Dear Presidents:

The NYS PTA convention was a great event! Nassau Region, with over 100 members in attendance, cheered as our Food Animal Production and Antibiotic Resistance resolution was adopted without amendment. We hope to see it move on to National PTA as a 2015 resolution. Congratulations also to Massapequa Jr/Sr HS PTSA on the adoption of their resolution, Revising NYS Dept. of Transportation Child Safety Zone Point System. It was a great weekend of advocacy for our children!

We would also like to congratulate newly elected NYS PTA Vice President Gracemarie Rozea, a past Nassau Region Director and Judy Van Haaren who was elected to the position of Secretary. Judy is the immediate Past Region Director of Nassau Region. Nassau is well represented on the executive committee of NYS PTA, a point of pride for us all!

The Presidents/Principals Dinner, held on November 25 was a wonderful event we hope you were able to attend. Recognizing our three National PTA Reflections winners, Matthew Greene, Hiram Chowey and Koby Lazar was a highlight for me. We hope your PTA is participating in the Reflections program; we’d love to recognize your students as National winners next year!

There seems to be progress in PTA’s efforts to see that there are changes in the implementation of the Common Core Standards. Things may not be changing fast enough for some but that there is an acknowledgment by the State Ed Dept. that there are too many tests, that teacher preparation has not been adequate and the implementation needs to be revisited is a ray of hope. You can read NYS PTA’s latest Letter to Members at www.pta.org and you can access the Talking Points Guide at http://nyspta.org/pdf/Advocacy/NYSPTA_Voice_CCTalkingPoints.pdf.

We hope you are thinking membership! Revitalize your membership campaign. Now more than ever, every membership counts, every member’s voice is vital and valuable in PTA’s efforts to bring change to the Common Core Learning Standards implementation and all issues affecting the health and welfare of our children. Encourage everyone in your community to “Carry the Card that Counts”.

Presidents’ Rap II and the Nominations and Elections workshop will be held on January 23 at Baldwin High School. We hope to see all unit and council presidents attend the Rap and that you send your elected nominating committee members to this important workshop. Elections are the #1 problem issue in our units. Do it right and eliminate the stress and strife electing a new board can bring.

May all your New Year resolutions come to fruition. I have to admit, January is not my favorite month!

Regards,

Laurie May, Region Director

www.nassaupta.org
Take Your Family to School Week

February 17-21, 2014 is National PTA Take Your Family to School Week. This is a wonderful opportunity to bring parents, teachers and school together. This year, the theme is “Supporting Student Success.” The focus is to address the risk factors associated with dropping out of school.

National PTA has a Take Your Family School Week toolkit that can be accessed via the [http://www.pta.org/](http://www.pta.org/) website. Now is the time to start bringing all the partners in your school community together to plan what family engagement activities can be done during this week. Using the theme, “Supporting Student Success” PTAs can start to identify how this theme relates to your school/community. This can be an opportunity to start to work as a team. Just a few steps can mean the world to building positive family-school relationships.

The National Standards for Family-School Partnerships provides tips to bridge gaps that may exist between home and school. These tips include:

- Hosting a welcome night
- Being inclusive of all families and cultures in the PTA
- Invite the principal to take part in developing the PTA’s plan of work
- Making the principal-parent dialogue visible
- Networking with community establishments
- Inviting community groups and youth serving organizations

Advocacy in Action - Legislation Education Conference

By: Jerilyn A. Lewis, Nassau Region PTA Legislation - Resolutions Chair

Happy New Year to my fellow PTA Advocates; may this year be our best yet! We ended the year on a high note, passing two new resolutions at NYS Convention whose sponsors came out of Nassau Region. Many thanks to Lucille Vitale from the Massapequa Jr/Sr HS PTA for her resolution, “Revising NYS DOT Child Safety Zone Point System” and Sue Landini, Mary Ward, Pat Assortato and the Legislation committee from Nassau Region PTA for their resolution, “Food Animal Production and Antibiotic Resistance.” These resolutions address two very important issues relating to the health and safety of our children. As a result of their efforts, we have already received positive feedback from The PEW Charitable Trust and US Representative Louise Slaughter of NY, both in support of the Antibiotic resolution. We may also have gained the attention of the NYS DOT now that the entire NYS PTA Congress has agreed that the Child Safety Zones point system needs to be revisited. This is the impact of NYS PTA – Every Child One Voice - on the issues we care about.

