

parents
teachers
students
& community
are the **basics**
of every PTA

principal
resource guide
2015-2016



Commyyounity



Principals play a significant role in a successful PTA. As a member of the Local PTA Board, the principal working side by side with the PTA President and other officers create the “PTA culture” on that campus. Communication, planning and delivery of meetings, programs and events will determine how members view the PTA’s relevance and value.

Evidence indicates that strong principal involvement makes a huge difference in a PTA’s longevity and effectiveness. Positive results are not accidents; they are the product of intentional efforts on behalf of the school staff and PTA volunteers.

It is critical for principals to understand the roles of the PTA and its leaders, and likewise, PTA leadership must be respectful of the principal’s role. When everyone is clear that the principal works for the school district and the PTA is a 501 (c)(3) member-governed organization with its own bylaws, the work of the PTA will go smoothly while maintaining the most important focus – the mission.

The vision of “making every child’s potential a reality” can and will be achieved through a solid working relationship between the principal and PTA volunteers. Trust, respect, compromise and transparency are key ingredients for the principal-PTA team which will ultimately produce a PTA that is the heart and soul of the campus.

Thanks to all of our principals for what you do and for your support of PTA!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leslie Boggs".

Leslie Boggs, Texas PTA President

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ABOUT PTA

VISION

Every child's potential is a reality.

MISSION

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

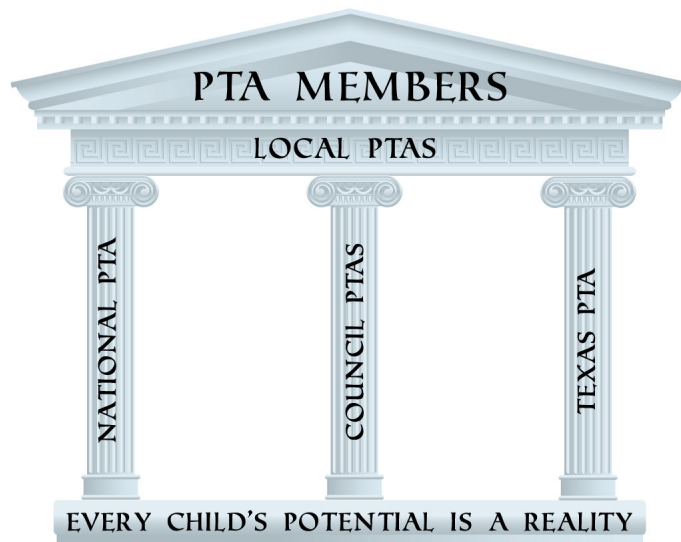
PURPOSES

- 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 care 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.

PTA VALUES

- **Collaboration:** We will work in partnership with a wide array of individuals and organizations to broaden and enhance our ability to serve and advocate for all children and families.
- **Commitment:** We are dedicated to children's educational success, health, and well-being through strong family and community engagement, while remaining accountable to the principles upon which our association was founded.
- **Diversity:** We acknowledge the potential of everyone without regard, including but not limited to: age, culture, economic status, educational background, ethnicity, gender, geographic location, legal status, marital status, mental ability, national origin, organizational position, parental status, physical ability, political philosophy, race, religion, sexual orientation, and work experience.
- **Respect:** We value the individual contributions of members, employees, volunteers, and partners as we work collaboratively to achieve our association's goals.
- **Accountability:** All members, employees, volunteers, and partners have a shared responsibility to align their efforts toward the achievement of our association's strategic initiatives.

ASSOCIATION STRUCTURE



POLICIES

- The organization shall be noncommercial, nonsectarian, and nonpartisan.
- The organization shall work with the schools and community to provide quality education for all children and youth and shall seek to participate in the decision-making process establishing school policy, recognizing that the legal responsibility to make decisions has been delegated by the people to boards of education, state education authorities, and local education authorities.
- The organization shall work to promote the health and welfare of children and youth and shall seek to promote collaboration among parent, schools, and the community at large.
- No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, directors, trustees, officers or other private persons except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the Purposes set forth in Article III of the Local PTA bylaws.
- Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (i) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or (ii) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- Upon the dissolution of this organization, after paying or adequately providing for the debts and obligations of the organization, the remaining assets shall be distributed to one or more nonprofit funds, foundations, or organizations which have established their tax exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and whose purposes are in accordance with those of National PTA.
- The organization or members in their official capacity shall not—directly or indirectly—participate or intervene (in any way, including the publishing or distributing of statements) in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office; or devote more than an insubstantial part of its activities to attempting to influence legislation by propaganda or otherwise.

