

# MONTANA PTA VOICE

Providing PTA news and information for Montana PTA local units, councils, and members

Volume 3, Issue 3

September 2011

## MONTANA PTA DUES INCREASE: HOW WILL IT BE IMPLEMENTED?

Delegates at the 2011 Montana PTA Convention held September 16 and 17, in Great Falls approved an amendment to the Montana PTA Bylaws which increases the Montana PTA annual dues to \$3.75 per member. *This increase is effective on January 1, 2012.*

So now, many of you are probably wondering how we plan to implement a dues increase that goes into effect in the middle of a membership year. Here's the process we will be using to collect dues for the remainder of the year:

- November 1 — Submit your dues and insurance premium using the Montana PTA Remittance Form. At this time you will submit \$5.50 per member (\$3.25 Montana dues, and \$2.25 National PTA dues.) Remember to include your \$50 Annual Liability Insurance Premium. At that time, your unit may also choose to make a donation to the MT PTA Scholarship Fund or a Founder's Day donation. In addition, your unit may wish to

purchase supplemental insurance such as Fidelity Bonding Insurance.

- January 2012 — Your unit should submit dues for any members who joined your PTA between your first submission and December 31, 2011. Your unit will submit \$5.50 per member.
- January 1, 2012 — Be sure that from this point forward your unit charges enough in dues to cover the increased dues. You may need to amend your standing rules.
- April 1, 2012 — Submit your final dues remittance for the 2011-12 year. Your unit will now submit \$6.00 per member (\$3.75 Montana dues and \$2.25 National PTA Dues).

We know this may be a confusing process, so please feel free to contact the office or any state board member for assistance and clarification.

Reminders will be sent when deadlines are approaching and additional information will be included in future editions of this e-newsletter.

### Upcoming Deadlines

- October 5— Walk to School Day
- October 6— Farm to School Webinar
- Start the Arts Week—October 10-16
- November 1 — Deadline for 1st Dues Remittance and Insurance
- November — PTA Healthy Lifestyles Month

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## GET READY TO FILE YOUR 990

The deadline to file is the 15th day of the 5th month after your fiscal year end. So, if your fiscal year end is June 30th, the deadline to file is November 15th. Now is the time to start preparing the materials you will need to file your return. Most of our units will be filing the 990N e-postcard this year. Completing the e-Postcard requires the eight items listed below:

Employer identification number (EIN), also known as a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)).

Tax year

Legal name and mailing address

Any other names the PTA uses

Name and address of a principal officer

Web site address if the PTA has one

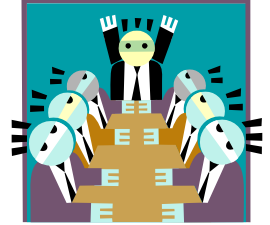
Confirmation that the organization's annual gross receipts are normally \$50,000 or less (for tax years ending on or after December 31, 2010)

If applicable, a statement that the organization has terminated or is terminating (going out of business)



*Detailed instructions on filing your 990N e-postcard will appear in next month's newsletter!*

## MEET THE BOARD



HELLO ALL!! I am very proud to say that I am the new Montana PTA secretary!! I have served as vice president for one year and President for 3 years at our local unit in Lolo. I have also been the fundraising and membership coordinator for 4 years. I have a very supportive husband and three great kids ages 7, 14, and 17. I work full time at Lolo school as a Para professional and also work part time at JcPenneys! I am a very busy person, BUT love it that way!!!

I cant wait to meet as many people as I can at the local units and I am always available for questions!!! I LOVE being part of the PTA family!!

Tanya Sharbono

[chaotictwisty@hotmail.com](mailto:chaotictwisty@hotmail.com)

[secretary@montanapta.org](mailto:secretary@montanapta.org)

## Fundraisers that work – any time of the year.



### Mixed Bag Designs

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



For the past year, Montana PTA has been represented in Helena as part of the Chapter 55 Task Force to review and revise the Standards of Accreditation.

What is Chapter 55? Chapter 55 contains the Standards of Accreditation, or Administrative Rules of Montana that provide minimum requirements to guide Montana public schools. These rules have the force of law and every accredited school throughout Montana is required to follow them to help ensure a quality education in every school.

