

Galway PTSA Chartered in 1951 - serving Galway students for 70 years

GALWAY PTSA NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2021

Welcome back!

We hope everyone had a great summer, and you will soon settle into the school routine. While there are still challenges from COVID, we're in a much better place than last September. It's wonderful to have all our students back in school full time. We're also welcoming lots of new students and faculty. PTSA is once again planning in-person events, including Book Fairs, Family Fun Nights, and the Holiday Gift Shop. These events are subject to cancellation at short notice if COVID is more prevalent in the county, but we choose to be optimistic.

Our PTSA Officers were busy over the summer working on the budget, scheduling, and planning events, attending a NYS PTA conference, and getting up to date with everything. We have planners for faculty, and donated water, Gatorade, crackers, and children's underwear to the school nurses. Winners of our Elementary School Sunflower Growing Contest will be announced soon.

Our PTSA Dance program is open for enrollment. Classes begin September 14. Last year because of COVID, we had to find an alternative location for classes and there was only time and space for our competition team. This year, when space in the school is at a premium, we are very grateful to the Galway United Methodist Church for giving us a temporary home which can accommodate everyone. If you'd like to register for classes, go to <https://ptsadancefall2021registration.cheddarup.com> Registration closes September 10. Masks and social distancing policies will be the most stringent of either the Galway CSD or Galway United Methodist Church. This will include no parents in the building during classes. Full details are available online.

Our first monthly meeting is on Monday, September 13, at the Cock 'N' Bull in Galway, starting at 6:15pm. This is open to everyone, member or not. We will be setting out some of our goals for the year and voting on our budget. We aim to keep this meeting short because we are also having our Volunteer Awards ceremony at 7pm. We have chosen three outstanding members of our community who give much of their time for the benefit of our young people. They will all receive Honorary Life Memberships to NYS PTA. Congratulations and thank you to Mark Bombard, Amy Thompson, and Crystal Walker. We are also recognizing the hard work and dedication of the awesome Galway CSD Food Service Team, (led by Amy Thompson). These ladies are always working hard, but during the last eighteen months they have gone above and beyond to make sure no Galway child goes hungry. We are thanking our current committee Chairpersons, without whom we could not run our events. After the awards, there will be refreshments and appetizers for all. Time to meet our PTSA Officers, community members and other parents. We would appreciate an RSVP if you would like to attend, so we can give the Cock N Bull an accurate head count for food. You do not have to sit through the meeting to attend the awards. You are welcome to arrive at 7pm.

Elementary Picture Day is Wednesday, September 29. Jr/Sr High School Picture Day is Thursday, September 30. Information and order forms will be sent home soon. We are once again partnering with Adirondack School Portraits from Glens Falls, who are great to work with and very experienced. You are not obligated to purchase photos, but every child will have their picture taken for school ID and Yearbooks. There will be a make-up/retake day on December 7, if your child is absent or you don't like their picture.

Our Fall Fundraiser will launch soon. Love it or hate it, this is how PTSA pays for most of the events and programs we offer. (Dancers pay for their classes and costumes.) We use a local fundraising company, based in Northville. Catalogs and details of an online store will be sent home soon. There is also the option of donating directly to PTSA if you can't

find something you like in the catalogs or if you'd prefer 100% of your money to come directly to PTSA. Unlike last year, we will be distributing catalog orders at school. Online orders are shipped directly to homes.

Planning for our Fall Book Fair is well underway. We will be utilizing a lot of things we had organized for the Spring 2020 Book Fair, when the theme was Jungle. Book Fairs are one of our biggest events and usually require the most volunteers. We are having to change the way we do certain things to work within COVID protocols, which will make our scheduling a little different. If you would like to help with our preparations for the Book Fair and Family Fun Night, please contact us via email. With the understanding Family Fun Night is very tentative and may not go ahead. A volunteer sign-up for the actual events will come out at the beginning of October.

