



PTA Council of Baltimore County, Inc. | Established 1950

<https://www.bcptacouncil.org> Free State PTA: <https://www.fspta.org> National PTA: <https://www.pta.org>

JANUARY 2026 | BULLETIN

President's Letter

Happy 2026! We hope you had a restful break and have jumped in to the second half of the school year!

First, some finance-related housekeeping. We hope that your unit filed its **IRS 990 form** (due on November 15) and **Maryland Charitable Solicitations Act filing** (due on December 30). Both are crucial to keeping your corporation "in good standing." Please reach out if you need help, especially due to the group exemption status issue facing some units.

We're excited to announce that our next **General Meeting** will be held on Thursday, January 29 at 7pm via Zoom. After a brief business meeting, which includes voting on Council bylaws (WE REALLY NEED A QUORUM!), we'll receive a Legislative Update from PTA Council Advocacy and Legislation Committee Chair Beth Jarrett and will hold **treasurer training** and **boardmanship training**. Both are mandatory trainings required by Free State PTA.

Thank you for all you do to help "make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children."

Feel free to contact me or any of our board members for **ANY HELP YOU NEED!**

Sincerely, President Leslie Weber, president@bcptacouncil.org 410-227-7631

PTA was HERE FOR IT!, American Education Week 2025



Thank you to all the PTAs/PTSAs that took part in our inaugural "PTA is HERE FOR IT! Attendance Challenge."

We're happy to announce the results of the challenge. Students who entered the drawing received prizes from community partner Service-Learning Concepts 4Kids, Inc. (thank you!).

- **High School Level Winner:** Woodlawn High School PTSA which submitted the most (100 or more) pledges and received a \$100 Council programming grant
- **Middle School Level Honorable Mention:** Southwest Academy PTSA which submitted 25 or more pledges and received a \$50 Council programming grant
- **Elementary School Level Winner:** Deer Park Elementary School PTA which submitted the most (100 or more) pledges and received a \$100 Council programming grant

Thank you to Ramona Basilio, Chair of PTA Council's Family, School, and Community Partnerships Committee, and her team for making this great new program happen. We look forward to offering it again next year during AEW 2026 as a programming option for PTAs/PTSAs which supports an important BCPS initiative.



Update from the Family, School, and Community Partnerships (FSCP) Committee



A reminder that our Responsible Cellphone Use Campaign, started in 2024, is still going strong!

The FSCP Responsible Cellphone Use Committee this Spring will:

- continue the Off and Away Social Media Awareness Campaign
- continue partnership with Team BCPS
- encourage BCPS Cellphone Pilot schools, administrators and staff, and families to enforce the policy
- support BCPS end-of-semester/year assessments

Let us know how the policy and/or pilot is working at your school!

Chair Ramona Basilio, partnerships@bcptacouncil.org

Welcome New Committee Chairs!

We recently voted in the following new Board Members:

- Edwin Perez, Chair, Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee Chair
- Melissa Sivels, Northwest-Area Nominating Committee Member
- Angie Obaza, Scholarships Committee Chair

CONGRATULATIONS!

Important Financial Filings!

Did you file your IRS 990, which was due 11/15/25?

Did you file your MD Charitable Solicitations Act filing, which was due on 12/30/25?

Find details on these CRUCIAL requirements here:

<https://bcptacouncil.org/pta-unit-compliance/>

PLEASE REACH OUT WITH QUESTIONS!



Leaders' To-Do List

JANUARY

- Attend Council General Meeting, 1/29/26 7pm via Zoom (BYLAWS will be voted on!)
- Pay FSPTA and NPTA dues
- If not paid already, pay Council dues
- If not yet done, file 990 and MD Charitable Solicitations Form (for help, contact Treasurer Jayne Lee; forms must be filed to retain status as active PTA and fundraise in Maryland)
- Review bylaws to determine date and process for selection of local PTA Nominating Committee if holding elections in spring
- Start thinking about filing MD Annual Report and/or Personal Property Tax Return (see <https://bcptacouncil.org/personal-property-report> for details)

