

Committees

2022-2023



REFLECTIONS

Over the past decade, a new way of thinking about arts education has taken hold. Based on substantive and rigorous content, the new arts education develops the capacities that business leaders, educators, and parents want the schools to provide for our children: creative problem solving, analytical thinking, collaborative skills and judgment. The Florida Sunshine State Standards for Pre-K to 12 includes standards regarding Dance, Music, Theater, Visual Arts, Film/Video, and Photography. How does your school or district measure up?

The following are some ideas on how to “**Be Smart, Include Art**”:

- **Prepare** a plan of work to present to your board for discussion and approval about how to expand the National PTA Reflections Program.
- **Have** funds budgeted for Reflections events or presenters.
- **Add** a Reflections column to your PTA/PTSA newsletter. List free upcoming events to which your parents can take their children. Schedule a guest Arts columnist.
- **Invite** an Arts related speaker to a general meeting. Some sources are: museum curator, artist, photographer, local college professor, Arts Guild or musician.
- **Work** with the After-School Director to arrange for involvement of parents or community members in an Arts field.
- **Plan** a series of after-school workshops for writing, music, photography and art.
- **Get** a local sponsor to bring in an Arts Event for all students.
- **Create** student recognition for the Arts (could be presented at your PTA/PTSA meetings or with the school’s honor roll/attendance recognition).
- **Work** with the art teacher to provide displays and maintain an ongoing student art exhibit.
- **Videotape** students engaged in art activities, and show the video at your parents’ meeting.
- **Hold** multicultural arts day where students can show work from their native countries.
- **Organize** a group of parent volunteers to help in art classes or RSVP volunteers as story readers.
- **Sponsor** field trips to local museums, theaters and art exhibits.
- **Have** a museum sponsor a PTA/PTSA meeting and give free tickets as door prizes.
- **Host** a family art night and set up activity stations or displays of student artwork.
- **Have** the art teacher or panels select a student artist of the month. Contact a Frame, Art or Photo Shop to frame and display the student’s work at their shop.
- **Remember**, literature is an art form; have children’s literature bound into individual or classroom books. Arrange for guest readers. Organizations for the retired are a good source.
- **Show** videos of artists at work. The National PTA’s Reflections Program video and art videos are available on the National PTA website via a link from the Florida PTA website (see Reflections under the Programs menu item).
- **Attend** your county council and/or the Florida PTA Leadership Training in July and network with other PTAs for ideas.
- **Contact** local art organizations for programs available and speakers for meetings.
- **Meet** with your Principal for ways to include arts in the classroom.
- **Identify** an “Arts Partner” to fund a cultural arts event, program or speaker.
- **Check** out community funding opportunities or grants.
- **Work** with the SAC to include arts in the school improvement plan.
- **Add** art related magazines to the Parent Resource Room or the area where parents wait for appointments.

(Reflections Continued)

- **Contact** your school district on how you can get more involved. Volunteer to serve on a district committee and bring information back to your school or council.
- **Plan** Reflections Events in the School Calendar.

National Music in our Schools Month- March

National Today

<https://nationaltoday.com/national-music-schools-month>

March is Youth Art Month

National Art Education Association

[Youth Art Month \(YAM\) • National Art Education Association \(arteducators.org\)](https://www.arteducators.org)

National Association for Music Education

[National Association for Music Education \(NAFME\)](https://www.nafme.org)

October is National Arts & Humanities Month

Americans for the Arts.

www.americansforthearts.org/events/national-arts-and-humanities-month

Arts4All Florida

[arts4allflorida.org](https://www.arts4allflorida.org)



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, and JUSTICE

PTA advocates for every child and we speak with one voice. It is our responsibility to acknowledge and address the needs of our ever-increasing and ever-changing diverse population. As our communities become increasingly diverse, we must embrace the challenges and renew our pledge of advocacy to ensure that each child's voice is heard.

Diversity is defined as including and realizing the potential of everyone regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, marital status, socio-economic status, education, mental/physical/emotional challenges, national origin, parental status, employment status, experience, language, religion, ability, age, learning styles, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, geographic/residence, and more.

Equity strives to ensure that everyone (while honoring identities and experiences) has what they need to succeed. It is a process through which systems must consistently be engaged to ensure everyone has the opportunity to grow, contribute, and develop. It means those with fewer barriers and more advantages may, on paper, 'get less' while those with greater barriers and fewer advantages will 'get more' so that both can end up in the same final spot. Florida PTA must recognize community needs and provide additional resources where needed.

Inclusion requires action. It is in creating a space where all individuals feel a sense of belonging. Community members with different identities must feel welcomed, valued, heard, and empowered. Florida PTA must collaborate respectfully and cooperatively to engage a mixture of voices and lived experiences.

One of the goals of Florida PTA, through the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) committee, is to educate the various levels of PTA within our state regarding the importance of:

- identifying/recognizing the diverse populations in their areas,
- providing resources to support advocating for equity & inclusion among the diverse populations,
- countering hate speech, and
- encouraging the incorporation of DEIJ in the daily functions at all PTA levels.

Through embracing these efforts, the relevance of PTA to all families and children can be realized. Florida PTA's DEIJ efforts are the foundation that nourishes our association.

Secondly, potential leaders from across the state can be identified and mentored to expand the knowledge base of Florida PTA. The goal is to form a pool of qualified leaders who can fill leadership roles at local, county, regional, and state levels, thus bringing more diverse members and perspectives to our leadership teams and strengthening DEIJ efforts within our association.

It is through the understanding and addressing of the unique needs of our diverse populations that we expect to increase our parent involvement at the local, county, and state

levels. Florida PTA will also constantly evaluate how we are meeting the needs of diverse populations through these DEIJ efforts. We will speak in a powerful voice on behalf of all children and the issues they face.

Adding diversity to your local unit isn't just about reaching out to an underrepresented population or to men. It goes much deeper than that and is much more complex. Adding diversity means finding all populations that are underrepresented. Your outreach should include families with ESE students, members of the LGBTQ community, as well as people (other than parents) who serve as the primary caregivers, such as foster parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles. By identifying individuals who have not traditionally been involved in PTA, you can also enrich the leadership of your PTA.

The richness of diversity will allow your PTA to consider programs and solutions to school issues that may otherwise have been overlooked. Additionally, your PTA can become stronger by gaining new advocates for all students. The more diverse our membership is the more likely we are to address the needs of all children with one voice.

The big question is how to make it happen at your school. How do you get started?

1. Identify the populations within your school that are not currently engaged with PTA. Talk with the principal and teachers to help you identify individuals that may be candidates to volunteer with the PTA.
2. Seek input from the individuals that have been identified. Listen carefully and then find ways to implement the suggestions that are brought forth.
3. Broaden the programs and activities that you offer in order to be more inclusive of the entire school community.
4. Consider increasing your outreach into the area surrounding the school and/or inviting like-minded groups to join you at a meeting that will interest the entire community.
5. Contact your council or the State Office for suggestions on programs that have worked in other communities with similar demographics.
6. Attend Council meetings. The presentations and programs that are discussed may benefit your PTA.
7. Remember that it will take more than one attempt to reach the populations that you seek to serve. Don't be discouraged. Keep working at it.
8. Share information about your PTA in the primary language(s) spoken in the community. Increase the cultural awareness of your officers and members.
6. Remember to share your successes with others. We are in this together and the more ideas that we can generate, the more success we will have.



**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Committee**

EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS

The Educational Pathways committee provides parents and families with information, resources and support for our children from birth through college and/or career. The most rapid brain changes and development happen in the first five years of life. Research shows that the early years of your child's education and development are critical to future academic success. Your child will have the opportunity during the first five years of life to shape their cognitive, social and linguistic capabilities through the partnership with quality early childhood programs. It is also important to understand role of education policy including standards, curriculum and opportunities available to you as you navigate and advocate for your child through the K-12.

The Research also shows that students often feel overwhelmed by the process of figuring out their goals for the future, the education they need to reach their goals and taking steps through the college/career-going process. This committee is designed to assist all members and their families in navigating through the various transitions that are critical to our children and their education from cradle to college. We are here to assist parents, families, teachers, administrators and others with these transitions and to offer resources and guidance every step of the way.

Listed below you will find information and resources to help you better understand the importance of each stage in your child's education.

- Parents can help to promote good vocabulary by speaking with their children from early years, using real words, not "baby talk". Reading often to children is ~~also~~ vital. This allows the child to be exposed to words. Research shows that children who are exposed to words from an early age do better in Kindergarten than those who are not. Adequate print knowledge and phonics development are key markers in future readers.
- Encourage parents to take their children on field trips to help them garner knowledge, this does not need to be expensive. Visit a local park, zoo, or museum. These local resources often offer free programs for children under the age of 5 to take advantage of. Use these opportunities as teaching moments for young children.
- Count cars as you drive, identify shapes and colors as you run every day errands. The time you spend with your child in those early years are extremely important as these create an atmosphere of learning and build curiosity in children.
- Focus on math skills and oral language through cooking or baking. Cooking and baking activities incorporate the use of reading recipes, measuring, following directions, sequencing, and cause and effect.
- Early childhood centers can also encourage parents to work on physical, emotional, and social development. Discuss the importance of balance, coordination for physical development. Social development is cultivated through relationships with peers, sharing, the use of manners, and building self-esteem and confidence through both activities and play.

