

April 2026

Newsletter

for PTA Leaders in San Diego and Imperial Counties



every child, one voice.
www.ninthdistrictpta.org

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Happy Spring!

March was a fantastic month! Amy Flicker and I began the month (along with over 300 others) attending the National PTA Legislative Conference in Alexandria, VA. The three day conference included two days of great speakers and workshops and one day spent on Capitol Hill meeting with legislators. Amy and I were able to meet with Representative Mike Levin's office to discuss topics related to children, families and education that are close to our hearts. PTA representatives from across California met with staffers from Senators Alex Padilla's and Adam Schiff's offices. It was wonderful to see folks from across the country, the US Virgin Islands and PTA Europe come together to advocate for children and families.

We had a fantastic turnout at the Ninth District PTA Annual Meeting and Founders Day Breakfast. Thank you to all of you who came. I know it is not always easy with all of our other family duties, so I appreciate the effort it takes sometimes to make it to events. It was touching to see former Ninth District District PTA presidents Beth Bacting and Colleen Hervey, along with CAPTA representatives Heather Ippolito and Will Sanford also attend our meeting. I would like to give a special thank you to our keynote speaker, Dr. Eric Chagala, who gave such a meaningful talk on PTA and community. For those of you who missed the event, I encourage you to come next year.

Our Reflections Showcase was a blast. It was a joyful event enjoyed by the artists and their families. To see all the student's artwork really highlighted the incredible talent across the county. Congratulations again to all of our Reflections award winners. Kudos to the Ninth District PTA Reflections committee and gratitude for all the Reflections Chairs from across Ninth District PTA.

It was fun to be part of some council events this month as well. Tierra Del Sol Council's Annual meeting and Honorary Service Awards Night was a great night of celebrating volunteers and all the good things PTAs are doing for kids. South Bay Council held their Everyone's A Reader Festival. There is something special about watching kids get excited about books and reading. Thank you for the invitations; I was honored to attend both events as a representative of Ninth District PTA. Please keep inviting us to your events.

Finally, Denae Senise and I attended a presentation by UNITE on The Dignity Index, which was hosted by Fourth District PTA. The Dignity Index focuses on how we can disagree with dignity rather than contempt. To quote from their event flyer, "We don't always agree - and that's okay. What shapes our school community isn't whether we disagree, it is **how** we disagree. The words we choose can either build bridges or create walls" This is something that feels especially important in the work we do as PTA leaders. It was an honor to hear Tami Pyfer speak and attend her presentation. Thank you Fourth District PTA for the invitation. To learn more about The Dignity Index visit their website: www.dignity.us

As the end of the school year approaches, things get busy. Please remember elections for the 2026-2027 officers need to be held no later than the second week of April. Once you have elected officers, please make sure to put the incoming officers' information into Future Fund Connect. If your PTA has not yet held your election, or you would like assistance, please contact us. We are always happy to assist and support our units and councils.

I am hoping to see many of you at the CAPTA Convention in Fresno in a few weeks. If you have not yet registered, please do so soon. CAPTA has extended early bird registration to April 7, so you still have some time!

--Anne Emfinger, Ninth District PTA, President
president@ninthdistrictpta.org



[Register for Summer Leadership Conference](#)

[Register for: Treasurer Huddle: Financial Review - What do I need to do to get ready?](#)

[California State PTA Convention](#)

[Financial Procedures for the Internet](#)

[Toolkit on Budgeting](#)

[Volunteer for Summer Leadership Conference](#)

[Register for: Treasurer Huddles: Closing Out the Books - End-of-the-Year Must Do](#)

[Ninth District PTA: FutureFund Connect](#)

[Toolkit on Personal Gifts](#)

[Toolkit on Committees](#)

Are You Benefiting from the PTA?

Hopefully you enjoy the volunteer work of the PTA and that is the best benefit. I used to enjoy having students recognize me from events that the PTA organized and thank me or tell me how great it was. That is the best reward!

It may not be the only reward though. Hopefully you are meeting other parents and caregivers from the community and growing your own network of resources. Some of my best friends I met "working" at a PTA event, and we didn't even have children that knew each other. I've known people that have found services through their PTA connections or maybe just recommendations for after school activities.

But when does benefitting become a bad thing?

Private inurement is a legal term that refers to an individual, specifically an "insider", such as an officer, benefiting from the assets of a non-profit organization, the PTA in this case.

Most PTAs would not have the opportunity to commit this serious of a crime, but there are ideals we should try and adhere to so that activities don't drift towards inurement.