Galway PTSA always appreciates your support. We understand the difficulties of juggling family, work, and home, particularly with young children. We are all volunteers, and value any time you have for PTSA. Some of our members work on projects at home - things like decorations for the Book Fair or Holiday Gift Shop. Some help plan events and logistics. Much is organized well ahead of time and is done through emails. Some events need people in school during the day - Picture Day, Book Fair, Holiday Gift Shop. These are a great way to meet other parents, see how the school operates, meet the teachers and aides, and possibly spend a little time with your child. Some events are during the evening - like Family Fun Nights, although we also know you might want to be there with your family.

Volunteer sign-ups are emailed to fully paid up PTSA members a few weeks prior to each event. If we are short of volunteers, we then open it up to everyone. You do not have to be a PTSA member to volunteer, except for positions handling money. Becoming a PTSA member costs \$6 per person. You can sign up the whole family, including students. You do not have to come to a meeting. You do not have to volunteer. You are not obligated to do anything. Your \$6 shows your support of PTSA and gives you greater access to what we're doing, as well as the opportunity to be part of our work.

We are always open to new ideas and suggestions. We definitely welcome your feedback. We are all busy parents, wanting to add a little more to our children's school experience and be part of our community.

If you would like to be involved in some of the planning and organizing of events, you can contact us via email at galwayptsa@gmail.com. If you prefer to wait and sign up to help at a particular event, become a member. There is a form attached to this newsletter. Fill it out and return it to school in an enveloped address to Galway PTSA. Include a check for \$6 per member, made payable to Galway PTSA. Alternatively, you can sign up online. Go to:

<https://galwayptsamembership.cheddarup.com>

We look forward to seeing everyone soon,

Emma

Emma Obern, PTSA President.

galwayptsa@gmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/galwaynyptsa>

Visit our PTSA pages on the Galway School District website:

<https://www.galwaycsd.org/community/galwayptsa>

PTSA Meeting. Monday, September 13, 2021. 6:15pm Cock N Bull, Galway.

7pm Volunteer Award ceremony, followed by time to meet our Officers, community members and other parents. Please RSVP to galwayptsa@gmail.com if you would like to attend. You are welcome to come to just the award ceremony, not the meeting.

WHAT HAS PTSA DONE IN THE LAST MONTH?

- Back to School event
- Planners for faculty
- Water, Gatorade, crackers & underwear to the School Nurses
- Fall Dance Program
- Sunflower Growing Contest

UPCOMING EVENTS & VOLUNTEERING

- Volunteer award ceremony, PTSA Fall Social
- School Picture Day
- Fall Book Fair & Family Fun Night (tbc)
- Fall Fundraiser
- Town of Galway Trick or Treat Trail

REASONS TO BECOME A MEMBER AND WAYS TO SUPPORT PTSA

- **You do not have to come to a meeting – ever!** But we will keep you informed about our events and volunteer opportunities.
- \$2 of your \$6 membership fees stays with Galway PTSA. \$1.75 goes to the NYS PTA. \$2.25 goes to National PTA. We are part of these organizations. We get our insurance and our 501c3 status through NYS PTA.
- The NYS PTA website is <https://nyspta.org/>. Your membership to Galway PTSA makes you a member of the NYS PTA. You can find information about their programs, events, and advocacy efforts, as well as member benefits available through the National PTA from this website.
- Designate us as the beneficiary of your Amazon Smile account and 0.5% of eligible purchases will come to Galway PTSA. It's just the same as regular amazon shopping, but you need to go through <https://smile.amazon.com/> . When asked to choose the beneficiary for your purchases, search for Galway PTSA. Our official title: PTA New York Congress 12-070 Galway PTSA. Once this is set up, you do not have to do anything more. Amazon smile is also available through the mobile app.

To become a Galway PTSA member, go to:

<https://galwayptsamembership.cheddarup.com>



SPIRIT WEAR IS AVAILABLE TO ORDER

We offer a range of Galway Eagle clothing for all the family. This can be shipped to your home, delivered via your child, or we will arrange a local pick up. PTSA makes a minimal amount on each order to cover some (but not all) expenses. We do not use this as a fundraiser. Please understand these orders are not immediately dispatched to our vendor when you place them. Our volunteer coordinator waits until she has several, because we are asking for custom orders, in small quantities, year-round. The vendor has also experienced delays to their supply of garments because of COVID. Once completed, our volunteer collects the orders and arranges deliveries to suit you. She has also taken a lot of time to set up the website to make ordering easier for everyone. Please be patient.

