

Committees



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ARTS

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 a few 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 Afterschool 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; 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 about 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.

(Arts Continued)

- **Add** art related magazines to the Parent Resource Room or the area where parents wait for appointments.
- **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

<https://www.arteducators.org/10-youth-art-month-yam/>

National Association for Music Education

[National Association for Music Education \(NAFME\)](#)

October is National Arts & Humanities Month

Americans for the Arts.

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

Arts4All Florida

<https://rts4allflorida.org>



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 resources that are statewide. Some of these entities have local offices to help.

Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (<http://www.fdlrs.org/>) 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/>)

The Florida Department of children and families contracts behavioral health services through regional systems of care called Managing Entities (MEs). (<http://prod.myflfamilies.com/services/samh/childrens-mental-health-program>)

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 & COMMUNITY 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 a key 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, health/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 one-time, but family engagement is an ongoing partnership with two-way communications for a common goal not a onetime event or activity nor simply having volunteers. **Some helpful hints for a successful family and community engagement are:**

- 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 teachers' 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 the benefits of getting involved (either simply through open dialogue with the teachers and the school or also helping with specific volunteer opportunities).

PTAs National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships set the bar for how schools and parent organizations should work together to support student success. We know that families are essential partners to providing a high-quality education for every student. Decades of research shows that family engagement matters for student success, students whose families are engaged are more likely to attend school, avoid discipline problems, achieve at higher levels and graduate. Family engagement also helps schools, research suggests it is equally as important as school leadership or a rigorous curriculum to predict school improvement.

Although there is consensus that family engagement matters, parents and educators struggle to figure out how to engage with one another in ways that reach all families and have a positive impact on student success (Robinson & Harris, 2014). Since their initial creation over 20 years ago, the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships have contributed to greater awareness and capacity for improving family-school partnerships across the country and internationally.

The Standards are one of few recognizable and concrete guideposts for family engagement across the education system, complementing important work such as the Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School-Community Partnerships. The National Standards for Family-School Partnerships have been used by PTAs, schools, districts, state education agencies, and the U.S. Department of Education for accountability and support for strong family engagement.

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 National PTA released the PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships information , 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.

How are the Standards organized?

National PTA identifies six Standards that can help schools, PTAs and school districts improve their family-school partnerships so that all students can thrive:



Who should use the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships?

The National Standards for Family-School Partnerships are designed for multiple audiences, but especially:

- School, district and state education leaders who wish to ensure that their family-school partnership efforts are adequately implemented, funded, and monitored
- PTA and other family and community leaders who want to know how to support and push their schools to better partner with the families in their communities
- Families, educators and youth who want to know what questions to ask and things to look for to find or help build a school with strong family-school partnerships
- Researchers who want to use an updated framework to explore the impacts and implementation of family-school partnerships
- Policymakers and private funders who want to invest in stronger communities through family-school partnerships

Visit <https://www.pta.org/home/run-your-pta/family-school-partnerships> for the guide on National Standards for Family-School Partnership in its entirety and other additional resources



SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE

The 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.

The School of Excellence Program aims to:

- Provide a framework for PTAs to identify and implement best practices in family engagement to strengthen family-school partnerships.
- Build inclusive and welcoming school communities where all families contribute to enriching the educational experience and overall well-being for all students.
- Help PTAs attract new, action-oriented PTA members who want to focus on the issues that affect our children the most.
- Provide step-by-step guidance and networking opportunities for PTAs to gain support and feedback, identify and reach goals and earn recognition.

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.

For more information, visit

<https://www.pta.org/home/programs/National-PTA-School-of-Excellence>

No two volunteers are alike and there are as many distinct 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. They may 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.

MENTAL HEALTH, WELLNESS & SAFETY

As you prepare for the upcoming school year, remember the mission of PTA.

*PTA's mission is to **make every child's potential a reality** by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.*

As a Local Unit PTA/PTSA you provide resources and information to families, educators, communities, and students that will help to promote the mental health, wellness, and safety of all children and families. Local units are also encouraged to offer programs, education, and activities to help raise awareness regarding the same issues that affect children, through all years until young adulthood. Workshops, PTA meetings, community presentations, media releases, websites, newsletters, e-mails are all ways to disseminate and get the information out.

