



## PTA vs. PTO Competitive Analysis

### Overview

PTA offers many distinct advantages over PTOs and other independent parent groups. First and foremost are substantial cost savings for programs and services as well as a broader scope of advocacy and support for children.

### PTA Advantages

PTA	PTO	DIFFERENCE
Once a group decides to form a PTA, the state PTA assists in setting up bylaws, hosting an organizational meeting, filing paperwork, and securing non-profit status. There is <b>NO FEE</b> to file as a nonprofit since local PTAs fall under the state PTA's group exemption. Approval comes in a matter of days.	A PTO that wants to form as a nonprofit must file directly with the IRS. Fees are either <b>\$400</b> or <b>\$800</b> , depending on gross receipts. This cost does not include attorney or <b>legal fees</b> . IRS approval can take up to 18 months.	The difference is measured in potentially thousands of dollars, hundreds of man hours, and several months of waiting. PTA provides a <b>quicker, easier, and a less expensive way</b> to form a tax-exempt, nonprofit parent group – providing much needed services to our children sooner.
State PTA resources and National PTA Service Representatives in the field are readily available to assist new units with their startups. There is <b>NO FEE</b> for this service.	PTO Today sells a startup toolkit for \$39 or includes access to a downloadable “revised and updated” toolkit as part of its <b>\$199 “Plus” membership fee</b> .	The difference is in the cost of materials and the lack of support from trained, experienced people whose job it is to assist PTAs.
Most state PTAs offer local units low-cost insurance either included in their dues or at an additional cost.	PTOs must find their own insurance and pay for it on their own. PTO Today offers a lower-cost insurance plan but it is still more expensive than any state PTA plan.	The difference is the cost of the state PTA plan versus other plans, plus the hassle of finding and securing a reputable insurance provider.
To assist with nonprofit filing requirements and non-profit responsibilities, PTA provides this information to units, publishes Quick-Reference Guides for continual reference, offers training, and provides trained individuals at the state	PTOs do not have this type of safety net or knowledge base to assist in meeting the requirements. PTO Today provides a live online chat for customer service or technical support but not specifically for assistance with nonprofit filing	The difference is the readily available expert advice provided by PTA to its members <b>at no cost</b> .

and local level that are ready to assist.	requirements.	
PTA members become part of a <b>powerful network</b> of almost 5 million people who advocate on behalf of children. Membership benefits all children—most importantly, members’ children.	PTO members have no such network or powerful advocacy beyond the local level.	The difference is PTA provides a powerful network to effect change on local, state and national levels.
PTA members benefit from a 115-year-old brand synonymous with service and advocacy for children. PTA is so highly respected that its recent partners have included the White House and NBC News. Other alliances include Consumer Reports, Coalition of Juvenile Justice, Action for Healthy Kids, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Harvard Family Research Project.	PTOs have no such alliances to build on.	The difference is PTA’s <b>respect</b> in the education and policy community, which affords it partnerships that provide to members valuable resources such as the Education Nation Scorecard for Schools and the Common Core State Standards parents guides.
PTA members can effectively engage in advocacy on the national level by simply subscribing to PTA Action Alerts and by using National PTA’s advocacy toolkits. National PTA policy experts also educate members about important federal policies on education, child safety, juvenile justice, and child health.	PTOs have no voice in Washington nor any policy experts to educate members.	The difference is PTA’s ability to bring about change that <b>makes a difference</b> to all children, including its’ members children.
National PTA invests more than <b>\$1.4 million</b> —41% of its budget—in recruiting, training and supporting our state and local leaders to ensure PTAs remain strong and relevant to their members.	PTOs make no investment in leadership development beyond the unit itself.	The difference is PTAs <b>invest in their people</b> at all levels of the organization.
PTA has secured <b>millions of dollars</b> in grants from businesses and organizations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Target and Verizon to help build the	A PTO is not able to secure grants of this magnitude.	The difference is National PTA has <b>ready access</b> to funds for building the capacity of its units at the state and local level.

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<p>PTA partners with international retailers like Sharp and secures sponsors such as Target to provide members with <b>benefits and cost savings</b>.</p>	<p>PTOs and PTO groups do not provide member benefits of this caliber.</p>	<p>The difference is that PTA provides valuable benefits to members that can <b>save them money</b> on things like mobile phone service, electronics, auto and home insurance, vacation packages, and interactive technology for the classroom.</p>
<p>PTA’s list of resources currently includes 6 major programs, 5 award and grant programs, 1 annual convention (and 1 state convention in each state), a national legislative conference, <i>Our Children</i> magazine, a resource-filled website, 4 e-newsletters (as well as state newsletters and websites), membership marketing materials, 16 e-learning courses, an idea-sharing network, and live workshops. <b>Most products and services are free to members.</b></p>	<p>Resources for PTOs are more limited, more narrow in scope, and often more expensive.</p>	<p>The difference is the quantity and scope of what PTA makes available to members—<b>free of charge</b>. Members can pick and choose what they want. PTOs often have to pay for similar programs and services.</p>