<https://my.cheddarup.com/c/galwayptsaspiritwear>



MEET OUR OFFICERS

Emma Obern, Galway PTSA President for the second year.

Pre-COVID you'd know me as the Book Fair lady - often seen wearing a ridiculous hat. (I already have some new headgear for the Fall Fair.) I coached Odyssey of the Mind for several years and have been involved in numerous PTSA events. Last year I ran the virtual competitions, worked Picture Day, The Town of Galway Trick or Treat Trail, School Picnics, and the Galway Family Fun Day, as well as meddling in everything else PTSA behind the scenes. All year (other than quarantines), I was making at least weekly deliveries to the school, including lots of recess equipment and pizza for Scavenger Hunt prizes. If you're still unsure, I have an English accent. Although I'm a full-fledged American citizen after living here 18 years.



Professionally I'm an artist and illustrator, but that often takes a backseat to numerous other projects. Over the years I've done many things, including manage a commercial art gallery in England, worked in restaurants in the UK and USA, a scuba diving shop in New Zealand, done landscaping, taught a hand embroidery class, and at some point, found myself working on roofs installing solar panels, and cutting, splitting, and delivering firewood.

When I'm not wearing silly hats or painting, I love to kayak, swim, hike, ski, and snowshoe. I practice Tai Chi, Qigong and Karate. I'm an active member of the Fish House Fish and Game Club, and the Clifton Park Chapter of The Well Armed Woman. I have a big garden, far too many flower beds, and love to cook. And while I've been fortunate to travel around the world, I'm really happy to call Galway home for the last twelve years. My favorite person: my daughter Elizabeth, is in 6th grade. She's the reason I recently dusted off my flute, so I can accompany her saxophone, and I also find myself learning how to shoot a bow.

Trisha Hopper, Galway PTSA Treasurer



My name is Trisha Campbell Hopper, and this is my first year serving as Treasurer of the Galway PTSA. As Treasurer I will maintain records to track funds and financial transactions. I will also be responsible for preparing the annual budget and monthly financial reports.

I have a Master's Degree in Accounting, and I am a licensed CPA. I have worked for many years as an auditor in both large and small accounting firms. I also spent a number of years traveling around the northeast auditing various businesses.

I currently volunteer in the Elementary School with the school banking program. I also volunteer at the Book Fair, Holiday Gift Shop, Picture Day, Kindergarten Screening, School Picnics and in my daughter's classroom.

In my spare time I enjoy spending time with my family, volunteering, doing DIY projects and spending time outdoors.

I look forward to working with the Galway PTSA this year.

Barbara Mead, Galway PTSA Vice President for the second year.

Hi everyone, my name is Barb Mead and I'm happy to serve as the PTSA Vice President again this year! My son Wyatt is going into fifth grade. I joined PTSA to better understand how the school works and get to know the people who spend all day with the kiddos. My son and I truly love the times we get to see each other, whether it's a quick hello in the hall or more time at Book Fair previews. I volunteer at many events and help with the planning and setup of activities when I'm available. My main goal this year is getting more people involved with PTSA. Being a member and volunteer is not as scary as you might think. I promise we won't come chasing you down the hallway with clipboards! I would absolutely love to get more parents and families involved with the school events, in any way.

I have also been a part of the Elementary Building Team (EBT), but most kids will know me as one of the school banking ladies. (We are also trying to expand this year!) This gives me the opportunity to be in school at least once a week and I get to know the children by name. Anything within the school that I can help with, if I have time, I try to be there.

In the few hours away from school activities, I enjoy playing with Wyatt and spending time with our family. I am an avid equestrian and have been guiding horseback trails in Lake Luzerne. Any chance I get to work with animals I jump right in. With a degree in biology, I have had opportunities to work closely with exotic and endangered species. On the flipside I love playing video games, am an avid reader and I love all things art.