FEBRUARY

- Pay FSPTA and NPTA membership dues
- 990 form due if extension was filed in November

PTA (National, Free State) Dues and Council Dues

Has your unit paid last year's (overdue) and this year's **PTA membership dues** (first payment was due in October)? Find information on how to handle dues here: <https://bcptacouncil.org/resources/membership>

Pay council dues (due in October) **using the form here:**

<https://bcptacouncil.org/resources/finances/council-dues/>

BCPS FY2027 Operating Budget Hearing and Work Session

Sign up to testify at the Board of Education on either Tuesday 1/20/26 or 1/27/26 or both!

https://www.bcps.org/board_of_education/participation_by_the_public

Learn more about the budget:

https://www.bcps.org/budget_101

Council Elections, April 2026

All officers' terms will end this year. Our Nominating Committee has started their work to create a slate of officers to be presented at our March General Meeting. Elections will take place at our April General Meeting. Both meetings are virtual.

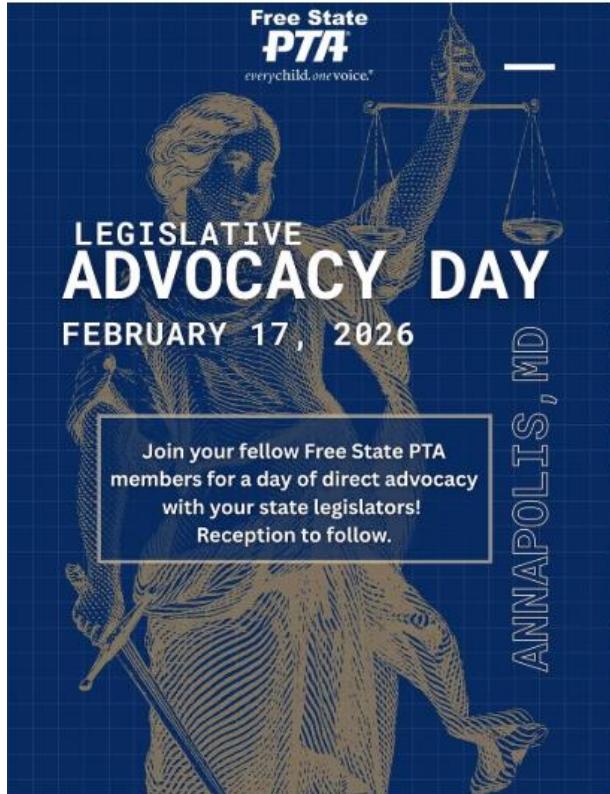
The committee is updating our Officer Interest Form. The new form will be posted on the website soon and will be shared with all units. In the meantime, please think about serving as a Council officer! You can use the soon-to-be-updated form currently on our website as a reference:

<https://bcptacouncil.org/about-us/join-us>

Free State PTA's Legislative Advocacy Day in Annapolis: February 17, 2026, 9am-5pm + Evening Reception

Join your fellow members for a day of direct advocacy with your state legislators!

Details and registration info here: <https://www.fspta.org/advocacyday>



Congratulations to Winners of National PTA Grants!

One of the benefits of PTA is being eligible for valuable grants from National PTA. We're thrilled to announce that 5 PTAs/PTSA's won \$13,500 in grant funds!

<https://www.pta.org/home/About-National-Parent-Teacher-Association/PTA-Newsroom/news-list/news-detail-page/2025/12/12/national-pta-awards-over-1m-to-ptas-across-the-country--to-support-students--families-and-schools>

- \$1,250 Be Internet Awesome and Meet LEO (Learn and Explore Online) Grant awarded to Sudbrook Middle Magnet School PTSA
- \$1,250 Healthy Minds Grant awarded to Deer Park Middle Magnet School PTA
- \$3,000 Create with Kindness Grant awarded to Eastern Technical High School PTSA and Woodlawn High School PTSA
- \$5,000 Youth Engagement Grant awarded to Overlea High School PTSA

BCPS Immigration Support and Resources for Students, Families, and Staff

Access important resources here:

<https://www.bcps.org/parents/migration>



National PTA Resource Know Your Rights: New Resources for Immigrant Parents and Caregivers

The [National Immigration Law Center](#) and Center for Law and Social Policy jointly [developed a resource for immigrant parents](#) and caregivers which details the rights that parents and caregivers have while being apprehended and detained. Under its own policies, ICE has a responsibility to ensure that detained parents and caregivers have a say in the care of their children and keeping them safe.