- Communication is a two-way street. This tool is essential for your parent toolkit. You need to communicate with many different groups of people in your school and community. Remember, it takes a village to raise a child. Rely on your early childhood program and teachers to give you resources and information to help your child be a successful learner.
- Parents should make their child's teacher and the administration at their child's school aware of any changes which might have either a negative or extremely positive impact on their child. Keep the lines of communication open, and be there to support your child while working with the teachers. Get involved where possible. Consider starting a PTA at your child's school. This can be done even in early childhood years. PTA has a wealth of support and programs that can help with all aspects of early childhood.
- Promote learning opportunities for parents such as Title 1 trainings, workshops sponsored by hospitals, sports teams and other community groups. Keep abreast of changes in your school district and community, especially those which could have an impact on your child. Know the importance of early intervention services for children who may need early intervention for speech, language, motor skill development, or social skills. There are resources in each county that can be utilized to help young children who may need some additional assistance prior to beginning Kindergarten. ***Take advantage where possible of free and/or low-cost online websites which provide programs that can be helpful to your child's learning.***
- Encourage all stakeholders to remain engaged in their child's learning through the primary and secondary levels. Conduct programming to educate parents of what is expected of their child at each grade level. Invite guidance counselors to speak with parents to make sure students are benefiting from every opportunity available.
- Visit the Florida Department of Education at [Florida Department of Education \(fldoe.org\)](http://fldoe.org) Visit the "Know Your School" portal which can be found at [Know Your Schools Portal \(fldoe.org\)](http://fldoe.org) . This information will be invaluable to you as you navigate through your child's education. It will also help you advocate for not only your child but your school and will help you when making decisions on the best learning environment for your child.
- Attendance is the second leading indicator of student success. Make sure your child attends class. For more information on chronic absenteeism and what it means for student success please visit FACCSS website at Florida Attendance Campaign for Student Success or Attendance Website at Attendance Works
To assist parents, families, teachers, administrators and others when transitioning to post-secondary education or career, please consider the following:
 - a) Meet with school-based administration or designee to determine what needs can best be met by the Education-Learning Transitions, particularly in the areas of early exposure to careers in-demand in your local community.
 - b) Conduct a parent/teacher/staff/volunteer survey to determine the needs and wants of the stakeholders. From career discovery activities in early grades through self-assessments in middle school and college/career planning in high school that include promoting FAFSA completion, where is there a need that the PTA could support?

- Encourage your school to participate in [College Ready Florida events](#) and share the student/parent resources at PTA meetings so that students have the support they need through the college-going process. Organize and provide a variety of opportunities throughout the school year which provide information, resources and support to all in attendance in the areas of need determined. Utilize the free resources on the [College and Career Readiness page](#) on the FL PTA website.
- Using a variety of media, advertise and encourage participation and attendance at these informational opportunities, particularly at College Application Week events, FAFSA completion help sessions, and College Decision Day celebrations. Monitor your school's FAFSA completion progress on the [Florida FAFSA Challenge Dashboard](#) to see if students need help earning money for college. Florida students every year leave \$100 million dollars on the table simply by not completing the FAFSA. That's FREE money they would have qualified for and not had to pay back that could help them go to college.
- Gain feedback after the informational opportunities from all participating stakeholders to determine the level of assistance provided and to what degree it met the needs of those in attendance.
- Use feedback gained in the current school year to drive programs and information opportunities for the next school year. Share the [Plan It Florida framework](#) and free handouts for parents/students to help them make plans and stay on track as they plan for life after high school.
- Offer resources on 4-year, 2-year, and career/technical colleges and programs along with companies looking to offer internships, participate in career days, and train our Middle and High School students in fields related to Construction, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration, Auto Mechanics and Cosmetology etc. Contact our local and State schools to see which schools are interested. Make sure stakeholders know about [Workforce Education](#) and [Apprenticeship](#) opportunities.
- Bring awareness and offer resources to our schools to fight the ongoing battles of Mental Illness, Human Trafficking, Reading Literacy, Domestic Violence and others that affect our children's abilities to focus on a College or Career due to society norms or peer pressures.



EXCEPTIONAL CHILD

In Florida, children who have unique learning needs that require specially designed instruction and related services are called exceptional students. This definition includes both students who are gifted and students who have a disability. The special help they are provided at school is called exceptional student education (ESE). The purpose of ESE is to help each child with a disability and each child who is gifted progress in school and prepare for life after school. ESE services may also include technology devices, therapy, special transportation, or other supports. There is no charge for ESE services. A team of people makes decisions about the child's needs and ESE services. The child's parents are part of this team. This process is based on the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

A. Working with Parents

1. Arrange group sessions for parents using resource professionals from your school system or nearby universities for the purpose of helping parents deal with and understand the challenges of rearing and educating exceptional children.
2. Offer educational programs in your local unit or council about existing exceptional child educational programs in the school and community.
3. Work with other committee chairs on your PTA or council board, such as preschool, in helping parents of exceptional children detect whether their child has special needs and provide procedure for suitable testing and placement in the appropriate special education program.

B. Working in the school

1. Discuss with your principal and exceptional child teachers their needs and challenges, working with them, if necessary, to secure exceptional child programs needed in your school or district.
2. Educate yourself about all exceptional child education programs.
3. Become acquainted with your district's director of exceptional student education, who can furnish you with information about the programs in your school or district and provide assistance on availability on those programs and services.

C. Working in the community

Work with organizations, associations and agencies that work for exceptional children. ***Below are just some of the resource that are statewide. Some of these entities have local offices to help.

Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (<http://www.fdlrs.org/>) which provides diagnostic, instructional, and technology support services to district exceptional education programs and families of students with disabilities.

Florida Department of Education Exceptional Student Education for multiple resources and information (<http://fldoe.org/academics/exceptional-student-edu/>)

(Exceptional Child Continued)

The Florida Department of children and families contracts for behavioral health services through regional systems of care called Managing Entities (MEs). (<http://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/substance-abuse/managing-entities>)

These entities do not provide direct services; rather, they allow the department's funding to be tailored to the specific behavioral health needs in the various regions of the State.

Project 10: (<http://project10.info/>) Transition Education Network is Florida's statewide discretionary project supporting the secondary transition of youth with disabilities.

Family Network on Disabilities (FND) (<http://fndusa.org/>) is a grassroots organization for persons with disabilities and their families that is family-centered and family-driven. They provide information sharing and mutual support.

The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (<https://www.fddc.org/>) helps plan individual and family-centered supports for persons with disabilities in Florida. The Council also guides the development and administration of services for people with developmental disabilities by planning and funding research, innovations, and programs designed to improve the quality of their lives.

Disability Rights Florida (<http://www.disabilityrightsflorida.org/>) is the statewide designated protection and advocacy system for individuals with disabilities in the State of Florida. Disability Rights Florida is a not-for-profit corporation that has authority and responsibility under eight federal grants. Our services are free and confidential.

Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology program, (FAAST) (<https://www.faast.org/>) has been and continues to be a resource to provide Floridians free access to information, referral services, educational programs, and publications in accessible format on extensive topics related to disability rights, laws/policies, and funding opportunities for assistive technology.



FAMILY & COMMUNITIY ENGAGEMENT

Family & Community Engagement in the education, health, safety and general well-being of our children and youth is at the heart of PTA. When families, schools, and communities work effectively together, engagement becomes a powerful tool that boosts student achievement and better prepares our children to lead healthy, happy and productive lives. PTA leaders play an important role in building closer relationships between home and school by creating opportunities for authentic family engagement in supporting academic success. In addition, by working closely with other school and community leaders, PTA's can develop a culture of inclusion that makes family-school-community partnerships a top priority.

As a PTA leader, you can boost parent engagement by linking your PTA activities to student learning and other specific outcomes. Provide information, resources, and workshops for parents to learn what parent involvement and engagement looks like and how best to support student learning at home and in school. In addition to traditional academics, include topics such as life-skills, heath/safety, and topics of general well-being to provide a well-rounded experience.

