

Arts in Education/Cultural Arts and Reflections

What is a PTA program?

A program can be a onetime event or presentation at a general PTA meeting. It can also be an ongoing program like Reflections, Kentucky PTA Kids' Day, Take Your Family to School Week, or Teacher Appreciation.

A program should always be offered at each of your general business meetings. The business portion of the meeting should be short, allowing the program to take up the majority of the time. A program may also stand alone and be held at anytime during the school year. This could be a program targeted to a specific audience like an information program for parents whose children are transitioning from elementary to middle school or middle to high school. Programs should be relevant-meeting the needs and interests of the members. They should increase knowledge, change attitudes, solve problems, or generate ideas. When developing ideas for programs your PTA/PTSA should consider these areas of focus:

- Supporting school success
- Improving health and wellness
- Promoting arts education

Partner with local business or organizations to present programs. Programs at an association meeting will also provide an opportunity to increase attendance and parent involvement in your PTA.

Along with ideas offered in this section of the Kentucky PTA Leaders' Notebook, there are other resources on the National PTA website at <http://www.ptakit.org/> and National PTA Programs Guide at <http://www.ptakit.org/Programs/index.aspx>

Participation in the arts—the opportunity for creative expression—is a very basic part of education. Study after study has shown that students who participate in the arts and who have regular experiences in creative expression learn all the other “basic” subjects (reading, math, etc.) better than those students who don’t. Dance, theater, voice, playing an instrument, story telling, visual arts creation, writing and photography—all help a child build self esteem and add joy to his or her learning experience. Yet time after time, when funds are short, the first thing cut is the arts—the program that so many consider a “frill”. It is important for PTAs and PTSAs to recognize the importance of the arts in basic education and to emphasize that importance to school councils and school boards across Kentucky.

The Arts and Kentucky Education Reform

Kentucky education reform is based on “capacities” that are to be acquired by all students in Kentucky’s public primary, elementary, middle and high schools. One of the required “capacities” is: “**Sufficient grounding in the arts to enable each student to appreciate his or her cultural and historical heritage.**” Without strong arts programs for all

students in every school, this cannot happen. All students must experience the arts both as participants and as spectators.

Suggested Goals for Your Arts in Education/Cultural Arts Program:

- to work with local school based decision making councils, emphasizing the importance of the arts as a basic and integrated part of education;
- to encourage a school program that utilizes cultural arts for classroom study as well as for extracurricular activities, including participation in the National PTA Reflections Program.
- to emphasize the need for early childhood experiences in literature, art, music, dance and other forms of creative expression;
- to encourage people of all ages to participate in the arts;
- to stress that all people can enjoy cultural arts in some form;
- to improve communications among parents, teachers, students and the community through cultural arts events;
- to gain an understanding of the past through a study of our cultural heritage; and
- to develop an appreciation of other countries through the study of their cultures.

Suggested Activities

- Encourage participation in the National PTA Reflections Program
- Include the arts in PTA meetings; use parents, students, teachers and community cultural arts resources.
- Display student art projects at PTA meetings, events, and businesses. Present awards or special recognition to students. Recognize all students who participate. Sponsor an arts festival cooperatively with students and teachers. For units providing child care during PTA meetings, plan craft or art classes using community resource people.
- Utilize meetings and newsletters to suggest home projects for family fun with arts and crafts. Cooperate with community organizations (libraries, museums, educational television, and civic groups), to bring special talent or programs into the school and community such as: puppet show, live children’s theater, opera, orchestra, concerts, etc.
- Encourage participation in library story-telling hour, music groups and art classes.
- Sponsor projects which will encourage understanding and appreciation for people of other cultures.
- Solicit funds from community organizations and businesses to sponsor cultural arts events.
- Encourage school councils, board members and administrators to provide funding for cultural arts in schools
- Establish a communication network with the arts community.

- Publicize arts events and activities in PTA newsletter and

the media.

Reflections

1.1 About the Reflections Program

The National PTA Reflections program is PTA's cornerstone arts program. It was developed in 1969 by Colorado's PTA President Mary Lou Anderson to encourage students to explore their talents and express themselves. Since then, the Reflections Program has inspired millions of students to reflect on a specific theme and create original artwork. **Each year, students in Grades Pre-K through 12 are recognized for bringing the theme to life through dance choreography, film production, literature, music composition, photography and visual arts.**

Students submit their artwork to Local PTAs for initial judging. In Kentucky, local winning entries then advance to the PTA District round. Top entries from our State PTA Reflections contest advance to National PTA for the final round of judging. National PTA awards are announced each May.

As a Local Leader of this program, you will play a critical role in promoting exploration of arts and culture in the home, school and community. Students who participate in the Reflections Program may not recognize themselves as artists when they sign up—but by the end of the Reflections celebrations, they will.

1.2 PTA Reflections and Family-School Partnerships

Research shows that family involvement supports student success. Students with involved parents are more likely to:

- Earn higher grades and pass their classes
- Attend school regularly and have better social skills
- Go on to postsecondary education

The arts—and the National PTA Reflections program, in particular—can be a valuable tool for building stronger partnerships in your school community. Consider how you can apply the following PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships to your Reflections activities:

- **Standard 1 – Welcoming All Families Into the School Community.** Promote PTA Reflections to all families in the school. Emphasize that every child's participation is valued, and offer tips for how parents can support their children's artistic expression.
- **Standard 2 – Communicating Effectively.** Share Reflections Program information and reminders through a variety of channels, including your school or PTA website, newsletters, PTA meetings and more.
- **Standard 3 – Supporting Student Success.** Emphasize that PTA Reflections is designed to support students' learning by enhancing quality arts education. Entries can be created in school, and the program can be used to support curriculum.
- **Standard 4 – Speaking Up for Every Child.** Use PTA Reflections to rally families to speak up for the value of arts education—to work with teachers, school administrators and legislators to keep the arts in your school, despite budget cuts.
- **Standard 5 – Sharing Power.** Give students a voice by encouraging them to enter the annual PTA Theme Search Contest. Invite parents and caregivers to volunteer with the PTA Reflections Program, and welcome their ideas.
- **Standard 6 – Collaborating with Community.** Seek community partners to support PTA Reflections with prizes and exhibit space.

For more information about PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships, including an implementation guide and assessment forms, visit the National PTA website: www.pta.org/FamilyEngagement

Additional Opportunities

2016–17 Reflections Theme Search Contest

National PTA Reflections sponsors a student-focused Theme Search Contest annually to determine a theme for the next year. The winner for the 2016–17 school year will be selected in January 2014 and will receive \$100 from National PTA and recognition at the 119th Annual PTA Convention.

Kentucky entries are due in the KY PTA office by **October 15, 2014**. For theme search student entry form and a list of past themes, see Appendix A

Mary Lou Anderson Reflections Arts Enhancement Grants

The National PTA Mary Lou Anderson Grant Program provides matching-dollar funding to local PTAs to support in-school and after-school arts enhancement programs in local communities. PTAs serving at-risk student populations are particularly encouraged to apply. **Applications will be available at PTA.org/Reflections on January 6, 2015 and due Friday, March 14, 2015.**

For more information, visit: PTA.org/Reflections

2014–15 Reflections Theme:

The World would be a better place if...

This theme by Mercedes Messer of Puyallup, Washington was selected through the Reflections Theme Search Contest. When asked what inspired her theme, Mercedes said, “Our world, because I care about it and wanted to know other kids’ ideas on how we could make it a better place.” Join the search for a future theme by entering the annual **Theme Search Contest**.

The arts—and the National PTA Reflections program—support student success and serve as a valuable tool for building strong partnerships in your school community. Celebrate arts learning in your school community with *Reflections*.

National PTA Reflections welcomes all grades and abilities to explore and be involved in the arts. Annually, thousands of students will reflect on a common theme and create original works of art in the categories of dance choreography, film production, literature, music composition, photography and visual arts.

2. Program Planning

Below are the steps needed to implement your program. As you read through this guide, **use the sample action plan in Appendix B** to make notes about specific tasks, who will be responsible for each task, and when tasks are due.

Your action plan may include the following steps for starting your Reflections program:

Step 1: Orient yourself to the Reflections Program.

Step 2: Organize a team of volunteers. (Including judges)

Step 3: Promote the Reflections Program to students, school personnel and the community.

Step 4: Collect and organize artwork for judging.

Step 5: Recruit judges and begin judging process. (Recruit judges under step 2)

Step 6: Advance winning artwork to the next round of judging.

Step 7: Celebrate student participation and achievement.