March is Advocacy month, so plan on attending the NYS PTA Legislation Education Conference in Albany March 1-2, followed by Lobby Day and Virtual Lobby day. The NYS PTA website will have the registration for the conference when the registration period begins. The website will also have the details of the NYS PTA’s issues and talking points established for Virtual Lobby Day 2014. Help us advocate for our children, youth and families. Thank you.
Assistant Director Team

- Are You A Unit In Good Standing?
- Do You Have At Least 25 Members?
- Paid Insurance?
- Up-To-Date Bylaws?

No? Then Contact Your AD For Assistance…they’ll be happy to help!

The Assistant Director Team is your link to Nassau Region PTA. If you have questions or concerns regarding your unit, contact your Assistant Director. A full directory is located on the Nassau Region website.

www.nassaupta.org

click on: Know your AD

Presidents/Principals Dinner
By: Barbara Reynolds & Veronica Goldberg, Dinner Chairmen

The Presidents/Principals Dinner is truly an event that everyone looks forward to. Over 510 attendees enjoyed a lovely evening with tasty food, great conversation, captivating entertainment by the students of the Nassau BOCES Long Island High School for the Arts, greetings from NYS PTA president, Lana Ajemian and an inspirational message from our newly elected NYS PTA Vice President, Gracemarie Rozea. It was a pleasure to recognize our three National PTA Reflections winners as well as other award recipients. Planning for a dinner at this magnitude is no easy task, thank you to all of the units/councils that returned their RSVP on time. It makes seating over 500 people so much easier! Thank you all for making our 54th annual Presidents/Principals dinner a night to remember.

Important Reminders for Treasurers

- Know your unit code number, Federal ID number and tax exempt number.
- All checks must have two signatures.
- Never give out a blank check.
- Pay all bills by check, never cash.
- A reconciliation of the checkbook must be done monthly by someone not authorized to sign checks.
- Be sure your bank signature card is kept up to date.
Treasury Tips
By: Jeanette Meoli, Nassau Region Treasurer

Treasury Q and A

What a busy year it's been and I’m so glad to have met so many of you at the Treasurer’s workshop at Officers Training in June, the Budget workshop in August, the Fall Conference Treasury and IRS workshops, and Presidents Rap in October! For those of you who haven’t been able to make it to our training, I have been sending out blast emails to all treasurers periodically to remind everyone of important deadlines and share some treasury tips and best practices. Here are three popular questions that have come up:

**Taxes:** Yes, even though we don’t pay taxes, every unit must file a 990, 990-N or 990-EZ information return with the IRS every year. If you missed the November 15 deadline this year, contact me and we’ll get it sorted out. If your unit has had its 501(c)3 status revoked, please contact me or your AD and we’ll help you through the process to get reinstated. Please don’t answer any correspondence from IRS on your own without letting us know.

**Sales Tax Exemption:** The New York Exempt Organization Exempt Purchase Certificate (Form ST-119.1) should be in your unit files. If it is not, you will need to contact the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance directly at (518) 485-2889, as each unit is an independent agent with their own FEIN# and NYS Tax-Exempt#. They do not allow you to download the form – they want to speak with you before they send you one. Make copies of the blank form for your files before you complete it! Then you won’t have to call again. In order for a purchase to be exempt from sales tax, it must be paid for by the PTA (PTA check, cash or credit card - not personal check or credit card) and the ST-119.1 must be submitted at the time of purchase.