Giving away the perishable food after an event to the volunteers that stuck around to help clean up is fine and a good way to not waste food. But purposely buying too much food with the intent that volunteers will take home the extras at the end of the night is definitely headed into territory where someone is financially benefitting.

Using PTA funds to attend training and having those expenses reimbursed is appropriate (and encouraged!), but staying at an expensive hotel for the area for two days before and two days after would start drifting into privately benefitting.

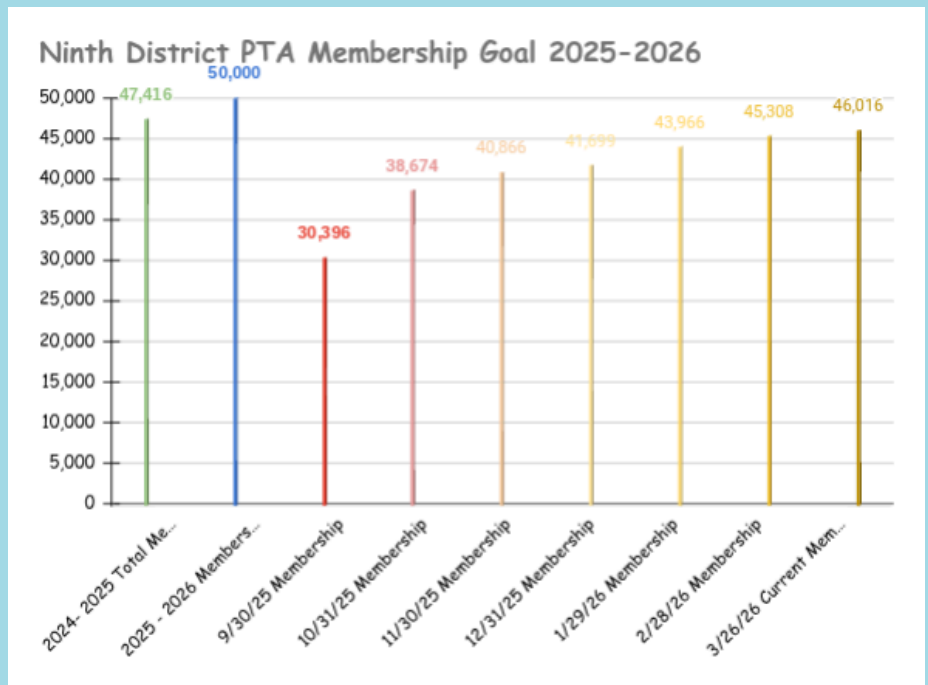
Each situation is different, and it could be that the two days before and two days after are needed to get to and from where the training is. This type of scenario should be voted on by the executive board and then approved by the association to confirm that everyone is aware of what the funds are for.

The food situation is also hard to monitor, and if someone did overplan and there is a LOT of food leftover, then this is where making notes and documenting the event will help with future planning.

Committees also help with these situations. Rather than having just one person make all of the decisions, it is better to discuss ideas in committee to help several people provide the answers to, "are we benefitting or are the kids benefitting?"

Further reading:

--Shawna Straw, Ninth District PTA, Executive Vice President
evp@ninthdistrictpta.org



Ninth District PTA 2025-2026 Membership Goal

During 2024-2025 we had a total of 47,416 (green) PTA members. Our goal for 2025-2026 is 50,000 (blue) PTA Members.

- September 30, 2025 - 30,396 (red) PTA members.
- October 31, 2025 - 38,674 (pink) PTA members.
- November 30, 2025 - 40,866 (medium orange) PTA members.
- December 31, 2025 - 41,699 (yellow) PTA members.
- January 29, 2026 - 43,966 (medium yellow) PTA members.
- February 28, 2026 - 45,308 (light mustard) PTA members.
- March 26, 2026 - 46,016 (dark mustard) PTA Members

We have 3 months left for this year to meet our goal of 50,000 members! As of right now we are **1,400** shy of equalling last year members numbers. We need **3,984** members to reach our goal of 50,000!

Keep up the great teamwork, and your membership drive!

SUMMER LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (SLC)

Plan to attend the Ninth District PTA Summer Leadership Conference on June 6th!

Summer Leadership Conference, or SLC, is a great day of training and networking on the beautiful campus of the University of San Diego. Check-in begins at 7:30AM!