Step 8: Wrap up.

To orient yourself to the reflections program, continue reading this guide and engage your PTA Reflections Network of National, State and District PTA Leaders.

3. Organizing Your Team

As a Local PTA Reflections Chair, you will be responsible for overseeing the administration of the PTA Reflections program in your community. This is a big job ... but *you are not expected to do it alone!* Your State PTA Arts Chair is here to help at every step of the process (see box).

We also strongly recommend that you recruit a committee of volunteers to help. Volunteers will enrich the program by bringing a variety of ideas, talents and skills ... and they

will make your job much easier and more enjoyable by ensuring that program tasks don't fall on your shoulders alone.

When building your committee, keep the PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships in mind. Welcoming all families, communicating effectively, sharing power and collaborating with the community are all strategies that will enhance your committee and help make your events a success.

3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

As the Local PTA Reflections Chair, you will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Recruit Local PTA Reflections Committee members.
- Oversee the Local PTA Committee's planning and implementation of the Reflections Program.
- Establish a program timeline.
- Communicate with other PTA leaders through attendance at KY PTA Convention/Leadership and your PTA district conferences.
- Represent your Local PTA at state wide arts-related events and collaborations.

Additional tasks for you and your committee include:

- Promote the Reflections theme search and program to local students, teachers, parents and the community as a whole.
- Recruit other committee members, Reflections judges and volunteers as needed.
- Distribute and answer questions about the rules, deadlines and student entry forms.
- Collect student artwork.
- Coordinate the local judging process.
- Host recognition activities for participants and winners.

We're Here to Help You!

Kentucky PTA is responsible for the overall implementation of the National PTA Reflections Program in our state. The KY PTA Program Commission and district chairs provide training and support to Local PTAs on how to implement and promote the program in their communities.

In addition, throughout the fall, National PTA will host opportunities for you to connect with other PTA Reflections leaders. Your Reflections Network is a support system comprised of National, State and District PTA Leaders eager to answer your questions and share best practices.

See Appendix C and P for a schedule of Kentucky PTA district training opportunities and National PTA Reflections Network events.

- Register your Local PTA and prepare winning artwork for submission to the next round of judging.
- Return artwork to students.
- Evaluate the process at the end of the year and make recommendations for improvements to the Local PTA Reflections Committee, our State PTA or National PTA.
- Collaborate with other Local PTA leaders to promote Reflections activities and arts advocacy messages through social media and traditional media (i.e., print/broadcast).

See Appendix D for suggested Volunteer Job Descriptions.

3.2 Tips for Recruiting Reflections Volunteers

You may find the following tips helpful when recruiting volunteers to help with your Local PTA Reflections Program:

- **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 the planning team—or ask the **student council** to promote the program and host events, with PTA support.
- Consider recruiting **school staff** who have a natural interest in arts education for your committee. These might include choir or band directors or teachers of other art, music, media, technology, journalism or creative writing classes. School administrative staff might be willing to help, too—for example, by collecting and organizing student entries.
- People who don't want to attend planning committee meetings might still be willing to **help with a specific role**. These might include promoting the program through social or traditional media, creating a flyer or banners or making phone calls to solicit community support.
- Community members such as **arts professionals or teachers** might be interested in participating as Reflections judges. See more about this in the section on “Collecting and Judging Student Entries.”

3.3 Recruiting Volunteer Judges

Inviting professionals in the arts and community leaders who serve as trustees, donors and patrons of arts organizations to participate as Reflections judges increases the credibility of your program and exposure for PTA. All judges should have a working knowledge of their assigned arts area. Sources of judges might include:

- **Parents** who work as professionals in the arts or arts education.
- **School and community teachers** of music, art, dance, theatre, language arts, writing, graphic design and media arts.
- **Working professionals in organizations or companies** such as museum directors, curators, symphony and choral directors, musicians, librarians, editors of newspapers, photographers and local television personalities.

Always recognize judges in promotions and thank them for their participation. Some PTAs give each judge a small PTA gift or certificate of appreciation.

4. Promoting Reflections

One of your most important tasks is to promote the Reflections Program to students and families, to encourage as many students as possible to participate. Taking time to promote the program to school personnel and the community, as well, can help increase participation, enhance family engagement at the school and garner additional support.

4.1 Program Messages

Below are some important messages to emphasize as you spread the word about the PTA Reflections Program, especially through the media or to school and community partners:

- **All children deserve opportunities to explore and be involved in the arts.** The arts play a critical role in students' success in school and beyond, enhancing their reading and language skills, mathematics skills, thinking skills, social skills, motivation to learn and positive school environment.
- The National PTA Reflections program is **PTA's cornerstone arts program**. It offers students the opportunity to earn local, state and even national recognition for original artwork they create in response to a specific theme.

- Students who participate in the Reflections Program get an **opportunity to explore the arts and culture, develop creative thinking and problem-solving skills and recognize themselves as artists.**
- This year’s entries should reflect upon and interpret the theme: *Believe, Dream, Inspire*.
- **Families can support their children’s participation** by creating time and space for students to work on their entries, providing encouragement and needed materials and volunteering to support the Reflections Program.
- Entries should **represent students’ unique creativity**—adults are welcome to encourage students but are asked not to assist in any way with their interpretation of the theme or artistic expression.

4.2 Student Recruitment Messages

Share the following sample messages with teachers and student leaders to promote the PTA Reflections program. You may find these messages work best in a school newspaper, during morning announcements, and at activity fairs promoting school clubs.

- *Choreograph a dance, produce a film, write a poem or story, compose a song, take a picture or create a piece of visual art and tell us your interpretation of the theme: “The World would be a better place if...” Pick up a PTA Reflections Entry Form today from <INSERT NAME> and return by <INSERT DUE DATE>.*
- *Discover your world and explore new cultures or your own through dance, film, literature, music, photography or visual arts. No experience is required to participate in Reflections! Choose the arts category you’re interested in, create an original piece of artwork based on the theme: “The World would be a better place if...” and be recognized as an artist in your community.*

Networking With Other Local PTAs

Connecting with other Local Reflections Chairs can help build your support network.

By communicating about challenges and successes, Local Reflections Chairs can help one another with tasks such as identifying community judges, promoting the Reflections Program in the community, locating affordable vendors and finding additional sources for support.

4.3 Ideas for Promoting Reflections

Use the following suggestions to kick-start your plan to promote the PTA Reflections Program.

To Students and Families:

Use a variety of channels to reach students and families. Consider creating promotional messages and materials in multiple languages, to reach all families in your school community. Some possibilities include:

- Host a **school wide assembly** to introduce the program. Feature examples of artwork from last year’s winners at the local, district, state and national levels.
- Include messages in students’ **morning announcements**.
- Hang **posters and flyers** in visible locations, and send copies of flyers home to parents.
- Post the deadline and reminders on signs near **student drop-off** and pickup locations.
- Post announcements and updates on the **school and/or PTA website** and via **social media** (Facebook, Twitter).
 - Write an article about Reflections for a **PTA or school newsletter**. Showcase prior years’ winners and/or the benefits of arts education. Ask a student to write a similar article for the school newspaper.
 - Appoint “**student ambassadors**” to talk positively about the program among peers. Willing students might be found in art or dance classes or clubs, school music programs (choir, band, orchestra) or creative writing or journalism classes.

Among Teachers and Administrators:

Invite arts teachers to serve as Reflections co-chairs, committee members or volunteers. The more involved they are in planning, the more likely they will be to serve as “champions” of the program among other faculty and staff, as well as to students and parents. Other ways to engage school staff:

- Request **time at a staff meeting** to present the Reflections Program to teachers. Highlight the benefits of arts education and invite their ideas about how they might encourage their classes to participate.

- Provide suggestions for how this year’s theme might be **linked to curriculum** and Program Reviews for Arts and Humanities. Ask a teacher volunteer to create a sample lesson plan and share it with peers.
- Engage school staff in **planning the awards ceremony/celebration**. The school might be willing to hold a school-wide assembly or host a special lunch for participants and winners.

In the Community:

When reaching out to potential community partners, focus on the *impact* of the Reflections Program on students, schools and families. For example, share how a local PTA showcases students’ artwork and brings families together to celebrate. Here are some ways your community can get involved:

- Invite community members to serve as **judges**.
- Reach out to nearby gathering places (neighborhood centers, barber/beauty shops, coffee houses) to **exhibit student artwork**.
- Local businesses might be willing to support **fundraisers for Reflections** (for example, a local restaurant might host a “dine out” night, with a portion of receipts benefitting the program). Proceeds might help pay for trophies, ribbons or certificates for student participants; food for the celebration; or a supplies scholarship for a student who might not otherwise be able to participate.
- Other businesses might provide **in-kind contributions**: ask a local arts-supply or craft store for donations of paintbrushes, paper or paints; a local library or print shop might allow students to use their computers and photo-editing software for entries.
- Work with school officials to customize **media releases** to invite local coverage. Don’t forget smaller, local media outlets such as neighborhood association blogs and newsletters.
- **Community bulletin boards** can be good places to promote the program or announce student winners.

