

Middlebrook PTA Committee Guide

www.middlebrookpta.com

Dear Middlebrook Families,

On behalf of the PTA, we would like to welcome everyone to Middlebrook School.

Middlebrook is working hard to provide a high quality education for every child. But we can't do it alone. Parent and community involvement is critical to creating great schools.

One of the best ways to enhance your family's experience at Middlebrook is to become actively involved in any way you can, in your child's education. Studies show that parent involvement --your involvement -in education increases your children's chances for success in school and in life. Students with involved parents perform better in school, score better on standardized tests, have fewer behavioral problems, are less likely to use drugs and alcohol, and go to better colleges. When you participate in your children's education, say hello to the warm feeling of satisfaction you get when you know that you've helped your children.

Joining the PTA is a great way to get involved! A generation ago, the mention of PTA parents -primarily mothers --conjured up images of bake sales and fund-raisers. Today, moms are still predominant, but there are also many dads. The issues on the minds of parents and teachers go far beyond bake sales and are as diverse as the students in American classrooms. We are also aware that more and more families have two parents working which is why even an hour contribution is valued and appreciated.

Start first with the ideas that appeal to you most and will easily fit into your schedule, and then add others as time permits. The good news is that no matter how little time you have, you will find a number of things that you can do every day to help your children.

If you think PTA moms and dads just organize fundraisers and school carnivals, you might want to attend our next meeting which occurs once a

month. The Parent Teacher Association can be your best link to teachers and is one of the easiest ways to become involved with your child's school.

Commonly Asked Questions

What do PTA organizations do?

They support and speak on behalf of children in the schools, in the community, and before government groups and other organizations that make decisions affecting children. They help parents develop the skills they need to raise and protect their children. And they encourage parent and public involvement in public schools across the country.

What will I get out of joining the PTA?

- Regular updates on school activities and policies
- Access to teachers and administrators at your child's school
- Access to parents of other children at the school
- A forum to discuss concerns and problems at school.
- Access to resources on parenting, education, and more from the National PTA
- Appreciation from teachers for all your help
- Education about school policies, state funding, and other issues concerning your school

As a PTA member what would I be expected to do?

Your level of involvement is up to you, but here are some of the main things the PTA will expect from you:

Middlebrook PTA raises money throughout the year for projects and improvements at the school, such as money for supplies, scholarships, computers, or field trips. You will likely be called on to help out or contribute.

Your voice is important to help shape the goals of our PTA. Feel free to address any concerns you have at meetings.

You'll get the most out of your PTA membership by staying involved. Meetings are usually scheduled in the evenings. If you can't make the meetings, see about getting minutes and try to make it to fundraisers and other PTA events.

Do I have to pay to be a member of the PTA?

Yes, the cost is minimal. It is only \$5.00/person and \$10.00/family, and it goes to a great cause-our kids.

How do I join the PTA?

It's easy! Simply fill out a membership form and send it with your dues into the school via your child's teacher.

PTA Myths Revealed

Have you succumbed to the myths surrounding the PTA? Here is a rundown of what's fact and what's fiction about the PTA.

MYTH: PTA meetings are long, drawn out affairs filled with boring roll-calls.

FACT: PTA meetings last one hour and are filled with useful information for parents. Mrs. Colello gives an update on what's happening throughout the school-news you won't hear anywhere else. You can ask questions and voice your opinions. And you can help decide how to raise money for the school and – even more importantly- how to spend it.

MYTH: PTA members are a tight-knit social group that is hard to break into.

FACT: PTA members are there for one reason: To help their child and the school succeed. Members will put their egos aside and work together to do what is best for everyone.

MYTH: If you are a PTA member, you have to commit to hours and hours of volunteer time.

FACT: You can volunteer as little or as much as your schedule allows. You can just pay your dues and come to meetings if that is all you have time for. Or you can sign up for an activity or even chair a committee if you desire. Whatever you do will be greatly appreciated.

MYTH: Money raised through the PTA goes toward paperwork and other useless expenses.

FACT: All money raised goes directly back into our schools.

Choosing a Committee That Is Right for You

After School Enrichment

Description:

This committee handles the organization and scheduling for after school activities and programs.

Duties:

To find and schedule instructors for each program,

Characteristics/Skills Needed:

Creativity--Ability to develop new and interesting ideas.