A WINNING TEAM: PRINCIPALS AND PTA

The principal's responsibility is to make parent involvement a school priority and create an environment that welcomes parents to the school, building a strong home-school partnership. The PTA should work with the principal to help achieve this objective.

POSITIVE PARTNERSHIP

The Principal and the PTA should create a positive partnership through:

- Communicating openly and honestly
- Understanding the roles and responsibilities of each other
- Establishing goals and visions, working collaboratively for student achievement
- Respecting each other's opinions and input
- Actively pursue parents and staff to get involved
- Building positive community relationships
- Commitment and building trust, to work toward a common goal

Effective partnership requires understanding the responsibilities and the roles of each participant. Parent involvement becomes a reality when there is strong support from the principal and when teachers build effective partnerships with parents to strengthen their participation in the school community. The principal, the teachers and the community are all team players, networking to make student achievement and parental involvement a reality.

The principal sets the tone, the climate and the professionalism of the school. The principal as a member of the PTA, works with the PTA to address issues, develops parent involvement programs and encourages family engagement. The principal and the PTA work together toward the mutual benefit of the school.

The principal should be familiar with the resources available to the PTA leaders. The information in these resources is invaluable when working with the PTA.

PRINCIPAL'S ROLE IN PTA

- Be an active member of the PTA Board.
- Be available to the community, schedule meetings open to the public at different times and invite parents to set up appointments to discuss concerns.
- Work to make parents feel welcome and comfortable in the school.
- Be sensitive to families and their situations.
- Be active in the PTA and encourage teachers to become PTA members and to participate in activities and meetings.

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- Help the PTA keep its primary focus on the three principles of PTA – parent education, parent involvement and advocacy.
 - Help evaluate the need for and use of fundraising dollars.
 - Work with the PTA to solve problems and set goals that benefit the students.
 - Help the PTA plan activities to accomplish goals.
 - Work with the PTA to develop a program for volunteer training, and use parent and community volunteers who can help in all aspects of the school.
 - Help parents stay informed on current issues in education.
 - Recognize volunteers' efforts and appreciate the contributions of parents.

CREATING A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP

To create a successful partnership the principal should:

- Join the PTA – encourage all school personnel to join the PTA.
- Be an active participant of board and membership meetings.
- Have open communication with the PTA president and the board. The PTA president and principal should meet prior to the end of the school year to establish the “climate” and “shared vision” for the next school year.
- Help the PTA identify their strengths and weaknesses before developing the plan and the goals for the new year.
- Make sure the PTA clearly communicates the use of PTA funds, especially after a fundraising event.
- Ensure the school calendar of events is shared with the PTA and coordinate dates of the PTA programs and projects.
- Promote the vision, mission and purposes of PTA.

MAINTAINING A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP

To maintain a successful and positive partnership, the principal and the PTA should:

- Keep the primary goal of PTA on education and advocating for students.
- Collaborately plan activities with PTA to accomplish the goals of the PTA.
- Develop a program that trains parents in: the policies and procedures of the school and school district, on current issues that influence the instructional program, on federal/state laws that affect the instructional program and any other topic of need.
- Keep each other informed.
- Maintain open, honest communication.
- Be positive and enthusiastic about the school.
- Keep things seen or heard in conferences or at school confidential. Encourage all volunteers to be sensitive to the ethical responsibilities regarding students and their privacy.

PARENTS BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP

- Encourage the principal to speak openly of his or her goals and concerns.
- Present PTA concerns and issues to the principal.
- Focus on education and how to benefit students
- Work with the principal or site-based committee to set goals.
- Be alert to staff and community talents and resources, and use them for the benefit of the entire school.
- Help the principal promote fair discipline for all children.

WORKING TOGETHER

PRINCIPALS	PTA PRESIDENTS
Attend all meetings	Invite the principal to all meetings and activities
Take time to plan with PTA president	Consult the principal on all plans early in the year
Inform your PTA president about school plans and needs	Build some PTA programs around school needs
Cooperate with the PTA in the use of school facilities	Plan effectively
Become confident that you know and understand PTA	Seek opportunities to understand your school better
Invite your PTA president to attend one or more faculty meetings	Inform everyone (staff and PTA members) about programs and benefits
Encourage teachers to participate in PTA activities and attend all meetings	Take care not to make too many demands or interfere with campus activities
Encourage families to become involved	Encourage families to become involved
Make your PTA feel welcome and part of your school	Train your volunteers on campus policies and procedures
Take care not to “dominate” the PTA	Work to be inclusive of all board members
Refrain from asking your PTA to buy equipment that should be purchased by the school district	Remember the mission of PTA and spend wisely
Guide your PTA away from activities that should be reserved for administration	Follow the chain of command, leaving administrative duties to the board of trustees and administrators
On common causes, educate parents and bring issues to their attention	Provide advocacy for common causes
Work well with others and give credit where credit is due	Work well with others and give credit where credit is due

MEMBERS

PTA members can be anyone who believes in the PTA vision, mission and purposes. Members who join locally are automatically part of National PTA and Texas PTA; they join nearly 5 million members nationwide and 500,000 members in Texas.

