



Name: Leslie Carrell Boggs

Position: National PTA President Elect

1<sup>st</sup> PTA Position: Dennis Chavez Elementary PTA Treasurer

Most challenging obstacle: Within each new position lies challenges of communicating effectively what the role's duties and obligations are and how they impact not only the Board I sat on but with the parents and families our

PTA engaged. Then with each position comes the responsibility of engaging those parents and families in understanding what our PTA goals and achievements are and how important it was for us to have/need their voice, their membership, to help empower our PTA to become as strong a voice as it should be within our community, our state. This challenge replicates itself to a certain extent when I went from PTA to PTA throughout my children's education since each school's goals and achievements were different and so were the families we engaged.

How did we overcome this obstacle: Being very open with our staff and administrators when setting our goals, which then helped all of us communicate the same message when it concerned "Why PTA?" Building relationships with our parents by engaging them in whatever we, PTA, were trying to accomplish and how it impacted their child and their campus. Membership became a priority, so each member of our board engaged in the process of building our voice throughout the campus. We worked together as a team, knowing there would be times one of us would be unavailable, knowing we then had to support/help our association to continue moving forward in someone's absence. I truly believe this "Team" effort overcame the "policing" effort which had been prevalent before led most of our efforts to a successful year.

Happiest moment in PTA: There have been so many! Probably as a state President, helping implement a marketing campaign, which then led to a statewide message about PTA "Backing the Future". This campaign helped us have a unified message across the state about the importance of PTA and how we needed not only parents, teachers and students to join PTA but the entire community. Our membership slowly started to turn, so by the time I left office the state had a membership increase.

On a personal note: My happiest moment was watching graduates from our Emerging Leaders Academy become involved as leaders in their local and Council PTAs, as well as, watching one graduate, Sheri Doss, become the new State President for Texas.

Advice to a budding leader: Take advantage of the learning opportunities given by your Council, State and National PTA. Make a commitment to work on leadership, not just policy and procedures. Your title does not equate you to a great leader. It is only when you work on leadership will you begin to see your influence and leadership within PTA or any other association begin to grow. Always keep the mission and goals in focus. Stay

away from drama as much as you possibly can by not encouraging others to talk negatively about someone, but to go directly to the person and work out their differences.

Advice to PTA leader wanting to become President Elect of National PTA: Always keep the association first, our mission, our goals, the children and families of our nation. This is not about you, your wants and needs. Learn to listen more, ask questions and continue to learn more about each state's assets and needs. When you decide to run for member representative to the Board of Directors, don't come in thinking you have all the answers. What works in one state doesn't necessarily work in another. Again listen, watch and learn. Your title does not automatically mean you have all the answers nor that you are a great leader. It is only when you embrace our association fully, all 54 Congresses, when you become a member of a team and not about I that you will find your way to any position.

What would I do differently if I had a chance? I resigned from a position once because I disagreed with what I saw happening. What I learned was when you resign you give up the right to fight to make what you saw wrong right. While my decision to resign was a very hard one, I always think back and wonder if I could have made a difference. However, I knew for me I could not condone what was happening.

What is next for me? National PTA President – YIKES! I say that jokingly, but it is right around the corner. I am still learning and listening. Transitioning is always an interesting journey, but so far, I have found this journey to be engaging, exciting and full of twists and turns. I am looking forward to us making our association be even better than we thought we could be!

Which figure reflects my leadership path? I would say a combination of the two. There was a time when I was not well liked by Texas leadership, so much to the point I was not voted back on the board for a couple of years. During this time, I became more engaged on the National level with NLDC. So, the stair steps were very messy at times. What I have learned is be true to yourself. If something truly goes against your moral compass, don't let your aspirations for leadership prevail over those "gut" reactions. Making the right choice may not be an easy choice, but in the end, it always seems to be the right direction to go. I guess I would say I have had some failures, but when failures lead to more positive leadership it is part of growing as a leader. Leadership can be messy, which is okay!



Figure A

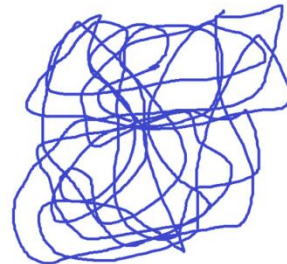


Figure B