Dependability--Can be counted on to complete tasks. Organization--

Can make a logical order out of many competing interests.

Banners

Description:

This committee helps maintain and organizes the creation of the teacher and staff banners that hang in the hallways of the school.

Duties:

Contact new teachers and organize the creation of banners for them as well as maintain existing banners (make name changes, and alternations as need be).

Characteristics/Skills Needed:

Creativity--Ability to develop new and interesting ideas.

Dependability--Can be counted on to complete tasks. Organization--

Can make a logical order out of many competing interests.

Helpful Tools:

Glue gun and felt!

Lifespan of Committee:

Entire school year as needed

Board of Ed Liaison

Description:

This committee attends the Trumbull Board of Education meetings and reports back to the PTA at the monthly meetings or by phone or email correspondence.

Duties:

Represent our school at monthly meetings and voice any Middlebrook concerns, if need be.

Time Needed:

Approximately 1-2 hours once a month.

Personal Benefits:

Find out what is going on at other schools and in the Board of Education.

Book Fair

Description:

Organize Fall and Spring Book Fairs.

Duties:

Work with committee members and Scholastic to plan 2 book fairs per year – one in the fall and one in the spring.

Time needed:

Total Time per year: 2 weeks

A committee meeting or two prior to the book fair to divide up the duties:

- Sending out flyers
- Hanging up flyers and posters around the school
- Collecting money from students for donations to the teachers
- Organize volunteers to work at the fair
- Setting up the fair the day before it begins
- Working at the fair – usually two days and one night
- Re-ordering books with Scholastic, if needed
- Closing up the fair and packing up what is left

Additionally time will be spent on the following:

- Working with the treasurer for start up money and depositing all of the money collected.
- Working with Scholastic in planning the fair
- Work with the office staff/PTA on the dates and locations to see what is available

Characteristics/skills needed:

Creativity--Ability to create flyers, posters and to decorate the gym according to the theme of the fair.

Dependability—You will need to attend the fair and be available should any emergency arise.

Organization—The week of the fair is a very busy time with many things happening at once.

Lifespan of committee:

Twice a year your life is very hectic for about a week. Otherwise it is a

few hours prior to the book fair.

Personal benefits:

Bringing books to the school for the kids is the best benefit. You get to help all of the students chose their books, work with other parents at the fairs.

Correspondence

Description:

Keeps members and staff updated on upcoming events or PTA news.

Duties:

Send Executive Board meeting reminders to members, monthly; send out all acknowledgement cards and correspondence.

Time needed:

Actual work time to implement may vary.

Characteristics/skills needed:

Verbal and written communication skills.

Organization--Can make a logical order out of many competing interests.

Helpful tools:

Telephone and Computer

Lifespan of committee:

Entire school year.

Cultural Diversity**Description**

This committee is responsible to coordinate and schedule multi-cultural events throughout the school year.

Duties:

- Coordinate monthly display case for different countries/culture
- Organizing “International Table” for Middlebrook Holiday Boutique
- Plan the once a year “International Festival” at Middlebrook and any other activities that may arise at our once a month/six weeks Cultural Diversity Committee meeting.

Time Needed:

Depending on what is planned, could be several hours for one person or several committee members to finish a project.

Characteristics/Skills Needed

Creativity – Ability to develop new and interesting multicultural ideas or programs.

Dependability: Can be counted on to complete tasks. Originality and Organizational skills.

Personal Benefits:

This is a real opportunity to meet staff and families with a variety of cultural backgrounds.

Father’s Club**Description:**

The Middlebrook Fathers Club serves as a forum for fathers to become more involved with their children and their school. A subset of the PTA, the mission of the Fathers Club is to provide service to the School Community through projects, school beautification and fun events held throughout the school year.

Duties:

Volunteer for club run events such as movie nights, parties, Spring Fling, minor repairs, etc.

Time Needed:

An hour or 2 for events, meeting attendance is optional

Characteristics/Skills Needed:

Desire to do good things for the children's school experience and see your kids have fun!

Helpful Tools:

Willingness to help out, trade skills are always an added bonus but not necessary

Personal Benefits:

You can experience the gratification of being involved with your child's school and sharing their experiences with them. Contributing to the enrichment of the student body.