Hopefully this year I will get a chance to meet and work with you personally. Please reach out to us so we can come together to improve our children's experience in and out of school. My focus is and always will be the kids and how we can bring smiles to their faces!



Amber Eaton, Galway PTSA Secretary



This is my 6th year serving on the PTSA board. Over the six years I've held both the Treasurer and Secretary positions. I also help with Spirit Wear, fundraising, and all things the PTSA does in an online capacity.

My husband Doug and I have two boys ages 12 (7th grade) and 6 (1st grade). They are both in Boy Scouts, so I also volunteer as Treasurer of Pack 5 Cub Scouts. When I'm not volunteering, we enjoy going mountain biking as a family, our low-key family movie nights, hanging out with friends, and of course playing video games.

Professionally, I am a former Software Developer of 20+ years and currently work as an Accounting Specialist doing accounts payable and accounts receivable, both in the automotive field.

GALWAY PTSA & COVID PROTOCOLS

Since March 2020, we have been living with COVID. Most of us have stayed well, although we all know someone who's been affected. Last year we all experienced virtual school at some point, either as a choice, or when we were hit by quarantines – our own, and when too many school employees had to stay home. There is a good chance we could experience a pivot to virtual learning at some point this year, but we are very well prepared.

Wearing masks has been a contentious issue from the start. Galway PTSA was approached over the summer of 2020 about our stance on masks. We were again approached during the summer of 2021. On each occasion we have declined to make public statements or join the debate. This is for several reasons, all to do with how our organization is set up, it's governance and who we represent.

Our by-laws state the purpose of Galway PTSA is as follows:

- To promote the welfare of children and youth in the home, school, places of worship, and throughout the community. This is done through advocacy and education in collaboration with parents, families, teachers, educators, students, and the public; developed through conferences, committees, projects, and programs.
- To raise the standards of home life.
- To advocate for laws that further the education, physical and mental health, welfare, and safety of children and youth.
- To promote the collaboration and engagement of families and educators in the education of children and youth.
- **To engage the public in united efforts to secure the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being of all children and youth.**
- To advocate for fiscal responsibility regarding public tax dollars in public education funding.

We are a 501(c)(3) organization, organized exclusively for charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes. The following are basic principles of this PTSA in common with those of the National PTA and the New York State PTA:

- **Galway PTSA shall be noncommercial, nonsectarian, and nonpartisan.**
- Shall work to engage and empower children, families, and educators within schools and communities to provide quality education for all children and youth.
- **Shall seek to participate in the decision-making process by influencing school policy and advocating for children's issues, recognizing that the legal responsibility to make decisions has been delegated by the people to boards of education, state education authorities, and local education authorities.**
- Commitment to inclusiveness and equity.

Galway PTSA's membership and Officers have widely differing opinions on masks, vaccines, and other COVID protocols. We represent those who want our students to be mask-free, and those who would not send their children back to school without a mask. Ultimately, we all want a return to normal, to no masks, and no restrictions. We only disagree on the timing. We have a duty to represent everyone, and that is why we respect everyone's right to their own opinions. You will hear our individual voices on this subject, but as an organization, Galway PTSA will be adhering to Galway CSD policies. Our events in school will have the same mask requirements as regular school. Our volunteers, if they wish to help at events in the school, will have to abide by Galway CSD requirements for vaccination, COVID testing and masks.

We encourage everyone who feels strongly about this issue and any other, to get involved in Galway CSD. There are Board of Education meetings every month. Our administrators have always been open to communication from parents and the community. We all shared the experience of lockdown and saw our community coming together to do things for our children. Galway PTSA will continue those efforts and continue to build relationships with all our community.

Galway Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) Membership and Volunteer Opportunities!

Galway PTSA would like to give you this opportunity to become a new member or renew your membership of the PTSA. Benefits of membership include frequent email communications, voting rights concerning PTSA business, and showing support of our school, our students, and our teachers. Your support allows us to continue funding the programs and numerous events school wide for Grades K-12. **Since the 'S' in PTSA stands for 'Student', we encouraged Student memberships as well!**
Membership is only \$6 per person!

