

ECCPTA Board, 2016-17

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PTA[®] matters

October/November 2016
Vol. X Issue No. 2

The newsletter of the Escambia County Council of PTAs/PTSAs

~ Calendar ~

October

- Bullying Prevention Month
10 Teacher Planning Day
14 United Way Day of Caring
18 ECCPTA Board meeting, 11:30 a.m.,
J.E. Hall Center, Room 140
18 School Board meeting, 5:30 p.m.,
J.E. Hall Center, Room 160
25 ECCPTA PTA Leaders Roundtable,
11 a.m.-1 p.m., MESS Hall
24-28 Red Ribbon Week
28 Groundbreaking for new Beulah
Middle School, 9 a.m., 6001 W.
Nine Mile Rd.
29 Making Strides Against Breast
Cancer, 8 a.m., Cordova Mall

November

- Manna Food Drive Month
1 School Choice Expo, 6 p.m.,
Washington High School
8 Reflections entries due to Hall Center
by 4 p.m.; Room 140
11 Veterans Day – no school
15 Tax filing deadline for PTA units
15 ECCPTA Board meeting, 11:30 a.m.,
J.E. Hall Center, Room 140
15 School Board meeting, 5:30 p.m.,
J.E. Hall Center, Room 160
21-25 Thanksgiving Break

PTA LEADERS ROUNDTABLE

ECCPTA is hosting its first training session of the school year on Tues., Oct. 25, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Pensacola MESS Hall, downtown. See back page for more info!

PTA Matters is a publication of the Escambia County Council of PTAs/PTSAs.

It is published bimonthly.

Submissions are welcome. Send to:

kirstenefirdpta@gmail.com.

The next deadline is Nov. 30.

ECCPTA • J.E. Hall Center • 30 E. Texar Dr.
Pensacola, FL 32503

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Busy Fall awaits PTA leaders



Michelle Salzman
president@eccpta.org

Hello fellow adventurers,

It sure has been an incredible start to the school year! I cannot express how PTA proud I am of each and every one of you. Your enthusiasm and dedication to our children is making waves throughout the district. So many of you are doing amazing things! I encourage you to share your great stories with the County Council so we can share them with all of Pensacola. We want our voices to be heard, and by sharing your stories you are doing just that.

Your unit's president and other executive board members are invited to our **PTA Leaders Roundtable** on Oct. 25 at Pensacola MESS Hall. We will have catered lunch, guest speakers, and a chance to team-build as we talk with other local leadership. Another HUGE event is the revealing of the **Cooking Matters Grant award winners!** We appreciate each of you for taking the time to apply for this grant money, and are very excited about your community outreach! Further, **Reflections** should be in the forefront for each of your schools. You are encouraged to invite your County Council board and your own Area Vice President to your school's award ceremony! Finally, we have our **Holiday Party** that will be the first week of December at The Pensacola Yacht Club! Look for details on this great event soon.

Your commitment to your schools and community does not go unnoticed. As we get caught up in the planning of carnivals, family nights and membership drives, remember the big picture. YOU make a difference, YOU have a voice and YOU are appreciated!

Open Houses

Open Houses were held on several nights in September, and your Area Vice Presidents came to show their support!



Connect with us:

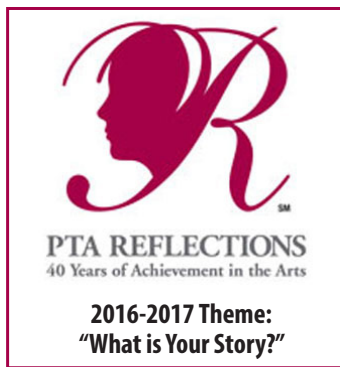
Website:
www.EscambiaPTA.org



Facebook:
www.facebook.com/ECCPTAFL/



Twitter:
@eccptanews



Reflections deadline fast approaching

By now, your school's Reflections program should be well under way. The deadline to turn in all your winners for county judging is Tuesday, Nov. 8, by 4 p.m. at the Hall Center.

Reflections is a national PTA program that encourages students in pre-K through 12th grade to explore and be involved in the arts. Students can create works of art in six categories: film production, literature, dance choreography, musical composition, photography, and the visual arts that reflect the year's chosen theme, "What is Your Story?"

Any PTA/PTSA in good standing (i.e. has paid their county dues and sent membership dues to Florida PTA) is eligible to sponsor a Reflections program for its students.

For information, entry forms, rules and resources, go to: www.floridapta.org/programs/reflections. Or contact county Reflections co-chairs Cami Dozier, mcamid@gmail.com, or Kim Chandler, kchandler@escambia.k12.fl.us.

JOIN OUR COUNTY PTA TEAM! "PTA ADVENTURERS"



**Saturday, Oct. 29, 8 a.m.
Cordova Mall**

ECCPTA once again has a team for the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk. All local unit boards are invited to join our team if your school doesn't have one! Register to walk and/or make a donation to our team by using this link: <http://tinyurl.com/z75nlju>

Meet your ECCPTA adventure guides!