Invite your entire board to this training- we will have something for everyone including workshops on specific officer responsibilities, how to organize a successful program or fundraiser, or build a strong school community. You will also learn about membership, Reflections, Totem, Future Fund Connect, and how to advocate on behalf of all children.

SLC is also host to 25 or so exhibitors to chat with and get some fresh ideas. Thanks to our sponsor, **Educational Products, Inc. (EPI)**, for providing a free t-shirt and tote bag for each attendee!

Take advantage of this opportunity to learn from experts around San Diego County and meet others who share your passion for PTA!

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER NOW for SLC or to VOLUNTEER](#)

[Looking for workshop descriptions? Click here.](#)



Location:

Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice
University of San Diego
5555 Marian Way, San Diego, CA 92110

--Denae Senise, Ninth District PTA, Vice President, Leadership Services Director
leadership@ninthdistrictpta.org

Why can't our PTA use Venmo or other P2P (peer-to-peer) cash apps?

P2P applications are great for individuals, but pose significant risks for our PTAs. The California PTA states that these applications should not be used by California PTAs.

As a 501(c)3 organization, donations to our PTAs must be directly to the PTA, and units are required to provide formal receipts that are not provided by P2P platforms. If someone is using a personal account and then transferring funds to the PTA, those donations are not tax-deductible. These platforms are also required to provide 1099-K forms to the IRS, which would be reported as personal income if it is linked to a personal account.

These platforms are also at a higher risk of security and financial fraud. P2P transactions are irreversible, so if a PTA is scammed into sending money, there is no way to recover the funds. P2P platforms are not FDIC insured. This would leave the executive board personally responsible for funds if there is a problem with the transfer or donation.

P2P accounts are linked to a personal mobile phone, which makes it difficult to monitor transactions and transfers. These platforms also do not always provide details for income and expenses that are required for tax and charitable trust filing purposes.

Other platforms provide the security, donation receipts, and are linked only to the PTA accounts. With the availability of QR codes, anyone with a mobile phone can make payments to a variety of safer platforms. Be sure to research to make sure that whatever platform your PTA is using, it meets the "[Financial Procedures for the Internet](#)" guidelines provided by the California PTA toolkit.

--Deborah Childers, Ninth District PTA, Treasurer
treasurer@ninthdistrictpta.org

Calling All Treasurers:

On March 19th, we held our first **Treasurer Huddle** on FutureFund Connect, document storage, and money handling platforms. I appreciate everyone who attended. Each meeting will have about 15 minutes for training on a critical component of being a treasurer, 15 minutes for collaboration on a topic, and 15 minutes for Q & A. We will be holding the sessions at different times, but the slides and the recordings will be housed on the Ninth District website under the "Running Your PTA" tab, "Treasurer."

April's Treasurer Huddles will be:

Closing Out the Books - End-of-Year Must Do

When: April 16th , 2026 @ 6:00 PM

Where: [Click Here to Register](#)

Financial Review - What do I need to do to get ready?

When: April 27th , 2026 @ 10:00 AM

Where: [Click Here to Register](#)

Watch for more details coming out soon! **Can't make it?** Be sure to watch the video on the [Ninth District PTA website](#).

--Deborah Childers, Ninth District PTA, Treasurer
treasurer@ninthdistrictpta.org

Attention PTAs/PTSAs with Bylaws

Yeah, that's all of us. The California State PTA has made some changes to the 2025 templates used by associations.

1. Recording secretary, corresponding secretary, and historian will be removed from any PDF fillable bylaws submitted to the state parliamentarian for review. Secretary remains a required officer for all associations. Those roles were removed by the Board of Managers this past summer. We should acknowledge that these roles are no longer listed among the executive officers. To address concerns regarding officers who are currently in these roles, they complete the term and are thanked for their service.
2. If a PTA/PTSA wants those positions to continue, they may be added as Vice President or Standing Committee members. This may change the quorums.
3. The 2024 bylaws template will not be accepted past March 31 by the state parliamentarian. If your PTA/PTSA is in the process of updating bylaws and using the 2024 template, work quickly to submit soon.

4. The Ninth District PTA deadline for submitting any bylaws is set at May 15. This date is to allow time for review and submitting to the state parliamentarian. And hopefully, getting them back signed by the state parliamentarian.

--Sue King, Ninth District PTA, Parliamentarian
parliamentarian@ninthdistrictpta.org



Attention Out of Council Leadership

I made a mistake when advising on the information to include in the bylaws. **Please look at Standing Rule #3.** It should read:

“Board Roster – The president shall prepare the list of association officers and chairs required for directory data and submit as directed by the district. The deadline for directory data to the district is May 15.”

