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# PTSA Resource Guide 2008-2009

Keep this as a reference!

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(206) 364-7430

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www.seattlecouncilptsa.org

## Mark your calendar:

### SCPTSA General Meetings

October 22, 2008  
February 5, 2009  
April 28, 2009  
JSC Auditorium

### 2009 WSPTA Focus Day

February 26, 2009  
Legislative Building,  
Olympia, WA

### 2009 WSPTA 95<sup>th</sup> Annual

Convention, Sea-Tac, WA  
May 1-3, 2009

## *What Is Seattle Council PTSA?*

Seattle Council PTSA (SCPTSA) was established in 1909 as a citywide coalition of local PTAs. Our charge from Washington State PTA is to:

*Support, coordinate, facilitate, and serve the needs of the local units which are members of that council.*

SCPTSA is one of Seattle's largest and oldest organized groups representing the interests of children and families. In 2007-08, we supported 80 local PTAs with over 12,000 members.

SCPTSA provides a common voice for PTA members, with representation on school district, city and state committees.

SCPTSA provides training, networking and support to local PTA officers as we develop new grassroots leadership. Individual help is available, for quick questions or lengthy challenges.

SCPTSA provides information about current happenings through a newsletter, website, news bulletin, email lists, and our regular meetings. This information is provided to make your PTA more effective and your job easier.

SCPTSA advocates for public education. We organize grassroots support to improve the quality and funding of our public schools.

SCPTSA offers you a way to participate in a larger sphere, beyond the walls of your school building. We encourage you to take advantage of the opportunities available to you.

SCPTSA sponsors Reflections, a National PTA program, encouraging all grades in creative growth using all types of artistic media including writing, music, photography, and more.

### SCPTSA Mission

To be a strong, effective voice to promote the health, education and welfare of all children.

### SCPTSA Goals

- Empower local units and develop leaders.
- Lead the legislative advocacy effort to ensure that local unit voices are heard.
- Strengthen the partnership between SCPTSA and Seattle Public Schools
- Increase parent involvement through outreach efforts and partnership with the Seattle Public Schools

## Seattle Council PTSA Directory 2008-2009 Page 2 of 8

**President**

Sharon Rodgers [president@seattlecouncilptsa.org](mailto:president@seattlecouncilptsa.org)

**Vice President**

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**Vice President**

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**Secretary**

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**Area Directors**

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**E-news Editor**

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**Legislative Chair**

Heidi Bennett [heidibennett@seattlecouncilptsa.org](mailto:heidibennett@seattlecouncilptsa.org)

**Reflections Chair** to be filled

**Website Editor** to be filled

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**SCPTSA Office**

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Website: [www.seattlecouncilptsa.org](http://www.seattlecouncilptsa.org)

**Washington State PTA Office**

Address: 2003 – 65<sup>th</sup> Ave. W., Tacoma, WA 98466-6215  
General Info: 800-562-3804, 253-565-2153, Fax: 253-565-7753  
President 2008-09: Laura Bay  
E-Mail: [wapta@wastatepta.org](mailto:wapta@wastatepta.org)  
Website: [www.wastatepta.org](http://www.wastatepta.org)

**National PTA**

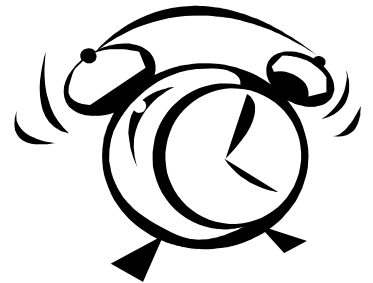
Headquarters: 541 N Fairbanks Court, Suite 1300 Chicago, IL 60611-3396  
Phone Contacts: Toll-Free: (800) 307-4PTA (4782); Fax: 312-670-6783  
President 2008-09: Jan Harp Domene  
E-mail: [info@pta.org](mailto:info@pta.org)  
Website: [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)

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## SCPTSA 2008-09 Calendar Page 3 of 8