5. Collecting and Judging Student Entries

The process of judging student entries for the Reflections Program includes distributing and enforcing program rules, collecting artwork, determining eligibility and hosting judging.

The first step of this process is to determine a deadline for students to submit their work. Expect to need at least two weeks to facilitate the judging process and another two weeks to prepare winners’ artwork and complete the

registration process so that winners may advance to the next round. Therefore, **set your Local PTA deadline approximately one month before submissions are due to the next round**. PTA Districts set their own deadlines and are not all the same. See the deadlines in **Appendix P. Districts must submit their winning entries to KY PTA by December 15.**

5.1 Understanding Program Rules

All students must adhere to the General Student Participation Rules, as well as the rules for their specific arts category. A brief overview of these rules is provided here; **see Appendix F for the 2014–15 National PTA Reflections Rules, including specific rules for each arts category.**

Student Eligibility and Entry Guidelines

Students must participate in the National PTA Reflections program through a Local PTA/PTSA in good standing, as determined by their State PTA. It is your Local PTA Reflections Committee’s responsibility to confirm that your PTA is in good standing and to determine each student’s eligibility. If you are not sure whether your PTA is in good standing talk with your PTA President.

The following additional guidelines apply to student entries:

- Each entry must be the original work of one student only.
- A student may develop an entry inside or outside of the school.
- A student may submit entries in more than one arts category.
- Each student entry must be accompanied by a paper student entry form, signed by a parent or guardian. This form can be found in **Appendix G**.
- Student entries must include a title and an artist statement, which communicates the artist’s inspiration for the work and how it relates to the theme. The statement must describe the content and include at least one sentence but not exceed 100 words.

Special Artist

Students with disabilities may participate in the National PTA Reflections program in one of two ways.

Option 1: The Special Artist Division is an optional division of the Reflections Program, accepting students in all grades, for students whose physical, cognitive or mental health challenges meet guidelines set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act. Qualifying students create their own artwork but may receive non-artistic accommodation and

assistance from an adult. Kentucky PTA recognizes Special Artists in each art category. National PTA will honor one Special Artist from across all arts categories to receive an Outstanding Interpretation Award. Up to five additional Special Artists will receive a National PTA Award of Excellence.

Option 2: Students who qualify for the Special Artist Division may choose instead to enter in one of the traditional four grade divisions (primary, intermediate, middle or high school). In this case, students follow all general rules and arts category rules but may submit their entries in the grade division most closely aligned to their cognitive or functional abilities. These students are recognized and awarded as part of the general student population, without regard to special needs or challenges. See the flyer promoting the **Special Artist Division in Appendix B**.

Originality

Specific rules related to originality for each arts category can be found in Appendix E. In general:

- An adult may not alter the creative integrity of a student's work.
- Only one student may be recognized for each entry; collaboration with other students is not allowed. Other individuals may appear in or perform a student's work, but the work itself—the dance choreography, film production (i.e., screenplay, camera work and directing) or musical composition (i.e., written score and any lyrics)—must be the creative product of one student alone.
- The artwork must be inspired by the current year's theme and created expressly for the program. Artwork produced before the dissemination of theme or used for another competition or program may not be submitted.

Use of Copyrighted Materials

Use of copyrighted material is prohibited in the literature, music composition, photography and visual arts categories. This includes the use of copyrighted cartoon characters, copyrighted material from the Internet, advertisements or advertising ideas, musical themes from existing copyrighted compositions, copyrighted recorded music, copyrighted photographs or stock images. Use of copyrighted music in dance choreography and film production entries is **acceptable when the title, composer and performer of any music in the submission are cited on the student entry form**.

Film productions, photography and visual art may include public places, well-known products, trademarks or other

copyrighted material, as long as that copyrighted material is incidental to the subject matter of the piece and is a smaller element of the whole. Visual arts collages may include portions of existing copyrighted works, such as portions of photos, magazine clippings, internet images and type cut out of a newspaper, as long as those pieces of copyrighted works are used to create a completely new and different work of art. A collage should be judged for its whole—not its parts—and its creativity as an original work of art. Misuse of the above materials constitutes plagiarism—taking and using another's words, ideas or inventions as one's own.

Addressing Student Ineligibility

Occasionally, entries submitted to the Reflections Program are ineligible. One reason for ineligibility is that the Local PTA is not in good standing. It is very important that you check with your PTA President to ensure your PTA is in good standing with the State.

Other common reasons for ineligibility are plagiarism and resubmission. The following recommended procedures apply to both plagiarized and resubmitted entries:

1. **Scan entries** to ensure that all are original and have not previously been submitted to Reflections or another art competition.
2. **Alert judges** to the possibility that some pieces may not be original and encourage them to communicate when one may be questionable.
3. **Check questionable entries via Google** or another search engine.
4. **Return ineligible pieces** to students; explain why they are being returned.
5. **Talk with appropriate school personnel**, such as school counselors, the principal or teachers, about ways to address the seriousness of copying someone else's work or resubmitting artwork with the student and his/her family.
6. **If ineligibility is confirmed after judging**, determine whether awards (including award money, pins, certificates, etc.) should be returned.

5.2 Judging Process

The judging process has two goals:

- To determine which student entries will advance to the next round of judging for our State Reflections Program. Each PTA district has its own rules regarding the number of entries that may be forwarded from the local unit to the district level. Check with your district Reflections chair. The contact information is located in Appendix P. **Each PTA district may submit a total of 30 entries to the KY PTA level for judging.** This is 5 entries in each arts category – 5 visual arts, 5 photography, etc.
- To award other prizes and recognition as determined by your Local Reflections Committee.

All PTA Reflections Program entries should be judged on **artistic merit, creativity, mastery of the medium and interpretation of the theme**. Mastery of the medium refers to the level of skill the student demonstrates in the basic principles and techniques of the arts area. However, a well-developed concept is more important than technique. Entries should be judged primarily on how well the student uses his or her artistic vision to portray the theme.

To facilitate the judging process, judges should receive the title and artist statement for each entry and the rules specific to their arts category. It is important to conduct *blind judging*—where judges do not see the artists’ names—in situations where judges may know a student. Here are some tips for conducting blind judging:

- Literature:** Distribute photocopies of *only* the front side of each literature entry. However, send the *original* manuscript of each winning entry on to the next level of judging.
- Musical composition, dance choreography and film production:** Prepare a CD or DVD of all the entries for each arts area, as well as a list of the entries, using a code in place of the students names.
- Photography and visual arts:** Cover the personal information attached to the artwork by folding the student entry form. If the student has signed the artwork, cover the signature for judging.

The following is a simple judging rubric your PTA may find helpful in evaluating entries and assigning awards. Notice that interpretation of the theme is weighted more heavily than the other considerations.

Sample Judging Rubric

Interpretation of Theme	How closely the piece relates to the theme, based on the artwork itself and the artist statement	20 pts
Artistic Merit/ Creativity	How creative and original the piece is in its conception of the theme and its presentation	10 pts
Mastery of Medium	The level of skill demonstrated in the basic principles/techniques of the arts area	10 pts

With this rubric, each entry may receive a total of no more than 40 points from each judge. Have judges record their points for each entry on a score card. Add the points from each judge and rank the artwork accordingly. **If two entries are tied, the entry with the higher score for interpretation of theme receives more recognition.**

Sample score card for judges can be found in Appendix H.

6. Opportunity for State and National Recognition

Provide your students with opportunity to share their artwork across the state and nation. National PTA Reflections is a multi-layered competition that has local, district, state and national levels of competition. We encourage all local PTAs participation in Reflections to advance their student winners to the next round. National PTA offers both paper forms and an online tracking system to support registration of PTA Units and advancement of student entry forms along the path to the National PTA Round. In our State, the paper student entry form must accompany each student entry even if they have been entered online. Each local PTA is encouraged to use the online entry for students moving to the next level. Do not enter students until your winners are chosen. If you have problems contact your district chair or the KY PTA office

6.1 Report Participation

After your judging process is complete, share participation information with your district PTA. Complete the Paper Local Unit participation form (Appendix I) and send it with

the printed student entry forms for each piece of art that moves to the next round. Please also complete the online participation form and online student entry forms. Use your paper forms as a guide to enter information online before advancing your forms to the next round.