If your bylaws have a date other than May 15, please line out what you have and write in May 15.

I apologize for my error.

Sue King
Parliamentarian
parliamentarian@ninthdistrictpta.org

FutureFund Connect

Have you logged into Future Fund Connect yet? If not, please ask your president to invite you again. Please make sure your contact information is correct for every board on which you serve.

Then when your new officers are elected, input them into Future Fund Connect. Please check [Ninth District PTA: FutureFund Connect](#) for training videos

--Denae Senise, Ninth District PTA, Vice President, Leadership Services Director
leadership@ninthdistrictpta.org

--Deborah Childers, Ninth District PTA, Treasurer
treasurer@ninthdistrictpta.org

Reflections Showcase: A Celebration of Student Creativity

This year's Reflections Showcase was a huge success! We are grateful to all the talented student artists, dedicated Reflections chairs, and supportive families who joined us to celebrate creativity and artistic expression.

The showcase featured 132 art submissions representing 43 schools and 10 councils across Ninth District. It was truly inspiring to see the creativity and talent of our students on display. Attendees also enjoyed interactive art activities that added to the excitement of the event.

A special thank you to our community partners-Raising Cane's, Panda Express, and Costco for helping make this year's event extra special.

We are especially proud to recognize the following Ninth District students who received additional recognition at the California State PTA level:

Award of Excellence

- Brayden Atkinson – Photography (Middle School)
- Max Salemi – Music Composition (Accessible Artist)
- Gianna Roman – Music Composition (Primary)

Honorable Mention

- Ada Civitci – Photography (Primary)

- Jasmine Bourdlaies – Visual Arts (Intermediate)
- Kali Buckmaster – Film Production (Primary)

Congratulations to these outstanding students for their remarkable achievements!

Looking ahead, we are excited to announce next year's Reflections theme:

"What My Culture Means to Me." We can't wait to see how our students bring this theme to life through their creativity.

Questions or want to get your program started for next year email Jemima Dutra at reflections@ninthdistrictpta.org.

Walk on the Wild Side for State Convention with Ninth District PTA in Fresno!!! May 1st to 3rd.

California State PTA Convention is an event filled with inspiration, connection, and plenty of fun. It is also the way that local unit PTAs have the opportunity to participate in the business of California State PTA! We'd love for you to be there!

Great news! The Early bird registration **deadline is extended** for the [2026 California State PTA Convention](#)! Use promo code "LASTCHANCE26" to register for convention at the best rate. Convention is one month away, so don't miss out on your chance to save and attend our biggest event of the year!

Early Bird Rate: \$249 Full-Time Pass, \$149 One-Day Pass (available through April 7 only)
CAPTA has reserved a block of rooms at the DoubleTree by Hilton Fresno until April 13.

Please reach out with any questions.

Karla Orsa, Ninth District PTA - 2026 CAPTA Convention Chair

convention-chair@ninthdistrictpta.org

~ WILD FOR NINTH ~

Fresno May 1 - 3, 2026



Celebrating Leadership, Community & Membership Growth

Thank you to everyone who joined us for this year's Annual Meeting and Founders' Day. It was a wonderful opportunity to come together, celebrate our shared mission, and recognize the dedication of our PTA leaders

We would also like to extend our sincere appreciation to our community partners who helped make the event even more meaningful. Thank you to Live Well on Wheels, Art Box, The Water Conservation Garden, CalCoast, and San Diego Suicide Prevention for your support and for sharing valuable resources with our attendees. Your partnership helps strengthen the connection between our schools and the broader community.

We are especially grateful to the many leaders whose continued efforts are growing membership across Ninth District. Your commitment makes a meaningful impact in supporting students, families, and school communities.

We are proud to recognize the following units for adding 17 or more members during the month of February earning them the "Roots of Success" award:

- Calavera Hills Elementary PTA – Carlsbad Council
- Hidden Valley PTSA – Escondido Council
- Reidy Creek PTA – Escondido Council
- Rock Springs Elementary PTA – Escondido Council
- Lemon Crest Elementary PTA – Lakeside Council
- Riverview International Academy PTA – Lakeside Council
- Del Mar Heights PTA – North Coastal Council
- Empresa Elementary PTA – Vista Unified Council
- Vista High PTSA – Vista Unified Council

Congratulations on this outstanding achievement!