DUES AND MEMBERSHIP

The general membership is all individuals who have paid dues to the Local PTA for the current membership year. The membership year is August 1 through July 31. Local PTA dues are determined by the membership and are listed in the Local PTA bylaws for each PTA. Members must pay the local portion of dues, Texas PTA portion of dues, and the National portion of dues. Individuals who want to participate in more than one Local PTA must join each one separately, paying full dues to each.

A Texas PTA Honorary Life Member is exempt from paying the state portion of their dues at only one designated PTA.

The principal should encourage the school staff to become PTA members and support the work of the association.

PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

All PTA members:

- Can participate in PTA meetings
- Have a voice and vote at Local, State and National PTA meetings
- Are eligible to serve as an officer of the PTA
- Maintain membership in Texas and National PTAs
- Are privy to informed and trained leadership
- Have a unified voice to influence legislation affecting children and youth
- Have the opportunity to work for the education, health, safety and welfare of all children and youth



AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

The Golden Apple Award is earned when a PTA recruits and reports 100% of school faculty as members by the published award deadline. Texas PTA's definition of faculty is: principals, assistant principals, teachers, counselors, and aides employed at the campus full-time. An award form must be submitted.

LOCAL PTA

A Local PTA is dedicated to fulfilling the Purposes of the PTA. While a Local PTA is usually organized in a school setting, it is independent of the school and the school system, with its work determined by the needs of the community and the interest of the members.

Local PTAs:

- Are self governing, after having been chartered by the Texas PTA.
- Accept into membership in accordance with their bylaws, all individuals who pay dues as specified, and who subscribe to the Mission and Purposes of the National PTA.
- Are guided by the Purposes and protected by the basic policies of Texas and National PTA.
- Plan programs and activities to meet the needs of children and youth in their own local community.
- Study concerns that affect a broad area.

PTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Officers
- Chairs
- Other (optional)
 - Council PTA Delegates
 - Historian
 - Teacher Representatives
 - Student Representative
- Principal or designee

Each Local PTA must elect a President, a Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer every year. A parliamentarian should be appointed by the board after yearly elections. A Local PTA may have more than these officers, the bylaws of each PTA lists who are elected officers of that PTA. Elections should be held yearly in the month listed in the Local PTA bylaws. Only persons who have paid membership dues to the PTA may hold office.

Standing committees perform a continuing function, and remain in existence permanently.

Committee Chairs and other board members are appointed by the president with the approval of the board. Board members may serve 2 consecutive one year terms. Council Delegates may be appointed or elected. The process for selecting these representatives is located in the Local PTA bylaws.

Each Local PTA selects the standing committees needed at their school. Here is a list of suggested standing committees:

- Arts in Education
- Communications
- Environmental Awareness
- Fundraising
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Legislative Action
- Membership
- Parent Education/Programs
- Volunteer Coordinator

Special committees are appointed as the need arises, to carry out a specified task. At the completion of the task, the committee ceases to exist.

DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Transact business in intervals between regular meetings
- Present reports at regular meetings
- Approve Plans of Work
- Create Committees
- Fill vacancies
- Prepare and submit budget to membership
- Approve routine bills within budget limits
- Complete records retention policy and present for membership approval
- Attend all meetings (board and association)
- Insist on financial accountability
- Encourage participation
- Take advantage of training opportunities
- Adopt and sign ethics/conflict of interest policy

BOARD MEETINGS

The board should meet on a regular basis. The Local PTA bylaws state that the executive board shall meet prior to each regular meeting of the association. The board determines the time and place of these meetings at the first meeting of the year. Only members of the board may discuss and vote on items. Invited guests can attend meetings but they may not enter into discussion or vote.

The board should meet to make decisions and set goals that will be brought to the membership for their approval. Each officer and committee chair should report to the board any activities or issues. This includes the principal, they should give brief reports about the events and activities of the school.

The principal should be in attendance at all board meetings, as it is critical that they attend to understand the activities of the PTA and how these activities weave into the climate of the school. The principal works to ensure that the PTA's mission and goals are working and aligned to the strategic plan of the school. He or she is the direct liaison between the PTA membership and the school's staff.