We will spotlight various board members and committee chairs in every newsletter so you can get to know your partners in your PTA journey.

Cami Dozier, Reflections Co-Chair (334) 479-6550 / mcamid@gmail.com



My name is Cami Dozier. I'm president of the PTA at Longleaf Elementary School. I also sit on the board at ECCPTA as Reflections and Hospitality Co-Chair. This is my first year on the board. I'm married with two children, ages 20 and 10. This will be our last year at the elementary level! I'm excited about the new year and ready to take on the new challenges ECCPTA and PTA has to offer all of us!

David Schneier, Student Liaison



David Schneier is a 6th grade student at Workman Middle School and currently is serving on our County PTA Council as Student Liaison Chair. He was nominated for this role as a student voice for our Council and is very excited about this year. He has a passion for helping others and a drive for excellence. David actively participates in all Council events to include speaking during the monthly school board meetings.

Deidre L. Young, Teachers Matter Chair (850) 417-0042 / avp1@escambiapta.org



I have been an educator, a child advocate and community volunteer for more than 26 years. I have served on numerous education-related boards and community groups at the local, district, and state levels. A graduate from the University of Florida, I was a classroom educator for 11 years, teaching both middle school and elementary-aged children. I am the past chair of FLPTA Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Currently, I am a substitute teacher, enjoying the flexibility of continuing to teach and impact the lives of children, while at the same time being able to travel, spend more time with my family, and attend weekly ladies Bible study.

Phillip Salzman, Webmaster, Cybersecurity Chair webmaster@escambiapta.org



I am in my first year on the ECCPTA Board, though I have been volunteering now for several years. My primary focus with ECCPTA is webmaster and leading our Internet Safety Initiative. As a parent of the children in our District, I am a regular volunteer for various PTA and other events throughout our county. My PTSA board member status started at Ferry Pass Middle School several years ago, and I have assisted other schools with activities as well. I am also currently serving on the Diversity and Inclusion Committee for the Florida State PTA. My professional life started in the mid-1990s with regional tech firms and operating one of the first, and largest, Internet providers in the region. Today I continue my work in technology as a solutions consultant for clients across the world. I have three children, the youngest in kindergarten at McArthur Elementary, one at Tate High School, and the eldest a freshman at UWF.

See Phill's cybersecurity tips on the back page.

Advocating during this election season

ADVOCACY

WHAT IS ADVOCACY? In the context of PTA, advocacy is support and speaking up for children – in schools, in communities, and before government bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children. Throughout the year we will publish a series of articles to generate ideas on conducting basic advocacy activities in our area.

Advocacy takes time and effort and does not become successful overnight. Most importantly, advocacy should not happen only during legislative session. The time to start is now, when the daily rigor of schoolwork and homework settles down. The place to start is your own backyard. There is greater impact meeting with your legislators while they are at home in their district offices than when they are in Tallahassee. You have a greater opportunity to express your concerns and to talk with them about the effects decisions have on your community, but first:

GET OUT THE VOTE! One important, and nonpartisan, activity your PTA can do during an election year is help get out the vote! Voting is an essential part of our democratic process, and PTAs can **encourage community members** to take part.

- Ensure you are registered to vote and be familiar with your local polling station.
- Encourage friends, family, and neighbors to vote.
- Remind PTA members about election day.
- Ensure that members know about early voting.
- If there are ballot measures, remind members of the importance of their vote on that issue.
- Raise the volume of your efforts as election day approaches.

Voting is important for selecting public officials who will best represent the interests for our children, our schools, and our communities. There are different mechanisms we can use to educate ourselves on who the candidates are and where they stand on issues that are important to us. First, we can help the

community familiarize themselves with the candidates by hosting an appearance or

co-sponsoring a candidate forum. There are some specific rules in conducting this type of activity, so contact me for detailed information and resources. Another activity is to create a **legislative questionnaire.** Send a list of questions (not to exceed 10) to all nominees running for your legislative county delegation that are of special interest to your PTA. Questions could include issues such as their vision for the future of public education; the importance of parental involvement; vouchers; funding, etc. Establish a deadline for their written responses and post the responses on your website or other electronic communication. For those who may not respond to the questionnaire, post that as well. Lastly, the election season is a great time to put a **spotlight on your organization's mission and goals.** Write an op-ed or guest column for your local paper.

Remember, A 501(c)(3) organization may NOT conduct partisan activities to support or oppose any candidate for public office, including:

- Endorsing a candidate.
- Making a campaign contribution to or expenditure for, a candidate.
- Rating candidates on who is most favorable to your issue(s).
- Letting candidates use the organization's facilities or resources, unless those resources are made equally available to all candidates at their fair market value.