What can you do? How can you get involved? The Task Force needs your feedback on the draft changes to the standards. Montana PTA's main concern is Administrative Rule 10.55.701 # 3(n) i-vi in that the NPTA Standards of Family Engagement will not be updated and restated in this law. Please make it clear to the Task Force that this needs to be addressed by following the link to [www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/Accred/Chap55](http://www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/Accred/Chap55), scroll down for comment the section on left side of the webpage and request the new standards be added as stated below.

Please go to the site by the November 1, 2011 deadline, read the proposed changes, and consider what these new standards will mean for you, your students and your schools. Also talk with your colleagues, friends, and neighbors about the importance of the process and show them where they can

contribute to the review process of the Accreditation Standards.

The Task Force's suggested draft recommendations for consideration are based on what works best for learners and for our schools and educators. Again, specific changes that will affect families are Administrative Rule 10.55.701 #3(n) i-vi.

### Chapter 55 Task Force – Chronicle

The Task Force is made up of 29 voting members representing the broad spectrum of the public education community across the entire state of Montana. The members of the task force were nominated by Montana educators and community members and selected to represent large and small schools, elementary, middle, and high school teachers, principals, superintendents, education associations leaders, parents, local trustees, postsecondary educators, and Montana's diverse cultures and geographic regions.

A full review of the current standards has been conducted by the Task Force including the examination of how other states accredit schools. The Task Force mainly focused on Colorado, Missouri, and Kansas models. However, the Task Force is working on a Montana model. As a result of this effort, an initial set of recommendations for changes to the standards were developed. At the September 2011 work session, the Task Force reviewed the suggested changes, in total, considering each standard within Chapter 55 as to whether the standard is "complete for now" or "needs more work." The Task Force will prepare a final set of recommendations in the coming months for the state superintendent who will consider these recommendations before she carries them to the Board of Public Education. July 1, 2013 is the anticipated effective date for implementation of the revised Chapter 55 Standards of

Accreditation.

The Task Force is also working on blending in elements to the accreditation process that relate to performance of schools on the state tests (MontCAS), graduation rates, and drop-out rates. Another major piece of the Task Force's work is to develop a process that provides flexibility for schools in Montana to meet standards. A subcommittee of the Task Force has been formed to consider ways to provide for this flexibility by revising the alternative to standards request rule.

An easy to read public, web-based reporting format is being pursued where color coding is used to clearly indicate where a school is relative to each criteria used in that school's accreditation process. Initial decisions were made as of the September work session, with more definitive decisions planned in October as the Task Force closes in on its goal of having initial draft recommendations for the state superintendent in December 2011, and the Board of Public Education in January 2012.

Montana has always had good schools. The courts and the legislature have said that the Chapter 55 Standards of Accreditation set the foundation for quality education. The work of the Task Force is to help enhance quality in our Montana public schools.

The Task Force values our views and wants our help in enhancing the quality of our Montana public schools while revising and developing standards that meet the needs of our students and schools in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**PTA—the "A" does make a difference!**

## 3 things teachers want parents to know

The relationship between parents and teachers is a powerful piece of the puzzle when it comes to the success of a child in school. No matter how old your child is, establishing a good working relationship with the teacher will set the scene for a happier, more productive year. Yet so many parents go through the school year without communicating with the teacher or understanding what they should and shouldn't do to make the most of the year.

According to the National PTA, hesitancy towards establishing a parent-teaching relationship may stem from lack of knowledge of their role rather than a conscious effort to sit on the sidelines.

Both teachers and parents need to

actively seek opportunities to work together in order to support and encourage the success of the student. Help your child have a successful school year with this simple list of dos and don'ts. What it all boils down to is three general guidelines: lend a hand, be organized, and stay connected.

**be organized.** What happens at home has a lot to do with how a student learns in the classroom. Cutting down on chaos and clutter at home can translate to a calmer and confident child at school. Simple things like a clean bedroom, organized homework area, and establishing a regular routine each night can help your child feel better prepared and focused on the day ahead.

**stay connected.** Introduce yourself as soon as you have the opportunity. Ask the teacher about the preferred method of communication such as phone or email. Many teachers have a weekly or monthly newsletter or a website that parents can browse. If a specific communications system is not in place, opt for an email versus a phone call. Most teachers are required to check their email daily.

**lend a hand.** Even the busiest of parents can give the teacher a hand without stretching themselves too thin. Volunteer in the classroom, chaperone a field trip or help out at the book fair. Parents who spend time in their child's classroom learn

*(Continued on page 8)*

## A Fresh concept in Fundraising!



### A Proven program to raise Money

PTAs and schools throughout Montana have used CITY BREW COFFEE as a very successful fundraising venue. We have now developed several different programs, to allow smaller schools to participate. There are pre-sale programs, upfront ordering programs,

and combinations of the two.

### Private labeling for individual schools

By putting the label on the coffee, we have found most schools and PTAs have had significantly higher results due to the novelty and clarity of where the funds are being used.

### Finally—a manageable product!

As opposed to so many products, coffee does not have concerns such as needing to be refrigerated or being kept warm and doesn't have any breakage issues. Next to oil, coffee is the number one most traded commodity in the world! There will be almost 10,000,000 pounds of coffee consumed in Montana this

year. People love to buy products that they know that they will consume.

**For more details please contact**

**Michael Taylor at**

**406-534-3541 or 888-545-4675.**

**Email:**

**MichaelT@citybrew.com**



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PTA REFLECTIONS

# REFLECTIONS

## 2011-2012

“Diversity means.....”



Please allow your students the honor of participating in this program. The rules can be intimidating but can be broken down one by one AND I am here to help!

Some PTA's have had a Reflections Chair and a co-chair to make it easier too. Have a group to make it easier yet! All you need are one or more people who care about seeing kids excel and recognized.



It can be as simple or elaborate as they chose. We have PTA's with huge awards banquets and there are others who quietly display the winning works in the school library and invite all to see.

IF you already have a Reflections Chair/Chairs, we can't thank them enough! Either way if you have them or are finding them please pass on the following.....

**Reflections Chair, each year it is required to take a minute and send me an e-mail so I may put you on a Reflection list for info and reminders throughout the year:**

**[stonewarebyjennifer@msn.com](mailto:stonewarebyjennifer@msn.com)**



**Thank you!**  
Jennifer MT Reflection Chair



# NATIONAL PTA SAFE SCHOOLS WEEK: BULLYING: WHAT CAN YOU DO?

## **ASK QUESTIONS**

Asking questions about your child's day will help strengthen your relationship and help you know whether or not your child is being bullied. Make it a habit to talk about your child's school day. Ask about experiences on the way to and from school; ask about recess on the school playground, lunch time in the cafeteria and experiences in the classroom.

Taking time out of your day to talk to your child will have many benefits. Make sure you ask questions to have your child divulge deeper information. Find out who their friends are, why they are having a good or bad day, and how they treat other children.

## **GET INVOLVED**

If you hear that your child is being bullied don't ignore it. This will tell your child that bullying is ok. Give your child the proper support by taking cases of bullying seriously. Never tell your child that this may be their fault. Instead encourage your child to report the incident to a teacher or staff member. If the situation doesn't improve or stop it will be important for you to contact the teacher or school.

## **STAY CALM**

It may not be easy to hear that your child is being bullied. However, it is important to stay calm in order to handle the situation appropriately. Talk to your child about not resorting to verbal or physical retaliation. When speaking to teachers or school staff, remember to use specific information and not let your emotions take over. Getting upset will not help ease the situation, nor will it help reach a solution.

## **DOCUMENT THE BULLYING**

Keep a log of where, when and

who is involved in the bullying situation so that school staff will know the details.

## **LOOK FOR HELP**

Ask your school administrator or your child's teacher if they have a policy on bullying. There are many resources available to inform parents on how to deal with bullying, as well as resources for children on bullying.

Visit the resources on the PTA website, or reach out to your local PTA. Together we can all become involved in preventing bullying and keep our children and schools safe.



*Playgrounds, Climbing Walls and Rocks, Outdoor Furnishings  
Popcorn Poppers, Gym Equipment  
406-454-0420 or [bobremy.msec@bresnan.net](mailto:bobremy.msec@bresnan.net)*



**New Fall 2011  
Start Fit Activity  
Packages**

## NPTA TAKE YOUR FAMILY TO SCHOOL WEEK GRANT PROGRAM

**Deadline: October 28, 2011  
at 5pm EDT**

**Apply Online at: [PTA.org/familioschool](http://PTA.org/familioschool)**

National PTA's Take Your Family to School Week is celebrated each February to pay tribute to PTA's legacy of building family-school partnerships. Next year, PTA will celebrate PTA Take Your Family to School Week from February 12-18, 2012 with the purpose of expanding and enhancing family engagement in schools across the country.

National PTA offers grants to PTAs to implement programs that engage families in the school community. These grants can be used to build positive partnerships with teachers and families, connect parents to

their children's school experiences, and give children fun ways to share what they are learning and doing in class with their families.

PTA Take Your Family to School Week is sponsored by the AXA Foundation, the philanthropic arm of AXA Equitable. The AXA Foundation is a Proud National Sponsor of PTA.

### Funding Available:

National PTA expects to provide 45 grants of up to \$1,000 each.

### What National PTA Will Fund:

National PTA will fund programs that are aligned with PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships. Proposed programs should implement one or more of the Standards. Applicants are encouraged to plan multiple activities

during Take Your Family to School Week with these grant funds.

### Project Timeline:

Proposed program activities must take place from February 12-18, 2012

National PTA Standards for Family School Partnerships:

- **Standard 1: Welcoming all families into the school community**
  - Standard 2: Communicating effectively
  - Standard 3: Supporting student success
  - Standard 4: Speaking up for every child
  - Standard 5: Sharing power
  - Standard 6: Collaborating with community



## 2011 MONTANA PTA EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

The Montana PTA Outstanding Educator for 2011 is Danielle Waddell from Montana City School PTA.

Danielle puts in many hours after school as well as she is a dedicated PTA member. Nicole Stroman summarizes it best by saying, "Danielle Waddell is the perfect recipient of this award! She is not just a wonderful "educator", she realizes that her job doesn't end when that bell rings and embraces it. We are all lucky to have her as one of our teachers, a dedicated PTA member, and if we are really lucky, as a friend."

One of the most rewarding parts of being on the outstanding educator committee is to read and see so many truly magnificent educators we have in the state of Montana. Thank you again Danielle for doing such an outstanding job teaching the youth in Montana City

## WHAT'S MY UNIT ID NUMBER?

For any unit to find their ID# is a simple process.

First, go to the Montana PTA website

Click on the "Unit Tools" tab

Click on "General PTA Information" (*it has a green circle with an "I" on the left*)

This brings up a list of documents. Click on "Unit ID's and Charter Dates"

This opens a PDF document which is an alphabetical list of units with their Unit ID listed at the left. This is both the National and Montana ID number.

If the number has less than 8 numbers, they need to put zeros at the beginning so that it becomes an 8 digit number.

- example -- Absarokee (since it's first on the list) has 22128 listed as their number. They need to add 3 zeros to make their ID # 00022128

# MONTANA PTA 2011 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

It was a great honor to award Marta Bertoglio from Montana City PTA at the 2011 Convention as the Outstanding Volunteer for 2011.

Marta's many hats as a volunteer include: the Teacher Support chair in which Marta made sure all teachers have one parent able to donate time in their classroom, during parent/teacher conference she made sure teachers had dinners, and Marta has taken on teacher appreciation week that let's teachers know how valuable they are. Along with all these great works Marta was able to provide a much needed storage shed for the school. Marta is not only a dedicated mother she is invaluable to Montana City School PTA.

Thank you Marta from all the Montana PTA Board of Directors.

## PTA CONVENTION THANK YOU' S!

Each year Montana PTA receives invaluable assistance from local unit members during our State PTA Convention. Without their help it would be impossible for Montana PTA to successfully hold our convention. Thanks to the following individuals who graciously gave their time at this year's convention:

*Darcy Russell, Washington School PTA, Billings*

*Lee Keyser, Washington School PTA, Billings*

*Teresa Ground, Longfellow PTA, Great Falls*

*Korrie Butler, Lolo PTSA, Lolo*

*(Continued from page 4)*

first-hand what teachers do, and children see an ongoing relationship between school and home. Additionally, research indicates parental involvement can help free up precious time for teachers so they can focus on what's most important: educating children.

The value of volunteer cannot be underestimated. When parents get involved the kids see that their education is important. And, it often offers an added bonus of the opportunity to meet other parents.

If work or other time commitments seem to get in the way, parents can ask the teacher and the PTA about other ways to become involved. Making copies, sorting papers or caring for the class pet can be a big help. A school truly can never have enough volunteers!



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## EFFECTIVE MEETING TIPS

It happens in school districts across the country every fall. The first PTA meeting of the year is packed—packed with promise, packed with excitement, packed with attendees. But when the October meeting rolls around, attendance has plummeted. What happened? A bad meeting might be to blame. It doesn't have to be this way. A well-run meeting can set the stage for a productive school year and it's easy to pull off if you follow a few simple guidelines.

### Watch the Clock (but in a Good Way)

A good rule of thumb as a PTA president is to keep meetings to one hour. Period. People are busy. Remember, your meeting is competing with the kids' homework or the latest episode of *Glee*. So, you must make it worth parents' time. Besides, after an hour, meetings hit a point of diminishing returns. People lose focus. They may leave before the meeting ends never to show their face again. Packing everything into 60 minutes isn't easy, but it can be done. It just requires focus, discipline, and a well-constructed agenda.

Plan the agenda with your time limit in mind and publicize it before the event so everybody will know exactly what to expect. Parents are more likely to go to a PTA meeting when they know ahead of time that they'll be investing only an hour. And once they've gone to your meeting and seen how well run it is, they're more likely to come back for the next one.



Your first agenda item should be to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. The minutes will refresh everybody's memory so you won't have to spend valuable meeting time revisiting everything you covered the last time you met. Have hard copies on hand to pass out to your general membership for review before the meeting starts.

### Steady Ahead

Chairing a meeting requires a mix of firmness and flexibility. The chairperson's role is both to keep the meeting on track and to allow attendees to be heard. Designate a spot on your agenda "other business/community input." Keep it to 10 minutes or less—long enough for people to bring up new issues and feel heard. If the discussion goes on too long, you can politely point out your concern for everybody's time and move on to the next item on the agenda. If the discussion warrants it, offer to include the topic as an official item on the next meeting's agenda.

Be firm about keeping the meeting on topic. It's the only way to stay within the time limit. It's also the only way to make progress. When discussing the planned activities for the *Polar Express* party, don't allow the discussion to veer off into Family Fun Night. Many meetings get derailed when the board tries to accomplish too much in one session.

It's also important to be mindful of

another common hazard that can keep prospective PTA members away from your meetings: insider discussions. Save the war stories for social settings. Likewise, don't confuse planning sessions with

business meetings. Encourage committees to meet separately from the full PTA. A room full of parents looking for updates on the PTA budget and the principal's school improvement plan do not need to witness a debate over whether to hire a DJ or a live band for the spring formal.

### Meet Robert

Finally, a little parliamentary procedure can do wonders when it comes to maintaining order in a meeting. By following basic Robert's Rules, you can direct your group to stick to one topic at a time. When discussions get off track, suggest that the group table the discussion and revisit it during the appropriate part of the agenda.

If you're new to Robert's Rules, they might seem overly strict. But after only a few meetings your group should be comfortable following them. And while these guidelines may seem formal at first, they will save you valuable time and most likely will increase participation levels.

With the help of a well-constructed agenda, Robert's Rules, and a firm but flexible hand, your PTA meetings will be known as a place where ideas are encouraged, parents are respected, and great things happen.

*Watch the Clock,  
but in a Good Way!*

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

The new school year is off and running that means membership time is upon us. As the new Montana State PTA Membership Chair, I am available anytime to hear questions and lend a hand with your membership needs. I was glad to meet all who attended the Montana State PTA Convention in Great Falls. You can contact me Sherry Holderith at 406-860-9743 or email me at [membership@montanapta.org](mailto:membership@montanapta.org).

## SCHOLARSHIP BASKET THANK YOU!

Thank you to the following local units and individuals for bringing a scholarship basket to Convention!!! You make it possible for us to give out scholarships each year.

- |                               |                           |                         |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| ☺ Ponderosa Elementary PTA    | ☺ Sacajawea PTA           | ☺ Roosevelt PTA         |
| ☺ Burlington Elementary PTA   | ☺ Roundup PTSA            | ☺ Laurel Elementary PTA |
| ☺ Laurel Middle School PTSA   | ☺ East Middle School PTSA | ☺ Longfellow PTA        |
| ☺ Meadow Lark PTA—Great Falls | ☺ West PTA                | ☺ Lolo PTSA             |

## CELEBRATE OCTOBER — NATIONAL FARM TO SCHOOL MONTH WITH MONTANA'S FOOD-CORPS TEAM

**Thursday, October 6th  
at 4:00 pm**

Registration details:

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/402536298>

Call in: 888-617-3400

Room: 695912

**Presented By:**

**Mary Stein**

**Farm to School Coordinator,  
Montana Team Nutrition**

October, 2011 marks the first ever National Farm to School Month in the United States. In Montana, a team of Americorps VISTA service members, known as Montana's FoodCorps, are working on Farm to School endeavors in rural communities throughout the state. Join Mary Stein, Farm to School Coordinator with Montana Team Nutrition, and the

Montana FoodCorps team to learn about on-the-ground Farm to School projects and resources to help with procurement of local farm fresh foods in schools.

\*If you are unable to attend the live session, this webinar will be recorded and posted online to view at your convenience.

Please contact Carolyn Pollari to receive the link.

For connection details or any other questions, please contact:

Carolyn Pollari

[cpollari@montana.edu](mailto:cpollari@montana.edu)

(406) 994-5310



## MEMBER BENEFITS



**OfficeMax**®— Now, PTA members can save on supply essentials and more at OfficeMax, a Member Benefits Provider. You'll find everything from notebooks, binders and pens to paper, art supplies and furniture. You can even make copies and print flyers and student presentations—all in store at the OfficeMax ImPress® Print Center. Ready to shop and save? Get the current deal now and check back often for exclusive savings throughout the year.



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your Neighborhood. The world's largest airport general use car rental brand, operating from approximately 8,500 locations in 146 countries worldwide is proud to offer PTA members benefits like:

- Savings of up to 20% off rentals
- Special promotions in addition to

your discount

- Fee Waived Hertz #1 Club Gold® enrollment—a \$60 savings! Earn free rental days and receive expedited service on all your rentals.



Sharp Electronics Corporation is offering PTA members special purchase opportunities on AQUOS liquid crystal televisions and other audio, video, home appliance and home office products. Sharp is a world leader in the liquid crystal television category, and is pleased to offer these state-of-the-art flat panel TVs and their other products at extremely attractive discounts.

**MetLife Auto & Home**® — MetLife Auto & Home has worked with PTA to bring PTA members a group insurance program that comes with special savings and benefits. This program includes competitive benefits and superior discounts for

members.



**T-Mobile** — T-Mobile and PTA have partnered together to bring PTA members exclusive discounts on wireless mobile service and equipment. All PTA members receive special discounts on selected promotional devices, exclusive discounts on monthly service charges and waived activation fees on T-Mobile products and services.



*These PTA member benefits require the user name and password located on the back of your membership card.*

*Visit [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org) and click on "Member Benefits" to access benefits and learn more.*

## board of directors

### **President:**

**DEE HENSLEY MACLEAN**  
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[president@montanapta.org](mailto:president@montanapta.org)

### **Secretary:**

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### **Treasurer:**

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### **President Elect:**

**Filled At Convention 2011**  
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**VACANT**  
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### **APPOINTED CHAIRS**

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**MONTANA CONGRESS OF  
PARENTS & TEACHERS ASSOC.**

P.O. BOX 1269  
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