SUCCESSFUL PTA BOARD

- Take advantage of PTA training and resources
- Subscribe to electronic communications
- Set goals and adopt Plans of Work
- Learn and follow school district policies, such as:
 - School district employees serving on the PTA board
 - School district employees handling PTA money
 - Selection of vendors
 - Background checks for volunteers
 - Photographing students
 - Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB)
 - Media

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

A PTA membership meeting is a meeting of all PTA members who come together to conduct the business of the PTA. All PTA members are encouraged to attend these meetings. The number and months of these meetings are outlined in the bylaws of the PTA. Texas PTA requires that all PTAs hold at least three meetings a year. Meetings are normally conducted at school.

At these meetings, the membership hears recommendations from the PTA leadership and then gives their approval or disapproval of the recommendations. Only those who are PTA members and who are in attendance have voting privileges at the meeting. There is no proxy voting.

The principal should be an active participant at the PTA membership meetings. By modeling the expectations and by being actively engaged in the vital partnership, parents, staff and community will come to expect total participation in the school to promote student achievement and a healthy, positive school climate.

MEETING AGENDA

- Call to order
- Opening Ceremonies
- Reading and approval of minutes
- Report of treasurer
- Correspondence
- Report of the Board of Directors
- Reports of standing committees
- Reports of special committees
- Unfinished business
- New business
- Program
- Announcements
- Adjournment

BYLAWS AND STANDING RULES

Bylaws are the governing rules of a PTA. The bylaws of a PTA contain basic rules relating to the association as an organization in order to conduct the Local PTA's business and govern its affairs. Every member of the Local PTA should be given access to the bylaws, which includes the principal. If a copy of the bylaws cannot be found locally, the Local PTA president may request a copy of the last approved set of bylaws from Texas PTA. Bylaws must be reviewed and updated every 5 years.

The bylaws:

- Are approved by the general membership and can only be changed by the membership at a membership meeting, after proper notice is given (30 days)
- Outline the basic policies and practices of the PTA
- State the PTAs relationship with Texas PTA
- Specify who can be members and the amount of the local portion of dues
- Outline the election of officers and their duties

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- Define the number of meetings and the meeting months for the PTA
 - Specify the quorum for both membership and board meetings
 - State items regarding standing and special committees
 - Define Council PTA membership
 - Specify the fiscal year and the duties of the financial reconciliation committee
 - Define how the document is amended

STANDING RULES

- Relate to the details of administration
- May not conflict with approved bylaws
- Do not repeat what is stated in the bylaws
- Are adopted as a need arises
- Require a majority vote for adoption
- May be amended by a two-thirds affirmative vote without previous notice or a majority vote with such notice
- May be suspended, unlike the bylaws, for a current session by a majority vote

STANDARDS OF CONTINUING AFFILIATION

Texas PTA has developed basic standards that all Local PTAs must meet to remain in Good Standing and to obtain Active Status each year. Visit the Texas PTA website or contact your Council PTA or Field Service Representative to receive a copy of these requirements. Many Texas PTA programs and recognition opportunities are linked with a PTAs compliance with these standards, so it is important to educate your PTA leadership on compliance.

FINANCES

PTA funds should always be used to further the PTA vision, mission and purposes. Appropriate use of funds should be in areas such as arts in education, environmental concerns, healthy lifestyles, parent involvement, family engagement and advocacy efforts on behalf of children and youth. The principal and PTA should work together to set goals that will benefit students and keep the primary focus on education rather than fundraising.

The PTA must adopt a budget at the annual meeting in the spring. All amendments to the budget must be approved by the membership at a membership meeting. Any disbursements must be in the approved budget.

All PTAs are organized under the Internal Revenue Code as 501(c) (3) nonprofit organizations.

- All funds raised by PTA belong to the PTA
- Membership has budget approval authority
- Budget must be specific and understandable
- Expenditures are guided by the Mission and Purposes of PTA
- Executive board has fiduciary responsibility to manage funds within the approved budget following proper procedures

Each PTA:

- Has a unique Employer Identification Number (EIN) for business and reporting purposes
- Plans fundraising following the 3-to-1 guideline
- Is exempt from paying sales tax on items purchased for use by the PTA, but
 - Must collect and remit sales tax to the Texas Comptroller's Office, when appropriate
 - May hold two, one-day tax-free sales days per calendar year
- Must complete the appropriate IRS Form 990 annually

Financial guidelines exist to protect the PTA's assets - its volunteers, members and the PTA/school's good name.