Gifts/Sunshine

Description:

This person will research gift ideas for the school; report to the Executive Board; coordinate ideas with the administration and staff; purchase gifts for custodial and office staff.

Time Needed:

Varies depending on the needs of the committee.

Gift Wrap

Description:

This committee organizes the largest fundraiser for our school.

Duties:

- Finding a company that will give us the biggest return on sales.
- Meet with Account Representative
- Create incentives for fundraiser
- Set up showcase or display board
- Prepare pamphlets for every student
- Create memos
- Schedule games/drawings
- Collect all orders and money
- Account for all sales
- Get students involved and anxious to sell
- Count up each order and balance money with each order
- Handle all discrepancies, disputes, and missing and/or damaged items
- Hang posters
- Creative flyers. (Copy and distribute)
- Get all notices that will be sent home to students approved by office personnel
- Recruit helpers for delivery of products

Time Needed:

- 4-5 hrs preparing pamphlets for each student
- 1.5 hrs. Delivery of pamphlets to classrooms
- 5 hrs. One night of distribution of all sales
- 5 hrs. Tallying up all orders (phone calls for discrepancies, etc)
- 1/2 hrs Make copies of all checks

Characteristics/Skills needed:

- Comfortable with handling money
- Good with figures
- Telephone skills (with parents, students and account representative)
- Copier
- Able to organize time well.
- Can be counted on to complete tasks

Helpful Tools:

Calculator Copier Telephone skills Volunteers (especially for distribution night)

Lifespan of Committee:

6 weeks

Personal Benefits:

It's great knowing that our school will benefit immensely from the outcome of our profits. It's also nice to give a little something of yourself to the school your child attends.

Grade 5 Activities**Description:**

This committee organizes and oversees the activities that are made available to the 5th grade class, including, the class t-shirt, the slide show, the class picnic, and the talent show.

Duties:

Find and organize individuals who will assist with above tasks.

Characteristics/Skills Needed:

Creativity--Ability to develop new and interesting ideas.

Dependability--Can be counted on to complete tasks. Organization--

Can make a logical order out of many competing interests.

Personal Benefits:

You would have a special role in making a child's memory of his last year at Middlebrook spectacular!

Handbook/Calendar**Description**

This person will gather and type pertinent information needed for the Handbook/School Calendar; deliver copy to the printer; distribute Handbook/Calendar to all Middlebrook families.

Time Needed:

A few days in August to gather and update information.

Characteristics/Skills Needed:

Creativity--Ability to develop new and interesting ideas.

Dependability--Can be counted on to complete tasks. Organization--

Can make a logical order out of many competing interests.

Helpful Tools:

A computer, email and a telephone.

Personal Benefits:

You get the first glance at the year's planned activities.

Holiday Boutique

Description:

An event that gives children the opportunity to do holiday shopping for family and friends at very reasonable prices.

Duties:

- Submit Permit
- Organize tables
- Distribute flyers
- Find volunteers to work

Recruit sub-committee members to run an individual table

Time needed:

- Planning the event may take several committee meetings, phone calls or emails.
- Depending on sub-committees, several hours may be needed to either shop, make phone calls to other parents, complete above duties, or assemble items.
- For the actual 2 days of the boutique time can be divided among chairpersons. Usually the boutique is the first week in December from 9-2 & 6:30-8:30 Thursday and 9-2 Friday.

Characteristics/skills needed:

Creativity

Dependability

Organization

Lifespan of committee:

2 days

Personal benefits:

This is an awesome event for the children. To see the excitement in

their eyes while they are shopping for mom, dad, brother, sister, grandma, grandpa, aunty, uncle, dog, cat, etc. is just wonderful.

Hospitality

Description:

Provides refreshments for events such as PTA meetings or programs.

Duties:

Coordinate refreshment tables for large events such as the holiday boutique, contacting volunteers to help bake or work tables. Provide refreshments for monthly PTA meetings and other school events.

Time Needed:

Varies depending on the activities of the school. Prior to each event, a few hours may be needed to plan refreshments and to either buy/bake or make phone calls asking parents to contribute.

Characteristics/Skills Needed:

Resourcefulness: Finds inventive ways to complete a project.