### ***Dates to Note:***

August 15	Parent Leaders' and Principals' Breakfast
September 3	First Day of School
September 30	Region 6 Fall Leadership Conference (location TBA)
October 3-4	WSPTA Legislative Assembly
October 25	First Membership Service Fee payment due
October 22	SCPTSA General Meeting
November	Liability Insurance application due (see WSPTA Treasurer's guide for specific date and instructions)
November 17-26	Elementary Parent-Teacher Conferences
November 15	Form 990/990EZ and 990-N (E-Postcard) Forms due (PTAs are required to file an annual return with the IRS. This is only an information return. It is not a tax return.)
December 1	WSPTA Applegate Grant applications due
December 7	Reflections Entries due
January 25	Membership Service Fee payment due
February 23	SCPTSA General Meeting
February 26	WSPTA Focus Day in Olympia
March 1	WSPTA Awards applications due
April 28	SCPTSA General Meeting
May 4-8	Teacher Appreciation Week
May 1-4	WSPTA Convention (SeaTac)
May 21	SCPTSA General Meeting (FOCUS: Incoming PTA Officer Training)
May 25	Final Membership Service Fee payment due
June 16	Last Day of School
June 26-June 29	National PTA Convention (Ft. Lauderdale, FL)



***MEMBERSHIP NUTS AND BOLTS***

As a grassroots membership association, PTA depends on membership service fees (dues). In order to receive the benefits of affiliation with SCPTSA, Washington State PTA and National PTA, your local unit **PTA must have 25 members by October 25, 2008 to be in good standing and to be eligible for AIM insurance.** If you miss the deadline, be sure to send your dues in as soon as possible. Here is what you need to know:

**1. Membership Payment Instructions - All membership fees should be made payable to the 'Seattle Council PTSA' and mailed to the SCPTSA Post Office Box.** Do not send it to the Washington State PTA. The Council address is on page 1 and on our website.

**2. Membership Materials** - Valuable membership information can be found on the Washington State PTA website [www.wastatepta.org/programs/membership.htm](http://www.wastatepta.org/programs/membership.htm) and in the WSPTA Annual Leadership Packet.

**3. Membership Enrollment** - Membership enrollment is available online at the Washington State PTA website. Your PTA's new 2008-2009 login and password for online enrollment was mailed to your PTA president. If your PTA has co-presidents, the letter was mailed to the first alphabetically. If your PTA president did not receive a password letter, please contact Melissa Anderson at [support@wastatepta.org](mailto:support@wastatepta.org). We encourage our Local Units to use the on-line registration process on a monthly basis after the first membership deadline (October 25, 2008) has been met.

**4. Membership Service Fees** - For 2008-09 the minimum member assessment fee is \$8.00. This assessment breaks out as follows:

	<u>Per member</u>	<u>Per Unit</u>
SCPTSA portion:	\$1.50	
WSPTA portion:	\$4.75	
National PTA portion:	\$1.75	
<b>Total per member</b>	<b>\$8.00</b>	
<b>Annual assessment (Oct pmt only)*</b>		<b>\$2.00</b>

\* With the first membership payment due by October 25, 2008, a one-time fee of \$2.00 per Local Unit per year should be included in the payment sent to Seattle Council PTSA. This fee is forwarded to WSPTA, which uses the revenue to pay for Washington State's Outstanding Local Unit's attendance at the National PTA Convention in June.

Each Local Unit PTA may add its own membership fee to cover its needs. Typically, Local Unit fees range from \$8.25 to \$15.00 for a single membership. Many PTAs make available dual memberships, with fees varying from \$1.00 to \$5.00 less than the total amount due for two single memberships. **You may also consider using these additional fees to finance membership scholarships for parents who wish to join PTA but whose ability to pay the fees is a financial challenge.**

**5. Significant Membership Deadlines are as follows:**

- October 25, 2008** Determines whether you are a Local Unit in good standing and therefore eligible for insurance coverage and participation in Reflections program.
- January 25, 2009** Determines the number of voting delegates your PTA may send to State Convention.
- May 25, 2009** Determines if your PTA is eligible for membership awards.

**As a volunteer organization, the success of PTA depends entirely upon its members.** Membership in the PTA is open to anyone who cares about children. Expand your PTA's membership to include everyone in your community who believes in children and their education.