**Sample Reports and Forms:** The best place to start is the New York State PTA website – www.pta.org – in the Members Only section. Section 5 of the Resource Guide has sample vouchers, monthly and yearly reports, audit forms and much more. If you can’t find what you need there, visit the National PTA website’s Back-to-School Kit at http://www.ptakit.org/. The Finance section is an amazing collection of resources for PTA treasurers including many sample reports and forms. Both of these PTA publications should be printed and kept in the PTA files for reference.

Communication works best when it’s a two-way conversation – so I am inviting all of you to send your treasury questions, problems, and successes to me at treasurer@nassaupta.org.

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Keep every board member informed with up to date information, calendar, and issues for every level of PTA.

For extra subscriptions of the Nassau Region PTA’s Newsletter - LEADER please go to www.nassaupta.org, Click on “PTA downloads” then on “Leader Subscriptions” download the order form and instructions.
March is PTA Advocacy Month
By: Roxanne Wynn-Trotman, Nassau Region Chair

HEAR OUR VOICE
by Roxanne Wynn-Trotman

Some voices are strong, echoing off the mountains
Others are a whisper heard above the winds
All are relevant, necessary and vital to deliver our message
A message for All of our Children
A message for education
A message for a future
A message for the beauty and wonder of the world

Our Children, Our Future, Our Strength

This poem is inspired by the importance of March as PTA Advocacy Month. However, it is important to note that we are Advocates all year round!

We hope that you as parents, teachers, and students take part in lending your vital voice to PTA’s work.

We can each lend our voice to support our children:

- Sign up to receive PTA Advocacy Alerts;
- Engage in a letter writing campaign;
- Work on a resolution to bring forth a community concern that has an impact on our children;
- Register and Participate in PTA Legislation events,

A few moments and days of your time go a long way to address concerns about any issues that you face in your school and community. We look forward to seeing you at these events:

March 8 – Nassau Region Legislation Roundtable – Hofstra University – e-mail: Roxanne Wynn-Trotman at [legislationevents@nassaupta.org](mailto:legislationevents@nassaupta.org).

Here are important resources to learn more about Common Core and other Advocacy Efforts and how you can get involved at the Region, State and National PTA levels:

Nassau Region PTA [www.nassaupta.org](http://www.nassaupta.org) and [www.facebook.com/nassaupta](http://www.facebook.com/nassaupta)
NYS PTA [www.nyspta.org](http://www.nyspta.org)
National PTA [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)

So join us, we look forward to seeing you and hearing your voice!
Graduation Options for Students with Disabilities

Beginning with the 2013-14 school year and thereafter, students with disabilities will have the following graduation options:

- **Regents diploma**
- **Local diploma**
- **New York State (NYS) Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential**
- **Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (SACC)**

The Regents Diploma will be awarded to high school students who obtain 44 credits in different courses and receive a passing score of 65 or higher on 5 Regents exams (ELA, Math, Science, US History and Global History and Geography).

Students with disabilities with an IEP or a 504 plan may earn a local diploma by:

1. Scoring 55-64 on required Regents exams
2. Scoring 45-54 on one or more of the five required Regents exams, other than the English language arts (ELA) or mathematics exam, but scoring 65 or higher on one or more of the other required Regents exams, in which case the lower score(s) can be compensated by the higher score(s). The English and math scores must be greater than 55. Students must also pass the course in which they earned a score of 45-54 and have satisfactory attendance.
3. The Regents Competency Tests (RCTs) are being phased out. Students with disabilities who failed one or more Regents exams (54 or lower) used to be able to graduate with a local diploma by passing the corresponding RCT exams. Only students who entered the 9th grade prior to the 2011-2012 academic year are still eligible to receive a local diploma through the RCTs.