Three Pillars of Healthy Lifestyles

Our Healthy Lifestyles initiative includes the following three pillars. Click on each to learn more.



Being physically healthy by following a healthy diet and doing regular physical activity.



Proactively strengthening our mental health and social and emotional well-being.



Supporting our planet and local communities to build the best future.

Mental Health Resources

[National PTA - Healthy Minds](#) [National Alliance on Mental Health](#)

[Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#)

[988 Suicide &](#)

[Crisis Lifeline](#)

[Crisis Text Line](#)

[TXT 4 HELP](#)

SAFETY

What is Safety



Safety is a concept that includes all measures and practices taken to preserve the life, health, and bodily integrity of individuals.



For more information on safety resources, visit <https://www.pta.org/home/family-resources/safety>

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 out 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 the 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 policies 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 the 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 identity 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: [Florida Governor \(flgov.com\)](http://flgov.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 completed 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 ensure 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 Communication 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 all within the school and local community to enroll as many members as possible. ASK, ASK, ASK!

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 promote 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
- Goals 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 and remember membership is 365+days a year. **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).

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 at 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 **Givebacks to track members and create reports.**
13. Turn in all money from dues to treasurer as soon as they are *received*, if using paper forms Remind treasurer to remit State and National dues to the State Office, by the end of every month. This can be done via Givebacks. Membership dues money are not sent automatically, the treasurer or president must submit.
14. Submit membership articles for both PTA and school newsletters.

Memberships can and should 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.



Explore the Arts and *Express Yourself*

National PTA has a long-standing commitment to arts education. For over 50 years, Reflections has helped students explore their own thoughts, feelings and ideas, develop artistic literacy, increase confidence and find a love for learning. The Reflections program provides **opportunities for recognition and access to the arts** which boosts student confidence and success in the arts and in life.

Each year, hundreds of thousands of students in pre-K through grade 12 **create original works of art in response to a student-created theme**. In Reflections, students submit artworks in the available arts category areas and program divisions.

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

Students 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 the Florida PTA Programs Coordinator at reflections@floridapta.org.

The PTA Reflections Program aims to:

- **Inspire** students and families to creatively engage around the annual theme.
- **Share** resources to support families' artistic endeavors and access arts education opportunities.
- **Provide** student artists access to recognition and celebrations for their creative talent.
- **Encourage** continued participation in the arts

The 2025-2026 Reflections theme



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 IRS 990 must have been filed and Bylaws must be current through May of the membership submitting year.)

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.

Reflections winners are recognized at the State and National levels. Check the Florida PTA and National PTA websites for more information.

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.

I Belong!
Explore the arts and
express yourself!

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 Yearbook / Memory Book Catalog Sales

Sell "Prime" Parking Spot / Best Locker Location / Principal for a

Day Website/Newsletter Sponsorship

Auctions / PTA School Spirit Items

T-Shirt Sales / 5K/Fun Run Walk-a-thons Carnivals

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:

- a. 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
- b. 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.
- c. Instead of being spoken for, you can speak for yourself. After all, you're the reason there is an education system.
- d. 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.
- e. 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.
- f. 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.
- g. 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.
- h. 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.
- i. PTSA is one of the few youth-focused organizations that actually gives its youth members equal opportunity, equal responsibility, and an equal vote.
- j. 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.
- k. 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.).
- l. 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
2025-2026**

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).
- Resource links such as www.pta.org, www.floridapta.org, social media sites such as the following FaceBook pages: Florida PTA, Florida PTA Family Engagement and Membership, National Parent Teacher Association, PTA Local Leaders.
- 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 but always convey the value and benefit of PTA membership.. 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's 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

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 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 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 2023 -2024 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 is 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.

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 125 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 produce 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 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 Givebacks 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>

Givebacks support - <https://support.Givebacks.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 (talk 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.”

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