

Got Volunteers? The Perpetual Dilemma



California State
PTA
everychild.onevoice.

We want to know

How did you get started?

Why did you first volunteer for your PTA?



California State
PTA
everychild.onevoice.

We will share ideas based on:

- Experiences in the field
- What we've read
- Results of unit leaders survey



California State
PTA
everychild.onevoice.

Experiences in the Field

- ▶ Declining number of volunteers
- ▶ It's all about the money
- ▶ Declining membership
- ▶ Conflict
- ▶ Lack of follow-through



California State
PTA[®]
everychild.onevoice.

Volunteer Demographics

- ▶ 65% female, 22% male
- ▶ 47.9% Caucasian, 2.1% African American, 50% unknown
- ▶ Average volunteer age: 47!

California State
PTA[®]
everychild.onevoice.

Reference Book

***The New Breed –
Understanding and Equipping
the 21st Century Volunteer***
by
Jonathan & Thomas McKee

California State
PTA[®]
everychild.onevoice.

Reference Book Findings

Today's volunteers ...

Changing lifestyles and
 more commitments

People want to make a difference
 for a cause.

Goals are important.



Reference Book Findings

Busy volunteers want to manage
 their own schedule.

Don't micromanage! Empower and
 trust your volunteers!

Volunteer managers must be
 flexible.



Reference Book Findings

Ask them! Relationships
 are important.

Teambuilding is
 important.

Start small. Don't
 overwhelm!



**Each year,
 California State PTA
 conducts a survey of
 local unit leaders.**



Survey Results

**Biggest Challenges
 of Unit Leaders**

1. Parent Involvement
2. Unaware of value of PTA
3. Managing PTA & board members



Unit Leaders Survey Results

#1 Parent Involvement

- ▶ Involve all groups in school community
- ▶ Be honest about job description and time commitment
- ▶ Match skills to volunteer



Survey Results

#1 Parent Involvement

- ▶ Accommodate working parents
- ▶ Goals attract volunteers
- ▶ Show thanks and gratitude
- ▶ Use plentiful resources



Survey Results

#1 Parent Involvement

- Want to make unit better
- How will this help *my* child?
- Want a seat at the table



Survey Results

#2 Unaware of value of PTA

- ▶ History of PTA is important
- ▶ Toot your own horn
- ▶ Marketing and PR
- ▶ Connect with real parents - use PSAs
- ▶ Address what people think and why



Survey Results

#3 Managing PTA & board members

- Conflict
- Past board members
- Volunteers who won't take positions
- Communication



Parents=Experienced Leaders

- Time management
- Conflict mediation
- Delegation
- Budgeting
- Overseeing projects
- Teamwork



Parents=Experienced Leaders

- Reading and signing contracts
- Protecting assets
- Assuming responsibilities
- Meeting deadlines
- Communicating
- Expressing expectations



Meetings can be a deterrent!

- Be organized and timely
- Keep them short
- No committee work at association meetings
- Make them informative and worthwhile



California State
PTA[®]
everychild.onevoice.

Meetings can be a deterrent

- Survey parents
- Guest speakers on topics of interest
- Host a Reflections program



California State
PTA[®]
everychild.onevoice.

Summary of Strategies

- Retain rather than recruit
- Ask volunteers about projects and communication.
- One-on-one gets the best results
- Volunteers want a voice



California State
PTA[®]
everychild.onevoice.

Summary of Strategies

- Encourage volunteer evaluations.
- Use a suggestion box for input.
- Encourage volunteers to use their experience & skills.
- Assign a greeter at each event.



California State
PTA
everychild.onevoice.

Summary of Strategies

- ASK!
- Be genuine
- Explain why you are asking
- Be honest about time needed
- Support
- Paint a positive picture



California State
PTA
everychild.onevoice.

Avoid Overload!!

- Don't burn out your volunteers!
- Adhere to term limit guidelines.
- Divide volunteer projects into bite sized pieces!



California State
PTA
everychild.onevoice.

Avoid Overload!

- Plan ahead for future leadership.
- Partner volunteers; use the committee strategy.
- Avoid favoritism! Treat all volunteers fairly.



Find Their Passion!

- Recruit to a cause
- Link input and outcomes
- Let newer, younger volunteers plan projects
- Utilize technology
- Give meaningful titles



Best Practices

What has worked for you?



**THANKS FOR
VOLUNTEERING!**

Jackie Wood jwood@capta.org
Mary Galuska mgaluska@capta.org



California State
PTA
everychild.one voice.

Get the best from your PTA volunteers

An increasing number of organizations recognize the added value of volunteer involvement. To attract that involvement, it's important to recognize that prospective volunteers are also customers who can choose from a multitude of alternatives in the volunteer marketplace. Once you've successfully secured a volunteer's support, it is important to ensure that the benefits of volunteering continue to outweigh the costs. Satisfied volunteers can be strong advocates for an organization's mission and persuasive partners on a volunteer recruitment team. Once you "lose" a volunteer, it's hard to get him or her back.

➤ Provide meaningful work

- Make work meaningful; never waste time.
- Provide orientations that link volunteer assignments to the broader mission of the association.
- Create positions that are diverse in tasks.

➤ Show respect

- Never require anything from volunteers that cannot be enforced.
- Provide clear instructions and the necessary tools to perform the work expected.
- Accept recommendations and take advice.

➤ Offer personal growth

- Let volunteers grow with the program.
- Provide opportunities that might not be available in the marketplace.

➤ Show recognition

- Show appreciation often and in ways that are specific to the individual being recognized.



The Value of a Volunteer

Ten little volunteers standing in a line.
One disliked the president, and then there were nine.

Nine ambitious volunteers offered to work late.
One forgot his promise, and then there were eight.

Eight creative volunteers had ideas as good as heaven.
One lost enthusiasm, and then there were seven.

Seven loyal volunteers got into a fix.
They quarreled over programs, and then there were six.

Six volunteers remained with spirit and drive.
One moved away, and then there were five.

Five steadfast volunteers wished there were more.
One became indifferent, and then there were four.

Four cheerful volunteers who never disagree.
Till one complained of meetings, and then there were three.

Three eager volunteers! What do they do?
One got discouraged, and then there were two.

Two hard-working volunteers; our rhyme is nearly done.
One joined a health club, and then there was one.

One faithful volunteer was feeling rather blue,
Met with a colleague, and then there were two.

Two earnest volunteers, each enrolled one more.
Doubling their number, and then there were four.

Four determined volunteers just could not wait,
Till each won another, and then there were eight.

Eight excited volunteers signed up sixteen more,
In another six verses, there will be a thousand twenty-four!

Reprinted from the Kentucky PTA Bulletin - October 2000