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**A strong membership is a sign of a vibrant, responsive PTA.**  
*If membership is low, take a look at your programs and activities. Are you meeting the needs of your community?*



## ***Seattle Council PTSA talks to YOU***

### **General Meetings**

SCPTSA hosts General Meetings in October, February and April. We will have programs of interest to all grade levels. All PTA members are invited to attend. Let us know if there are issues you would like to see addressed at our meetings or guest speakers that you are interested in hearing.

### **Phone Calls**

We are here to help you. We will check in periodically just to see how it's going. Don't hesitate to let us know how we can assist you.

### **Networking**

Throughout the year, we will host networking groups on issues of common interest. For example, high school leaders have met regularly to discuss common issues and share best practices. We can facilitate similar meetings in your region in order to enable communication, develop discussion groups, and share best practices. Let us know if there is a subject you would like to discuss with other PTA leaders.

### **Newsletter**

SCPTSA has a newsletter that is sent to all PTA officers and board members whose information has been submitted to us. We are dependent on you to supply us with those names, and feel free to add as many as you like.

### **Website**

Seattle Council PTSA has a website at [www.seattlecouncilptsa.org](http://www.seattlecouncilptsa.org) with information for PTA leaders and members. New information is added all the time, so check back.

### **Email Lists**

We have several email lists for communications. Currently, SCPTSA offers email lists for Presidents, Reflections Coordinators, and Legislative Chairs. We also send a regular e-news bulletin to all PTA board members, and other interested community members. Let us know if you'd like to be added to any of these lists. Please email [communications@seattlecouncilptsa.org](mailto:communications@seattlecouncilptsa.org).

## ***Local PTA Communication***

### **Set up your own email list**

Does your PTA have an email list? If not, consider setting one up. Many free services are available and SCPTSA can help you with this. It's a great way to share school and PTA information.

### **Add us to your Newsletter subscription list**

You can send your newsletter to us free through school mail at mailstop 11-950, or send it by US Mail to PO Box 24438 Seattle 98124 or send e-news to our SCPTSA email address. Share your great ideas, parenting classes and workshops so we can post them on our website.

### **Share your news with Seattle Public Schools**

Seattle Public Schools officials also appreciate news from each school, so consider using school mail to send them a copy of your newsletter. See the Seattle Public Schools website for current mail stops for the District leaders.

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### ***Reflections Arts Program***



National PTA believes all children deserve a quality arts education and encourages students to pursue artistic expression through participation in its annual arts Reflections Program. The program offers students the opportunity to create works of art for fun and recognition. Students in preschool through grade 12 are encouraged to create and submit works of art in six areas: dance choreography, film production, literature, musical composition, photography, and the visual arts (which include art forms such as drawing, painting, print making, and collage). For nearly 40 years, the program has encouraged millions of students across the nation and in American schools overseas to create works of art. The Reflections Program was started in 1969 by then Colorado PTA President Mary Lou Anderson.

Seattle Council PTSA supports the Reflections Arts Program with judging and recognition at the school district level. Information about this National PTA program is available in the WSPTA Leadership Packet. A special message to local PTA Reflections Coordinators is included with the President's Resource. If you need additional information, contact the SCPTSA Office. The theme this year is **WOW**.

Students participate in the Reflections Program by submitting entries to their local PTA or PTSA. Any PTA/PTSA in good standing is eligible to sponsor a Reflections Program.

Rules and deadlines are not the same for all PTAs. Contact your state PTA for specific guidelines.

### ***PTA and Politics***

PTA can lobby and participate in campaigns for issues. It cannot endorse or campaign for individual candidates. If you invite a candidate for office to a PTA meeting, you must invite all candidates for that office. If only one candidate is able to attend, it is okay for him or her to appear, but it is important to offer the opportunity to all candidates. If a PTA officer or board member endorses a candidate, it is important that every effort is made to identify the endorsement as an individual endorsement only and not a PTA endorsement. Failure to do so may jeopardize your non-profit status.

