Hello PTA & PTSA members,

I look forward to working with you to advocate for every child as one voice striving to make every child's potential a reality. I wish to take a personal moment and welcome all of our new PTA Leaders throughout the state.

Summer is winding to an end and we all are gearing up for a busy school year. As school starts many of you are already involved with your programs, community building and hospitality events. I understand you are both excited and overwhelmed. Breathe and Relax. You have this and your PTA/PTSA year will be fabulous! SCPTA is here to help and the newsletter is one way we reach out to you with news and ideas.

You can also follow us on our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest. We look forward to the opportunity to celebrate your successes, and provide you with ideas, motivation and encouragement. We all are in PTA/PTSA for the same reason: our children and young men & women. Remember state and national PTA has grants and programs that you can use at your school.

Thank you for serving PTA/PTSA.

Best wishes,

Pamela S. Driggers  
SCPTA President

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We goofed. We published an incorrect list of award winners. We offer our sincerest apologies to readers of yesterday's newsletter, especially to all those who worked so diligently to earn this prestigious award.

CONGRATULATIONS...

TO SOUTH CAROLINA'S NATIONAL PTA SCHOOLS OF EXCELLENCE!

South Carolina PTA is pleased to announce the winners of PTA's National School of Excellence award. National PTA School of Excellence is a recognition program that supports and celebrates partnerships...
between PTAs and schools to enrich the educational experience and overall well-being for all students.

Our South Carolina winners this year include:
Blythe Academy of Languages PTA in Greenville
Fork Shoals PTA in Pelzer
Hughes Academy of Science and Technology PTA in Greenville
Laurens Middle School PTA in Laurens
Pelham Road Elementary PTA in Greenville
Pleasant Hill Elementary School PTA in Lexington
Pleasant Hill Middle School PTSA in Lexington

By enrolling in this program, the PTA/PTSA and school administrators make a year-long commitment in identifying and implementing an action plan for school improvement based on PTAs National Standards for Family-School Partnerships.

Those schools that exhibit improvement are honored as National PTA Schools of Excellence, a distinction that spans two years. Honorees receive celebration tools and automatic consideration for the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Award and a $2,000 grant for their school. PTAs are encouraged to renew their designation each year, or every other year, to continue to build on their momentum.

Pam Driggers, president of SCPTA, commends the winners, "I am thrilled that seven South Carolina schools received this high honor this year. Clearly, the parents and administrators understand the benefits of this exceptional program and have worked diligently to earn this designation for their students. It's a win/win for everyone."

A School of Excellence designation helps attract new, action-oriented PTA members who want to focus on the issues that affect our children the most. And being a National PTA School of Excellence opens the door to other honors and opportunities for schools.

**Here's how Laurens Middle School Earned their Award**

Our School of Excellence Committee, under the direction of our chairman Tom Stevenson, the school's ISS teacher, created a parent resource center to foster a culture and climate that welcomes all families and offers them information about their child's education. In the short time it has been open it has made a significant contribution to the atmosphere of Laurens Middle School, fostering better communication and outreach for parents and visitors. In addition to the parent resource center, the committee installed signs in and around the school in efforts to be more inclusive of our Spanish speaking students, parents, and community members.

![School of Excellence Committee](image_url)

**SAVE THE DATE**

SCPTA EXPO (formerly SCPTA Convention)
March 29-31, 2019
Double Tree by Hilton (formerly Springmaid)
Myrtle Beach, SC

**MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**
Wow! What an amazing beginning we have had using our new membership site, MemberHub! Thank you for being patient as we work out the kinks and become acclimated to this new website. Most schools have already begun inputting members or using the online store as a membership tool. Dubose Middle School has already submitted their first membership dues payment via ACH! Way to go Dubose!

Our first reporting deadline, September 1st, is approaching quickly, so please reach out if you need any assistance. Remember, you will NOT be mailing a check to the state any longer. You will need to sign up for a WePay merchant account through MemberHub and send all payments via ACH.

** There are training videos posted on MemberHub if you were not able to attend a webinar this summer **

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**FACULTY MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE**

100% faculty membership qualifies your school to win $100!

- Add the number of principals, assistant principals, administrative assistants, and teachers who dispense grades on report cards. You can also include aides, clerks, guidance counselors, librarians, etc to help reach your 100% faculty goal! If you are unsure of your total certified faculty, please contact your school for that number.

- Each staff member needs to be been entered in MemberHub under faculty. Verify that your ACH has been activated. Please send electronic payments NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 1st to be entered in a drawing to win one of (3) $100 prizes!

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**PROGRAMS and GRANT OPPORTUNITIES**

National PTA and SCPTA provide programs and grant opportunities you can use at your local PTA/PTSA. Members can make these programs a reality.