- Detailed financial reports must be given at each board and membership meeting.
- The PTA must have a budget that has been approved by the general membership before any funds are raised or expensed.
- PTAs should adopt a check signature policy (i.e. number of signers, amount thresholds, etc) to be added to their Standing Rules.
- Any gift cards purchased by a PTA should not exceed \$25 in value and must be retail-specific (i.e. branded cards of restaurants, stores, etc.). Generic cards (MasterCard, Visa, etc) are not permitted.

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- Checks are never made payable to cash.
 - Signers of the bank account shall not be related by blood or marriage and must not reside in the same household.
 - Money is always counted by two people and verified by signature on an Itemized Receipt Form.
 - All deposits are made as quickly possible.
 - PTA funds are never deposited into personal accounts or into the school's activity account.
 - Forms are used for all deposits and reimbursements.
 - State and National portion of membership dues are submitted to the state on a regular basis.
 - The treasurer should reconcile the bank statement monthly.
 - A member of the PTA, who is a non-signer opens, reviews, initials and dates each bank statement before giving to the treasurer.
 - Purchase insurance – liability, officer liability, fidelity bond, property
 - The only person who may sign a contract, which binds the PTA, is the PTA president.

3-TO-1 GUIDELINE

National PTA recommends that PTAs use the 3-to-1 rule when planning activities for the PTA. This simple guideline helps PTAs protect their 501(c) (3) status. For every one fundraising activity, there should be at least three projects aimed at helping parents or children, or advocating for school improvement.

GUIDELINE FOR USE OF PTA FUNDS

- Funds raised should be for a definite predetermined and budgeted purpose and must be approved by the membership
- Funds should be used to promote the Purposes of PTA
- All monies deposited in the PTA account belong to the membership
- All funds should be spent as allocated in the budget as approved by the membership
- It is the fiscal responsibility of the school district to provide for the curriculum and infrastructure needs of the students. PTA funds should never be used to provide curriculum materials, only support or enrichment items.

FINANCIAL RECONCILIATION

At the end of the fiscal year, the PTA books are closed for financial reconciliation. The purpose of the financial reconciliation is to review the financial transactions for the year to make sure that proper bookkeeping methods were followed.

The Local PTA bylaws state a financial reconciliation must be performed:

- At the end of the fiscal year
- When any authorized check signer is added or deleted from the bank account
- At any time deemed necessary by the president or three members

The president appoints, with the approval of the board, the financial reconciliation committee. This committee must not consist of less than three members; these members may not be signers on the bank account. They also cannot be related by blood or marriage and shall not reside in the same household as any authorized signers.

The financial reconciliation committee report shall be adopted by a majority vote at the first membership meeting following the completion of the reconciliation.

990

All PTAs as nonprofits under Texas PTA group exemption are required to file a tax return annually regardless of activity or gross income level. The type of 990 filed is determined by your gross income per fiscal year. Failure to file annual tax return result in the IRS revoking your non-profit status, significant IRS fees and ultimately loss charter with Texas PTA.

2010 TAX YEAR AND LATER (FILED IN 2011 AND LATER)	FORM TO FILE
Gross receipts normally \leq \$50,000 Note: Organizations eligible to file the e-Postcard may choose to file a full return.	990-N
Gross receipts $>$ \$50,000 but $<$ \$250,000, and Total assets $<$ \$500,000	990-EZ or 990
Gross receipts \geq \$250,000, or Total assets \geq \$500,000	990

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

COUNCIL PTA

A Council PTA is a group of Local PTAs organized under the authority of Texas PTA for the purposes of support and training. A Council PTA serves as a critical link between the Local, Texas and National PTAs.

Local PTA presidents, principals and selected delegates provide representation at the Council meetings. The voting body also includes the officers of the Council, the chairs of the standing committees and the superintendents of the school districts within the Council PTA's membership. Local PTAs must file a list of delegates and alternate with the council secretary each year, not later than October 15. Council bylaws specify the number of delegates from each Local PTA.

PURPOSE

- To unify and strengthen Local PTAs comprising the Council of PTAs.
- To provide for the conference and cooperation of the Local PTAs/PTSAs in membership so as to create a public opinion favorable to the interests of child welfare; to encourage child welfare projects in the various Local PTAs; and to assist in the formation of new Local PTAs according to the plan of the Texas PTA.
- To promote the interests of National PTA and of the Texas PTA within its territory without duplicating the work of Local PTAs.

TEXAS PTA

The Texas Congress of Parents and Teachers, chartered under the laws of the state, is a volunteer association actively engaged in work for the welfare of children and certain lines of educational work. It is a branch of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, an association with five million members.