The Local PTA Unit Participation Form is completed on paper and online. Local PTAs are encouraged to complete student entries advancing to the next level online.

- The paper version of the Local PTA Unit Participation Form can be found in Appendix I.
- Complete the online version of the Local PTA Unit Participation Form at PTA.org/Reflections

6.2 Advance Winning Entries to the Next Round

Contact your District PTA Reflections chair (Appendix P) for the number of entries your PTA/PTSA may submit to your PTA district. Each district has different rules regarding number of entries allowed to advance.

- All student entries advancing to the district/state levels must have the paper student entry form even if the entry was entered on line.
- Print confirmation pages of your PTA registration form to include with your entries.
- Double check the rules to make sure all entries are in the size and format required.
- No student work has to be uploaded at this level.
- For visual arts and photography, put student entry form in a clasped 8.5 x 11 envelope, label as indicated below and attach to the back of the art work. If the entry is small you may put it inside the envelope.
- Place entries for literature, film, dance, music in a clasped 8.5 x 11 envelope and label as indicated.
- Enclose any DVDs in a plastic or cardboard case. Label both the case and the DVD. Make sure the score is included in the envelope with the music DVD.
- Label all envelopes as follows:
>KY<, >DIVISION<, >CATEGORY<, >LAST NAME<, >FIRST NAME<
Example:
KY.MID.PHOTOGRAPHY.SMITH.JOHN
- Label abbreviations: DIVISION – pri., int., mid., sen; CATEGORY – dance, film, literature, music, photography and vis art
- Make sure to keep copies of paperwork forwarded to the next level

Contact your district Reflections chair to see where to send the final submission packet and your specific deadline – Appendix P. If you do not have a district Reflections chair contact the KY PTA office. If you are

shipping the packet, we recommend that you ship it with a company that offers online tracking capabilities, in case the shipment is delayed or gets lost.

Any time you have questions, contact your District Reflections chair or the KY PTA office.

7. Celebrate! Recognize Student Participation and Achievement

Now it's time for you to be creative too! Follow your PTA and school traditions or add new ways to celebrate student participation in the arts. Recognition helps all students recognize themselves as artists, encourages family engagement and provides opportunities to connect with the community.

7.1 Ideas for Recognizing Students Locally

The PTA Reflections Program offers opportunities for PTA visibility throughout the year. There are many ways Local PTAs celebrate Reflections participants and winners.

Examples include:

- Presentations at PTA and school board meetings
- School awards nights, banquets or luncheons
- Announcements in the school newsletter or on the website
- Exhibits at community arts galleries or other public spaces (e.g., shopping malls, community centers, coffee shops)
- Features in local newspapers or television broadcasts
- Sharing photos, links, quotes or anecdotes about the Reflections Program or related events through social media channels such as Twitter or Facebook
- Invite the media to your celebration! **Customize the template media advisory in Appendix K** with your own local details and PTA logo. Email it to the media in your hometown and follow-up with a phone call to encourage their presence or post-event coverage.

7.2 District and State-Level Recognition

Each PTA District has its own awards and recognition.

Contact your district Reflections chair for specifics.

Kentucky PTA award recipients are typically announced in early spring. The KY PTA sends a letter to each student winning at the state level and notifies the District and Local

PTA president. Kentucky PTA awards a creative interpretation winner in each arts category and three (3) Awards of Excellence and up to two (2) Awards of Merit in each arts category.

7.3 National PTA Recognition

National PTA award categories include the following:

- **Outstanding Interpretation Awards:** Seven Outstanding Interpretation Awards are given—one to the submission in each arts category, including the Special Artist Division, that best interprets the theme.
- **Awards of Excellence:** These are given to the top three scores for each arts category in each division.
- **Awards of Merit:** These are given to the next five highest scores for each arts category in each division.

National PTA award recipients are typically announced via news release and on PTA.org at the end of May. State PTA Presidents and State PTA Arts Chairs are notified via email. Each State PTA contacts the Local Units of students who receive national recognition (except for the Outstanding Interpretation Award recipients—see below). Local Unit chairs notify winners.

The National PTA notifies Outstanding Interpretation Award recipients directly and coordinates their travel to the National PTA Convention, where they are recognized. National PTA mails certificates to students who received Awards of Excellence and Awards of Merit following the National PTA Convention, at the end of July.

For more details on National Awards and Recognition, see Appendix L.

8. Wrapping Up

You're almost done! This chapter covers other important items including recognizing volunteers, returning artwork and sharing program information with your PTA President.

8.1 Recognize Partners and Volunteers

After your Reflections Program concludes for the year, one of the most important tasks is to thank those who helped make it a success.

Be sure to include all of the following groups in your recognition plan:

- Students who entered, as well as any students who helped to promote or administer the program
- Family-member volunteers
- School personnel

- Judges
- Community partners that provided donations, such as prizes or exhibit space

Use the acknowledgment letter in Appendix M to thank volunteers and community partners for any donated goods/services.

8.2 Return Student Artwork

National PTA recommends that original photography and visual arts pieces be returned to student artists as soon as possible after judging and/or recognition. Art works submitted electronically, including those in the dance choreography, film production, literature and music composition categories, typically are *not* returned.

Non-advancing artwork can be returned immediately after judging or after your Local PTA celebration. National PTA recommends that artwork be returned by the end of the school-year. Please be sensitive to secondary students needing their artwork for college admission. If student artwork advances, it will be returned according to State and/or National policy (see below).

State PTA Policies

Kentucky PTA may use student art work on Reflections brochures and other publications. **Only visual art and photography pieces are returned** These are generally returned shortly after the state wide Student Recognition in late spring. . If a student will need one of his entries before this time please notify the KY PTA when the entry is submitted. **Please make copies of all other entries.**

National PTA Policies

National PTA's award-winning entries are featured online at www.pta.org/ReflectionsGallery Visual artworks and photographs are displayed throughout the National PTA headquarters, exhibited at National PTA special events and returned within three years following their submission to National PTA.

8.3 Evaluate Your Program

Evaluation is a critical part of wrapping up your Reflections Program. It is important to understand what worked and what didn't, so that you can plan for an even more successful program next year. Here are a few ideas:

- **Survey Reflections students, parents, school and PTA volunteers, and community partners.** Share quotes in a newsletter, blog or at your PTA and school meetings. With permission, use these quotes to further

recognize student achievement on the school or PTA website or share them when seeking funding for your PTA. **See Appendix N for a sample survey evaluation.**

- **Meet with your Reflections Committee** and other team members to reflect on the program,

gather feedback and document successes and areas needing improvement. Sharing this information with next year's team will provide a smooth transition between Reflections Chairs.

Kentucky PTA Kids' Day

Kentucky PTA Kids' Day was established in 1985 by Kentucky PTA to set aside a special day just for our students. The goal is to send the message to each child that he or she is a special and unique individual who is respected and loved. It also serves as a day to make the public aware of the educational and personal needs of children.

“KIDS ACROSS KENTUCKY – WE ARE SPECIAL!!”

*By: Rita Scott, Verilyn Eyerly and Jane Boyer,
Past Kentucky PTA Board Members*

I am special, you will see!
Kentucky PTA made this day for me!

We're special kids from a special state!
It's our special day, so let's celebrate!

So let's get together and cheer real loud!
We're Kentucky kids and very proud!

Let's join hands in unity,
To show how special we can be!

All children are special in many ways, yet too often we forget to tell them. It is our responsibility as PTA volunteers to help students identify their special qualities.

AWARD WINNING PROJECTS

A movie theme was chosen. The school entrance was decorated with a red carpet and movie themes throughout the school. Parents posed as photographers and took pictures of students as they entered. Each student received an "I'm a Great Kid" sticker. Sack lunches were prepared and students are outside with their family. Students, faculty/staff, family members, and the community participated in a parade to kick off their "Rev'd up for Reading" program. After the parade, students received popcorn, candy, and a movie.

Clay Elementary PTA

Students were greeted by cheering teachers and staff as they entered the school building. Teachers read excerpts from student letters and some students read them on their own. Every student received a letter detailing why they were a STAR.