- National PTA School of Excellence Program
- National PTA STEM + Families Math $1000 Grants
- Reflections Art Program
- National PTA Connect for Respect Program
- SCPTA Awards
- Family Engagement Tools

For more information, go to scpta.org and pta.org.

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**MEET YOUR LEADERS**

Ed Murray appeared on the PTA stage in 2016 when he assumed his current duties as the Director of Administrative Services, District Athletics, and Public Relations in Laurens County School District 55. Prior to his arrival in Laurens, the district was a PTO district. When given the responsibility, Ed began converting the PTOs to PTAs. "We believe we must have standards and expectations for family engagement in the same way we have them for the classroom," says Murray. "The National PTA and SCPTA give us the framework we need to achieve that goal." Now, after only two years, Dist. 55 and Dist. 2 celebrate two awards: National PTA School of Excellence and Phoebe Apperson Hearst Award of Merit (Laurens Middle School PTA).

Ed Murray has been working in the academic arena for 30 years and is dedicated to the success of students at every level of the educational spectrum. In his career in public education, Murray has been a science and social studies teacher, football, baseball, and Academic Decathlon coach, athletic director, and school administrator. Prior to starting his career in public education, Murray was a post-secondary school administrator, primarily in the areas of financial aid management, curriculum management and development, and general operations.

Born in Pittsfield, MA; Ed's family left New England when he was 6 years old; he grew up all over the southeastern United States (attending 13 different schools from first grade through high school). Ed graduated from Airport High School in West Columbia, SC in 1975. He then attended The Citadel for two...
years before leaving to care for his ailing father. After his father recovered, Ed joined the U.S. Navy and served in the Navy's Nuclear Power Program. He earned a Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Force Medal for his service during the 1980 Iranian Hostage Crisis. Ed eventually earned his B.A. in History from California State University in Sacramento. He went on to earn 2 Masters Degrees, 1 in Cross-Cultural Teaching and another in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies.

Ed is married to Ms. Joey Nichols. His son, Rick, graduated from the University of South Carolina in 2015 and is currently serving as a science teacher at Laurens District High School. The family lives in Fountain Inn, SC.

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**WELCOME NEW UNITS**
Charleston Early College High School
Deer Park Middle PTSA
Haut Gap Middle School
Hunter Kinard Tyler Middle/High PTSA
Julian Mitchell Elementary
Northside Elementary School of the Arts
Rosewood Elementary
Rudolph Gordon School
Scotts Branch Middle High PTSA
St. James Middle School PTSA
Sullivan Middle PTSA
The Meyer Center

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**ADVOCACY NEWS**
My name is Helena Miller and I am the VP of Advocacy for the SCPTA. I am planning on publishing a bi-weekly newsletter with some hi-lights of the legislative updates that is pertinent to our state, including both National and State information.

We are currently in the process of building strong networking relationships and talking to our legislators during their time off so that we have a stronger voice this session. My hope is to get everyone involved and informed so that we can make a real difference for the children of South Carolina.

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**TAKE A STEP. BUY A BRICK.**
The South Carolina PTA’s Historic House Committee continues to work on the preservation and restoration of the South Carolina PTA house. The PTA House is the official office of the South Carolina PTA. The House serves as a communication center for SCPTA leaders and staff to be connected with PTA districts, local units, and individual PTA members. It is:

- listed in the National Register of Historic Places,
- designated a Bicentennial House by the Richland County Bicentennial Committee,
- House #43 in the Landmark District of the City of Columbia, and
- on the walking tour for visitors in the City of Columbia.

Who Can Participate?
Anyone: local PTA/PTSA units, district PTAs, educators, vendors, business partners, individuals...

About Your Brick
Bricks can be engraved in memory of a loved one or in special recognition of an individual or group. A generous print area allows up to 4 lines of print with 21 characters per line.

Order Now!
Each brick, measuring 4" x 8", costs $50. Go to [Buy A Brick](#) and print and mail the order form along with your check to Historic House Fund at:

SCPTA Office
1826 Henderson Street
Congratulations Bethel Elementary PTA!
Bethel Elementary PTA in Simpsonville took the lead. Join Bethel in the creation of your SCPTA Unity Walk.

YOUR 2019 SCPTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
President: Pam Dirggers
President-Elect: DeVane Trigiani
Secretary: Jeanette Maxey
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Lexington: Kitty Waikart
Columbia: Pat Gates
Rock Hill: Helena Miller
Charleston: Willie Brooks
Sumter: Branden Kennon
Myrtle Beach: Bob Zeller
Summerville: Ashley Wimberly

NEW DAYS AND TIMES FOR SCPTA OFFICE
The SCPTA office is open Monday through Thursday from 10 am until 5 pm. Vicki Patterson is happy to assist you.

1826 Henderson Street
Columbia, SC 29201
803-765-0806
email: office@scpta.org

STAY CONNECTED: