

Kesterson PTA: Frequently Asked Questions

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What is PTA?

PTA stands for Parent Teacher Association. The National PTA is the world's largest and oldest volunteer child advocacy organization in the United States. A not-for-profit organization, National PTA is an association of parents, educators, students, and other citizens active in their schools and communities. National PTA has over 26,000 local units in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Department of Defense schools in the Pacific and in Europe.

PTA is devoted to the welfare of children and youth, and is a leader in reminding our nation of its obligation to these children and youth. PTA acts as the connecting link between the home and the school. PTA can be the catalyst for bringing people together to solve problems. PTA is People Taking Action.

PTA is a well established organization with ongoing structure, policies, guidelines, and leadership training programs. Since everyone who works in PTA is a volunteer, there are no vested interests to be gained - - - only better schools and communities.

PTA has the collective strength to get things done. By paying your dues, you are adding your name to the more than 6.5 million names nationally that want issues affecting the welfare, education, and protection of children addressed. There are 178 active PTA's in Nevada, with 30,000 members statewide. We are actively striving on both the State and National level to better our schools and strengthen our communities.

What is PTA's Mission?

The mission of the PTA is three-fold:

- ~To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, and before governmental agencies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children;
- ~To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children; and
- ~To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.

What is PTA like at Kesterson ES?

The Kesterson PTA is very active on campus. Last year, our catalog sales and cookie dough fundraisers generated money for our school and students. Thanks to the generous support of all who participate in the fundraisers, last year the Kesterson PTA rose over \$20,000 in net profit for our school and donated these funds for instructional supplies and discretionary funds for classrooms and specialists. Some specific items PTA purchased for Kesterson include: books and prizes for Nevada Reading Week and Caught You Reading program; Field Day t-shirts for all students; educational fieldtrips for classrooms; and funds for classroom supplies. Your PTA also paid for many more items to benefit the students at Kesterson Elementary. In the Clark County School District, school PTAs donate over \$300,000 each year to better their campuses.

This year the Kesterson PTA will sponsor Open House, ice cream socials, Trunk-R-Treat, Doughnuts with Dad and Muffins with Mom, Teacher and Staff Monthly Luncheons, All Fired Up Ornament Decorating, Reflections, Spring Carnival, DARE celebration, Kindergarten, and Fifth Grade Celebration.

Kesterson PTA coordinates the Albertsons Community Partner Program, a partnership with Albertson's Grocery Store, which returns a percentage of grocery sales back to Kesterson PTA. Kesterson PTA also participates in the Campbell's & Soup Labels and Box Tops for Education programs, collecting and sending in the labels and box tops from students. Money is then returned to the school based on the number of labels and box tops received. The Kesterson PTA also sponsors the Galleria Mall at Sunset Shop for Education program. All Galleria Mall receipts are eligible for credit toward the school, and prizes for top performing schools are also available. Receipts from all mall shops (including restaurants) are eligible for credit. The receipts are accepted, stamped, and returned to you at the Customer Service Center in the Galleria Mall. Your receipts help our school accumulate points. In the event that you do not have time to stop at the Customer Service Center, a box is located inside the Kesterson main office for your convenience. Receipts placed in the box will be taken to the mall so that the school receives credit for your purchases.

Kesterson PTA will be again gifting each student chosen as a Kesterson Coyote Café monthly recipient during the school year with a license plate holder for his or her family car. Each family joining PTA this school year will receive a Kesterson logo key chain, courtesy of your PTA.

What are the volunteer opportunities available?

The PTA strongly encourages parents to see what volunteer opportunities are available throughout the school and within your child's classroom. Our teachers and students really do appreciate your help. Listed below are some of the volunteer opportunities that are available through the PTA.

Kesterson Trunk-R-Treat – Volunteers are asked to participate by either decorating a trunk or helping with the games or food sales in the Multi-Purpose room. This year a limited number of craft or vendor booths will be available for \$25-\$50. Please contact us by calling the school office at 799-6300 and the office staff will forward the message to PTA.

Doughnuts with Dad and Muffins with Mom – Volunteers are asked to assist with handing out doughnuts, muffins, coffee, milk, and juice for these November events. Assistance with setting up and cleaning up is also welcomed.

Fundraisers – The PTA does a fall/holiday catalog fundraiser at the beginning of the school year. The other fundraiser is cookie dough, sold during late winter. Volunteers are needed to set up and

distribute items sold when it arrives.

Fifth Grade Celebration – Volunteers will assist in coordinating the Fifth Grade Celebration at the end of the school year.

Spring Carnival – Volunteers are needed to set up and staff the booths during the carnival. Volunteers are also needed to clean up after the carnival and assist with other tasks during the event.

Raffle – Volunteers are needed to sell raffle tickets before and after school during the raffle sales period. In addition, anyone having special skills/services or gifts or are able to obtain some that could be used as raffle prizes are needed and greatly appreciated.

