

Suffolk Region

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Kick off the Year Strong Start-

Start the year off strong! There is always a lot of excitement with back to school. Capitalize on that enthusiasm with a membership push. Competitions are fun ways to raise engagement. Create teams in the different grades, Enlist teachers and staff. Get Creative! Incorporate membership with Family Engagement Programs such as a Bus Safety or Bike Safety event. Have a table set up to gain members at a teen driving safety event. Remind parents/caregivers/teachers/students that the main purpose of PTA/PTSA/SEPTAs is to advocate for students. They are supporting advocacy for their student. Parents have a voice and can participate, if they choose, to attend our Lobby Days event and speak with our elected officials about matters that concern PTA.

When you are planning your year, incorporate Family Engagement in everything. One great way to do that is to commit to a goal of applying to become a National School of Excellence. Here is the explanation of what it means to be a National School of Excellence from the National PTA website.

“By enrolling in this program, your PTA and school administrators are making a year-long commitment in identifying and implementing an action plan for school improvement based on **PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships** and **Transformative Family Engagement**.

Those that exhibit improvement are honored as National PTA Schools of Excellence, a distinction that spans two years. Honorees receive celebration tools and automatic consideration for the **Phoebe Apperson Hearst Award** and a \$2,000 grant for their school. PTAs are encouraged to renew their designation each year, or every other year, to continue to build on their momentum.

Your School of Excellence designation will help attract new, action-oriented PTA members who want to focus on the issues that affect our children the most. And being a National PTA School of Excellence will open the door to other honors and opportunities for your school”.

Here are the Steps to enroll:

1. Step #1: Enroll and Gain Support (Enroll by Oct. 1)
2. Step #2: Deploy Baseline Survey (Sep. — Nov.)
3. Step #3: Set a Shared Objective (Sep. — Nov.)
4. Step #4: Complete Initial Application (Submit by Nov. 1)
5. Step #5: Follow Roadmap to Excellence (Throughout School Year)
6. Step #6: Deploy Final Survey (March — June)

7. Step #7: Complete Final Application (Submit by June 1)
8. Step #8: Celebrate Your Excellence (Aug.)

Check the National PTA website for the link to enroll when it is posted.

Lastly, there is a New Resource for Parents and PTA on pertinent topics- PTA.org's new Notes from the Backpack podcast. <https://www.pta.org/center-for-family-engagement/notes-from-the-backpack> topics range across the grade levels from elementary to high school.

Why Incorporate Family Engagement into Your Planning?-

With the start of a new school year, it is important to reiterate why Family Engagement is so important for students. But first, what exactly is Family Engagement? It is different from involvement. Family Engagement is intentional, planned and reviewed strategy that is developed to be an out of the box collaboration between the school and parents and other stakeholders. Why it is so critical is because the students who have a parent or caregiver engaged in their learning enjoy: higher grades; better attendance; behave better and are more likely to go on to postsecondary education and successful careers.

There are Six National Standards for Family Engagement which can each be remembered with one word each: 1 Welcoming; 2. Communicating; 3. Supporting; 4. Speaking-up; 5. Sharing; 6. Collaborating.

Welcoming each family and student and making them feel as though they belong in the school community is so important in getting parents to feel they can engage. Is your school environment inclusive or not? How do you communicate with parents and other stakeholders? Do you have multiple channels of communication? Do have materials printed, posted and emailed in all the languages that reflect your school demographics? People can't participate, if they don't know about what is going on and what is needed. Are the policies at the school supporting student success? Does your PTA speak up for all students, so that all students are set up for success? Is there a 50/50 split in sharing power between the school and the parents? When new policies or curriculum are considered is it done in collaboration with parents? These are the standards to measure your Family Engagement by. To read the full Standards document go to PTA.org/family-engagement or check back issues from the spring of 2019.

Key Dates to Remember-

September 30, October 1, 2019- Rosh Hashanah

October 9, 2019- Yom Kippur

October 14, 2019-Columbus Day

November 8-10, 2019 - State PTA Convention- Where- Tarrytown, Doubletree by Hilton, 455 South Broadway, Tarrytown, NY 10591

Register NOW-Registration

Link-<http://www.cvent.com/events/nys-pta-123rd-annual-convention/event-summary-07777c0e58974125a42f7c18990432b8.aspx>

Registration Packet-

https://nyspta.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Conv19-Registration-packet-2019.FINAL_.pdf

Proposed

Resolutions-<https://nyspta.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/PROPOSED-RESOLUTIONS-2019-FINAL.pdf>

Family Engagement Theme for September- National Hispanic Heritage Month

Family Engagement Theme for October- LGBTQ History Month

Important Advocacy Calendar Notes

September to do list-

1. Mail school Calendar to your legislators and local officials- attach a personal note
2. Call your legislator and invite them to a PTA event in September or October
3. Ask your principal and teachers to have a monthly joint meeting with PTA leaders
4. Register for Annual Convention
5. Bring an advocacy action plan to 1st PTA meeting and appoint an advocacy committee

RESOURCES and LINKS-

Child's Plan-Improving the Social and Emotional Wellbeing of New York's Children and Their Families

https://www.ccf.ny.gov/files/5013/7962/7099/childrens_plan.pdf

Apps for building Resilience in Children and Adults-

Pacifica Stress and Anxiety -4.4stars

Mindfulness Coach-gives tools for getting to sleep- 4.6 stars

HappiMe- 5.0 Stars- free and in app purchases

6 phase meditation- **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gRhrdm_1afQ**

SEPTA-

Accessibility Service- Going on an excursion or day trip to local New York historic sites, Adventure parks, State and Local Parks, Museums? Wonder if they are Accessible for mobility challenges? Check out Destination Accessible to know before you go. This is a free service to make your trip more fun and enjoyable.

www.destinationaccessible.com

or call 917693-3420

<https://www.learning-styles-online.com/overview/>

<https://www.developgoodhabits.com/good-study-routine/>

Other Resources-

NYSED updated ESSA website:

<http://www.nysed.gov/news/2018/state-education-department-announces-updated-resources-every-student-succeeds-act>

Parent Partnership Kit-

<https://www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/parentpower/booklet.pdf>

Link to PTA Leadership webinars-

<https://nyspta.org/home/pta-leaders/trainingmaterials-webinars/>

Parent Workshop toolkit link-

<https://www.engageny.org/resource/planning-a-parent-workshop-toolkit-for-parent-engagement>

Link to Common Core Standards-

<http://corestandards.org/the-standards>

Prevent Opioid abuse

<https://www.operationprevention.com/#about>

New ESSA website and explanatory letter:

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/1/#inbox/FMfcgxwBTsXXqxCRwWHpSPdTQJSTtFdJ>

*New York State Education Department, “SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING: ESSENTIAL FOR LEARNING, ESSENTIAL FOR LIFE”.