PTAs can endorse ballot measures and legislation. Washington State PTA identifies a legislative agenda every October at its Legislative Assembly. Seattle Council PTSA also makes endorsements, as may your individual PTA. After the endorsement vote has taken place, your PTA can make campaign donations, invite campaign speakers, distribute campaign materials, and recruit campaign volunteers.

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## ***USE OF SCHOOL DISTRICT RESOURCES***

Although PTAs and schools are partners, the separation between a private organization (PTA) and a public, tax-funded agency (school district) must be maintained for the protection of both bodies.

### **PTA MEETINGS**

Each PTA must file a Building Use Permit form with the school district for any PTA-sponsored events it plans to hold on school property. For your general membership meetings, one permit form at the beginning of the school year listing all scheduled meetings is all that is required. (All groups using School District space for gatherings and/or meetings, such as Boy Scouts, Camp Fire groups, etc., must file a permit.)

Having this permit on record allows your PTA to set your own agenda and to speak freely on all issues and to invite speakers of your choice. For example, in the case of a school levy, a permit allows your unit to invite only the speaker(s) you wish to hear. Without a permit, both pro and con sides of any issue must be represented at any meeting.

### **LOCAL PTA NEWSLETTERS**

If your Local Unit's newsletter is distributed through students, it is considered to be a school resource and your PTA must be very careful of the newsletter's content. For example, if your Local Unit has endorsed an initiative or levy/bond issue, you may report only the fact of the endorsement, along with the ballot title. The principal has the final approval of any materials sent home with students.

If a PTA uses school-generated labels for mailing its newsletter, the same restrictions apply. These rules must be followed in order to receive labels from the school.

### **WEB SITES AND E-MAIL**

If your PTA website is hosted by the Seattle School District, the district and your principal have the right to control the content of the information you may wish to place on it. You must comply with the same restrictions as the District when using the technology (e.g., a PTA may not promote a political issue on a District-sponsored web site). If a parent email list is set up and maintained by a school staff member, the same restrictions apply.

It is recommended that you use an independent host for your website and set up a PTA sponsored and maintained email list to preserve the freedom to share advocacy information.

### **PRINT SERVICES**

If you use your school copy machine for PTA business, include a budget line to reimburse the school budget, or arrange to purchase paper or other supplies to compensate for the copying. Remember that the PTA is a separate organization that should not be a burden on the school budget.

Get price quotes for printing with the School District Print Services: 206-282-0080. We've found their rates to be very competitive. Several print/copy businesses offer discounts to PTAs-and it never hurts to ask.

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# ***School Board Meetings***

The Board of Directors for Seattle School District is an elected body representing seven geographical regions, known as Districts, within the City of Seattle. The length of the term is four years. Board meetings are generally held twice monthly on the first and third Wednesdays of each month, at 6:00 p.m., with the exception of July, August, November and December when meeting dates change due to school holidays and vacations. In the 2008-2009 school year there will only be one meeting in November but two are scheduled for December. All board and committee meetings are open to the public unless they are in "executive session," generally used to discuss personnel matters.

Members of the public may address the school board during the public testimony portion at the beginning of their bi-monthly meetings. You will have three minutes to speak, and you may bring handouts for the board members and/or audience. You must call the school board office at (206) 252-0040 to be placed on the agenda. Only twenty openings are available and you may call as early as the Thursday morning following a meeting to be placed on the agenda for the next scheduled meeting.

Committee meetings and work sessions are open to the public and are a great way to learn more about what is before the Board. However, "when" and "what" is being presented by District Employees frequently changes so check the school Board's calendar for updates. [www.seattleschools.org/area/board/calendar.dxml](http://www.seattleschools.org/area/board/calendar.dxml)

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***School Board Members  
want to attend your  
meetings!***

*They are informative and  
entertaining guest  
speakers and they  
appreciate hearing your  
members' concerns.*

## ***Contact your School Board Members***

Find School Board info at: [www.seattleschools.org/area/board](http://www.seattleschools.org/area/board)

Peter Maier  
District I  
(206) 252-0040  
[peter.maier@seattleschools.org](mailto:peter.maier@seattleschools.org)

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Harium Martin-Morris  
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