



FOUNDERS' DAY

FEBRUARY 17

Honor Our PTA Founders

Each year in February, PTA honors its founders. The Founders' Day celebration was originated in 1910 by Mrs. David O. Mears, one of the charter members of the first National Congress of Mothers, which was organized on February 17, 1897 in Washington, D.C. The name was changed in 1925 to the National Congress of Parents and Teachers Association. Alice McLellan Birney and Phoebe Apperson Hearst are recognized as co-founders of the National PTA, and Selena Sloan Butler as the founder of the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers organized in 1926. The two volunteer organizations were formally united on June 22, 1970.

In Founders' Day observances, PTA members honor the founders and other leaders in PTAs at the national, state, district, council and unit level. Each local PTA unit determines how they will celebrate Founders' Day. The extent of the celebration varies greatly from community to community. The celebration should reflect the community each PTA serves.

Our founders' vision and commitment have provided a strong foundation for the nation's nearly four million members to work on behalf of children and families. Honoring our founders is an opportunity to bring PTA's history and accomplishments to the attention of our members and the general public. Founders' Day also offers each PTA the opportunity to honor their own founders and charter members as well as the local and council leadership of each PTA.

Founders' Day Celebration Ideas

- Celebrate with dinner at a local restaurant in February.
- Invite the principal of each unit, as well as the superintendent.
- Conduct a 50/50 raffle or auction with proceeds donated to PTA scholarships.
- Enjoy a meal prepared by your student-run culinary restaurant. This is a fabulous way to enjoy a great meal plus give students practice cooking for a large event.
- Announce your Outstanding Educator and Helping Hands Awards recipients.
- Honor your Past Presidents at the event.
- Invite and applaud individuals who have won an Ohio or National PTA Achievement Award.
- Recognize your Reflections winners and participants.
- Showcase your PTA by projecting photos of events during your celebration so that your attendees can see all of the wonderful accomplishments and work that have been done during the year.
- Ask your school choir, band or orchestra to perform at your celebration.
- Serve a PTA birthday cake and sing "Happy Birthday."
- Display PTA memorabilia- photos, scrapbooks from past decades.
- Surprise a volunteer with an Ohio PTA Achievement Award for their outstanding service to your unit or council.
- Recite the mission of PTA and recommit to our purposes.
- Host a PTA trivia contest.
- Share your celebration on Facebook Live.
- Recognize those who have earned Ohio PTA Gold Keys.
- Invite the Ohio PTA President to say a few words...and join your unit.
- Incorporate your celebration into Take Your Family To School Week and invite everyone!
- Have a multicultural potluck dinner and ask members to bring a dish reflecting their ethnic heritage.
- Make your celebration a community service event and "charge" one non-perishable food item for your local food bank as admission.
- Celebrate your PTA's anniversary. Is it 1 year (paper), 5 years (wood), ten years (tin), 20 years (crystal), 25 years (silver) or 40 years (ruby)? Use these themes for decorations, invitations and gifts.

The Founders' Day Committee

The PTA Founders' Day Committee includes a chair and committee members who coordinate its work with the program committee and plans an observance to:

- Honor the founders of PTA, plus past and present leaders
- Review the PTA history of achievements
- Inform members of current PTA activities and projects
- Stimulate members to meet challenges of current and future school and community needs
- Honor deserving individuals with an Ohio PTA Achievement Award or a National PTA Life Achievement Award

How to make your Founders' Day a success:

