



everychild.onevoice.®

**Texas PTA State Office**  
408 West 11<sup>th</sup> Street / Austin, Texas 78701  
1-800-TALK-PTA / www.txpta.org

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
February 28, 2018

**Media Contact:** Kyle Ward, Executive Director  
communications@txpta.org

**President**  
Lisa Holbrook

**President-Elect**  
Sheri Doss

**Vice President  
Field Service**  
Suzi Kennon

**Vice President  
Leadership**  
Heather Ashwell-Hair

**Vice President  
Membership**  
Larriann Curtis

**Vice President  
Programs and Resources**  
Sylvia R. Reyna, Ph.D.

**Secretary**  
LaDorshe Damron

**Treasurer**  
Lisa Johns

**Director-at-Large**  
Tim Greenwell  
Lee Guerra  
Choni Hajibashi  
Fred Henley  
Lizeth LoCicero  
Neil Shelby

**Legislative Consultant**  
Ellen Arnold

**Executive Director**  
R. Kyle Ward, CAE

### Texas PTA Outlines Action Plan for Statewide School Safety

**Austin, Texas** – Texas PTA shares in the grief and heartache that has reverberated across the nation following another school shooting. We mourn for the lives taken at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, and for the students, parents, and educators dealing with unimaginable pain. And while there is a time for grief, we are also compelled to act. As a membership association of nearly 500,000 voices, Texas PTA works tirelessly to address the interests and concerns of our constituents, including parents, educators, and community leaders. The common bond and shared priority for all who join PTA among this diverse group of people is simple—our students. And ensuring that these children and young adults are safe at school, and free to learn without fear, is paramount for everyone who is a part of Texas PTA.

The epidemic of school violence has touched many communities across our country, and it knows no bounds of race, gender, or economics. There is no single solution and our success will require an honest discourse between families, schools, and elected officials.

Texas PTA will meet with officials at the Texas School Safety Center (TxSSC) at Texas State University in San Marcos on March 1, 2018. The TxSSC serves as a clearinghouse for the dissemination of safety and security information through research, training, and technical assistance for K-12 schools and junior colleges throughout the state of Texas. We will engage their expertise in crafting our legislative proposals for a range of school safety policies, including: physical audits of campus safety practices, funding and construction of secure campus entrances, and increased scrutiny and response to any threat made against our schools. It's also imperative that our school districts be given the opportunity to become a proactive partner in securing our communities with a system that allows them to identify and share information about those who pose the highest risk to our schools.

Leadership within Texas PTA will then travel to Washington D.C. during the week of March 12, 2018 to meet with Senators John Cornyn and Ted Cruz for discussions on federal policies. It's been made clear during the recent events, including the Sutherland Springs tragedy in our own backyard, that the systems in place to keep weapons out of the hands of those who are likely to do harm are failing. Raising the age to purchase semi-automatic and automatic weapons, while expanding background checks, are needed safeguards to protect the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens.

Texas PTA is committed to a dialogue with our members and will be engaging in direct conversations as we develop our final policies. This will be conducted in three ways: with face-to-face meetings in the community, far-reaching distribution of information online, and comprehensive gathering of feedback. It is our hope that we can all contribute to these deliberations knowing that we must come together for the sake of our children.