Helpful Tools:

Pretty baskets or trays

Tablecloths and creative centerpieces

Lifespan of Committee:

As needed throughout the school year.

Personal Benefits:

If you love to bake or entertain, this is your committee! It also enables you to meet new people and stay involved in school activities.

Library**Description:**

This person acts as a liaison between the Media Center Specialist and the PTA

Duties:

Communicate with the Media Center Specialist to find out if she wants anything reported at the PTA meetings.

Time Needed:

About 15 minutes the week before PTA meetings to discuss with the Media Center Specialist anything that needs to be said at PTA meeting. Also, might need to help coordinate volunteers in September.

Characteristics/Skills Needed:

Dependability--Can be counted on to complete tasks. Organization--Can make a logical order out of many competing interests.

Lifespan of Committee:

Entire school year

Personal Benefits:

Get a first glimpse of what the children are doing in the Media Center.

Membership**Description:**

To encourage parents and staff to join the PTA, so that they can participate in PTA meetings and cast votes on PTA issues.

Duties:

- Run membership drive at the start of the school year
- Attend Back-To-School Nights and solicit new members
- Plan and run End-of-the-Year PTA Board Dinner
- Produce excel chart of all members including child's name and grade
- Collect dues and make necessary deposits
- Produce PTA Memberships Cards for all members

Time Needed:

- Several days in early September including all Back-To-School Nights
- A week to produce and distribute PTA Membership Cards
- A day in May to set up the dinner
- One week or so in June to follow up and run the Year End dinner

Characteristics/skills needed:

Excellent communication and outreach skills Organization skills to keep order of all deposits

Lifespan of committee:

- One to two weeks in September during the membership drive
- One day in May to set up the dinner date and send out notices to PTA members
- One week in June to coordinate the Year End Dinner

Personal benefits:

Great opportunity to interact with parents and staff during the Back-To-School Nights The Year End Dinner is ALWAYS a fun event!

Newsletter

Description:

Committee is responsible for developing and distributing a bi-monthly newsletter to parents and staff.

Duties:

- Solicit information regarding upcoming school events, print updates on past activities, as well as, providing helpful information for parents and print news from teachers regarding classroom events/curriculum.

- Keep a calendar of events upon which to report
- Copy and distribute newsletter.

Time needed:

At least a several hours per newsletter.

Characteristics/skills needed:

Creativity--Ability to develop new and interesting ideas.

Dependability--Can be counted on to complete tasks. Resourcefulness--

Finds inventive ways to complete a project.

Helpful tools:

computer / PTA Room Copier

Lifespan of committee:

August through June.

Personal benefits:

Most newsletter work can be accomplished at home. You will always be aware of school events and activities.

Plant Sale

Description:

This committee runs the annual PTA plant sale in the spring.

Duties:

Select date and check with office regarding location and time, organize volunteers, purchase plants and set-up the sale.

Publicity

Description:

Provide Publicity for the school and the PTA in the Trumbull Times and Channel 17 on a weekly basis and the Connecticut Post for special occasions.

Duties:

Work with the school staff and the PTA Presidents to get the upcoming events information to submit to the paper/TV channel. Attending the PTA meetings is helpful as much of the information is discussed at the meetings and often when there is a change in the date, time or location, this is the first place that it is discussed.

Time needed:

About 5-10 minutes per week to send out e-mails to office staff/PTA presidents, put the information into the correct format and then send it to the Trumbull Times and Channel 17. On special school occasions, it may be necessary for you to go to the school to take photos or to work with the staff/PTA to get photos to submit to the paper. Also on special occasions, an article will be submitted to you from a committee member to be submitted to the paper.

Characteristics/skills needed:

Computer Literate – the ability to send/receive e-mails, type articles, attach photos to e-mails.

Good communication skills – spelling and grammar are important.

Lifespan of committee:

5-10 minutes per week to send e-mails

Personal benefits:

You get to know what is going on at the school first! A good and easy way to be involved with the PTA.

Reflections**Description:**

Coordinate the Reflections contest for Middlebrook school; distribute entry flyers, collect and judge entries, provide acknowledgement for winners.

Characteristics/Skills Needed:

Creativity--Ability to develop new and interesting ideas.

Dependability--Can be counted on to complete tasks. Resourcefulness--

Finds inventive ways to complete a project.