Engagement can include, but is not necessarily volunteerism. Consider volunteerism more as labor, but family engagement is an ongoing partnership with two-way communications for a common goal(s) not a onetime event or activity nor simply having volunteers. Some helpful hints for a successful year with engagement as a priority are set out below:

- Before school starts, schedule a planning meeting with your principal to determine how PTA can best meet the needs of your school through engagement (consider communication/dialogue opportunities, programs, parent/teacher/student learning opportunities, etc.).
- Also discuss with the principal having specific event and activity surveys in addition to the formal beginning, mid-year and/or year-end survey. Ask for input on what worked and what did not.
- Refer to the *Programs Guide* within the *Back to School Kit* from National PTA for a *Family Engagement Survey*, *Program Evaluation Tools* and other helpful resources.
- At the beginning of the year, evaluate the prior year's family engagement methods. Review recent survey results from your members (teachers, parents and students) from your school and climate assessment surveys. Be sure to gather feedback and input from your teachers, staff and volunteers.
- To assess your teacher needs and feedback, request a few minutes on the faculty meeting agenda to speak about PTA's role in engaging your families and community members.
- Consider holding round table sessions for parents, guardians, teachers and staff to share experiences and discuss ways in which they can continue to support each other in meeting the goals set for our children, both at home and in school.
- Have a PTA table at all school registrations, orientations, first day of school, open houses and PTA meetings. Have a board member at the table to discuss and provide information to interested people on benefits of getting involved (either simply through open dialogue with the teachers and the school or also helping with specific volunteer opportunities).

(Family & Community Engagement Continued)

PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

The benefits of family-school-community partnerships are many: higher teacher morale, more parent involvement, and greater student success are only a few. That is why in 2008 National PTA released the PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships Assessment Guide, a tool for empowering people to work together with an end goal of building family-school partnerships and student success which is still very relevant today. Below are the six standards. Note: Refer to www.pta.org > At School > National Standards for Family-School Partnership for the guide in its entirety and other additional resources.

Standard 1: Welcoming all families into the school community—Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

Standard 2: Communicating effectively—Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

Standard 3: Supporting student success—Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

Standard 4: Speaking up for every child—Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

Standard 5: Sharing power—Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

Standard 6: Collaborating with community—Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

NATIONAL PTA SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE

National PTA School of Excellence is a recognition program that supports and celebrates partnerships between PTAs and schools to enrich the educational experience and overall well-being for all students.

By enrolling in this program, your PTA and school administrators are making a year-long commitment in identifying and implementing an action plan for school improvement based on PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships.

Your School of Excellence designation will help attract new, action-oriented PTA members who want to focus on the issues that affect our children the most. And being a National PTA School of Excellence will open the door to other honors and opportunities for your school.

(Family & Community Engagement Continued)

Volunteer Roles

No two volunteers are alike — and there are as many different roles to play as there are personalities! Whether volunteers would prefer to roll up their sleeves in a planning meeting, help promote programs from home, or simply lend a hand at events, there is a job for everyone who wants to help. Use the following suggestions to expand your thinking about how team members can be involved in your PTA programs.

Plan

- Be sure to announce planning meetings widely, rather than relying on the same small circle of volunteers. Ask the principal to suggest parents who might be interested in getting more involved, and have your board members extend a personal invitation. You might be surprised who steps up!
- Invite a representative of the student council or student government to participate on a planning team, or ask a group of interested students to take the lead in planning a program or event, with PTA support.
- Consider recruiting school staff who have a natural interest related to particular programs. For health and safety programs, for example, these might include health and physical education teachers, school nurses, kitchen staff, crossing guards and playground monitors.
- Also consider tapping into student groups related to the program area. For arts in education programs, for example, think about choir/band classes, dance teams or film clubs.
- Contact past volunteers to see if they are interested. Maybe they know other parents, grandparents or community members who would like to be involved with the school and the PTA.
- Telephone or email all potential volunteers to encourage participation. Reach out to the community. Many clubs, organizations or places of worship want to be involved but do not know how they can get started. Again, be specific about your needs.
- When sharing information about volunteer opportunities, be specific about needs and possibly the amount of time expected for each job. You may use an e-marketing company to reach your membership. Some are free and others charge a monthly fee based on your membership base. While we do not endorse these companies, many units have had success using them.
- Talk with your Principal about seeking business partners for school programs.
- If applicable, send out follow up notices listing the remaining unfilled volunteer needs.

Train

- Communicate with volunteers, when they understand their role, feel welcome and have the knowledge and skills to support student success they are more likely to remain active participants.
- Provide volunteer orientation and training workshops as needed. Some jobs require more training than others.
- Hold a round table meeting for volunteers to share experiences and if it works, plan more.

Promote

- PTA members who cannot make it to planning meetings might be willing to help with promotion: writing press releases, creating a flier or banners, updating the school sign board, making phone calls to invite parents or community representatives or spreading the word via social media.
- Student volunteers might be willing to promote an event during morning announcements or write an article about a program's impact for their school newspaper.
- Teachers might agree to have their students make posters reinforcing program messages.

Participate

- Family members who attend events with their children might be willing to come a little early for set up, stay a few minutes after to help clean up or give a half hour of their time to staff a membership table or collect event evaluation forms. If yours is a Title I school, the parent center is a great place to reach potential volunteers.
- If you are hosting an event in the afternoon or evening, consider contacting the local high school to identify older students who might need community service hours to meet graduation requirements.
- Do not forget to engage community members who have an interest in children and/or a specific program area. For example:
 - Local media
 - Representatives of local children's hospitals or pediatrician's offices
 - School board and city council members
 - City or county parks and recreation departments, health departments or libraries
 - Local United Way representatives
 - Service clubs (Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions, etc.)

Thank

- Contact your volunteers to thank them for their offered time and service. Work out the jobs and schedules around the time that they can offer so they may continue to want to help out in the future.
- Always send "thank you" letters or emails and plan recognition/appreciation activities for your volunteers.
- Have an article in all newsletters praising your volunteers and about opportunities to participate.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Working on behalf of children is what PTAs/PTSAs are all about. Always keep in mind the purposes and mission of the association when your local unit is planning a program, Local Units can provide resources and information to families, educators, communities and students that will help to promote the health, safety and well-being of children and families. Local units are encouraged to offer programs and activities that help to responsibly assess and intervene in the health, safety and environment of all children, pre-natal through young adult. This includes practical, as well as contemporary ethical issues in the areas that affect our children.

Some ideas to promote the health and wellness can include education, information, programs, activities of unit members, educators, community members, students, and any group that has interest and concerns about children. Workshops, advisory meetings, community presentations, media releases, websites, newsletters, e-mails are all ways to disseminate and get the information out.

As the manager of the school building, the principal has the final say regarding any programs or activities that take place on school grounds. Remember that this is a partnership.

Program ideas can include, but are not limited to:

- Advocacy for Children
- Bullying
- Child Abuse and Prevention
- Childhood Diseases
- Childhood Readiness/Early Learning/Voluntary Pre-K
- Children's Medical Services (all aspects)
- Crime and Violence
- Diet and Exercise
- Disease Control (STDs, HIV/AIDS, Immunizations, etc.)
- Domestic Violence
- Drugs and Alcohol (Inhalant Abuse, Over the Counter Drugs, Controlled Drugs, etc.)
- Drunk Driving Programs for High School Students
- Early Infant and Parent Issues
- Environmental Health (poison prevention, mold, water, etc.)
- Family/Parental Involvement
- Fingerprinting
- Gangs and Cults
- Hearing, Vision, Dental Care for Children
- Hurricane and Disaster Preparedness
- Injury Prevention
- Internet Safety and Cyber-Bullying
- Juvenile Diabetes
- Literacy
- Mental Health/Suicide Prevention
- Nutrition and Childhood Obesity
- Parenting Skills
- Safety (all aspects, car/bus, fire, etc.)
- School Health-Florida Coordinated School Health Program
- Stress and Children
- Tobacco (Smokeless tobacco) and Cigarettes and Vaping
- Trafficking
- Wellness of Whole Child

Please keep in mind that budgets should be made and will vary according to programs or activities. There are many speakers within your community that might be willing to volunteer time and services. Refreshments, snacks and sometimes a meal is served.

HISTORIAN

The Historian keeps records that remain the property of the association and are provided to the next board each year. The information includes the following:

1. Compile and keep a record of the activities and achievements of the association. Have readily available any historical facts which may be needed by officers and committee chairs.
2. Preserve a list of:
 - First officers and committee chairs.
 - First original bylaws.
 - List of special activities carried on during the early years with any available photographs and newspaper clippings.
 - List of Honorary Life Members and Awards.
3. Maintain current activities, as they occur, in a scrapbook or file. Examples:
 - Names of officers, committee chairs, and delegates.
 - Activities and projects with photographs and clippings.
 - Newsletters and programs.
 - Copy of amended bylaws.
 - Names and dates of new recipients of Life Memberships.
 - New awards.
4. Display historical records often to generate interest among new members and develop pride among the seasoned members.
5. Assist the president with the application for the local unit achievement award.
6. Create a Video Library of the year's activities.

Optional:

Compile a brief narrative at the end of the year that may be added to a running history of the association.