– Dennis Mills, ECCPTA Legislative Chair

IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER: *What to do after the election.*

Treasurers' notes:

Audit past due; taxes due Nov. 15

This is just a reminder that if you have not yet submitted your 2015-16 Audit to Florida PTA, it was due Sept. 30. Completed audits should be emailed to audit@floridapta.org.

After your annual audit is complete, you must report your GROSS income/receipts to the IRS. **This 990 filing is due Nov. 15.** Although we are tax-exempt, it is our fiduciary responsibility to ensure that the proper, informational 990 tax return is filed with the IRS every year. **A PTA/PTSA will lose its 501(c)(3) federal tax-exempt status if it fails to file a proper Form 990 for three consecutive years.**

Also, the IRS may assess penalties for failure to file for one year or for late filing. If you file an IRS Form 8868 Deadline Extension Request, you are required to forward a copy of that to Florida PTA by Nov. 15 as well.

It is important that each local unit keeps records for all IRS related correspondence in the Treasurer's Procedure Book. You can find additional resources on the National PTA website at www.pta.org.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact treasurer@floridapta.org



Make a difference as a Youth Mentor!

The Youth Motivator Mentoring Program of the Escambia County School District matches volunteers one-on-one with students who need encouragement to do better in school. The program provides a structured framework for mentoring by individual community volunteers, as well as government agencies and businesses that allow release time for employees to mentor at a school.

No special skills are required to be a mentor, just a genuine desire to help a child and the willingness to make a commitment to weekly meetings. In the last two years, we have grown from 270 mentors to more than 800 mentors, but there will always be a need for more. We have 47 schools in the Escambia County School District, and every school has said they need more mentors.

Mentors can volunteer at an elementary, middle school (6th-8th grade), or high school of their choice at a day and time most convenient for them. The schools select the student and parent permission is obtained. Each school has a designated staff contact person to oversee the mentors at that school.

All Youth Motivator volunteers receive a handbook and participate in a one-hour training session. The school district requires and provides fingerprinting of Youth Motivators/Mentors at no cost to the volunteer, as a part of the background screening process.

For more information, or to sign up for an orientation session, call 469-5676 or email sbergosh@escambia.k12.fl.us



Are you ready for **Red Ribbon Week (Oct. 23-31)**? The Red Ribbon campaign is the oldest and largest drug prevention program in the nation and a way for people and communities take a visible stand against drugs. This year's theme is "Yolo. Be Drug Free."

NEW this year! Enter The 2016 National Red Ribbon Week Photo Contest! We are giving out \$20,000 to schools across America. We invite you to enter the contest. Watch our video one-minute video and share it at <http://tinyurl.com/hnl8t6j>

Other ways to get ready:

- Download the Planning Guide, pledges, web banners and more at www.redribbon.org.

- Order and display Red Ribbon Materials.

- Take and share the Pledge.

- Share on social media.

Staying safe in cyberland

It used to be easy to know what your kids did online. Most homes had only one computer, or maybe a couple of laptops, that everyone would use. The computer would reside in a shared living space and be within easy viewing distance by everyone.

That's not the norm anymore. Today most Internet usage is conducted from handheld devices. Installing browser filters doesn't cut it anymore. Even though they are adequate for the home PC, they aren't as efficient on cellphones or tablets.

ECCPTA has created an initiative to help educate parents and kids about staying safe. We're partnering with the School District, FDLE and Sheriff's department, along with other local organizations and businesses. Our goal is to offer parents information that wasn't easily accessible before as well as programs to provide information about everything from generalized questions about staying safe, questions about apps our kids use, and even specifics on the Chromebooks now being issued by the district.

Today we're going to focus on **locking down your kids' phone or tablet**. There are a few different applications available to parents that can help with this task regardless if you have an Android or iOS device. Some of the most popular are **SecureTeen** and **MMGuardian**. Both provide parents with a dashboard to manage their kid's device. They allow basic filtering and time restrictions, content management, application monitoring, and device tracking. Both of the applications are restricted to what is available by the independent platform, and therefore features available on iPhone or Android may not be the same for both. Before adopting one, check their webpages and see which would be best for your kid's situation.

Common Sense Media has an abundance of information that can help you with things you might not have thought of. Their webpage for Cell Phone Parenting is linked to from our **EscambiaPTA.org** site. When browsing ours, simply choose Internet Safety and select the Cell Phone Parenting quick link. You will also find links to the software discussed above.

— Phillip Salzman, Webmaster and Cybersecurity Initiative Chair



PTA Leaders Roundtable

Tuesday, Oct. 25

11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Pensacola

MESS Hall,

downtown



RSVP by Oct. 21 to
Michelle Salzman at
president@eccpta.org
or 850-291-5577

Come get answers to your burning PTA questions at the upcoming Fall ECCPTA Leaders Roundtable! We will have a catered lunch, exchange of ideas, door prizes, and input from PTA veterans. Invite your board and join us!

Escambia County Council of PTAs/PTSAs
J.E. Hall Center
30 E. Texar Dr.
Pensacola, FL 32503