Room Coordinators**Description:**

Organize the room mothers for each class via telephone calls late in August; relay information to room mothers as needed during the year. Set up emergency contacts for each classroom.

Time Needed:

1 – 2 committee meetings in August and early September.

Characteristics/Skills Needed:

Creativity--Ability to develop new and interesting ideas.

Dependability--Can be counted on to complete tasks. Resourcefulness--

Finds inventive ways to complete a project.

Safety

Description:

Parents devoted to the standards of safety in a school.

Duties:

Work closely with principal and staff. Schedule kindergarten parents to ride buses the 1st week of school; supply safety tips and programs during the year;

Time needed:

Actual work time to implement may vary.

Characteristics/skills needed:

Creativity--Ability to develop new and interesting ideas. Organization--

Can make a logical order out of many competing interests.

Helpful tools:

Telephone Computer

Personal benefits:

Social interaction.

School Enhancement

Description:

Work closely with principal to determine areas that the PTA and

parents can focus on to improve the appearance of our school.

Duties:

Organize the maintenance of the flower gardens by working closely with parents, scout leaders, troops and other volunteers to clean up and beautify our campus.

Each spring, coordinate with 1st grade teachers regarding spring planting and order flats of flowers and herbs through Plant Sale Committee for classroom.

Time Needed:

Usually several hours during the fall and spring season only.

Characteristics/Skills Needed:

Creativity--Ability to develop new and interesting ideas. Organization--
Can make a logical order out of many competing interests.

Helpful Tools:

A rake, shears and a strong back!

Lifespan of Committee:

Early fall and late spring

Personal Benefits:

If you love gardening, then this is your committee. It gives you a chance to do what you love and to create a beautiful landscape for parents, teachers, staff and children to be proud of!

School Photos**Description:**

Organizing photo day for school.

Duties:

Schedule volunteers Distribute flyers Distribute pictures when they arrive

Time needed:

- 1 hour to copy and sort flyers
- 15 minutes to make calls to find volunteers
- 1 hour to sort and distribute pictures

Characteristics/skills needed:

Organized Enthusiastic

Lifespan of committee:

1 day

Personal benefits:

It is a lot of fun watching the kids preparing to capture their image for the school year. It's a nice feeling to know you helped them get the best

picture they could.

School Store

Description:

To buy all supplies needed to run the school store; schedule workers; keep record of transactions.

Duties:

Order merchandise as needed, keep inventory and sell in school lobby.

Time Needed:

2 - 3 hours per month on scheduled days.

Characteristics/Skills Needed:

Dependability--Can be counted on to complete tasks.

Lifespan of Committee:

September to May

Personal Benefits:

It's a fun way to interact with the children while assisting them with their purchases.

Scholarship**Description:**

Evaluate the financial needs of graduating high school students for a \$1,000 scholarship.

Duties:

Attend 1 meeting with one PTA member from each Trumbull school to review the submitted essays and the financial data. All students are given a number for identification and remain anonymous. Approximately 7 scholarships are awarded annually.

Time Needed:

Approximately 3 – 4 hours one time a year to attend the meeting.

Characteristics/Skills Needed:

Dependability – Can be counted on to complete task.

Personal Benefits:

This is a wonderful opportunity to help other students from our community further their education. It is also a good way to meet other PTA members from our surrounding schools.

Spirit Wear**Description:**

Offers Middlebrook families the opportunity to purchase a variety of wearable promotional merchandise bearing the Middlebrook School logo.

Duties:

Working with a vendor, choosing merchandise offerings, preparing, distributing, collecting and tallying merchandise orders, tracking orders and distributing merchandise

Time Needed:

A few visits to school to collect orders, 1-2 hours to tally, check and submit order forms. Several hours to check in and coordinate distribution of orders.

Characteristics/ Skills Needed:

Dependability--Can be counted on to complete tasks. Organization--
Can make a logical order out of many competing interests.

Lifespan:

This is a once a year fundraiser, so the commitment is flexible and time-limited; much of the work can be done at home.

TAY

Description: This committee stands for Trumbull Arts for Youth.

Duties:

The PTA Council selects a particular cultural event which is made available to all Trumbull schools. This committee contacts the PTA council representative to select a date, corresponds with the office to make sure the date is available and organizes any assistance that is needed by the performers.