As we move forward, please remember to continue submitting dues and remittances through the appropriate channels so we can ensure accurate and timely membership reporting.

--Jemima Dutra, Ninth District PTA, Vice President, Membership Director

membership@ninthdistrictpta.org

PTA Spotlight - South Bay Council

There is a unique kind of magic that happens when a community comes together to turn the page on a new adventure. This April, we are thrilled to shine our **April Newsletter Spotlight** on the **South Bay Council of PTAs** for their vibrant and heart-centered event: **"Everyone's a Reader."**

Through a beautiful blend of storytelling, mentorship, and generosity, the South Bay Council of PTAs proved that literacy isn't just a school subject—it's a community-wide celebration that connects us all.

The road to a successful event often begins with a vision and the resources to back it up. As a proud recipient of a **Ninth District PTA Grant** this year, the South Bay Council of PTAs put those funds to incredible use. Every single book handed out to eager children (from birth to young adults) was purchased through this grant, ensuring that the barriers to book ownership were swept away.

In a community where bookstores are rare, this event provided more than just paper and ink; it provided a gateway to new worlds.

For **Susan Connors**, South Bay Council of PTAs, Treasurer and a retired Librarian, the mission was personal.

"I feel it is very important to teach children a love of reading through adult examples," Susan shared. "Our guest readers were all educators known for instilling that spark. When children see how much fun reading can be, they develop that sense for themselves."

The festival featured a rich tapestry of stories in both **English and Spanish**, alongside a professional storyteller who reminded attendees that some of our most important "books" are the tales handed down through generations by word of mouth.

While the weekend coincided with the excitement of Little League opening day, the atmosphere at the festival remained electric and intimate. **Iris Cervantes-Garcia**, South Bay Council of PTAs, President, saw the beauty in every interaction.

"To me, this event is about strengthening the reading culture," Iris noted. "Even with a more personal turnout, the children and families who were there left happy, excited about their books, and grateful. It transforms reading into a community-wide celebration."

The joy was visible as families sat mesmerized, watching role models use their voices to bring text to life. Students didn't just pick books based on their reading level; they picked them based on **passion**. Whether they needed help with a few words or could sail through the chapters alone, the focus remained on one thing: **Interest**.

No festival is complete without a few surprises! Every student walked away with:

- A bag from the **San Diego Padres**.
- As many **free books** as they wanted to carry.
- A chance at beautiful **gift baskets** donated by local PTA Units.

When asked if they would do it again, the answer was a resounding **yes**. The South Bay Council of PTAs is already looking at ways to amplify their message and reach even more families next time.

We salute the **South Bay Council of PTAs** for their dedication to the children in their community. By putting books into the hands of children and passion into the hearts of parents, they are ensuring that in their community, truly **everyone is a reader**.

If you know of a PTA/PTSA that should be spotlighted in our April Newsletter please fill out this [Google Form](#) and submit it by midnight of April 23, 2026.

--Sonia Vargas, Ninth District PTA, Vice President, Communications Director
communications@ninthdistrictpta.org

In the picture to the right, starting from the left: Stephanie Martinez (South Bay Council - Reflections Chairperson), Iris Cervantes-Garcia (South Bay Council - President), Deedie Braender (South Bay Council - VP of Membership), Anne Emfinger (Ninth District PTA - President), Susan Connors (South Bay Council - Treasurer), Sonia Vargas (South Bay Council - Secretary), & Nayeli Martinez (South Bay Council - EVP)

PTA/PTSA in the Spotlight
Unit/Council/Out-of-Council



New E-Bike Regulations Take Effect in Carlsbad

Carlsbad City Council approved new e-bike laws that went into effect on March 27, 2026. Anyone operating an e-bike must be at least 12 years old. Anyone riding an e-bike under age 18 must wear a helmet.

No e-bike riding is allowed at either Poinsettia Park or Pine Avenue Park.

If you are an e-bike rider, you must follow all street laws including the speed limit.

For more information: [Click here](#).

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month Awareness

Wear Blue Day - April 3, 2026

For more information: [Click here](#).

*****If you need help with reporting abuse, do not wait! Call 911 immediately!*****

April is National Autism Awareness Month

For more information: [Click here](#).

April is Stress Awareness Month

For more information: [Click here](#).

April is Month of the Military Child

For more information: [Click here](#).

April 25, 2026 is National Prescription Drug Take Back Day

For more information: [Click here](#).

6401 Linda Vista Rd., Annex A
San Diego, CA 92111 • (858.268.8077)
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