

## **PTA FUNDRAISING GUIDELINES:** ***Raising Awareness not Raising Money***

- ✓ **Know the vision, mission, values and purpose of PTA.** Read the *Budget Basics* and *Fundraising Basics* sections of the National PTA's President's Quick Reference Guide and the Money Matters Quick Reference Guide (fund raising is not a priority).
- ✓ PTA is a **private, non-profit, membership** organization.
- ✓ Because PTA is a membership organization, its main purpose should be to serve the needs and desires of its members in **promoting the health, welfare, safety and education of children and youth** in the home, school, community and place of worship.
- ✓ **Set goals** with input from the membership.
- ✓ **Never raise money without setting goals.**
- ✓ **Funds can't be spent unless the funds have been allocated in a PTA budget approved by the general membership.**
- ✓ PTA is **not** a fund raising arm of the school.
- ✓ PTA funds and school district funds should not be co-mingled.
- ✓ PTA is **not** a 'school-related organization' (though they most often work to benefit a school community) but is an independent child advocacy organization.
- ✓ Laws governing schools and school districts are very different from laws governing private, non-profit organizations (these laws apply to booster clubs and other parent groups, too).
- ✓ School districts **should** fund everything necessary to provide the best possible education for ALL students.
- ✓ Unfortunately, because of legislative cuts to public education funding, school districts are often **unable** to fund everything they should or would like to and the burden has fallen on the local tax base and PTA.
- ✓ If a PTA membership **votes** to purchase equipment for a school district the following apply:
  - be sure the membership vote is recorded in the minutes of the PTA,
  - advertise fundraisers designated for this equipment very specifically,
  - once the amount voted on has been raised - grant it to the district with a written grant form for the purchase of ... from...(form available on the Montana PTA website), and
  - be sure the grant for equipment is recorded in the minutes of the school board.
- ✓ PTA's role is to **advocate for adequate and equitable funding for ALL** public schools. As long as PTAs continue to subsidize school budgets - there will be a vast difference between what schools have to offer - depending on the ability of the school community to raise extra funds.
- ✓ **Public Education is the cornerstone of our democracy.** If all of those willing to buy \$10 in wrapping paper could see that their \$10, combined with \$10 from many others across the city and state would benefit public education as a whole rather than one building, all would benefit.
- ✓ Read the *PTA Fundraising Essentials* provided to the President of each local PTA unit.
- ✓ There are ways to raise funds that fulfill PTA objects and mission and **don't exploit children but rather provide service** to the school, such as; a dinner for families, book fairs, Santa shops, festivals, art fairs, or family fun nights.
- ✓ As PTA conducts fund raising activities, **consider what you are asking children to do.** Are you subjecting them to assemblies in which they are "hyped up" to go out and sell items to neighbors and friends so they can "earn" trinkets, prizes, etc. This may be a common practice but no matter how often you tell students not to go door to door- they will. This becomes a safety issue and is usually against school district policy.
- ✓ Remember, **raising awareness of the PTA and the general public on issues** like funding of public education, health and safety issues, and how the welfare reform will affect families is much more important than any purchase of a swingset, computer or other equipment. Our strength is in our numbers and our long-standing work as a voice for children and youth when lobbying decision-makers.
- ✓ PTA should be **spending funds for PTA leaders and members to attend** leadership conferences and the state PTA convention. The leadership of your PTA needs to attend these training opportunities to educate themselves on the issues and mission of the PTA.