1. Review these Founders' Day materials:
 - Procedure Book
 - Information on past and present leaders from PTA unit or council
 - National PTA information
 - Ohio PTA information
 - PTA inspirations
2. Confer with your program chair and executive board early to plan for Founders' Day. This is an opportunity to present a different type of program on the birthday or anniversary theme.
3. Develop a new way to tell the Founders' Day story. Enlist the support of the arts educators in your community.
4. Learn more about the late 1800s and early 1900s – the time when the National PTA (1897) and the Ohio PTA (1901) were founded. Use that information in your welcome or a trivia contest or centerpieces. See if there is a way to involve students.
5. Be sure to include past presidents in any event that is planned. Invitations to past presidents and other guests should be sent early to accommodate busy schedules.
6. Work with the membership chair to make sure there is an opportunity for everyone to join PTA at the Founders' Day celebration.
7. If your PTA wishes to honor someone with a National PTA Life Achievement Award or Ohio PTA Achievement Award, make sure the check and request are in the PTA office (National or Ohio) well in advance of the program. Allow at least three weeks notice for delivery.
8. Publicize your event on social media and in school and local newsletters and newspapers.
9. Plan with the hospitality chair for any special decorations, nametags, or refreshments.

10. Arrange to greet guests and members at the door. Be sure to introduce past presidents to current members. Alert past presidents or guests in advance if they are expected to speak or participate in the program.

11. Share your Founders' Day celebration through a video or photos and post on Ohio PTA's Facebook page.

Materials that may be needed:

- Guest Book or Sign in Sheet
- Name Tags and Marker
- List of past presidents and guests
- List of members who may be receiving special recognition
- Area to display memorabilia
- Container for Founders' Day Freewill Offering

THE FOUNDERS' DAY FREEWILL OFFERING

or

"PTA BIRTHDAY GIFT"

Funds collected during Founders' Day observances can be donated to Ohio PTA, Ohio PTA or local unit scholarships or used for leadership training or a special project that benefits the entire school.

How was PTA formed?

The National PTA is the oldest and largest volunteer association working exclusively on behalf of all children and youth. For over 100 years, the National PTA has promoted the education, health, welfare and safety of all children and families. PTA has played a large role in supporting parent involvement in the lives of children and in advocating on the behalf of all children and families. The Founders' Day celebration is a time to reflect upon and take pride in the many accomplishments of PTA and a time to renew our commitment to be a powerful voice for all children.



Our Founders' Visions

Alice McLellan Birney (shown left) and Phoebe Apperson Hearst (shown right) knew there was no stronger bond than that between mother and child. To the mothers, then, they reasoned, must fall the responsibility for eliminating the threats that endangered their children. They called for action and more than 2,000 people responded— mothers yes, but also fathers, teachers, laborers, and legislators, all with a commitment to children.



Mrs. Birney addressed the crowd gathered in Washington, D.C., “It is my privilege to extend to each and all of you a heartfelt welcome and to express the hope that this large and gratifying audience, this more than encouraging response to our universal call, may prove an earnest indicator of the success destined to crown the work to which our best and highest efforts are now consecrated.”

The National Congress of Mothers was founded on February 17, 1897 in Washington, D.C. by Alice McLellan Birney and Phoebe Apperson Hearst.

Mrs. Birney appealed, “to all mankind and to all womankind, regardless of race, color, or conditions, to recognize that the republic’s greatest work is to save the children.” At this time, in many states segregated schools were legally sanctioned. A charter member of the National Congress of Mothers, Mrs. David O. Means, originated Founders’ Day celebrations in 1910. Each year in February PTA honors the founders of the National PTA.



Selena Sloan Butler (shown left) founded the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers in 1926 to address those children’s special needs in the segregated schools. On June 22, 1970 the National Congress of Parents and Teachers Association and the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers formally merged and became the National PTA.

NATIONAL PTA TIMELINE

- February 17, 1897 – organized National Congress of Mothers
- 1925 – name changed to National Congress of Parents and Teachers Association
- 1926 – founded National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers
- June 22, 1970 – the two volunteer organizations combined to form National PTA
- Between 1897 & 1919 – 37 state level congresses were chartered

What has PTA Advocated for?