LEGISLATION

One purpose of PTA is “*to advocate for laws that further the education, physical and mental health, welfare, and safety of children and youth.*”

For well over 100 years, PTA has successfully influenced policy to promote the education, health, and well-being of all children. Today, whether it is the local school board, city or county government, the Florida Legislature, or the U.S. Congress, PTAs need to be engaged in the process and remain a strong, united voice for every child.

City, county, state, and national concerns are all within the scope of your work with PTA. You and your members know the issues that directly affect your children. As a PTA advocate, you will be amazed at what can be accomplished when you take the time to study the issues and formulate constructive solutions.

Remember all advocacy at every level is based on PTA Resolutions/Position Statements.

When you speak with a PTA voice, you must only speak to national, state, or local resolutions/position statements. If PTA has no position, then we cannot speak to the issue. This, however, is an opportunity to recommend a resolution. If your personal opinion differs from the PTA position, then you cannot use your PTA identify to address the issue.

WAYS TO ENCOURAGE ADVOCACY

Creating a Legislation Committee in your PTA/PTSA local unit/council is a primary way to encourage advocacy. Some local units or councils have a Vice President of Advocacy or appointed Legislation Committee responsible for keeping members educated, informed, and updated on current local, state, and national issues. Please encourage your members to serve on the Legislation Committee. Finding an issue of concern to your PTA is a way to encourage involvement.

Engaging with decision-makers is vital to advocacy. At a minimum the PTA Legislation Committee should provide the following contact information to its general members:

- School Board/Superintendent
- City and County officials
- Florida Legislators for your County Delegation:
Senate: <https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/FindYourRepresentative>
House: <https://www.flsenate.gov/Senators/Find>
- Governor: governorron.desantis@eog.myflorida.com
- Commissioner of Education:
Commissioner@fldoe.org
- National Legislators: Senate: <https://www.senate.gov/senators/senators-contact.htm>
House: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>

Advocating as an association allows our PTA voice to be extraordinarily strong and loud. The PTA Legislation Committee needs to be familiar with the collective voice of our members which exists in the form of resolutions and position statements. FL PTA membership approves our legislative priorities annually at the Leadership Convention.

- Florida PTA Resolutions: <https://floridapta.org/resolutions/>
Information and procedures for developing a resolution, See Section 8 of this Kit of Materials or contact resolutions@floridapta.org
- National PTA Positions: <https://www.pta.org/home/advocacy/ptas-positions>
- Florida's PTAs Legislative Priorities Brochure: <https://floridapta.org/>

Maintaining a connection to PTA leadership on the state and county level is important to speaking with one voice. The Legislation Committee has these resources:

- Florida PTA Legislation Committee legislation@floridapta.org
- PTA County Council Legislation Chair or FL PTA Region Representative
<https://floridapta.org/board-of-directors/>

Providing PTA members with opportunities to have their one voice heard as a part of the whole is also a role of the Legislation Committee. Resources and activities are to be shared with members in order to stay informed:

- Join our Facebook page: **Florida PTA Advocacy Group**
Follow on Facebook: **Florida PTA** 
- Sign up for  annually!

FLPTA subscribes to Voter Voice to connect our members with their elected officials at the appropriate time in the legislative process regarding our priority issues. Call to Action emails drive the necessary supporters to act based on their districts and our targeting.

Florida PTA
<https://floridapta.org/voter-voice-legislative/>



National PTA
<https://www.pta.org/home/advocacy/take-action/sign-up-for-alerts>



Educating PTA membership is ongoing, and the Legislation Committee can keep its members informed with trainings throughout the year. Events to be shared with membership, which should be included in your budget:

- Annual Florida PTA Legislative Conference “Leg Con”
- Annual Florida PTA Leadership Convention
- Annual National PTA Legislative Conference “Leg Con” or Hill Days
- Annual National PTA Convention

Marketing PTA through building relationships with local media is a great way to rally support around a cause. Media outlets look for good stories and contacts at the grassroots level.

The strength in PTA is our passion, our members, and the process we use to help the children of Florida: our ONE VOICE.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

The object of marketing and communications is to inform members of upcoming programs and events, build support for your PTA with other stakeholders (i.e. school administrators, district office, elected officials, local business & community leaders) and encourage everyone to become involved.

There are a wide variety of communication methods, tools and resources available depending on your marketing and communication needs including, but not limited to:

Ambassadors (Adults/Students)	Blogs
Brochures	Invitations
Marquee	Newsletters (electronic/print)
School Announcements	Social Media (wide variety available)
Visual Displays (posters, fliers, bulletin boards)	Website
Media Outlets (local news stations & papers, school district communication channels)	

1. Develop a communication plan to promote your PTA based on its goals, programs, policies and activities. Discuss and explore how and when to use which method (s) of communication, review proper branding use of the PTA logo and name and when possible present material in multiple languages.
2. Develop a list of PTA/PTSA “Ambassadors” adult and student leaders who can speak on behalf of your unit.
3. Maintain a list of communications, newspaper, radio and TV outlets that cover your area. Get acquainted, in advance, with personnel, their deadlines, and preference in ways of preparing and submitting publicity.
4. Introduce yourself to the education reporter of your local media newspaper. Ask for Public Service time on the radio and TV stations to publicize your activities.
5. Establish a Newsletter (electronic or paper) to include the following:
 - a. Name of PTA and Logo
 - b. Volume and Issue Number
 - c. Message from the PTA President
 - d. Calendar of Events (Meetings, Workshops and Projects)
 - e. General PTA Information
6. Develop flyers, brochures and exhibits to get your message out.
7. Start a website or social media account (s) for your PTA. Establish clear guidelines (especially when posts involve students) to insure responsible and appropriate account administration. Check with your principal or school district regarding their rules.
8. Share information, news and programs received from your County Council, Florida PTA and National PTA with your members and stakeholders. Additional Resources:

Note:

Florida PTA has the Eugenia B. Thomas Communications Award. See the Awards Section of the Kit of Materials for more information.

MEMBERSHIP

The strength of PTA is in its membership—the parents, teachers, school administrators, business leaders, and community members who devote themselves to making a positive difference in the lives of children. Members are the lifeblood of PTA and provide the passion, leadership, and hard work needed to fulfill PTA’s Mission. Membership is open to everyone who is interested in the health, safety, education, and general welfare of children and youth. A person may join any PTA, even if they do not have a child at the school.

To meet the goals of PTA, local units must reach out to the diversity within the school and local community to enroll as many members as possible.

1. Study results of previous year’s membership program and set goals for new school year. Refer to Membership Support - Membership Procedure Book (and the end of this section) to prepare for a successful year.
2. Promote your PTA. Don’t be afraid to “sell” your PTA and ask everyone in the community to join. Explain the value of PTA. Create a flier or a PowerPoint (visual) that tells potential members:
 - PTA accomplishments from last year
 - ideas your PTA hopes to accomplish this year
 - ways PTA helps your community and its children.
3. Put the flier out at all school events; ask local businesses to post the flier in their business or have the local supermarket stuff the flier into shoppers’ bags. (See Membership Support/Procedure Book Information.)
4. Include funds in the budget for membership promotion (Special events, Membership Breakfast or Luncheon, Classroom recognition incentives, advertising, flyers, etc.).
5. Have membership tables set up at school registration, all PTA functions, Open House, etc. **PTA does not recognize family memberships.** See attached membership recruitment letters.
6. Just Ask! Ask for their membership. Don’t wait for the other person to take the initiative.
7. Attend “Back to School” faculty/staff meeting to recruit members. Hint: if your PTA is hosting it or assisting, place a PTA membership envelope on the table. Invite your School Board Members and Superintendent to join.
8. Ask administration for permission to place a TV/DVD player in the school lobby and run PTA public service announcements (PSAs) in a loop (continuously) during student drop- off and pick-up, Back-to-School events and morning announcements.
9. Have a theme to your membership drive and remember membership drives should last all year.
10. Incentivize your membership with donations from local businesses (you will have to market to local businesses the importance of PTA and what your PTA does for children and families in your school). Offer a free gift with membership (t-shirt or keychain with PTA logo, discount card).

(Membership Continued)

11. Emphasize the difference between membership and volunteering. People are always afraid that if they become a member, something will be expected of them. Welcome anyone who wants to volunteer or come to meetings, but don't require members to volunteer or attend meetings. Promise not to call unless the member wants this. Create several selections for the bottom of the membership form such as:

Yes, please notify (email) me of updates so I will always know what is going on at school.

Yes, I am interested in volunteering on a committee or with an event.

Yes, I wish to be a member, however, I am unable to commit to volunteering at this time. My membership simply shows support for what PTA is doing positively for the teachers, the students, and the school.

Verbiage similar to this will work. Basically, letting the member know you understand how involved he/she would like to be.

12. Keep an accurate list of members (including their contact information and email). Make a membership report at each meeting (board and general). Utilize **MemberHub to track members and create reports.**
13. Turn in all money from dues to treasurer as soon as they are *received*. Remind treasurer to remit State and National dues to the State Office, by the end of each month, as collected. This can be done via MemberHub. Membership dues money is not sent automatically, treasurer or president must submit.
14. Submit membership articles for both PTA and school newsletters.