Malcolm B. Chaney Elementary PTA

The PTA asked kindergarten and 1st graders to make their handprints on a sheet of card stock. One class painted their handprints, some traced their handprints and wrote how they were special inside the outline. The 2nd -5th graders were given 4 x 6 cards and asked to finish the sentence, "I am special because...". These projects were displayed in the hallway to remind us the each child is truly special. A Kentucky PTA Kids' Day banner was made by the local high school art department, and was hung at the school entrance.

Centerfield Elementary PTA

MORE GREAT IDEAS

- Have students plant spring bulbs on the school grounds-in the spring have a party to celebrate. Remind the students they too, like the flowers, grow and bloom with love and attention.
- Give out Kentucky PTA Kids' Day I.D.s to be used for discounts in local stores who have agreed to honor them the week of Kids' Day.
- Give out free or discounted passes to a movie theatre.
- Put a mirror in the front hall. "The most important person in this school is looking at you" can be written above or below the mirror.
- Send letters to parents the week before Kids' Day and have them write why their child is special to them. PTA and school staff can write to students whose forms are not returned. Give them to students on Kids' Day.
- Have each child trace their parent's hand and have the parent write something special about their child on each finger. Place each child's name or picture in the palm of the hand. Display for all to see.
- Make placements that say Kentucky Kids are special. Laminate these so they can be taken home and used.
- Have a parade through the neighborhood or around the school grounds. Have each class make a banner. Build small floats on wagons. Give prizes for different categories. Have a sack lunch picnic with parents invited. Have a DJ and karaoke.
- Use the day to kick off the Rising Star Award.
- Have a career day in order for students to "look into the future".
- Write the President, Governor, or Mayor and ask for a letter celebrating Kentucky PTA Kids' Day to be sent to the students.
- Position the students to form the outline of the state of Kentucky. Ahead of time, ask older students to help map out the outline. Ask the fire department to use their basket ladder to take a picture. Include local heroes in the center or have legislators stand in the Frankfort area.



Kentucky PTA Kids' Day is Tuesday, September 23, 2014

If September is too early for your PTA or PTSA to plan a Kentucky PTA Kids' Day celebration, celebrate later in the year. Our kids are special all year long.

Kentucky PTA Program and Project Ideas

Community Involvement: Kenton Elementary PTA

The Fall Festival Event for Kenton Elementary School in Independence has been around since 2004 and has grown each year, with this year's event hosting over 780 attendees, 70 volunteers, and upwards of 575 hours of volunteer hours. This event drew donations from over 45 businesses, not only locally, but from across the northeastern Ohio area and as far away as Pigeon Forge. It proved to be one of the best events yet with \$8,132 in profit. This money funded items such as document readers, musical instruments, wireless microphones, and multi cultural assemblies. This PTA group strive to out-do themselves every year so they survey the participants and the number one question is "did the kids have fun?" A unanimous YES! The kids are always worth every hour of it.

Student Development: Meadowthorpe Elementary PTA
Heritage Night at Meadowthorpe Elementary in Lexington is not only a celebration of Unit Day but a magical event. This successful program introduces and celebrates the various heritages and creates an awareness of the vast cultural diversity in the school and community. The school PTA has hosted this event for the past 3 years and each year it has become more popular. This year's event had the largest crowd with approximately 400 attending. One of the highlights of this event is having all 513 students decorate a 3 foot tall self-portrait of themselves in traditional clothing and displaying them throughout the school.

Parent Involvement: Eastern Elementary PTA

The Eastern Elementary School PTA sponsors a day long social for the Kindergarteners and their parents on the first day of Kindergarten. This "New Beginnings Social Event" provides time for students to play on the playground and parents time to meet each other while enjoying a refreshment. Kindergarten is half day at Eastern Elementary, so while the students attend their first class, the PTA board members introduce themselves and talk briefly how they partner with the school, the different programs that PTA supports and upcoming events. Parents are given opportunity to ask questions on school procedures, homework policies, and express other concern. This event also provides opportunity to hand out information on membership. As a result of this social, PTA recruited 51 members.

Kentucky PTA Kids' Day: North Pointe Elem. PTA

North Pointe Elementary is the largest school in Boone County with over 1100 students. The PTA sponsored a Kids Day Celebration that included week long activities culminating in a "Magical Day" of celebration on Friday. Each day during the weeklong celebration, students are greeted outside by the school mascot and begin the day with high energy and school spirit. Students, with their teachers, work all week creating fabulous artwork and decorations for the Door Decorating contest. All parents are encouraged to

write a "Great Letter" to their child about how they are loved, are special, and unique. PTA volunteers support this letter campaign, focused on making each child feel special, and making sure each child received a letter. This event reminded everyone of what the week-long celebration was all about kids.

Outstanding Arts Program: Chenoweth Elementary PTA

The Chenoweth Elementary PTA sponsored and new and unique arts enrichment project engaging every student and numerous volunteers. The Fiberglass Horse Sculpture Legacy project allowed each student to create ceramic tiles and to aid in applying them to a fiberglass horse that the PTA obtained from Cowpainters, LLC in Chicago. With the assistance of a local artist, the students cut clay into small shapes, painted them, and then fired them in the school kiln. The students were instructed on how to prepare the tiles to be applied to the fiberglass horse structure. A total of 11 PTA volunteers assisted in the project, as well as a local artist from the community. All participants owned a piece of the project and benefitted – 525 students, Chenoweth teachers and staff, PTA and the community.

Outstanding Health & Safety Program: Chenoweth Elementary PTA

In September, the Chenoweth PTA launched its first annual "Gallop-a-Thon Fun Run" event and a new model for "fun-raising". Gallop-a-Thon goal focused on physical activity as healthy fun and an alternative fundraiser generating revenue to enhance technology at Chenoweth, with over \$23,000 dollars raised to support upgrades to meet school's technology needs. The Gallop-a-Thon Kick-Off event hosted presentations by Director of Louisville Metro Public Health and Wellness and a local Orthodontist. Some 40 volunteers assisted on the event, accumulating 400 volunteer hours. Gallop-a-Thon got kids moving and abandoned the old models of fundraising with a focus on finding fun in physical activity and healthy lifestyle.

Happy Birthday Party – For 16 year old students, this program promoted seat belt usage and not driving under the influence. Law enforcement, insurance agents, parents, and the principal shared information with the students. Key chains "Drive Carefully – Your PTSA Loves You" were given to students. Cake and punch were served.

Eastern High School PTSA

Yoga for Teachers – Instead of donuts or chocolate for teacher appreciation week, teachers were offered free yoga classes.

duPont Manual High School PTSA

Cross Age Reading Project – High school students went to an elementary school to read to and play games with K-5 students. Some teens donned costumes of Cinderella, Clifford the Big Red Dog, and Cat in the Hat. Parents browsed through an information fair, and the superintendent read a book to all at the end of the evening.

Tates Creek High School PTSA

Programs to Enhance Education for Students and Parents

Arts in Education/Cultural Arts and Reflections, also education programs, are covered at the beginning of this section of the Leaders' Notebook.

The areas of PTA work that can be classified as "education programs" are varied and numerous. They include, but not limited to:

Career and College Preparedness
Self Esteem
Technology
Gifted & Talented-Exceptional Child Education
Early Childhood & Preschool Services
Middle/High School Services
Students with Special Needs
Kentucky PTA Trainings

Great Ideas for Your PTA/PTSA to Use

Mock Election - Hold a mock election just prior to election day. Compare your school's results with the community, state and nation.

Voter Registration - Conduct voter registration in high schools for students who will be 18 before election day. Encourage all adult members of your PTA/PTSA to register and vote.

Preschool PTAs - Help the preschools in your school's attendance area form PTAs or establish a preschool section of your existing PTA and invite parents of preschoolers to join.

Preschool Library - Establish a preschool section in your school's library. Set a time each week for parents and preschoolers to check out books.

Educational Pride - Show your pride in educational accomplishments by exhibiting students' school papers and projects throughout the community.

Literacy, Reading and Tutoring - Reading and literacy are two of the most basic needs of our school children, our youth, and of many of our parents, families and PTA/PTSA members.

The best course for developing reading programs is to first find out what programs are already available in your school and community. If possible, work with those programs, enhancing them with your PTA/PTSA volunteers and program expertise.

Parent Education - Don't forget parents and families when planning programs to enhance education. Anything the PTA/PTSA can do to help parents and families with the difficult job of raising children in today's complicated society is a valuable PTA program. Middle and high schools especially need an emphasis on parent education programs. Be sure to consult the school administration and your community to seek support.

Technology Nights - Technology nights are an important part of a PTA's/PTSA's parent education program. Many parents and families are unfamiliar with computers, and most adults are not nearly as "computer literate" as the children and youth with whom they live. Plan one or two nights a year for your adult PTA/PTSA members to come to school and learn about new technology.

Founders Day

Founders Day, February 17th, honors the three founders of PTA-Alice Birney, Phoebe Hearst, and Selena Butler. PTA was established at the national level in 1897 and Kentucky became a state congress in 1918. Here are some ideas about how your PTA can celebrate this day in February:

- Display pictures and memorabilia describing PTA's more than 100 year history. (Visit National PTA's Historical Photo Archive at www.pta.org/photoarchive)
- Research and draw up your PTA's historic milestones. (See National PTA Milestones)
- Observe the inclusiveness of PTAs founding by organizing a culture festival celebrating your community's various ethnic and cultural groups.
- Present Kentucky PTA Honorary Life Recognitions to volunteers and supporters who have made an impact in your school or community.
- Invite your past PTA/PTSA presidents to attend a special meeting/celebration
- Send a Founders Day gift to Kentucky PTA (i.e. \$1 for each year of membership)
- Share information from Kentucky and National PTA through mailings to members
- Challenge students to research PTA and create a school display or mural.
- Put a special message on your school's marquee.
- Be creative with your ideas and send an Outstanding Programs/Projects award application to Kentucky PTA

Programs and Projects to Enhance Education

ILP Workshop

The Individual Learning Plan guides students in making the connection between course work and career goals after high school.

More Ideas

Special Recognitions – Develop a program that recognizes and awards students for success other than high grades: perfect/improved attendance; “BUG” Bringing Up Grades; “On A Roll” honor roll for effort and citizenship.

Trash To Treasure – Have staff submit a wish list of classroom needs. Distribute the list among parents for donations of these items.

College and Career Fair – Ask community organizations who use teen volunteers or interns to participate in a fair. Also invite colleges and military divisions from around the state to exhibit at the fair as well. Hold the event in the cafeteria during lunch hour so students can visit each booth.

Take Your Family to School Week

Ideas based on movie or T.V. program themes:

- The Amazing Race – family teams participate in an “amazing race” through the school following clues about the schools from location to location and solving curriculum-based challenges at each stop. Translate clues if you have non-English speaking families.
- Smarter Than a 5th Grader
- Extreme Makeover – give the school grounds and building a spruce up. This is especially effective right before school starts. The principal can list “jobs” on index cards and families can choose which to do. Materials and tools are provided by the school as well as lunch.
- Cloudy with a chance of Meatballs – (Cloudy with a chance of Parents) – each grade level held event for parents. Examples – 1st graders hosted an author’s tea where they shared stories they had written and served tea and cookies to their guests. 4th grade invited to join children in science class to observe the weather, make clouds out of cotton balls, and label the clouds.

Monday Morning Coffee Drive-Thru – Give parents a warm greeting along with coffee or juice and information on the week’s activities as they drop children off at school.

Community, Kids and Parents – Each day of the week have a different community business work on a project with a specific grade. A local garden center could pot spider plants with 2nd graders. A cooking school could help 5th graders make quick and healthy snacks. Invite parents to join in.

Game Night – Provide board games for families to play in teams or as individuals. Organize tournaments to help families get to know new people.

School Tour – Invite parents to visit the library, computer lab, auditorium, track, music room and more to see where students spend their time at school.

Student Art Exhibition – Display student’s photographs, paintings, drawings, collages, sculptures, and other artwork in the school library and hallways. Invite families to a VIP opening complete with appetizers and refreshments. This would work well with the Reflections program.

Fun and Learning – Have a hands on activity like a Math Family fun Night. Games directly link to math standards. Provide take home kits with materials to help parents support their children’s learning at home. Game title examples: Domino Switch Dance, Fraction Action, Keep the Change, Decimal Dilemma, Triangle Matchmaker.

[Kentucky Core Academic Standards](#) (KCAS), also known as CCSS (Common Core State Standard Initiative). The Kentucky Core Academic Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. With American students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be best positioned to compete successfully in the global economy.

Honorary Life Recognition, Student Leadership Recognition and Scholarships

Kentucky PTA Honorary Life Recognition

Any PTA or PTSA-local, district or state-may bestow an Honorary Life Recognition on worthy persons in the school, community or state. Often the presentation is the highlight of a Founders Day meeting or the last meeting of the school year. The honoree is usually someone who has given outstanding service to children and youth—someone who has served as an advocate for children and youth in education, health, safety and/or legislation. The honoree need not be a member of a PTA nor a person well known beyond their own area of service.

When you give an Honorary Life Recognition, you not only honor someone who has made a contribution to children and youth, you also help support the Kentucky PTA Scholarship Fund. One hundred percent of the cost of a Life Recognition is used for student, teacher and parent-member scholarships. The life recognition application/pin order form is in Part I – Forms of the *Kentucky PTA Leaders' Notebook*. Order at least two to three weeks before your presentation date.

Note: Life Recognitions are honorary. Recipients must join the PTA/PTSA each year to be a voting member.

Kentucky PTA Student Leadership Recognition Award

Any PTA or PTSA—local, district or state—may bestow a Student Leadership Recognition Award to any deserving student. This is a great way to acknowledge your appreciation of leadership qualities and the hard work that a student has performed which has made a positive difference in the school or community. Each recipient will receive a certificate and a letter from the Kentucky PTA President.

Order at least two to three weeks before your presentation date. 100% of the cost of the Student Leadership Recognition Award goes to the Kentucky PTA Scholarship Fund.

Scholarships

1. Provide the counseling office with current Kentucky PTA scholarship forms for students, teachers, and parents. Applications for the \$1,000 "Harold Steele" Student Scholarship, the \$500 Student Scholarship, the \$500 Teachers-Member Scholarship, and the \$500 Parent-Member Scholarship will be accepted by the Kentucky PTA Scholarship Committee this year.

2. Provide assistance to counselors in the search for scholarships offered by community groups, government agencies, foundations, colleges and universities. Help keep the college and other post secondary catalogs in order and up to date.
3. Working with the guidance office, hold a college night, a vocational/technical night or a post secondary education night.
 - Contact state universities, private colleges and universities, community colleges, and vocational/technical schools in your area. Request the participation of both financial aid and admissions officers.
 - Have a panel presentation focusing on issues concerned with entering and remaining at post secondary institutions.
 - Invite all juniors and seniors and their families to attend.
 - Hold this event in the fall. Spring is past many admissions and financial aid deadlines.

Scholarships Awarded by Kentucky PTA:

\$1,000 Harold Steele Student Scholarship

The biennial \$1,000 scholarship is awarded in even numbered years for a two year period-\$500 for each year. **The recipient must plan to enter the teaching field and attend a Kentucky college or university.**

\$500 Student Scholarship

If funds are available, \$500 scholarships will be awarded to graduating seniors from high schools with a PTSA in good standing. **Recipients must plan to enter the teaching field and attend a Kentucky college or university.**

\$500 Teacher-Member Scholarship

The number of \$500 scholarships awarded is determined by funds available. **The purpose of these scholarships is to help teachers obtain credit toward a master's degree or Rank 1 at a public college or university in Kentucky or within a state bordering Kentucky.** Preference will be given to specialized areas which are most needed by the state when the recipients are selected.

\$500 Parent-Member Scholarship

This scholarship is for PTA/PTSA parent members pursuing **an undergraduate degree in education or a health field at an accredited public college or university in Kentucky.**

Parent/Family Involvement Training and Programs

THREE FOR ME - A PTA PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM

Three For Me asks parents to dedicate three hours of their time to their child's education, thereby strengthening the partnership between the home and school.



Three For Me is a promise from parent to school and parent to child and is now an official program of National PTA.

Three For Me offers:

- Easy-to-use program to increase parent involvement
- Appeal to busy parents and parents who are looking for ways to get involved
- Strategies for organizing activities around the National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Program and PTA priority areas such as arts and culture, health and wellness, student achievement, and advocacy.
- Opportunity to involve many parents and family members for the first time by creating a family-friendly school environment.
- Greater participation from all families because the three-hour commitment can be fulfilled at the school, in the home, or the community.

Register now to start Three For Me. Once you register, you have permission to use the information and helpful forms on the Three For Me web site—it's newly updated and free.

Millcreek PTA adopted a suggested program from the National PTA – Three For Me program. The Three For Me promise of contributing a minimum of three hours during the school year does not seem overwhelming to parents, especially to working parents. When three hours of service are completed and the time log is returned the volunteer receives a large star on the “Wall of Fame” located in the entry hall and a certificate stating they have met their goal. For each additional three hours, a sticker is placed on the star.

