

PTA vs. PTOthers

Some people think PTA and PTOthers are the same. They are not! PTA is a local unit affiliated with the Montana PTA and National PTA. PTAs are committed not only to our children and to our individual schools, but to the big picture. We advocate for all children, thus the tagline *everychild.onevoice*. PTO, PAC, PTC, and others are all lone local parent-teacher groups that are not affiliated with a State or National organization. Their sole concern is with their local school and only the children that attend it – there is no power of association – there is no value in working together for children beyond their school community.

PTA volunteers across the nation donate their time and energy towards benefiting not only their own child, but all children. Promoting cultural arts through the Reflections program; supporting reading programs by listening to children read aloud and sponsoring reading events; raising funds for computer labs, playground equipment and other much needed items, just to name a few. Members receive resources from MT PTA and National PTA to help them carry out their efforts.

PTA also brings financial savings to a local unit. Each local PTA unit in Montana is automatically a non-profit organization covered by IRS 501(c)(3) status. Additionally, PTA units purchase liability insurance for \$50 per year through the Montana PTA. AIM, our insurance provider, guarantees this to be the lowest rate available. They also make available other very low cost insurance options to PTA units only. To purchase comparable insurance outside of PTA would cost significantly more!

Possibly the greatest benefit of being a PTA is the “power of association.” Montana PTA offers access to the state office, Montana PTA board members from across the state, local units and councils. All are available to provide resources, advice, program information, and much more! This network of PTA power can be accessed easily by email or phone. The Montana and National PTAs both offer websites chock full of information and tools to help our members run units, offer numerous programs, and provide parenting tips and information. National PTA also mails valuable resources to local units including the President’s Quick Reference Guide, Fundraising Essentials, Back to School kit, Membership Marketing Templates and Tools, Local PTA Ad Council PSA kit, and provide an endless supply of PTA materials vital to an active team of PTA advocates.

In addition, Montana PTA holds an annual convention each fall and leadership trainings each spring. Convention and leadership trainings allow members to meet face to face, learn more ways to effectively manage local units, and provide opportunities for local PTA members and leaders to network with each other for support and ideas.

Amazing how far your \$6.00 membership dues go when you look at all that it provides. So, tell your members how much your local PTA and all children receive from their PTA dollars.