Memberships can be sold all year.

**Award eligibility, will be calculated by dues received by
Florida PTA by May 1st.**

Apply for Membership Awards (www.FloridaPTA.org – PTA Leaders Tab)

Visit the Florida PTA website—under PTA Leaders > Membership Information,
and also Join + Connect Tab.

More information on Membership is available in the *Membership Procedure Book Section*.

Thank You for being a PTA Member!!!

PROGRAM PLANNING

It is a known fact that well planned, relevant, timely programs increase attendance at meetings. What is the objective of your program? Plan the program to meet the desired objective. Also remember that the IRS suggests that for every fundraiser, PTAs should offer three programs.

FOR SUCCESSFUL PTA PROGRAMS:

1. Identify needs - What programs are significant for your school and community? This can be answered by meeting with the principal, teachers and staff. Also conduct a survey of parents and local community leaders/partners.
2. Suggested programs of interest may include the following:
 - Alcohol Abuse Education
 - Character Building
 - Curriculum Requirements
 - Dangers of Drugs
 - Issues Relative to Students and Youth
 - Gang Awareness
 - Guidance Counseling
 - Legislation
 - Planning for College
 - Reading Readiness/Improvement
 - Math Programs
 - School to Career
 - Programs sponsored by National PTA (www.pta.org)
3. Set realistic goals, enlist the interest of single parents, encourage the involvement of men and special interest groups, strengthen member participation, provide better opportunities for contact between families and teachers, develop PTA leaders and improve the overall effectiveness of the local PTA.
4. After selecting topics of interest, consider comprehensive activities which will be needed to deal effectively with those topics. Remember, PTA programs do not have to be limited to meetings and can be held at a site other than school property.
5. Decide what resources may be needed and plan how they will be obtained. If money has not been set aside in the budget for the program, estimate the amount needed and submit for approval. Paying for a speaker is a legitimate expense. Remember too that IRS suggests that for every fundraiser, PTAs should offer three programs.
6. Plan a Building Successful Partnership (BSP) or Florida State Standards training for your PTA. Trained presenters are available from the State PTA. A presentation is a comprehensive look at how getting parents and families involved can improve your school and increase student achievement. For more information on programs, check www.floridapta.org.
7. Remember that part of the mission of PTA is to assist parents in developing skills required to raise, protect and prepare their children. Identify and present programs that will assist parents in this process



The National PTA's 2022-2023 Reflections Program Theme

Show Your Voice!

The National PTA Reflections program provides opportunities for students to express themselves through the arts. Each year students in Pre-K through 12th Grade create original arts of work in response to a student-selected theme. This 50+ year-old program helps them explore their own thoughts, feelings and ideas, develop artistic literacy, increase confidence and find a love for learning that will help them become more successful in school and in life.

Students submit their completed works in one or all of the six arts categories:		
Dance Choreography	Film Production	Literature
Music Composition	Photography	Visual Arts

Student enter artwork by their Grade/Special Artist divisions:	
Primary Preschool - Grade 2	Intermediate Grades 3 - 5
Middle School Grades 6 - 8	High School Grades 9 - 12
Special Artist Division	
Option 1: Students in all grades, who identify as having a disability and may receive services under the IDEA or ADA: Section 504 may enter their artwork in the Special Artist Grade division. Qualifying students create their own artwork and may receive non-artistic accommodation and assistance from an adult.	Option 2: Students may choose to enter in one of the four traditional grade divisions (primary, intermediate, middle or high school). Students follow all general rules and arts category rules and may submit their entries in the grade division most closely aligned to their cognitive or functional abilities.

Students enter the Reflections Program through their local PTA/PTSA. Entries are then forwarded to their County Council for judging. If there is no County Council, contact Florida PTA.

Deadline: Local Units will need to set their deadline for student artwork submissions in order to meet the County Council's deadline (we recommend one month prior to county deadlines). Local Units please contact your County Council President or Reflections Chair for the appropriate deadline.

Recommended Submission Deadlines:

Local Units: September – October
County Council: November – December

Only PTAs/PTSAs in good standing may participate. (Monthly membership dues must be paid, the taxes/990 must have been filed and Bylaws must be current through May of the membership submitting year.)

REFLECTIONS (continued)

Recognition: Local units are encouraged to celebrate the students that enter the program. This can be done by assigning awards, announcing winners, hosting a student recognition event and even showcasing artwork through the school and community.

Student artwork that is forwarded to the County Council will be celebrated at that level and students that have artwork forward to the State and National level will also be recognized at those levels.

Each County Council can only submit to Florida PTA three entries, for each division listed above. For a total of 90 entries.

Florida PTA selects one **Award of Excellence** and up to 5 **Awards of Merit** in each Arts area and Grade Division. **Award of Excellence** recipients will represent Florida PTA at National PTA.

Students recognized at the State level will receive the following recognition:

Forwarded to State: Participation Ribbon

Award of Merit: Certificate of Merit; Award of Merit Ribbon; Invitation to Awards Ceremony; Artwork displayed at the annual Florida PTA Leadership convention.

Award of Excellence: Certificate of Excellence; Award of Excellence Ribbon; Award of Excellence Medal; \$50 Award Check; Invitation to Awards Ceremony; Artwork displayed at the annual Florida PTA Leadership convention.

Students recognized at the National level will receive the following recognition:

Award of Merit: Bronze Medal; Certificate of Merit; Work featured in the traveling exhibition

Award of Excellence: Silver Medal; Certificate of Excellence; \$200 Young Artist Scholarship; Work featured in the traveling exhibition

Outstanding Interpretation: Gold Medal, Certificate of Outstanding Interpretation; \$800 Young Artist Scholarship; Work featured in the traveling exhibition; \$200 Prize for Local PTA Unit

Resources: Program materials, forms, graphics, deadlines and instructions are accessible on the Florida PTA website at <https://floridapta.org/reflections-art-program/>.

You can visit the National PTA Reflections page for additional information and/or to view past National winners. <https://www.pta.org/home/programs/reflections>

Reflections Theme: How is the Reflections theme created? The answer is by students! And it could be someone from your PTA/PTSA. Themes are selected from thousands of ideas submitted by students to the National PTA's Reflections Program Theme Search. The entry form and instructions can be found on the Florida PTA website. The **deadline** for the Theme Search Entry contest is **November 1**, annually.

Questions: Please direct any questions about the National PTA Reflections program to the Florida PTA State Reflections Chair at reflections@floridapta.org or call 407-855-7604.

RESOLUTIONS: PTA Power Statements

PTA's mission is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children. We fulfill this mission for every child with one voice through members working through a resolution process to address issues for children.

Every PTA activity at any level should be linked to a position statement to ensure all advocacy activities are in line with the PTA mission, values, and purpose. It is important that PTA board familiarize themselves with the recent resolutions and active position statements of the Florida and National PTA.

What is a Florida PTA Resolution?

A resolution is an original main motion that is brought forward at the Florida PTA Convention because it addresses an issue of statewide concern related to the education, health, safety, or welfare of children and youth, or parental education and family engagement. A resolution outlines action and is submitted in writing. PTA resolutions and position statements give the association power to act as a whole.

Florida PTA and National PTA resolutions create the Position Statements for our advocacy Action Platform. You can find those position statements on our [Resolutions Webpage](#).

Why submit a resolution?

Resolutions call for action by Florida PTA. They define a problem, situation, and concern that affect children and youth statewide and that require statewide action. Florida PTA resolutions guide actions by the Florida PTA and all the county councils and local units in Florida.

What form does a resolution take?

A resolution consists of two main parts: Whereas statements: the preamble portion of the resolution consisting of a statement(s) providing information on the resolution, reasons for the resolution, and why it should be adopted. Resolved statements: the main motion. The resolved statements constitute the request for action and express the opinion or will of the group.

Who submits a resolution?

PTA members, local units, county councils, or Florida PTA committees may submit resolutions. Resolutions must be submitted by deadline for consideration by the Florida PTA Resolutions Committee, which is posted on the [Resolutions Webpage](#).

Where do I start?

Florida PTA presents Shaping Policy through Resolutions in a workshop at the Florida PTA Convention and in a webinar in September/October. The latest webinar can be found on the [Resolutions Webpage](#).

The strength in PTA is our passion, our membership, and the process we use to help the children of Florida. We have a responsibility to our children to use the strengths we are given!

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

PTA is an educational advocacy association, not a fundraising organization. Each Year PTAs raise funds through their annual Membership Drives. Some PTAs will complete their work with no further fundraising. However, if the PTA membership decides the membership dollars are not enough to support the programs, events and projects they want to complete within the year, they may decide to raise additional funds. Augmenting membership dollars should be done while maintaining perspective of the PTA Purposes and Mission.

