

Invitation to Convention 2019

This will likely be the last Illinois PTA Convention I attend. Almost three years ago, my wife accepted a position at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, and we made the decision for me to stay here in Illinois to finish my terms as President-Elect and now as President while our son attended the University of Illinois. Which is a roundabout way of saying that I'm planning for our 2019 convention to be the best ever—I want to go out on a high note—and I have a small request from you below.

On May 3rd and 4th, we'll be in Champaign, the place that I have called home for the last 23 years, where my children grew up, and where I got my start in PTA as a stay-at-home dad looking to get a little time away from the kids. It's where I volunteered after a meeting to be newsletter editor, and the PTA president told me, "We've already got someone for that, but we do need a Vice President..." And it's where after the day's convention events, you can find the best burger in the Midwest (Farren's), some of the best barbeque in the country (Black Dog Smoke & Ale House), and a lively downtown music scene on Friday and Saturday nights just up the road from our convention site, the Hilton Garden Inn.



We're still working on lining up speakers and workshops, but my aim is to have those activities do what an Illinois PTA Convention does best—sends you home filled with new ideas for your PTA, connected with new friends, and energized to advocate for children.

Now for that small request. We're hoping to have a workshop session called Ignite Your PTA. In it, several speakers from PTAs across the state will share a program, event, or activity that their PTA does in a 5-minute talk, no PowerPoint slides needed. As an added bonus, those PTAs selected to give an Ignite talk will receive a 50% discount on one early bird Convention registration—a \$40 value! Send your idea for your talk to me (just 2 or 3 sentences covering what it is and why it's great) at bminsker@illinoispta.org with "Ignite Your PTA" as the subject by November 30th. We'll pick the best ideas and let those selected know after January 1st.

So make sure you budget for Convention and plan to attend. I look forward to seeing you all on May 3rd and 4th in Champaign.

Brian Minsker
Illinois PTA President