This program was introduced at the “back to school” orientation in August and by February 1st, 250 persons had signed and returned promise cards. Over 1,000 volunteer hours contributed. Parents that had never been involved before were now volunteering in some way.

Millcreek Elementary PTA, Fayette

County

Effective Strategies for Family and Community Engagement

Building on Kentucky's long experience with reform, the Parent Advisory Council (CPAC) strongly recommends that Kentucky become the first state in the nation to set the standard for family and community involvement that is focused on student achievement. This standard, modeled after National PTA's *National Standards for Parent and Family Involvement*, includes six objectives designed to assist our state in meeting its goal of all children reaching proficiency by 2014.

The six objectives are:

1. **Relationship-building:** The school staff builds productive, personal relationships with parents of all students.
2. **Communication:** Two-way information in many forms regularly between school staff and parents about students' academic achievement and individual needs.
3. **Decision-making:** School staff encourages, supports, and expects parents to be involved in school improvement decisions and to monitor and assist school improvement.
4. **Advocacy:** For each student, the school staff identifies and supports a parent or other adult who can take personal responsibility for understanding and speaking for that child's learning needs.
5. **Learning Opportunities:** The school staff ensures that families have multiple opportunities to understand how to support their children's learning.
6. **Community Partnerships:** The school staff engages and partners with community members to plan and implement substantive work to improve student achievement.

The Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle report includes a comprehensive performance assessment tool: ***The Kentucky Family and Community Involvement Guide to Student Achievement***. Based on the descriptor levels novice, apprentice, proficient and distinguished, this tool gives specific school-level performance for each of the six objectives. This will help guide schools as they work toward continuous improvement in family and community involvement.

As members of the CPAC, representatives of Kentucky PTA worked diligently to help develop the new state objectives. Kentucky PTA and KYPIRC have developed materials and are committed to providing education sessions on **Effective Strategies for Family and Community Engagement**.

Training is available for Superintendents, Administrators, School Board Members, Teachers, FR/YSC's, and Parent and Community Leaders. Please contact Kentucky PTA to schedule a training at 502-226-6607 or kentuckypa@bellsouth.net

Phoebe Apperson Hearst-National PTA Excellence in Education Partnership Award



and community members promote parent/family involvement with ongoing programs that encourage student success.

The Phoebe Apperson Hearst-National PTA

Excellence in Education

Partnership Award recognizes PTAs whose collaborative efforts with parents, families, educators,

proceed are available on National PTA's website www.pta.org.

What the Award Provides:

- A visit from our National PTA President
- On-stage recognition and award presentation at National PTA's Convention and Exhibition in 2015
- \$2,000 to use on future family engagement strategies

Who Should Apply?

A local PTA/PTSA in *good standing* with Kentucky PTA and National PTA. Local unit PTAs must submit their application to National PTA. Instructions on how to

Application and Deadline

Visit www.pta.org for further information.



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.

As a **National PTA School of Excellence**, families feel welcomed and empowered to support student success, and PTA is a key partner for continuous school improvement.

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. Contact excellence@pta.org or call [\(800\)307-4782](tel:(800)307-4782) for more info.

What does it take to become a National PTA School of Excellence?

1. Enroll your PTA between **April 1 and Oct. 1**. You will receive the "Getting Started Guide," which describes program components, including your first steps to gather feedback from families and set goals with your school partner.
2. Survey your school community and share the results with National PTA by submitting a Family-School Partnership Scan by **Nov. 1**.
3. Receive a customized "Roadmap to Excellence" containing recommendations that respond to your specific results from the Family-School Partnership Scan.
4. Complete the National PTA School of Excellence application before **June 1, 2015**.
5. Celebrate your excellence! All National PTA School of Excellence recipients will receive a toolkit to support celebration activities.

In the 2014-2015 school year, put your school on the National PTA School of Excellence map.

Health Programs

The PTA purposes make it very clear that the health and safety of children and youth were very important to the founders of the PTA. Children who are physically or mentally ill, children who are hungry, and children who are frightened in their home or school environment, often have a difficult time learning. If we want children to learn adequately, we must also be sure they are healthy and safe. The areas of PTA work that can be classified as “health and safety” are varied and numerous. They include, but are not limited to:

- Environmental Literacy
- Family Health
- Mental Health
- Nutrition
- Prevention and Control of Disease
- Safety/Injury and Violence Prevention
- Self Esteem Programs
- STDs/HIV/AIDS
- Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Prevention (including Prescription Drug Abuse)

Great Ideas for Your PTA or PTSA to Use

Immunization Reminders - Keep your parents and families aware of immunization schedules for children and adults. Be sure to include both immunizations that are required for school entry and those that are recommended by physicians, but not required by the schools.

Healthy Meals - Compile a PTA cookbook of “healthy only” meals and snacks. Include basic nutrition information such as the basic food groups and the recommended daily requirements for vitamins and minerals.

Health Fair - A health fair is a great way to promote healthy behaviors and lifestyles for your students and their families. Successful health fairs are held on weekends, evenings and during the school day. A good way to begin—after approval from the principal and PTA board—is to contact your local health department. They will be happy to assist you and should have a list of other agencies and non-profit organizations that would be willing to exhibit at your health fair.

Halloween Safety - Use Halloween to emphasize personal safety and nutrition.

Holiday Safety - Use the holidays to emphasize fire safety, toy safety and the dangers of drunk driving.

Kentucky Safe Kids Week - Kentucky Safe Kids Week (May) is a great time to emphasize safety for the summer: water, bike safety and safety for children home alone. Re-emphasize the dangers of drunk driving before proms and graduation.

Playground Safety Week - Use Playground Safety Week (April) to promote safe play on school and community playgrounds.

Winning PTA Project

New School Playground – Three years ago there was no playground at the school. A fenced in concrete slab was the only play area in the school yard. One of the concerned parents in her research found out that the city council had grant funding available. She applied for a grant, and after a year there was approval for a site, and the PTA had raised money for the first phase of the playground. The students wrote letters to the principal and made a coloring book about playground safety. The first two phases of the project have been completed. The PTA is now working toward beautifying the grounds and adding playground equipment. This project involved the support of PTA parents, students, teachers, and community members who feel a great sense of pride for such an accomplishment.
Smyrna Elementary PTA



National PTA is [partnering](#) with Safe Routes to School National Partnership and Kaiser Permanente for [Fire Up Your Feet](#)—a physical activity program that encourages families to get more physical activity while raising money for their PTA or school. There are two main components to the Fire Up Your Feet program: fundraising and the activity challenge.

[Fire Up Your Feet Fundraising](#) helps PTAs, schools and families be more active and raise money! You can raise funds through walkathons, fun runs and other physical activity efforts to support all kinds of resources for your school, such as P.E. equipment and a cafeteria salad bar.

[Fire Up Your Feet](#) is available to any PTA and school, and **75% of the funds collected go directly to the local PTA!** It's simple to start an online team using the [fundraising toolkit](#), which is full of ideas, tips and a step-by-step guide to make your program a success!

Activity Challenge Are you looking for a new way to get your school community active? Fire Up Your Feet can help while raising money and resources for your PTA! Watch this [video](#) to learn how Ardenwood PTA in Fremont, Ca. got its program started...and what it plans to do with its \$1,000 activity challenge award!

Teacher Appreciation

National PTA Honors Our Teachers

Since 1984, National PTA has designated the first week in May as a special time to honor the men and women who lend their passion and skills to educating our children. PTA events at the national, state and local levels celebrate the outstanding contributions teachers make.

Additionally, National PTA is proud to recognize teachers and administrators with awards and grants. Whether you want to support your school's activities during November's PTA Healthy LifestylesSM Month with a grant or you want to honor a fellow colleague with National PTA Life Achievement Award, [PTA offers a variety of ways to recognize teachers](#). Learn more about these opportunities by clicking the hyperlinks on this page.

National PTA also serves on the selection committees for the [National Teacher of the Year Program](#) and [People Magazine's Teacher of Year Award](#).

Teacher and Staff Appreciation Teacher Appreciation Week: May 4-8, 2015

Daily Affirmations-Give each employee a small gift and note in their mailbox each day of the week.

Hall of Fame-Create a poster dedicated to every teacher with a photo and a selection of reasons why each one is so special. They can be bright, colorful, and designed to the specific taste of each teacher.

Class Photo-Take a picture of the class. Have the first row of students hold large, colorful cards spelling out "thank you" or "we appreciate you" and the date.