Reflections – Helpers are needed for workshops, cataloging, obtaining guest speakers, and general coordinator assistance for this cultural arts program. The Reflections program will begin in November and end with final judging in January.

How can I get involved?

Everyone is good at something. Please think about your own unique skills and talents and let us know of your abilities that you are willing to share. Strong schools start with strong parents. Your help is needed, wanted, prized, and appreciated. We do not know what you can do, or what you would like to do unless you let us know.

Are you an artist? A writer? A seamstress? Are you a gourmet cook? Are you an expert about foreign culture? Are you good at crafts or special projects?

Could you conduct an instructional unit or workshop? Do you own a snow cone machine? Do you have a circus tent? Do you know how to do face painting? Do you have a costume collection? Any science specimens?

Could you run a talent show? Do you own a farm? A garden? A petting zoo? Could you help with a chess club? Are you an expert in history, science, or art? Do you have contacts with businesses or restaurants? Are you employed in a public safety position such as a police officer or firefighter?

Tell us your talents and interests, and we'll find a way to use them!

If I don't have time to volunteer, why should I join Kesterson PTA?

When you become a member of PTA, you increase our collective strength. By adding your name to our roster of members, you will increase the impact we have when representing Kesterson Elementary School before governmental agencies. Your name also increases the strength of the Nevada PTA and the National PTA when they deal with the State Legislature and the U.S. Congress.

Studies over the past few decades have proved that children whose parents stay closely involved in their schooling are more successful academically than those whose parents remain uninvolved. They complete more homework, achieve higher grades, have a positive attitude, and generally behave better. More good reasons to get involved!

The PTA's goal is to have 100% membership for Kesterson student families and teachers, administrators, and staff. Today's parents are busier than ever. We understand everyone cannot donate time during school hours, or be available during after school programs, but by becoming a PTA

member, you are expressing your concern for our children. By joining PTA, you are getting involved by showing your support!

Who can join PTA?

EVERYONE! There is no eligibility requirement to become a member of PTA. Parents, teachers, administrators, and staff, grandparents, uncles and aunts, older siblings of Kesterson students, and friends of the school are encouraged to join the PTA. You do not need to have school-age children at Kesterson Elementary School to become a PTA member.

How do I join Kesterson PTA?

By paying dues of \$5.00 per person, you can become a member of the Kesterson PTA. All you need to do is complete a PTA Membership Envelope and enclose your money. *Checks should be made payable to Kesterson PTA.*

What does my membership entitle me to?

By becoming a dues paying member of Kesterson PTA, you are entitled to vote (one vote per membership). PTA members are also honored at the end of year party. During the year discounts are exclusively available to members on a local, statewide, and national level. Your membership also empowers you with the knowledge that you support our school, students, faculty, and staff. When you join the Kesterson PTA, you also automatically become a member of the Nevada PTA and the National PTA.

Where does the money go?

For each \$5.00 of dues received, the money is distributed as follows:

\$1.75 - National PTA

\$2.25 - Nevada PTA

\$0.25 - Sunset Council

\$2.75 - Kesterson PTA

At all levels of PTA, the officers are voluntary. The National and State PTA's use all the money that they receive to administer programs. The Sunset Council is composed of the school PTA's in our area. The \$0.75 membership received by the Kesterson PTA is put towards money donated to the school or for incentives for PTA membership.

When are the PTA meetings?

Kesterson PTA meetings are generally held the first Wednesday of each month, in the Kesterson multi-purpose room. The meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. and usually last one hour. These meetings are open to all members. During these meetings, PTA business is discussed including budget reports, committee progress reports, planning for upcoming events and overview of completed events, and any other pertinent information.

Does the PTA accept donations?

Kesterson gladly accepts donations of time and/or money, special talents, and gifts. If after paying your dues you would like to donate additional money to the PTA, please call the school office at 799-6300 and the office staff will forward the message to PTA. You will receive a receipt for your donation, and you may specify your preference for its usage. If you would like to donate time, there are many opportunities available. Volunteer positions and descriptions of each are listed below. If you would like to donate or know someone who you can get to donate special talents (i.e. free manicure, free oil change, etc.) or gifts to be used as raffle prizes for the carnival, those would be gladly accepted and

appreciated. You will receive a receipt and thank you letter for these donations as well. Please call the school office at 799-6300 and the office staff will forward the message to PTA. We also welcome your comments and suggestions at any time via this telephone line.

What if I have a question that has not been answered?

Although we have attempted to answer most possible questions, we are sure we have probably missed something. You may contact the PTA Board by writing a note and returning it to your child's teacher or to the school office, by speaking with any Board Member you meet on campus, or by calling the school office at 799-6300. The office staff will forward the message to PTA.