1920s - With legislative reforms beginning to take shape in response to PTA initiatives, we launched our own comprehensive education and training programs for members. Parenting skills were a particular concern and the focus of many local and national conferences. We found partners to broaden the scope of our efforts. In 1925, the PTA cooperated with the U.S. Bureau of Education in a Summer Roundup of children to help parents identify and correct children’s health problems before they started first grade.

1930s - As conditions changed, so did PTA’s programs. The age of the automobile brought new concerns about child safety. The PTA responded with a safety education program for schoolchildren that continues today as we support the Safety Belt and Child Restraint Project and Child Safety Month. We also reach out to children through the School Bus Safety Program with tip sheets for parents and teachers, educational posters, and television public service announcements.

1940s- A world shattered by war in the 1940s sought a new and better way to resolve conflicts before they erupted into violence and destruction. The PTA was among the very first organizations to support the fledgling United Nations and the hope it represented for all children around the globe.

1960s- Smoking and drug abuse became increasingly common in American culture. During the '60s PTA called for schools to focus on the risks involved with abuse. PTA expanded the idea and now devotes a week in October, "Red Ribbon Week" to educating parents and the general public about the dangers of addiction.

1970s - Violence on television spurred the PTA to action in the '70s as we sought to measure the effects of such programming on our children. Today, television has a coding system around the country to help parents evaluate what they and their children are watching.

1980s - The alarming rise in sexually transmitted diseases and the advent of AIDS found the PTA once more at the forefront of a difficult issue. PTA continues to advocate that comprehensive information about the disease is made available at school and at home to help children and adults understand the disease and its devastating effects. PTA has developed programs and publications to help parents talk frankly with their children about these issues. World Aids day is in December

1990s - The importance of parent involvement in all aspects of a child's life cannot be overstated. PTAs engaged in the support of the parent involvement standards around the nation. Advocacy continues to be a strong and forceful voice in the legislature at the local, state and federal levels with PTA leading the charge.

2000s - PTA entered the new millennium with renewed energy to supply the critical link between parents and educators, government, and the legal system. National security, No Child Left Behind (now replaced by Every Student Succeeds Act), and the digital divide became important issues. So, too, did children's health and safety reassert themselves as national concerns? PTA responded by creating new resources to encourage safe communities, anti-bullying measures, and healthy lifestyles at home and at school. As a means to galvanize all PTAs, a new tagline was adopted in 2001—*every child.one voice.* —to encapsulate the power and legacy of PTA., one thing remains constant—caring members continue to make a difference every day.

Today, PTA is the largest volunteer child advocacy organization in the nation. Our members represent the ethnic diversity of our nation, and they come from the ranks of traditional families, single-parent households, blended families, grandparents, and other caring adults. Together, we continue to serve as the conscience of the country for children and youth.

PTA Vision:

What the future will look like if PTA accomplishes its mission.

Making every child's potential a reality.

PTA Mission

A **powerful voice** for all children,

A **relevant resource** for families and communities, and

A **strong advocate** for the education and well-being of every child.

PTA Values: What PTA Stands For

Collaboration: We work in partnership with a wide array of individuals and organizations to accomplish our agreed-upon goals.

Commitment: We are dedicated to promoting children's health, well-being, and educational success through strong parent, family, and community involvement.

Accountability: We acknowledge our obligations. We deliver on our promises.

Respect: We value our colleagues and ourselves. We expect the same high quality of effort and thought from ourselves as we do from others.

Inclusivity: We invite the stranger and welcome the newcomer. We value and seek input from as wide a spectrum of viewpoints and experiences as possible.

Integrity: We act consistently with our beliefs. When we err, we acknowledge the mistake and seek to make amends.

PTA Purposes

To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, places of worship, and throughout the community;

To raise the standards of home life;

To advocate for laws that further the education, physical and mental health, welfare, and safety of children and youth;

To promote the collaboration and engagement of families and educators in the education of children and youth;

To engage the public in united efforts to secure the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being of all children and youth; and

To advocate for fiscal responsibility regarding public tax dollars in public education funding.