1. All funds raised should be used for specific, predetermined and budgeted purposes that further the work of PTA. These include the following: funding for committees, projects and programs, paying county council dues, attending County, State, and National PTA trainings, Leadership Convention. PTA funds should be used to further PTA programs, not as material aid to the school or community; that should be covered by public funds.
2. The board and the general membership must approve the budget and any fundraising activity. Remember this year's PTA cannot dictate or obligate next year's PTA. This includes approving ongoing projects or signing contracts. This means PTAs should only raise fund necessary to complete the current year's activities.
3. When considering additional fundraising options, compare 2 or 3 companies prior to selecting your fundraising company. A few questions to ask when considering possibilities include:
 - a. How long has the company been in fundraising?
 - b. Does the company have a local representative?
 - c. Is the quality of their product guaranteed? Is the price fair?
 - d. Will the vendor take back unsold merchandise, spoiled or damaged goods? If so, who pays the cost of returned items?
 - e. Can product be received without advance payment?
 - f. Are there any other PTAs in the area that have used this company and product?
 - g. Is the liability of the PTA protected through sufficient insurance or other means?
4. Select a vendor who is registered with the Florida Department of Revenue (www.sunbiz.org/index.html). Dealing with a Florida registered vendor allows the PTA to pay the sales tax on the wholesale cost of the product directly to the vendor. Remember, the PTA is the potential customer, so you should ask for references.
5. Ideas and Projects that have proven popular and successful may be found by using PTA resources. For example: objectively reviewing your PTA's fundraising history, asking other local units, and attending vendor fairs at PTA functions. Also, consider fundraisers you have seen successfully utilized by other community groups and non-profit organizations:

Special Dinners Book Fairs	Auctions PTA
Yearbook/Memory Book Catalog Sales	School Spirit Items
Sell "Prime" Parking Spot Best Locker Location	T-Shirt Sales 5K/Fun Run
Principal for a Day	Walk-a-thons Carnivals
Website/Newsletter Sponsorship	Coupon Books / Business Sponsorships

6. Remember to thank the school community and/or local businesses for their support of the PTA fundraising initiatives.

The key to remember is that your PTA should avoid exploiting children and making them responsible for raising funds!

Notes: Review the Fundraising section in the current year PTA Money Matters from National PTA.

Check school board policies regarding fundraising before any plans are implemented. Find out what insurance coverage is needed under the school board policy. PTA units should consider their need for general liability. The anticipation of a successful fundraiser should not cloud the judgment of the PTA or allow it to be exploited by those outside the PTA who have something to gain.

3-to-1 Reminder: Every fundraising activity should be balanced by at least three non-fundraising projects aimed at helping parents or children, or advocating for school improvements.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Student Engagement begins by establishing a PTSA and getting students involved.

1. The process of organizing a PTSA can be initiated by anyone, using these suggested steps:
 - a. Discuss the idea of involving students with the Executive Board and school administration.
 - b. Contact student leaders (Student Government, National [Junior] Honor Society, Interact/Key Club, etc.) and discuss the PTA/PTSA concept with them. Consider bringing student leaders to a Florida PTA event (Legislative and/or Leadership Convention) so they can see the work firsthand and their place in the PTA/PTSA.
 - c. Conduct a General Meeting where students, parents, and school staff discuss the benefits – from their perspective – of becoming a PTSA with the general membership. Vote to change/ratify the bylaws calling your organization a Parent-Teacher-Student Association.
2. Once a PTSA is established:
 - a. Your board must have at least one student member. Many schools have the student member of the board serve in the position of Student Representative or Student Involvement Committee Chair; some schools have grade representatives. Additional students can serve as chairs or members of the various standing committees.
 - b. Include students in meetings and activities. You will never have success if you do the planning and expect students to attend. You need to work together in discussing ideas, selecting dates, Planning activities, publicizing events, and implementing programs.
 - c. Most PTAs do whatever they can to encourage parent, teacher, and even community membership. Students need to see that the same commitment is made to involve them if they are to buy into the idea that the PTSA is an organization for them.
3. PTSA makes a difference:
 - a. Students provide new perspectives on PTA's ideas and programs. This makes your programs more effective.
 - b. It gives students the opportunity to participate in the planning and execution of PTA programs. Students' viewpoints and ideas are essential because all PTA programs focus on youth.
 - c. It gives students a better understanding of adults, and adults a better understanding of students.
 - d. It teaches students useful skills, such as parliamentary procedure, public speaking and conflict resolution. It also introduces them to the legislative process through your PTA's involvement in legislative activities.
 - e. It encourages students' personal growth and development.
 - f. It increases the number of skilled volunteers in your PTSA so you can conduct more programs.

Student Responsibilities:

1. As a student, you know what's happening in your school and you are uniquely qualified to determine how your education can be improved. You can provide your PTSA important student perspective for PTA ideas and programs.
2. PTSA will provide you with an open forum for discussing students' needs in your school. You'll be expressing your views to people who share your concerns about education, including the teachers and school administrators who make the final decisions.

(Student Engagement Continued)

3. Instead of being spoken for, you can speak for yourself. After all, you're the reason there is an education system.
4. You can make a difference in your community and school through involvement in PTA programs that address issues such as health education, juvenile justice, art education, and legislative affairs regarding education.
5. Membership in your local PTSA is your direct connection to your state PTA and to a nationwide network of millions of concerned members. The National PTA is your voice in Washington, DC, just as your state PTA serves your local unit's interests in the state capitol and your County Council at the school board/district level.
6. Learning means becoming a part of PTSA. You can attend school board meetings with members of your unit, become an expert on issues of education and children's welfare, and help gather community support for school board referenda and other legislation that is important to you and your PTSA.
7. PTSA involvement can help you gain leadership skills (conflict resolution, goal setting, etc.), learn how to run a meeting according to parliamentary procedure, strengthen your decision-making skills and become comfortable with public speaking.
8. You'll gain an understanding of public education and how it works, the operations of state and local governments as they affect schools, and the legislative process and its impact on school funding and services.
9. PTSA is one of the few youth-focused organizations that actually gives its youth members equal opportunity, equal responsibility and an equal vote.
10. Your PTSA membership entitles you to the same rights and privileges as adult members. You can become a leader in your unit by being elected to office or you can serve as a chair of a committee. The possibilities are endless.
11. Many of the contacts that you will make in the community during your PTSA work may prove useful after you graduate (e.g., job prospects, college recommendation letters, experience, etc.).
12. PTA/PTSA is a good way to meet people and to get involved in your school and in your education. You can make an impact on school policy or have a voice in determining the direction of your education.





everychild. one voice.

MEMBERSHIP
PROCEDURE BOOK
2022-2023



What does a PTA Membership Procedure Book Include?

- Directory of PTA board members, your membership committee, council membership chair, state membership chair, membership roster and other necessary contacts;
- Association bylaws;
- Current budget;
- Membership forms (local unit) and information on honorary memberships, including Florida PTA Honorary Life Membership Award, History Walk of Fame and President's Award of Honor (visit www.FloridaPTA.org);
- Membership calendar and plan of work. Membership calendar should include dates from your district that are relevant, i.e., volunteer orientations, district parent activities scheduled, your county council meeting/leadership dates and FPTA events.
- The National PTA Membership Quick-Reference Guide is located on the National PTA website www.PTA.org;
- The Membership Committee section of this Leadership Resource.
- Membership brochures.
- Job description of Membership Chair.
- Reference to membership articles from FPTA E-newsletter and National PTA's publications.
- Membership award information and deadlines.
- Previous year's membership report with suggestions for improvement (including a recap of surveys distributed and received).
- Information can be stored electronically on a thumb drive or printed in a 3-ring binder.
- Remember that a PTA procedure book is the property of the association and not the person using it for the year.



SAMPLE RECRUITMENT LETTERS

Following are samples of letters you can adapt for your local PTA. As you read them, note how the emphasis is different for each. This is deliberate: the appeal to a teacher will be different than one written to the parent of a new kindergarten student. The purpose of having a variety of letters is to address the concerns of the varied audiences that exist in your community, not just your school.

- Notice the different uses of the PTA logo. Incorporate the logo with your unit name and include it on all PTA materials.
- Consider writing letters for each grade level in your school. For example, think about what's important to the families of third graders (maybe their first statewide assessment test), how the PTA supports third grade families (test-taking strategy workshops, opportunities to socialize with other students, funding curriculum materials that support classroom instruction) and how PTA membership guarantees these efforts (more membership support means fewer fundraisers and more PTA emphasis on education).
- What might appeal to new middle-school parents? Does the PTA help them with the difficult transition years from elementary to high school? How?
- Parents are busy and Today's PTA member probably won't read a mass-copied, impersonal "Dear Parent" letter.
- Have a letter hand-signed; volunteers can help with this. Letters do not have to come from the PTA president and the membership chair;

Consider —testimonial letters from PTA members or teachers or volunteers or other community members.