Complete the back this form and give to any PTSA officer at an event or mail to Galway PTSA 5317 Sacandaga Road, Galway, NY 12074. You can also drop off/send in with your child at the Elementary or High School office in an envelope marked "Attention PTSA Membership". Make checks payable to Galway PTSA.

You can also register online! Scan this barcode, or go to this web address:

<https://galwayptsamembership.cheddarup.com>



Get involved – we need your gifts and talents 😊

PTSA is a national organization placed in schools to help parents, students, teachers and communities succeed in all areas of their education and well-being. Please let us know if you can help us out with the many programs and events we have planned for the school year. Your participation really makes a difference!

Say **Yes!** I want to support and help with the many events PTSA holds for our school! Please **circle** all events below that you would like to help out with or would like more information about.

Because of COVID-19 this school year, there will be less events, but we still need volunteers to help with planning for any events that may happen this year, and for events for the following year!

**PTSA
Fundraising**

**School Picture
Days**

Virtual Events

**Thank Your Bus
Driver Day**

Book Fairs

**Kindergarten
Screening**

**Holiday
Gift Shop**

After Prom Party

Family Fun Nights

Graduation

Spirit Wear

School Picnics

Please Note: Any activity in which you handle money does require a paid membership.



Galway PTSA

Membership Application 2021-2022

Member #1 Information		
Name	Phone Number <input type="checkbox"/> Landline <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile <input type="checkbox"/> Text ok?	Membership Type <input type="checkbox"/> Standard <input type="checkbox"/> Student >> Grade
Email	Interested in Volunteering <input type="checkbox"/> YES! <input type="checkbox"/> No	Demographic Information for Awards <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Community Member

Member #2 Information		
Name	Phone Number <input type="checkbox"/> Landline <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile <input type="checkbox"/> Text ok?	Membership Type <input type="checkbox"/> Standard <input type="checkbox"/> Student >> Grade
Email	Interested in Volunteering <input type="checkbox"/> YES! <input type="checkbox"/> No	Demographic Information for Awards <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Community Member

Member #3 Information		
Name	Phone Number <input type="checkbox"/> Landline <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile <input type="checkbox"/> Text ok?	Membership Type <input type="checkbox"/> Standard <input type="checkbox"/> Student >> Grade
Email	Interested in Volunteering <input type="checkbox"/> YES! <input type="checkbox"/> No	Demographic Information for Awards <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Community Member

Member #4 Information		
Name	Phone Number <input type="checkbox"/> Landline <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile <input type="checkbox"/> Text ok?	Membership Type <input type="checkbox"/> Standard <input type="checkbox"/> Student >> Grade
Email	Interested in Volunteering <input type="checkbox"/> YES! <input type="checkbox"/> No	Demographic Information for Awards <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Community Member

Member #5 Information		
Name	Phone Number <input type="checkbox"/> Landline <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile <input type="checkbox"/> Text ok?	Membership Type <input type="checkbox"/> Standard <input type="checkbox"/> Student >> Grade
Email	Interested in Volunteering <input type="checkbox"/> YES! <input type="checkbox"/> No	Demographic Information for Awards <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Community Member

Member #6 Information		
Name	Phone Number <input type="checkbox"/> Landline <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile <input type="checkbox"/> Text ok?	Membership Type <input type="checkbox"/> Standard <input type="checkbox"/> Student >> Grade
Email	Interested in Volunteering <input type="checkbox"/> YES! <input type="checkbox"/> No	Demographic Information for Awards <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Community Member

Number of Memberships: _____ X \$6.00 = \$ _____ (Total Amount Due)

Please remit Cash or Check payable to "Galway PTSA"

PTSA Use Only:

Amount paid: \$ _____ Payment Method Cash Check # _____ Date _____ Initials _____

Number of cards Issued: _____ Entered into MemberHub Online Membership System Date _____ Initials _____

Entered into GroupVine Email System Date _____ Initials _____