[Download in English](#) / [Leer en Español](#) / [Download in Haitian Creole](#)

Unsure how to talk to your children about what is happening with immigration enforcement? The Immigrant Family Mental Health Advocacy (IFMHA) Program at the Institute for Juvenile Research at UIC co-created a [brochure for parents and caregivers](#) that details how families can prepare, support, communicate, heal and continue to be resilient.

PTA urges everyone to [take action to support policies](#) that create a safe and supportive school environment for all families and students, including students in immigrant and mixed-status families. [Learn more](#) about PTA's position on Rights and Services for Children in Immigrant and Mixed Status Families.

PTA COUNCIL GENERAL MEETING & PRESENTATIONS

THURSDAY, JANUARY 29 @ 7PM VIA ZOOM



- Business meeting with voting on Council bylaws (QUORUM IS NEEDED FOR THIS IMPORTANT BUSINESS!)
- Legislative Update from Advocacy and Legislation Committee Chair Beth Jarrett
- Workshops for Treasurers and on Boardsmanship – attending counts toward Free State PTA requirements

Meetings are open to the public; you don't need to be a PTA member to attend! Only voting delegates (up to 4) named by a PTA/PTSA unit president may vote in the business portion of the meeting.

LINK: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86497556038?pwd=bE6lNF4laj5uKJf557sULmngBwKbDj.1>

To RSVP, email president@bcptacouncil.org by 1/28/26!

Maryland Center for History and Culture's New Exhibition: WayFinders: Making Sense of Our World

In March 2026, MCHC is opening the new exhibition, *WayFinders: Making Sense of Our World*, which enables students and families to navigate the past in new ways through hands-on and sensory learning. Featuring founding-era historical figures, like Mary Katharine Goddard, Benjamin Banneker, Charles Willson Peale, and Mendes Cohen, students and families will explore interactives and objects that enabled these individuals to better understand the changing and interconnected world. Indigenous voices from contemporary people will set the stage for Maryland's landscape. Many more learning opportunities will be offered via this much-awaited exhibition.

Visit the MCHC website for more information: www.mdhistory.org





Reflections Update

Local unit PTA submissions are at the county level for judging and will be submitted to Free State PTA in late January. Free State PTA announces recipients in March; National PTA announces recipients in May. Thanks to all units that took part in the program!

The PTA Council Reflections Ceremony (info and invitation to follow!) is planned for

Sunday, March 22, 2026 at 2pm, location to be determined

Website: <https://bcptacouncil.org/resources/reflections>

Partnership Spotlight: Baltimore County Health Department

PTA Council is proud to announce that we've reestablished a partnership, started in 2014, with the Baltimore County Department of Health (BCDH). The goal then and now is to educate families on critical issues relating to students' health.

In 2026, PTA Council will take part in the BCDH Tobacco Program's health communications campaign to share information on the dangers of electronic smoking devices.

PTA Council and representatives from PTAs throughout BCPS will take part in a focus group to help create educational materials to reach target populations.

We also plan to share BCDH information through our bulletin and social media, and host BCDH presenters at our March General Membership Meeting, which always has a health and safety focus.

BCPS Climate Survey: February 2 - March 6, 2026 – Take the Survey and Spread the Word!

As soon as the survey is available, we'll share the link!

The survey is for all stakeholders: students in Grades 3-12, parents/guardians, community members, and all staff and focuses on school climate and engagement. It takes 3 minutes or less to complete, is anonymous, and is available in other languages.

Keeping Your PTA out of Political Endorsements!

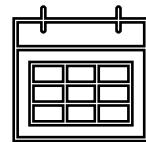
An important reminder: PTA, which are non-profits, aren't allowed to endorse candidates.