Be creative. Try something new. Think outside the box instead of doing things the way they've always been done. Address the specific issues of concern in your community, demonstrate how PTA is indispensable to the community, and PTA membership will sell itself.



SAMPLE – RECRUITMENT LETTER FOR TEACHERS

Insert Your PTA logo Here

Dear (name):

The (name) School PTA, like you, is embarking on a new year full of promise and high expectations for success. Parents and teachers work together to improve the lives of children and youth through programs and projects sponsored by our PTA. We know very well the impact of either group not being fully involved in the process of educating children. That is why ABC PTA invites you to become a member today.

Your PTA is working hand-in-hand with teachers to help them receive the tools they need to succeed in the classroom. Nationally the PTA is working with legislators and education officials to increase funds for schools and IDEA. PTA has taken a position against high-stakes tests that have become a requirement for graduation and advocates for the use of tests only as assessments of the effectiveness of instruction. PTA supports improved arts education programs, comprehensive health programs, funding for PE programs, and increased parent involvement. In short, the PTA is constantly working to improve our public schools and the tools made available to our teachers.

SAMPLE – KINDERGARTEN RECRUITMENT LETTER

Insert Your PTA logo Here

Dear Kindergarten Parent,

I am honored to welcome you to the (name) School. Having been a parent of two (name) School students for the past six years I can assure you that there are many opportunities for both you and your child within this community. One is the opportunity to be a member of the PTA (Parent Teacher Association).

The PTA, nationally and here in our school community, is committed to bringing the home and school together. PTA promotes the welfare of children throughout the community, works to secure laws for the care and protection of children and youth, and seeks to develop united efforts between educators and the general public so that children have the highest educational advantages. I have enclosed a membership form and encourage you to join the PTA. Everyone is welcome and each member has a voice.

Also included is information about the school (T-shirt, etc.) sale PTA sponsors each year. You may buy these for your child. If you join at Kindergarten round up, your child will receive a free school shirt for next year.

Again, welcome to ##### County Schools. I look forward to working with you on behalf of our children throughout the year. Please call on any PTA representative with questions you might have or how you can become part of this successful partnership—parents and teachers working together for children.

SAMPLE – RECRUITMENT LETTER FOR COMMUNITY

Insert Your PTA logo Here

Dear Neighbor:

The (name) PTA is embarking on a new year full of promise and high expectations for success. PTA's Purposes for over a century have been:

- To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community, and place of worship
- To raise the standards of home life,
- To secure adequate laws for the area and protection of children and youth,
- To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth,
- To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education.

That is why _____ PTA invites you to become a member today. Here in (name) County/City, the PTA is working hand-in-hand with teachers, parents and the school board to create a positive learning environment for children. While you may not have children in our schools who benefit directly from PTA programs, the PTA's efforts have an impact throughout our community. When parents are involved in their children's education, the children are more likely to succeed. When children are more successful in school, they are more likely to avoid drugs, gangs and other behaviors that harm themselves and their neighbors. Successful students are more likely to attend college and become valuable members of society, making our community more vibrant and keeping property values high.

Please take a moment now to consider the invaluable role PTA has played in public education. PTA has encouraged the partnership that studies have validated time and again—communities working together on behalf of children mean better-educated students.

Your membership support now will help ensure the continuation of this century-old alliance. It will add yet one more voice to the nearly 5 million nationwide that continue to speak for every child...with one voice. We look forward to including you as a member of (name) PTA.

Sincerely,
(name)

SAMPLE – RENEWAL LETTER

Insert Your PTA logo here

Dear (past member's name):

On behalf of the PTA and the community here at (name) School, I want to thank you for your past support of the PTA. Because of you and ### other members, (name) PTA was able to speak for every child with one voice during the 2013 -2014 school year. Here are just a few examples your PTA put membership contributions to work:

We sponsored the (XYZ...share what you have done that was most exciting and successful). Over ### people attended the event, which featured xxxx and met our goal of increasing i.e., parental involvement or student literacy, etc.

With Florida PTA and National PTA, we have worked hard to educate parents on ???? and will be supporting a variety of initiatives to promote healthy eating, improved exercise and increasing public awareness of the benefits of healthy lifestyles to combat childhood obesity.

PTA sponsored tutoring programs to benefit the reading, math and social studies skills of our students, as well as after -school programs that included a chess club, Odyssey of the Mind, Spanish club and Mad Science (examples).

(name) PTA meetings featured programs aimed at helping parents be better advocates for their children. Topics such as Avoiding Homework Hassles, Test-Taking Strategies, and Keeping the Lines of Communication Open.

This year plans to be just as productive for our PTA. We're working on scheduling speakers to cover some of the healthy-lifestyles initiatives as well as a program to address (anything you have set for the year, i.e., bullying—how to spot it and how to prevent it). We'll again be sponsoring school field trips, curriculum enhancement materials, safety patrol training and student social activities—the play, school dance, talent show and more.

I hope we can count on your membership support again this year to make these plans a reality. And, don't forget that local members make possible the work of Florida PTA and National PTA on behalf of children and education throughout the US.

Thank you for your consideration and for all that you do every day for the children at (name) School.

Sincerely,

PTA President and Membership Chair

PTA Benefits Families More

This coalition of male involvement organizations engages fathers and other role-model men in the educational and social development of children through events, volunteering, and programs.

“We want [men] to understand that their role in their child’s life is just as important as a mother’s role.” Betty Murchison, Black Star Project organizer PTA

Takes Action Network Resources and tools helping child advocates to be involved and informed—all available at PTA.org/advocacy.

“Reach out on your own, through schools, the PTA... and find out if there's a soldier or a soldier’s family right there in your own community who needs a little extra support—because they are there.” First Lady Michelle Obama

- PTA.org The best place online for family knowledge from health and education experts, PTA staff, and families themselves. The website has a multimedia library, message boards, issue and research information, links to PTA’s social media channels, and much more.

Building Family-School Partnerships PTA “wrote the book” with the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships, and companion assessment and implementation guides, as well as tools and financial awards for local PTAs.

“I know the difference between PTA and non-PTA groups—and I couldn’t run this school without my PTA parents.” Darrell White, Fountain Green Elementary School principal

With the support of national members, PTA is able to engage and inform families, provide free resources and programs, advocate for better education and health policies, and continue a relentless drive to boost involvement. Simply put: your support makes PTA the place for families.

Means more informed Parents. Parents involved with PTA understand the challenges schools face and become part of the solution. Because PTA is a forum for exchanging ideas, you are encouraged to make suggestions allowing you to be more engaged in the positive success and effectiveness of your child’s and other schools in your district, state and nation.

- Collective strength with those who share concerns and seek solutions.

PTA Benefits Students More

Reflections - This arts initiative encourages millions of children to create paintings, music, literature, videos and more—while strengthening their critical thinking skills and exposure to new cultures.

“I loved Reflections because it gave me an opportunity to not only compete; but to see what other students were writing, and to be exposed to the creative energy of my age level.” Kyle Jones, PTA Reflections Award of Excellence winner

- Makes you a good role model. By becoming a PTA member, you’ll be demonstrating to your child the importance you place on education as well as encouraging the spirit of volunteerism.

Research has shown that family engagement leads to improved school readiness, higher achievement, better social skills and behavior and an increased likelihood of high school graduation, according to the Harvard Family Research Project.

PTA is unique because:

- It has not lost its focus for over 100 years – *everychild.onevoice*.
- It demonstrates how ONE person CAN make a difference by working with others within the PTA network.
- It provides extensive training and reflects the professionalism of its volunteers.
- It continues to be highly respected as an advocate in Florida and nation for all children and youth.
- It is diverse group of individuals who embrace and enhance the lives of families and children.

PTA – Partners That Advocate!

PTA - People Taking Action! You are **welcomed** to be a part!

###

Ways to Encourage Teacher Memberships

Sponsor Mini Grants that are only eligible to teachers who are members of PTA. Establish a grant committee to come up with guidelines and applications. At the beginning of the school year, teachers can apply for a mini-grant of up to \$100 to purchase something for their classroom. They must be a member of PTA to be eligible for the grant and the item must be approved for purchase by the grant committee.

Survey your teachers to find out what they want from your PTA. They might need someone to watch the children when parents come in for parent-teacher conferences. More people to help with "administrative"-type duties, etc. Find out their needs.

Another idea in elementary schools is to decorate the doors of the teachers who join the PTA. The decoration follows the recruiting theme. Keep supporting all teachers, but give special recognition to those who do join (even a small treat in their box).

The absolute best thing you can do is to get your principal on board. If your principal is telling the teachers that they need to join, then you will see a better result. And make sure that your teachers know what you do that benefits them - luncheons, grant money, volunteer connections, mentors, family engagement programs and activities, etc.

Ways to increase PTA memberships

Sometimes increasing membership is not about what you are doing; but what you have already done.

