachers, or parents to host family book discussions or simply read a favorite story or book to students. Use this opportunity to establish a reading or book club corner in your school library.

Family Dinner

—Whitehall Elementary School, Pittsburgh, PA

Plan a dinner for families, teachers, school administrators, and community leaders. Invite just one grade or the entire school. Ask each family to bring a dish to share. End the evening with some educational games.



Kathy Ruth

Community History-Telling

Invite a local historian or long-time community member to bring history home for students and families. Have the speaker talk about the community's original inhabitants and some of its leading members. Alternatively, give a presentation on PTA's history.



Karla Terza

International Food Night

—Mary Deterding Elementary School,
Carmichael, CA

Introduce families to foods from around the world with a buffet dinner. Label each dish; include the country of origin. Also provide educational information on the countries represented.

Saturday Success Academy

—Frederick Douglass High School, Atlanta, GA

Offer parents workshops on such topics as parenting skills, graduation expectations, financing college, test-taking skills, and computer skills while students participate in review sessions for course exams and standardized tests.

Dads Club

Launch a dads club to promote the involvement of fathers and other male role models. Have club members select a special school-based project to work on and commit to participating in father-child and family events.

Snow Castle Contest

—Lake City Community School, Lake City, CO

Hold a snow castle contest for students and families during recess.

A Penny Saved

Show kids and parents how to save for a college education. Offer a workshop that provides useful tips and strategies to help make college possible.*

* See the award application form for a special opportunity from the PTA Take Your Family to School Week Awards Sponsor **AXA Foundation**.

Game Night

Provide board games for families to play in teams or as individuals. Organize tournaments to help families get to know new people.

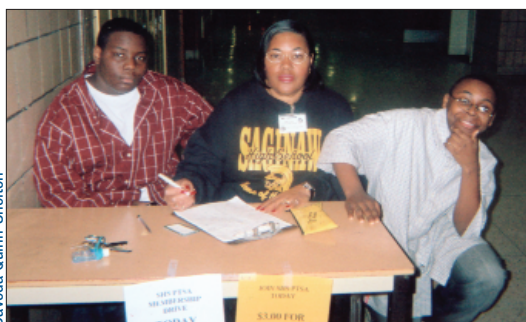


Ana Chapman

Valentine's Day Parent-Child Lunch

—McIntyre Middle School, Montgomery, AL

Invite families to join their special valentines—their children—for a school lunch. Decorate the cafeteria for the event.



Daveda Quinn-Shelton

PTA Membership Drive

—Saginaw High School, Saginaw, MI

Ask the entire community to join PTA! Post membership fliers around the school, advertise in local newspapers, and have a membership

table at the week's basketball games and other school events.

Craft Extravaganza

Set up craft stations where kids and families can decorate crowns and capes, learn how to quilt or crochet, make pipe cleaner animals, scrapbook, paint ceramics, design jewelry, and more. Ask local craft stores to donate supplies and volunteers.

Family Resource Center

—Gonzales Elementary School, Gonzales, TX

Kick off the week with the opening of a family resource center. Invite parents, students, school administrators, city officials, and the press to the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Black History Month Assembly

—Chickasaw School of Math and Science, Chickasaw, AL

Celebrate black history with a schoolwide assembly featuring presentations by community members and students. Welcome parent participation.

School Tour

—Fort Herriman Middle School, Herriman, UT

Invite parents to visit the library, computer lab, auditorium, track, music room, and more to see where students spend their time at school.

Family-Student-Faculty Sports Event

Organize games of softball, kickball, volleyball, or basketball. Have parents, students, and teachers compete against each other, or mix the teams up.

Career and Job Fair

—Laurel Elementary School, Marshall, NC

Introduce students to a variety of career and job opportunities. Ask a select group of parents to talk in detail about what they do. Foster small group discussions and show-and-tell by providing each parent with a display area.

Student Art Exhibition

Display students' photographs, paintings, drawings, collages, sculptures, and other artwork in the school library and hallways. Invite families to a VIP opening, complete with appetizers and refreshments, to admire the art and meet the artists.

A Full Schedule

—Foothill High School, Albuquerque, NM

Plan a schoolwide assembly hosted by the student council. Have parents attend abbreviated classes with their children. Hold parent-teacher conferences.

Share your event ideas in the PTA Great Idea Bank!

www.pta.org/greatideabank



Carol Davis



Brenda Capps



Katharine Saunders

Family Fun Festival

Set up booths with food, face painting, and arm wrestling—as well as information about school programs, community resources, and PTA membership. Organize carnival games, skits, and indoor relay races. And don't forget to offer door prizes!

Meet Your Computer, Meet Your Student

—Bailey Bridge Middle School, Midlothian, VA

Teach parents about cyberbullying and how to monitor their children's online activities. Give them hands-on experience in the school computer lab exploring online social forums.



Student Success Starts Here

Welcome All Families

Make your school a place where all families feel welcomed, valued, and connected.

* Host PTA Take Your Family to School Week events!

- * At events, have the school principal and PTA president greet each family and thank them for coming.
- * Post signs to welcome parents and direct them to important places like the school office, parent resource center, auditorium, gym, and library.
- * Host activities at varying times to accommodate family work schedules and lifestyles.

Communicate

Ensure regular, two-way, meaningful communication between the PTA, families, and school staff.

- * Advertise events through a variety of media: fliers, e-mails, newsletters, websites, formal invitations, phone calls, local newspapers, radio, etc.
- * Translate invitations and provide interpreters for non-English speaking families.
- * Make sure your events offer formal and informal opportunities for families and school staff to talk.

Speak Up for Every Child

Give parents the confidence and tools to advocate for the best possible opportunities for children.

- * Create and distribute a Parent's Bill of Rights and Responsibilities to reinforce parents' role as partners in education.
- * Use family events to encourage the school community to take action on issues such as arts education and school wellness policies.

PTA Take Your Family to School Week is about building family-school partnerships to support student success. Below are some tips on implementing PTA's new National Standards for Family-School Partnerships in your school community during this special week—and throughout the year.

Share Power

Benefit from the insight informed families can bring to school decision making.

- * Bring parents, teachers, and principals together to discuss important school matters: school safety policies, student behavior, testing, school goals, etc.
- * Form focus groups to learn the school community's thoughts on key issues.
- * Recruit a diverse group of volunteers to help plan and run PTA events.

Collaborate with Your Community

Welcome the broader community into your school so you can offer even more opportunities to students and families.

- * Ask local health-care groups, park districts, restaurants, universities, and businesses to contribute volunteers, speakers, goods, and services to support school and PTA programs.
- * Work with local organizations and civic departments to develop solutions to problems in the school community, such as traffic hazards and bullying.

Support Student Success

Family involvement increases student success. Maximize the benefits for your students!

- * Educate families about learning standards, the school curriculum, and how to have productive conversations about student progress.
- * Share with parents all the ways they can be involved in their children's education.
- * Plan fun family activities that have a learning component.



everychild. onevoice.®

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**See the results of family
involvement add up.**

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