BENEFITS OF TEXAS PTA MEMBERSHIP

- Maintains state headquarters with a staff available to provide assistance for PTA leaders and members.
- Provides leadership training through workshops, conferences, Summer Leadership Seminar, Family Engagement Conference and Rally Day.
- Publishes various materials available to Local PTAs: The Voice, Texas PTA Resource Guides, targeted e-newsletters, membership promotions and program resources.
- Hosts a variety of programs for both students and adults.
- Offers scholarships for educators and students.
- Provides an annual convention for training and state business.
- Sends information to Local PTA leaders on critical issues.
- Advocates for the children of Texas at the state capitol.

Texas PTA maintains a state headquarters in Austin, Texas, and employs a staff to develop and implement the strategic plan, as adopted by the board of directors. The staff is available to assist and guide PTA leaders and members with their questions and concerns.

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COMMUNICATIONS

communications@txpta.org

The Communications team manages and produces all Texas PTA communications, including *The Voice* (our quarterly newsletter), specialized newsletters (legislative action, healthy lifestyles, arts in education, environmental awareness, membership and field service), social media outlets and the Texas PTA website.

In addition to serving as Texas PTA's contact for all media inquiries, the Communications team also supports Texas PTA's training efforts by maintaining resource guides, quick-start guides, and other educational materials available through the online store.

FINANCE

accounting@txpta.org

Texas PTA understands the responsibility of managing your member dollars, and the Finance team is charged with monitoring Texas PTA resources in accordance with the annual budget, as adopted by the board of directors.

Members of the Finance team are also available to support PTA leaders in their compliance with state and federal financial requirements, such as filing the annual 990 with the IRS, as well as sales tax filings with the State Comptroller.

MEMBER SERVICES

memberservices@txpta.org

The Member Services team gives direct support to PTA leaders and members. They provide assistance with member recruitment strategies, bylaws and standing rules, organizing PTAs and general questions on leading and managing a PTA.

The Member Services team is responsible for the development of recruiting resources that may be adapted for all levels of PTA – early childhood, elementary and secondary. Staff processes officer information, membership rosters and dues, and requests for copies of bylaws and standing rules. Staff also coordinates membership awards and the distribution of membership cards to Local PTAs.

PROGRAMS

programs@txpta.org

The Programs team is focused on connecting PTA members and leaders with the information they need to be successful, as well as developing programs. Whether your PTA is registering for LAUNCH or Family Engagement Conference, or requesting a *Ready. Set. Achieve!* parent education or faculty in-service program, the Programs team is available to assist you.

The Programs team is also your contact for student programs, such as Reflections, Camp Just Imagine and Texas PTA's scholarship program.

NATIONAL PTA

For more than 100 years, National Parent Teacher Association (National PTA®) has worked toward bettering the lives of every child in education, health, and safety. Founded in 1897 as the National Congress of Mothers by Alice McLellan Birney and Phoebe Apperson Hearst, National PTA is a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families and communities, and a strong advocate for public education.

Today's PTA is a network of millions of families, students, teachers, administrators, and business and community leaders devoted to the educational success of children and the promotion of family engagement in schools. National PTA is composed of 55 state congresses and nearly 26,000 local PTAs in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and the Department of Defense Schools in Europe and the Pacific.

SCOPE OF SERVICE

- Establishes a purpose (Purposes of PTA) for all member PTAs;
- Develops PTA policies and positions;
- Cooperates with other child-oriented organizations;
- Works with federal governmental agencies;
- Establishes its member PTAs as nonprofit educational organizations;
- Maintains a national headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia; and
- Provides resources, such as public service announcements (PSAs), Back-to-School kits, online parenting resources, e-learning courses, e-newsletters, and more.

ANNUAL CONVENTION

The first PTA meeting was held in Washington, DC, in 1897. The founding PTA members recognized that child welfare could not be achieved by good intentions alone, and unity among concerned parents was required to ensure legislation that protected the education, health, and safety of America's youth. This tradition continues today through the National PTA Annual Convention. Held in June each year, the annual convention draws PTA members from across the country to engage in the business of the association, but most importantly, to hear and learn from others in the areas of parent education, family engagement and advocacy.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Mary Lou Anderson Arts Enhancement Grants: PTA's support of the arts through the Reflections programs has spanned more than four decades. To encourage PTAs/PTSAs to develop student-centered programs to improve arts education, National PTA awards a limited number of matching grants each year. Special consideration is given to programs that reach large numbers of at-risk students. For more information, email reflections@pta.org or visit the National PTA website.

