Electronic Membership FAQs

1. What is the electronic membership system?

   - The electronic membership system is an electronic platform that allows people to join their PTA unit online.

   - The system (Totem) was developed specifically for California State PTA and it collects the dues payment, provides a receipt and an electronic membership card, and simultaneously distributes the dues payments among the various levels of PTA.

   - The electronic membership card can be stored on a smartphone and has the potential to link to member perks.

   - The system allows for automatic membership renewals on July 1 and many other features.

2. What are some of the benefits to a PTA?

   - PTAs will be able to let members join online with a credit or debit card.

   - PTA leaders and members will be able to invite friends and family to join with a just a click.

   - The system will reduce the need to print out forms, collect checks and make trips to the bank.

   - Membership campaigns will be able to utilize social media to increase awareness and membership.

   - Anyone, anywhere will be able to join any PTA that participates in the program.

3. How do members know their credit card information is secure?

   - The electronic membership system (Totem) uses Stripe, a well–known and well– regarded payment processing system. The storage of card data will comply with the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI DSS). Stripe has been audited by an independent PCI Qualified Security Assessor (QSA) and is certified as a PCI Level 1 Service Provider. This is the most stringent level of certification available in the payment industry.

   - We will not store any credit card information on our California State PTA servers.

4. How much will this cost?

   - There is no cost for a PTA unit to use the system.

   - Each member that joins using the electronic membership system will pay a $1 convenience fee per membership. This will cover all the processing fees, and other costs of the system. This dollar will be paid by the member and it is added on to the membership dues so it will not reduce the portion of dues deposited in the local PTA unit bank account.

   - This may save PTA units money if they are currently mailing membership cards or paying bank fees on cash and check deposits.

- Members still have the option to join with cash, check or any other payment system used by a local PTA.

5. How will PTA unit leaders know who the members are?

- The electronic membership system will generate a list of members, which local leaders will be able to access the list and keep track of members in the system.

- The leaders will be able to manually enter other members (those who paid with cash or check) into the system

- Leaders will also be able to download the list to an Excel spreadsheet to be used with any membership tracking system they like.

6. Can members still join at a Back to School table?

- Of course! Leaders will be able to use computers, tablets and smartphones to access the electronic system and you can collect cash and checks from members who prefer to join that way.

7. Can PTA officers enter and manage members who join with check or cash? Will the members receive an electronic membership card?

- Yes. As long as the PTA is participating in the electronic system, and the member is willing to give an email address, the PTA leaders will be able to manually upload members names and emails into the system, and they will be able to receive the PTA electronic membership card.

8. Can PTA officers use the system if the PTA unit has different dues and membership levels?

- Yes, units who have different dues structures will be able to enter that information into the system.

9. How will a member search for the PTA they would like to join?

- The system will use geo–location and addresses to help people find the right PTA so they do not have to scroll through a long list of PTA's.

10. Can a member sign up for multiple memberships with a single checkout?

- Yes, the member will have the ability to sign up more than one member during a session such as two parents, or parents and grandparents.

11. What are the steps PTA leaders will complete to connect and verify a bank account?

- The electronic membership system will use a two–factor authentication to connect a bank account.

- There is a visible record for the user who creates or modifies any account information.

- The electronic membership system requires a second authorized leader to confirm new account information.