Teacher Appreciation

Description:

Provides a week of activities and goodies to show appreciation to the school staff.

Duties:

Coordinates Teacher Appreciation Week dates with the general calendar or the school / county school system dates.

Time needed:

Planning the week's activities may take several committee meetings. Depending on what is planned, several hours may be needed to shop, gather materials, or make phone calls to other parents soliciting donations. During the actual week, time may be spent according to what is planned for each day. To deliver flowers may only take an hour in the morning; to provide a luncheon may take several hours in the middle of the day.

Characteristics/skills needed:

Creativity--Ability to develop new and interesting ideas.
Dependability--Can be counted on to complete tasks. Organization--
Can make a logical order out of many competing interests.

Lifespan of committee:

Usually one work week, Monday through Friday.

Personal benefits:

This is a real opportunity to get to know staff members, and to work with other parents throughout the week.

TSV**Description:**

Send out interest finder to get parents to help committee chairs with their events.

Time Needed:

Maybe 6 hours for entire year. It is busiest at the beginning of the year when you get all of the responses and have to create lists for committee chairs.

Characteristics/Skills Needed:

Dependability--Can be counted on to complete tasks. Organization--
Can make a logical order out of many competing interests.

TPSLD (Trumbull Parents of Students with Learning Differences)

Description:

To support the goals and mission of TPSLD at the local school levels and is engaged in district wide opportunities to serve the TPSLD community.

Duties:

Act as a liaison with parents, administrators, PTA leadership and community leaders to promote support and advocacy for students with learning differences and their families. TPSLD representatives are encouraged to attend PTA meetings and provide committee reports.

Characteristics/Skills Needed:

Dependability--Can be counted on to complete tasks.

Lifespan of Committee:

The full scholastic year.

Welcoming/Newcomers

Description:

This committee organizes folders of information for newcomers to the school. Information in the folder is selected to assist the new family to both the school and the town and is available in the school office.

Wellness

Description:

This committee encompasses Nutrition, Physical Activity, and PACT (Parents and Children Together) Prevention. Wellness works closely with the superintendent's Health Advisory Committee to help educate children, families, and staff about healthier choices. Some activities and events include Nutritious Snack Day, Kids in Motion and Red Ribbon Week.

Duties:

A designated school representative attends bi-monthly Wellness Team meetings. Committee members help to execute activities and events presented by the Wellness Team and Health Advisory Committee, as well as work with the school's administration and staff to plan school-specific activities/events. The committee also solicits various food/prize donations. Finally, the committee submits timely Wellness information for the school's bi-monthly newsletter.

Time Needed:

The designated school representative only will need 1 to 2 hours every other month to attend Wellness Team meetings. The time required for other events and activities varies, and depends upon one's level of involvement with the committee.

Characteristics/Skills Needed

Anyone with personal experience or interest in the nutrition, physical fitness, or sports fields would enjoy working on this committee. Also, people with good communication skills and the ability to balance creativity with practical planning would be an asset to Wellness.

Helpful Tools:

Computer/email/telephone

Lifespan of Committee:

This committee is active during the full academic year (plus one potential summer meeting for the designated school representative).

Personal Benefits:

This is an opportunity to interact with all members of the school community, including administrators, staff, teachers, and students, as well as outside resources. There is an added potential to effect positive changes in the school environment. Lastly, there is flexibility to volunteer time for this committee from home and/or during off-hours in a variety of capacities.

Yearbook**Description:**

Responsible for all aspects of getting the yearbook into production.

Duties:

Obtain pictures of students in candid settings (classroom, school parties and events, scout events, sports events & field trips). Create layout and design pages. Contract with Vendor (Lifetouch) to produce book, choose cover art, coordinate with 5th grade class for their special pages, decide on a selling price, publicize and sell the book, and finally, to distribute the book in June.

Time Needed:

Total amount of time required: approximately 30 hours per committee member over the course of one scholastic year.

Characteristics/Skills Needed

Creativity--Ability to develop new and interesting ideas.

Dependability--Can be counted on to complete tasks. Organization--

Can make a logical order out of many competing interests.

Lifespan of Committee:

The full scholastic year

Personal Benefits:

This is a real opportunity to get to know staff members, to get to know the kids and to do creative work.