Phoebe Apperson Hearst Innovation in Family Engagement Award: National PTA recognizes and celebrates achievement by PTAs/PTSAs who build effective family-school partnerships. The recipient of the Hearst Award receives a cash award and is recognized at the National PTA Annual Convention. In addition to the top award-winner, four PTAs/PTSAs recognized with an Award of Merit will receive a certificate of recognition. For more information, please programs@pta.org or visit the National PTA website.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

EMERGING LEADERS ACADEMY (ELA)

PTA's commitment to engage families and communities as powerful advocates for children reaches across all cultural and socioeconomic boundaries. ELA seeks to support a diverse group of volunteers who are committed to creating successful schools through these fundamental characteristics:

- Demonstrates a passion for our vision that every child's potential is a reality;
- Exhibits visionary and forward-thinking leadership qualities;
- Reflects professionalism, integrity and PTA values;
- Believes PTA should be an inclusive association for all;
- Strives to increase family engagement through PTA programs and membership; and
- Seeks personal development to provide long-term leadership within PTA and throughout their community.

PTA members interested in applying for ELA should visit the Texas PTA website for complete program and application information. Application deadlines occur in the fall of each year.

LAUNCH (SUMMER LEADERSHIP SEMINAR)

LAUNCH is the signature training event for Texas PTA. While providing an opportunity for PTA leaders to receive comprehensive training for specific volunteer positions, attendees also have access to a wide variety of leadership and parenting workshops. PTAs can also walk away with a vast number of resources available in our exhibit hall, and networking opportunities with like-minded leaders from across the state.

Our statewide event attracts more than 3,000 volunteer leaders, but Texas PTA has shown its commitment to reaching every PTA possible by providing additional conferences that are held on a regional basis. Detailed registration information for all LAUNCH events is available on the Texas PTA website.

Texas PTA's Annual Meeting will be held in conjunction with LAUNCH in odd-numbered years.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT CONFERENCE

Successful students are created by active, engaged families who are committed to helping each child reach their full potential. In February of even-numbered years, Texas PTA hosts its Family Engagement Conference to highlight resources that will help your PTA achieve strong family-school partnerships to benefit your students.

PTAs that are focused on the needs of parents and students, and specifically helping them build open and effective relationships with the school, provide an invaluable benefit for their members and lay the foundation for long-term growth and success. Attend the Family Engagement Conference to hear success stories of how PTA programs across the state are making a difference in their communities.

Texas PTA's Annual Meeting will be held in conjunction with the Family Engagement Conference in even-numbered years. Texas PTA board member elections are also held during this annual meeting.

ADVOCACY

Texas PTA strives to secure adequate laws in the areas of school finance, education, health, welfare and safety. The legislative process can be daunting at both the federal and state levels and requires numerous communication avenues to be effective:

- Publishing monthly updates of legislative activity;
- Monitoring legislation and testifying at legislative hearings and State Board of Education meetings on behalf of all PTAs;
- Maintaining a strong communications network between PTA and state legislators.
- Informing members of pressing issues through email communications, and advising them when they need to call, email or write letters to their state legislators;
- Posting the current status of legislation on the Texas PTA website;
- Hosting Texas PTA's Rally Day; and
- Adopting legislative positions by majority vote of delegates at the Texas PTA Annual Meeting.

RALLY DAY

The Texas Legislature meets only for five months (January - May) in odd-numbered years. This brief meeting schedule condenses the timeline for many issues, and requires that our voices be ready and available. Texas PTA hosts Rally Day during February in each Legislative Session. This is a unique opportunity for PTA members to get detailed information on current legislation impacting students and public schools and to take their message directly to the policymakers. Rally Day is a free, one-day event held in Austin, so join us on the South Steps of the Capitol!

UNDER THE DOME

Stay up-to-date on the latest developments from the State Capitol and State Board of Education. The *Under the Dome* electronic newsletter is a seasonal publication that provides PTA members with detailed information on the status of pending legislation and policy, and the potential impact these decisions may have in their local communities. Visit the Texas PTA website to sign up for *Under the Dome* and other electronic publications.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

PTA supports the need for effectively involving parents and families in their child's education. Numerous research studies and years of experience in the educational field have demonstrated that involvement produces meaningful and lasting results. In 1997, PTA responded to the challenge of ensuring student achievement by issuing its own national standards for parent and family involvement. Using the most recent research and working with national experts, PTA updated the national standards in 2007.

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 expand learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE

School of Excellence is a recognition program established by National PTA in 2013 that supports and celebrates partnerships between PTAs and schools to enrich the educational experience and overall well-being for all students.