<https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/charitable-organizations/exemption-requirements-501c3-organizations>

To be tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, an organization must be organized and operated exclusively for exempt purposes set forth in section 501(c)(3). It may not be an action organization, i.e., it may not attempt to influence legislation as a substantial part of its activities and it may not participate in any campaign activity for or against political candidates.

Section 501(c)(3) organizations are restricted in how much political and legislative (*lobbying*) activities they may conduct. For a detailed discussion, see [Political and Lobbying Activities](#).

2025-26 PTA COUNCIL CALENDAR



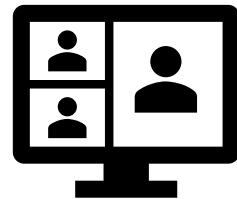
General Meetings/Special Events

- January 29, 2026: Virtual Meeting/Program, 7pm
- March 22, 2026: Reflections Ceremony, location TBA, 2-4pm
- March 26, 2026: Virtual Meeting, Slate of Officers Presentation, Health & Safety Program, 7pm
- April 30, 2026: Virtual Meeting, Elections, Program, 7pm
- June 8, 2026: Leadership Training, Scholarships and State Reflections Winners Presentations, location TBA, 7pm

Board of Directors' Virtual Meetings

First Thursday of the month at 7pm (if interested in attending, please request a link):

- February 5
- March 5
- April 16
- May 7
- June 4



National PTA 2026 Legislative Conference: March 2-4, 2026, Alexandria, VA

<https://www.pta.org/home/events/National-PTA-Legislative-Conference>

Register by February 9, 2026 here:

<https://pta.cventevents.com/event/legcon/summary>

It's time to take action for public schools! National PTA's Legislative Conference (LegCon) is your chance to strengthen your advocacy skills and make your voice heard on Capitol Hill on behalf of all children, families and public schools. Join PTA members and advocates from across the country at LegCon for networking, engaging workshops and insight from advocacy champions to take your work above and beyond. PTA members are already advocating for our communities each day, now let's raise our voice on Capitol Hill.



PTA Council Leadership Contacts

President: Leslie Weber, president@bcptacouncil.org

Area VP Central: Beth Jarrett, avpcentral@bcptacouncil.org

Area VP: Northeast: Katie Fetchik, avpnortheast@bcptacouncil.org

Area VP Northwest: Ryan Coleman, avpnorthwest1@bcptacouncil.org

Area VP Northwest: Antoinette Barber, avpnorthwest2@bcptacouncil.org

Area VP Southeast: Will Feuer, avpsoutheast@bcptacouncil.org

Area VP Southwest, Erica Williams, avpsouthwest@bcptacouncil.org

Secretary: Andra Broadwater, secretary@bcptacouncil.org

Treasurer: Jayne Lee, treasurer@bcptacouncil.org

Committees:

Advocacy & Legislation: Beth Jarrett, legislation@bcptacouncil.org

Communications: Katie Fetchik, communications@bcptacouncil.org

Curriculum and Instruction: Carrie Horwitz Lang, curriculum@bcptacouncil.org

Extension: Emory Young, extension@bcptacouncil.org

Family, School, and Community Partnerships: Ramona Basilio, partnerships@bcptacouncil.org

Health & Safety: Andra Broadwater, health@bcptacouncil.org

Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion: Edwin Perez, diversity@bcptacouncil.org

Multilingual Community Partnership: Edwin Perez, eperez@bcps.org

Nominating Committee: Chair TBA (committee members are listed on our website)

Reflections: reflections@bcptacouncil.org

Scholarships: Angie Obaza, awards@bcptacouncil.org

Representatives:

Baltimore County Student Councils: Hiyall Fitsum

Baltimore County Public Schools: Sue Hahn, shahn2@bcps.org

Teachers' Association of Baltimore County: Lloyd Allen, lallen@mseanea.org



Contact Us!

PTA Council of Baltimore County, Inc.

c/o Sue Hahn, BCPS Office of Family and Community Engagement

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www.bcptacouncil.org