Keep mission and purpose of PTA in mind when planning activities or fundraisers. This could make or break next year's membership drive.

Be Friendly!!!!!!!!!!!! Smile and greet everyone you meet at the school. Let them know you are a part of PTA and would love to have them as members. Just being nice and asking is all you need sometimes. Everyone loves their child, no matter what they wear, where they live or what they do for a living. Embrace diversity.

Create posters sharing positive testimonies from parents at your school or members in your community. Post them at your school.

Advertise. Make your PTA's accomplishments visible to parents – create a website that promotes the positives with a link to join. Try to get free advertising in the non-profit section of your local paper, leave membership forms attached to envelopes in doctor's offices, hair salons, local businesses – especially those who have a connection to your school, etc. (always ask for permission).

Host events that show evidence of the advocacy of PTA. **Partners That Advocate.** The opportunity to be involved in school is great; however, the potential to make a difference outside the school on behalf of PTA is powerful, too. This will validate to community members of why PTA exists, which ultimately, has the power to increase your membership outside the school in the community. Events could include: forums/discussion on local district needs, strengths, Q&A for parents with school board members, etc.

Be a relevant resource to families. Show benefits to families in your school by hosting resource events/programs – partnering with local agencies that offer free resources, medical care, counseling organizations, after school program activities that will directly benefit your families and community.

Have a theme to your membership drive and remember the membership drive should last all year.

Incentivize your membership with donations from local businesses. (You will have to market to local businesses the importance of PTA and what your PTA does for children and families in your school.)

Recognize and recruit men. One idea is to create an FBI Club (Fathers Being Involved). There are lots of creative membership drives to design for this acronym (i.e., give away free dollar store dark sunglasses to members, Mission: Possible – Getting Men Involved. Join the FBI.) Thanks to Brookville Elementary and Indiana State PTA for the great idea.

Share with potential members how they can benefit from PTA and how children can benefit from their membership.

Have a challenge (always with prior approval of President/Principals) to reward classes with the most PTA members. Or reward the children of PTA members with a special lunch with Principal.

Host your first PTA meeting with an open house or mandatory Title One meeting (again, with permission of President/Principal). Share via video or PowerPoint – include pictures, what PTA did last year. Share your final budget review which should show your funds were used for family involvement events, education support, teacher and student rewards. It's not about how much money you raised, but how much money you gave back to the families, students and school in general. Share what "cash free" donations were received and how it benefited the school and children. Once again, it's not about how much money was made but how many connections were reached out to and gained to make your school, families and students better.

Host a Meet the Principal breakfast/luncheon. Begin by sharing with those that attend that this is something the PTA hosts and believes will support academic success for students. Hand out membership flyers as parents sign in at the door. This is PTA in action. Great for showing the value of PTA.

Know your school population. Your membership drive will be much more successful if you understand the diversity of students and families that attend your school. Remember, it's not about how much money your members have. Keep in mind your PTA has the opportunity to offer leadership training and life skills to better not only the students but the parents, too!

Retain your current members by following the mission and vision of PTA when planning activities for the year. Also, encourage and educate them on the values of PTA. Don't misuse them or underestimate the power of your members. Respect them and offer them an opportunity to be engaged if they step up to the plate. Encourage every member to attend Leadership/Convention hosted by Florida PTA. These events are not selective only to members of your board. Always share these events with your current membership. **You never know, the next Florida PTA President could just be a member in your local PTA today!**

10 Tips to Increase Membership

Every PTA should have a good mix of membership strategies for retention and to increase growth. The start of a new year is a good time to evaluate your membership plan.

1. Exude a warm and welcoming attitude—A warm and welcoming executive committee can translate into a warm and welcoming PTA. Your PTA needs to take a pro-active approach in meeting and greeting potentially new members. The executive committee, in fact, should stand at the door, and shake the hand of members and guests as they come in for your monthly meeting. It can be hard for people to walk into a roomful of people they don't know. Introduce yourself, take an interest in them, and introduce them to other members.

2. Make everything you do a "media event"-Now that digital cameras are so easy to use, take a picture at all your events - - your keynote speaker at the monthly meeting, your new member inductions, when you meet with your legislators and send it to your local newspapers. Newspapers, especially weeklies, are always looking for items of local interest.

3. Want to get the media more interested in what you're doing?

Invite a local journalist to speak at your meeting. When the PTA invited the assistant managing editor of the local newspaper, she not only spoke about her life in the media but also gave us tips for ways to get better media coverage. She also took the business cards of everyone there, and wrote profiles of several business owning members.

4. Get to know your members

Make sure your PTA including the Membership Chair and committee members, makes a special effort to get to know each member by name. This can be a challenge, as your group grows, but it is essential. A member needs to feel that he or she is a valued part of the PTA, regardless of how much service or volunteer hours are contributed.

5. Set up a website

People increasingly expect an organization to have a website. Online search has become the most common and easiest way to research an organization for more information. You want to ensure that you are not missing out on valuable exposure online. Setting up a website is also a valuable resource to your members, who need to find timely information quickly and easily. Utilize website features through MemberHub to set one up.

6. Get new members involved on committees and special projects

Ensure that members are aware of what your committees are, and encourage them to get involved. A wide variety of skills and talents are needed to run a successful PTA and everyone's contribution is needed. Use your website to feature all the committees and what they do.

7. Have a membership contest!

Any member who brings in a new member during the year has their name put into a hat. The drawing is held in April, and the winner gets their membership dues for the coming year reduced by half! There can be various takes on this – maybe the member who brings in the most members during the year

gets a free membership the following year. The key issue is that your membership grows as a result of a collaborative effort.

8. Send postcards to local businesses

Use postcards as a promotional tool. If you see an article in your local newspaper about a new business or about a person who has a special appointment or achievement, send them a postcard with congratulations and invite them to come to a meeting. Better yet, invite them to join. Many people might believe your PTA is exclusive and would find it a great honor.

9. Challenge every member to bring a friend to at least one meeting per month

Ask one guest to provide a short comment toward the end of the meeting about what they thought about the meeting. This will give you a good indication whether they are a potential member. Sometimes they'll convince themselves to join right in the middle of their comments! Just make sure to tell the guest at the beginning of the meeting that these comments will be requested at the end so the guest is not caught off-guard.

10. Make use of other organizations in your community to "spread the word" about your PTA

Service clubs, networking organizations, and professional associations are always looking for speakers. Most municipal councils are open to presentations by local non-profit organizations. Economic development organizations often organize conferences and one-day seminars where you might have an opportunity to speak to others about your PTA.

Check out these additional resources...

National PTA membership toolkit

<https://www.pta.org/home/run-your-pta/membership-campaign>

MemberHub support

<https://support.memberhub.com>

Recruiting Members

Have Answers When Someone Says No

You have tried a variety of approaches for recruiting members. What do you do when some of the individuals you have been talking to do not see the advantages and benefits as you do? Isn't it amazing how many reasons people find for not joining the PTA? The following are some possible responses to those who are reluctant to join.

“I don't have the time!”

“I can understand that. However, it is your interest that counts. If you are unable to support the PTA with time, would you at least consider giving your financial support so that all the people working in the PTA know that you too are with us. You will have the satisfaction of knowing your money is helping, as we develop programs and activities that benefit not only your children but all children and youth.”

“But I don't have any children in school!”

“You do not have to have children in school to belong to the PTA. Anyone who cares about children can join our association. As supporters, it is important that we have a voice in the decision-making process relating to the laws and regulations — whether in the schools or governments — that affect children. You can have that voice through the PTA. Every child needs you. You will make a difference.”

“I don't agree with a lot of the PTA positions!”

Of course not. The only way to avoid disagreement would be to adopt a “do-nothing” policy. You would not want that kind of organization. But, in any case, it is easy for you to join. Then you can help to change the direction of the association, once you understand the whole picture.”

“Your organization doesn't really do anything!”

“I cannot speak for what may have happened in previous years, but let me bring you up to date on what we are doing now. For example...(list current activities, programs, accomplishments, etc.). As you see, we are a very active group, doing many things that benefit all our children. We need time, funds and goodwill from people like you to keep it happening.”

“Not right now - maybe later!”

“Later may be too late. You really cannot afford to delay in being informed on the current issues and trends affecting children. Through the PTA, you will have access to the latest resources and publications designed to address today's challenges facing parents and children in the school and the community. Our members are the heart of the association and determine the course of action we need to take by participating in PTA activities. Please make the time and put children first.”

“I just can't join another organization. I belong to too many already!”

“I know. There are so many good organizations to belong to, and it is difficult to support them all. But, I think the PTA is very special. Let me tell you a little about what we are doing. I find it helps to have information when I'm making a choice (tell about the PTA). Remember, PTA works to prevent problems and, of course, address those concerns that affect us right now. We really need people like you in the PTA.”

Reprinted from the web site of North Carolina PTA