The path to excellence starts with a joint commitment of PTA and school leaders to work together to achieve PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships. Through the *School of Excellence* program, your PTA and school will gain new ways to engage families in school decision-making, such as improvements to programs, practices and policies related to education, health, safety or the arts.

PARENT EDUCATION

READY. SET. ACHIEVE! (RSA)

With our educational resources, Texas PTA is working to make parents, teachers and students aware of the potentially negative impact of bullying, unhealthy lifestyles or even modern challenges such as the Internet. Most importantly, we are raising awareness among families that positive adult-role models and supporting our children as parents and mentors can make a huge difference in the life of every child.

Ready. Set. Achieve!, Texas PTA's parent education initiative, is designed to provide relevant, meaningful resources to assist PTAs in reaching their goals through parent education. RSA programs are a significant benefit of having a PTA on your campus, as these programs are delivered at no charge to your PTA or your members. Texas PTA also provides access to promotional materials and translation equipment, upon request.

Texas PTA board and staff work together to continually update the program offerings and debut new *Ready. Set. Achieve!* programs each year at LAUNCH. Programs may be requested online via the Texas PTA website. Once requested, Texas PTA staff members will work with you to help ensure a successful program. Please note that you need the desired presentation date for completion of the online request.

The current *Ready. Set. Achieve!* programs offered by Texas PTA are as follows:

- CRASH
- Don't Stand By, Stand UP!
- Media Madness
- Dollars and \$ense
- Success Starts at Home

CRASH

CRASH is a comprehensive media campaign to help youth and parents throughout Texas understand the dangers associated with distracted driving and give them specific tools and suggestions for lessening the chance of a crash. This campaign utilizes a variety of media and video tools to reach educators, parents and, most importantly, teens to emphasize the message: make good choices when you drive because, if you don't, there can be serious consequences.

The project centers on a documentary about distracted driving issues and includes several shorter stories about various aspects of distracted driving. It also includes a series of informational promos for television and a viewer guide about the issue. The program was made possible through a grant from State Farm Insurance and produced by Christopher Productions, LLC.

Any PTA can request the *CRASH* program as part of Texas PTA's *Ready. Set. Achieve!* initiative.

RESOURCES

Texas PTA is committed to providing our volunteer leaders across the state with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in their role within PTA. Access to quality educational resources is a key component in supporting this success, as well as continuing to build strong Local and Council PTAs.

FOUNDATIONS

FOUNDATIONS courses provide a broad overview of “what” PTA is, and share important information that every PTA leader should know. In addition to the courses offered for all board members, Texas PTA has also created a series of brief *FOUNDATIONS* courses that provide general information for many Local PTA board positions. It is important to note that these position-specific courses are not meant to be comprehensive training, rather a quick review of each position for newly-elected or prospective nominees. Other than *FOUNDATIONS: Leader Orientation*, all *FOUNDATIONS* courses are web-based presentations.

ALL BOARD MEMBERS

- Council PTA Board Orientation
- Inclusiveness
- Leader Orientation
- Local PTA Board Orientation

POSITION SPECIFIC

- Arts in Education
- Communications
- Environmental Awareness
- Fundraising
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Historian
- Legislative Action
- Membership
- Parent Education Programs
- Parliamentarian
- President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Volunteer Coordinator

BASICS

The *BASICS* series contains detailed information to support volunteer leaders in their specific board position. Texas PTA strongly encourages every board member to attend a *BASICS* course for their own position, as well as any other related positions.

BASICS courses are currently available for face-to-face presentations during LAUNCH and through your Council PTA or Field Service Representative, as well as scheduled web-based trainings hosted by Texas PTA. In addition to the training presentation, all *BASICS* courses have a companion Resource Guide, Quick-Start Guide, and Duties-at-a-Glance. These guides are available via download from the Texas PTA website or for purchase through Texas PTA’s STAR Co-op (online store). Courses marked with an asterisk (*) will debut at a future date.

- Arts Education
- Communications
- Environmental Awareness*
- Fundraising
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Legislative Action
- Membership
- Parent Education / Programs
- Parliamentarian
- President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Volunteer Coordinator

SPOTLIGHTS

PTAs have many unique programs, processes and responsibilities as healthy, thriving non-profits. *SPOTLIGHTS* courses offer an in-depth review of some of these most important and recurring PTA functions.

SPOTLIGHTS courses are available during LAUNCH and through on-demand, web-based presentations hosted by Texas PTA.

- Bylaws and Standing Rules
- Conducting a Meeting
- Financial Reconciliation
- Nominations and Elections

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