CMES PTA Frequently Asked Questions

**Why Should I Become a PTA Member**?

 The Carroll Manor Elementary School (CMES) Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a non-profit organization, run solely by volunteers, to help support the daily needs of CMES students and to provide a voice for our school community on the local, state, and national levels. Without membership, the PTA would not be able to function to provide classroom supplies, field trip transportation, books for students, cultural arts assemblies, teacher appreciation events, or any of the fun PTA activities that our students love, including the Variety Show, Paint Nights, Movie Nights, Glow Parties, School Dances, and PTA Picnics, among other events.

**Who Can Become a PTA Member**?

 Anyone with ties to CMES can become a PTA member including teachers, parents, guardians, grandparents, community members, etc.

**How Do I Apply to Become a PTA Member**?

 There are two ways to apply. The first is a paper membership form that can be completed and returned to the school with your child or directly to the front office. The membership fee(s), if applicable, should be returned with the form. Cash or checks are acceptable, and checks can be made payable to the CMES PTA. The second way to apply is through the CMES PTA website, <http://cmes.my-pta.org/>. You can register on the website, fill out an online membership form, and pay your membership fee online with a credit card. You should only use the latter option if you choose to pay by credit card. If you are paying by cash, check, or requesting to have your fee waived, you should use register via the paper form. A copy of the paper form was sent home with every child at the beginning of the school year but can also be found under the “Forms” tab on the PTA website.

**Why Is There a Membership Fee and Where Does This Money Go?**

 At CMES, the PTA Membership fee is $10 per individual. The CMES PTA has historically waived all membership fees for our CMES teachers. $5 of each individual membership fee goes to the Maryland and National PTA, to give our school a voice at the state and national levels. The remaining $5 stays with the CMES PTA and helps to cover the cost of teacher membership fees and PTA operating expenses. The purpose of the PTA is to help every child at CMES flourish, and the PTA does not want cost to be a prohibitive factor for any CMES family. If the $10 membership fee is preventing you from becoming a member, please do not hesitate to fill out a PTA Membership form and indicate “waive membership fee” on your form.

**What Am I Required To Do as a PTA Member**?

 Becoming a PTA member does not require a specific level of commitment from you. After returning your membership form, you are welcome to become as involved as you wish.

 **What Do I Get Out of Becoming a PTA Member?**

 Each year, the PTA publishes a directory of members, which provides a way for CMES parents to contact each other. This information can be helpful as CMES does not provide class lists for confidentiality reasons, so the PTA Directory is typically the only way parent contact information is shared. Information is only shared with the consent of a parent based on the response to the PTA Membership form.

 This year, the PTA Facebook page has been limited to PTA Members. It should be noted that a majority of CMES parents are NOT on the CMES PTA Facebook page, and all information posted on the Facebook page is also sent via a Find Out First (FOF) email, as FOF emails are the PTA’s primary means of communication with parents. For each PTA event, paper fliers are also sent home and RSVPs can be returned to school with students, as the PTA doesn’t want any student to miss out on these fun events! If you would like to join the PTA Facebook page, you are still welcome to become a PTA member at any time and join the group.

 The biggest incentive of becoming a PTA member is helping CMES become a better school for all of our kids! Having members allows the PTA to function, which in turn provides classroom supplies, educational materials, transportation, assemblies and fun, safe community events to support the growth of our students!

**How Can I Become Involved?**

There are countless ways to become involved and support CMES through the PTA. From becoming a Board member to donating food for a PTA event or anywhere in between, the PTA would be grateful for your contributions. Not sure where to start? You are welcome to attend a PTA Board meeting to get the latest updates on upcoming events or email a PTA Board member for more information on an event of interest to you. Keep an eye out for sign-up geniuses to volunteer at an upcoming event or to drop off food or other needed supplies.

For those looking for a bigger commitment, PTA Board member positions are voted on every Spring for the upcoming year. Be sure to attend a board meeting or contact a current board member if you have an interest in running for a board position for the upcoming year.

**What Should I Do If I Have a Suggestion About a PTA Sponsored Event?**

You are always welcome to email a PTA Board member with questions or suggestions about past or upcoming PTA events. In making suggestions, please keep in mind that the PTA is 100% volunteer run and the individuals putting their time and effort into helping the PTA run smoothly are doing it solely for the benefit of the CMES students. Positive suggestions are greatly appreciated and will be discussed with the Board. For some of our larger events like the Race for Education or the Roaring Lion 5k, these are often planned and scheduled the school year prior to their occurrence, so requesting a change to these events will likely take time. The email address of each current PTA Board member can be found on the CMES PTA website. Thanks for your continued support of the CMES PTA!