PTA Purposes: Historical goals of PTA

To promote the welfare of the children and youth in home, school, community, and place of worship.

To raise the standards of home life.

To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.

To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth.

To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education.

A little more about the life of our PTA Founders:

Alice McLellan Birney (1858-1907)

The idea of the first National Congress of Mothers was first conceived in the mind of Alice McLellan Birney. Alice was born in Marietta, Georgia, of Scotch-English parentage. Her earliest education took place in a private school, for at that time public schools were not numerous. Alice McLellan enjoyed from childhood the advantages of a home atmosphere of intelligence and culture. Broad and skillfully directed reading strengthened her naturally thoughtful mind. She married Alonzo J. White of Charleston, South Carolina, whose death left her the sole responsibility for their little girl. Several years later she married Theodore W. Birney and moved to Washington. Two daughters were born there. Mrs. Birney had the full support and cooperation of her husband in her aspirations toward building a better world for children. Her zeal and skill helped shape the National Congress of Mothers into the sturdy body that strongly influenced social action and spread its concern for human welfare into nooks and crannies of every state. In 1895, at Chautauqua, New York, she revealed her plan. The following year she explained it to the General Federation of Women's Clubs, which accorded it much interest, as well as her friends in Washington, D.C. These friends introduced her to Phoebe Apperson Hearst in 1897, who became a cofounder in the movement. The year that the National Congress of Mothers reached its realization, Mr. Birney died, and Mrs. Birney carried on in spite of her grief.

The National Congress of Mothers, later to become the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, was successful from the beginning. It is Mrs. Birney's determination, strength, and commitment to children and families that has served as an example to us today as we continue the work of the PTA.

Mrs. Birney, who died in 1907, served as the National PTA's first president.

Phoebe Apperson Hearst (1842-1919)

A daughter of pioneers, Phoebe lived on a farm near St. James, Missouri with her father. In her childhood, she attended the local district school and became a teacher at the early age of seventeen. Her first teaching position was in St. James. This early experience was a factor in establishing the lifelong interest in children for which her career was notable. Phoebe married George Hearst of San Francisco, California; who was interested in gold mining and eventually built a fortune. The couple had one son, William Randolph Hearst. Mrs. Hearst was especially concerned about school training for the very young child. In 1883 she helped to establish one of the first free kindergartens, which she herself supported. More kindergartens followed, with Mrs. Hearst supplying the means as well as the initiative. To these pioneering endeavors goes much credit for today's public school kindergartens. Until her death in 1919, Mrs. Hearst continued her interest and generous cooperation in projects that have enhanced the lives of American children and youth.

Selena Sloan Butler (1872-1964)

On May 7, 1926, in Atlanta, Georgia, delegates from four states representing 3,000 black members of parent- school groups responded to the call from the Georgia Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers. Once in session, they formed an organization that offered increased opportunities for leadership, inspiration, and accomplishments. They called the organization the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers.

Twelve officers were elected at the initial meeting. Mrs. Selena Sloan Butler was elected the first president of the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers. Mrs. Butler proved to be an exceptional leader. At its first national convention in 1927, which was held in Nashville, Tennessee, the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers approved bylaws and a constitution. During the next year, five new states joined the organization. Within a fourteen-year period, branches were established in twenty states. In 1942, membership was 40,000. In 1960, membership had climbed to a quarter of a million members. This was the last big year before its decline due to resolutions endorsed in 1955 supporting the 1945 U.S. Supreme Court decision regarding desegregation of the schools. From this action, inter-group committees were encouraged on both state and local levels of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers and the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers.

On June 22, 1970 in Atlanta, Georgia, during the forty-fifth annual convention the two Congresses merged. Through the efforts of both Congresses and now serving as one organization, the National PTA continues the work the two Congresses began. As a united organization the PTA is better prepared than ever to help all children, everywhere.