

Subject: Monthly Digest

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Congrats to all participants in the 2023-24 PTA Reflections program!

We are so very proud of those who created such amazing works of artistic expression. Two hundred eighty-five entries, representing all six arts categories, were received at the state level. Hopes and dreams abounded as students, in six of our PTA Regions, submitted entries reflecting the theme "I am Hopeful Because..." while PTA leaders, school staff and parents stepped up to encourage and support our innovative students' works. Thank you to all who participate and make the Reflections program possible.

Click [here](#) for a full list of advancers.

Speak Up for Education Funding in Springfield

Illinois PTA, with our partners at [Funding Illinois's Future](#), will be participating in the Advocacy Day in Springfield on May 1st to support increased education funding of \$550 million for FY25. [Registration is free](#) and includes a t-shirt and lunch, and bus transportation to and from Springfield may be available in some areas.

If you were able to attend our Evidence-Based Funding (EBF) formula panel discussion at the Illinois PTA Convention, you know that the EBF formula is working to bring our schools closer to full funding while closing funding gaps between districts, between races, and between low-income and high-income students, directing the largest amount of new funding to the districts and students who need the greatest support.

While we have made great progress since the EBF formula was passed in 2017, we still have a long way to go. At our current pace, all Illinois school district will likely not be fully funded until 2037. Join us in Springfield to urge lawmakers to increase EBF funding for our children. You'll be briefed on what to tell your legislators, make a difference for Illinois students, and have fun working with dedicated advocates for children like yourself. [Register before Thursday, April 18th](#), to be part of Advocacy Day on May 1st.

Do you want to Be SMART?

Safe Firearms Storage is a topic the Illinois and National PTAs follow regularly, following the adoption of Resolutions by both bodies.

Families and communities are developing essential conversations around the topic, often not knowing where or how to begin. Be SMART is a program designed to provide specific information on knowing how to begin that conversation at home, at school and in our communities.

Please join us Thursday, April 18 at 7:30 p.m. when Layla Danley, of Everytown, will join us for Be SMART.

[Register Today](#)

How to Safely Watch the 2024 Solar Eclipse

Just under seven years ago, a total solar eclipse crossed over southern Illinois. Now, on Monday, April 8, 2024, another total solar eclipse will pass over southern Illinois. Unlike the 2017 eclipse that moved northwest to southeast, the 2024 eclipse will move from southwest to northeast, bringing the path of totality closer to northern Illinois. Here's how to safely watch the total eclipse.

[Read More](#)

Teaching Kids About Boundaries

From childmind.org

For most parents setting boundaries for young kids' behavior is second nature: No hitting. Don't interrupt. We don't grab toys out of other kids' hands.

But as they get older, and social interaction gets more complex, it's not enough to just learn the rules. They need to learn to set boundaries for themselves and respect those of others. And that takes being able to recognize what others want and need — and express what they want and need, too.

[Read More](#)

New National PTA Connected Program Ready, Tech, Go!

We've highlighted the programs in PTA Connected from National PTA before. Now, in partnership with AT&T, National PTA has a new PTA Connected program called Ready, Tech, Go! The program is aimed at families trying to decide when their child is ready for technology of their own, known as screen readiness.

[Read More](#)

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