The CDOS Commencement Credential will be awarded as a supplement to a Regents or local diploma or students can graduate with this credential alone. The CDOS Commencement Credential will be available to students with IEPs who do not take the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA). This will replace the “IEP Diploma,” which will no longer be offered to students with disabilities. It is not equivalent to a high school diploma and cannot be used to apply to college, the military or trade schools.

This certificate documents:

- Completion, in grades 9-12, not less than two units of study (216 hours of instruction) in career and technical education courses (CTE) and/or 54 hours of Work-Based Learning (WBL) experiences or attainment of a nationally recognized work readiness credential.

- Attainment of the commencement level of technical knowledge and work-related skills and experiences of the New York State Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) learning standards, performance on industry-based assessments and other work-related academic achievements.

- Completion of a Skills Employability Profile to identify the student’s technical level of knowledge, work-related preparation and skills, work experiences for career development and entry-level post school employment.
**Special Education**  
*By: Jane Chan, Nassau Region Chair*

The SACC Commencement Credential is a certificate that is available to graduating students with severe disabilities who, because of their disability, cannot take the regular state assessments and do not meet the requirements for a Regents or local diploma. Students take the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA). It is not equivalent to a high school diploma and cannot be used to apply to college, the military or trade schools.

This certificate documents:

1. Completion of a Student Exit Summary that indicates the level of achievement and independence for each of the New York State Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) standards including career development, integrated learning, basic skill in reading, writing, listening, speaking, math and functional math, thinking skills, personal qualities, interpersonal skills, use of technology, managing information and

2. Attainment of academic achievement and functional performance and independence as measured by the NYSAA

3. The student’s skills, strengths, interests, other achievements and accomplishments

If you would like to learn which graduation option is appropriate for your child, speak to your child’s IEP team and/or the school transition planning coordinator as soon as your child starts middle school.

Additional information can be obtained from:


**New York State PTA “Hear Our Voice”**

NYS PTA has created a new campaign *Hear Our Voice* to engage members in joining the dialog with the NY State Department of Education (NYSED), the Board of Regents and our State elected officials regarding Common Core implementation.

Please join CAPWIZ by going to the NYS PTA website at [www.nyspta.org](http://www.nyspta.org) to sign up and use it as a valuable tool to reach out and let your voice be heard!

Hear Our VOICE!

- Value input from parents
- Order a one-year delay
- Implement first, test second
- Create improved, flexible testing
- Expand professional development
PTA Reflections News - Mary Lou Anderson Grant Announcement
By: Sarah Henris, Reflections Specialist

Don't miss the opportunity to support quality arts education in your community! The National PTA Mary Lou Anderson Grant provides matching funds up to $1,000 to local PTAs to establish a student centered arts project or enhance in-school or after-school arts programs in your local community. PTAs serving at-risk student populations are particularly encouraged to apply. For more information, please visit www.PTA.org/Reflections.

Applications accepted Monday, January 6 through Friday, March 14, 2014.

We’re on the web
WWW.NASSAUPTA.ORG
AND FACEBOOK
FACEBOOK/NASSAUPTA.ORG


Important Reflections Dates

Entry Pick-Up:
Monday, January 27, 2014 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM
Location: LEVITTOWN MEMORIAL EDUCATION CENTER
150 Abbey Lane, Levittown, NY 11756
See Nassau Region PTA website for directions
www.nassaupta.org
Nassau Region PTA ®

2013-2014 Calendar

January 2014
23 - Nominations & Elections & President’s Rap II
27 - Reflections Pick up - LMEC

February 2014
14 - PTA Founders Day

March 2014
1 & 2 - NYS PTA Legislation/Education Conference - Albany
3 - Lobby Day in Albany
4 - Virtual Lobby Day
8 - Nassau Region Legislation Roundtable
8 - Jenkins Scholarship Interviews

April 2014
7 – Arts-in-Education Showcase
23 – Reflections Reception

May 2014
12 – Spring Conference/Ways & Means Expo

June 2014
16 – Officers’ Training 7:30PM

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