School Photo Contest- Get teachers and staff to provide a picture of themselves from when they were in school. Put them up in a secured location and make it a contest for students to guess who is who. **Table It**-At the middle/high school level, set up a table during lunch so students can write thank you notes to their favorite teachers.

- Place a pack of gum in each teacher's mailbox and say, "You've chewed through 1/2 the year. Keep up the good work."
- Have message therapists in the teachers' lounge and do chair massages. Usually message students will do this for a reasonable price. Let teachers know about this special treat by sending them a note that says, "You deserve a pat on the back".

Recognition Themes:

- "Chip, Chip, Hooray-Our staff is the best" (serve chips)
- "Our staff is red hot" (serve chips and salsa)
- "Our staff floats above the rest" (serve root beer floats)

Here's more ways you can honor teachers:

- **Write letters and cards** of appreciation to your students' teachers throughout the week and ask your students' teachers how you can support them throughout the year.
- **Show your support** for the tremendous work teachers do by volunteering in your students' classrooms.
- Nominate your students' teachers for [local and national awards](#).
- **Tell us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram** how you plan to appreciate your students' teachers using the hashtag #ThankATeacher.
- **Pick up the April/May edition of [Our Children magazine](#)**, which is devoted to teachers' perspectives and offers parents great advice for building a strong relationship with their students' educators.
- Give the gift of [PTA membership](#) to a teacher in your life.
- **Follow the new [PTA Pinterest boards](#)** for more teacher appreciation ideas.
- **Follow the new [PTA Instagram account](#)** to share how you #ThankATeacher.



Safeguarding Our Children

Historically, The National PTA has tackled the toughest issues confronting American families head on. We're not backing down now. The recent spate of children shooting children is a symptom of a deeper problem that we may have to dig at to expose the roots. We cannot do it alone. We must enlist business, civic, and education leaders, as well as our children themselves, to take a hard look at where the conflicts exist. We need to understand the issues in order to begin to resolve them. This is not a simple process or a quick one. But unless we begin now, we run the risk of losing more children in the future.

Lois Jean White, National PTA President, 1997-

1999

Bullying Prevention-

In every classroom, there are children who are teased, harassed, threatened, assaulted and socially rejected by their peers. Psychologists call this peer victimization and educators call it bullying. Bullying is a form of school violence and should be taken seriously. It has been reported that bullying was a contributing factor in recent school shootings. Bullying has been linked to many problems; students taking weapons to school for protection, teenage suicide, stress in children, aggressive behavior, withdrawal, school phobia, joining gangs or hate groups, and dropping out of school.

Providing our children with the safest learning environment possible is not something schools can do alone. Parents are a vital resource in the effort to protect children. Following are some topics that could be covered in a PTA or PTSA sponsored program on bullying:

- What is bullying?
- How often, where, when and why does bullying occur?
- How is it different with boys and girls?
- What are the typical characteristics of bullies and their victims?
- How can adults prevent a child from becoming a bully or a victim?
- What should educators and parents do when they discover a child is a bully or a victim?
- How can parents and school personnel communicate more effectively about bullying?
- What resources are available to help reduce bullying in our schools?

[National PTA Connect for Respect bullying prevention program.](#)



Pledge Against School Violence

School violence affects everyone in a community: students, educators, families, businesses, and others. Stopping the violence begins with the awareness that one person can and does make a difference. Your individual choices and actions, when multiplied by those of others throughout the Commonwealth and nation, can reverse the violence. By making this pledge, you join with thousands of others to keep Kentucky's schools safe and drug free.

Sign the pledge on line at www.kycss.org/pledge

The Kentucky Center for School Safety (859-622-2898) sponsors Safe Schools Week annually in October. Your PTA/PTSA could sponsor a program on safe schools for your parents and students.

- Have a campaign to have everyone sign a pledge.
- Have a large banner made and hang it in the school all week for everyone entering to sign.
- Have workshops during the week on various school safety topics.

Kentucky's Safe Schools Week

October 20-26, 2014

www.kycss.org

In 2010, Attorney General Jack Conway signed the Safe Schools Week Proclamation at Dunn Elementary in the Jefferson County School District on Friday, October 15th. This event was the "Kick-Off for the Kentucky Safe Schools Week Campaign, October 20-26, 2014. Students from across the state signed the online "Respect" Pledge and discussed issues such as bullying, cyber bullying, internet safety and much more.

Heath Middle School in McCracken County had 100% of their students take the RESPECT pledge and Jill Vessels the Media Specialist taped her students Anti-bullying Videos.

Crittenden County Middle/High School held a Health Fair and one of the many exhibits was from the Kentucky Center for School Safety. Students took the online RESPECT Pledge and received information on bullying, cyber bullying, internet safety and suicide.

Many ideas for activates and resources are available on the Kentucky Safe Schools website at:

www.kysafeschools.org/safe1.html

Inclusiveness, Diversity, and Unity

Diversity

Can you, as a PTA/PTSA leader, answer the following questions with certainty?

1. What are the demographics of our school families-race, ethnicity, religion, and socioeconomic status?
2. What percent of families speak a language other than English at home?
3. What percent of our children are learning English as a second language?
4. How many children in our school are being raised by grandparents or are in foster care?
5. How many single parent homes are represented in our school?
6. How many children with disabilities do we have in our school?

Only after you can answer the above questions can you begin to serve all the families in your school and build a diverse PTA/PTSA and PTA/PTSA board.

Male Involvement

The Million Hours of Power Campaign

PTA has a history of low male participation. In 2010, National PTA initiated the Million Hours of Power campaign with the theme, "Give a Little, Change a Lot". Research shows that parents involvement leads to student success in school and beyond. Children perform better in school when **both** the mother and father (or another male role model) are involved in the education of their children. Using the idea of the Million Hours of Power campaign, set a goal for your PTA/PTSA to increase male participation. Include the number of males participation and the number of hours they will give (i.e. 50 males provide 200 volunteer hours). Your campaign would be "200 Hours of Power". Also, be sure to apply for the Kentucky PTA Male Involvement/Participation Award found in Part I of this notebook.

Part of your male involvement efforts could be to form a Dads Club. Activities can include a math mentoring program, golf scramble fundraiser, hosting "Muffins for Moms", silent auction for the school carnival, or parking duty for large school events. Here is an example of what one elementary school is doing with their Dads Club.

Veterans Park Elementary PTA-Dads Club

The Dads Club of Veterans Park Elementary School PTA is the product of three or four adults having conversations three or four times about growing male involvement and comfort in the school. Four years later, the Dads Club has multiplied into a 250-strong group with its own president, email distribution list, and a formidable workforce which turns out to help with class projects and school-wide programming.

At the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year Dads Club members brought grills to serve up hot dogs for the first annual "Back2School Bash", a start of school celebration for all families in the school community. In addition to this event, the Dads Club members have participated in the morning greeting program making everyone feel welcome, the two week "sprucing up the school grounds" project, and Breakfast with my Buddy program. The Dads Club at Veterans Park Elementary School has made a tremendous difference in the number of males who are involved in the school lives of children.

National PTA's "A Guide on Promoting Father Involvement" is available at

www.pta.org/Father_Involvement_How_To_Guide.pdf

Unity Day

The purpose of Unity Day is to celebrate the differences that make us unique and contribute to what unifies us. Unity Day is the Monday of Thanksgiving week and all PTAs/PTSAs are encouraged to work with their school and community to promote this special day. Celebrate cultural differences through art, music, and performances.

**Kentucky PTA Unity Day is
Monday, Nov. 24, 2014**

Ideas for Unity Day:

Multi-Cultural Meal-Have a meal and invite each family to bring a tradition family food. Plan to teach a game or dance unique to each culture represented.

Multi-Cultural Panel Discussion-Give parents an opportunity to discuss their own school experiences and create a venue for parents and teachers to share with each other their views and expectations regarding education.

"We Are One" Poster-Create a "We Are One" poster using photos and construction paper. Have participants decorate the poster with photos of their friends or pictures of children of all races interacting together. Display the posters for all to see.

Linking Hands-Using construction paper, have children draw outlines of their hands. To make a long chain, have the children do this multiple times. Cut the hands out of paper and glue them together to make a chain. Let the children decorate the hands with markers, stickers, and glitter. Hand the hands around a room or along a hallway.

Unity Quilt-Students used squares of paper and wrote something unique about themselves. The squares were connected to make a quilt that was hung in the hallway with a banner, "Our School Has Unity Covered". *Watterson Elementary PTA*

Continued on next page...

Every Child In Focus Campaign



[Every Child in Focus](#) reinforces National PTA's mission to advocate for every child—with one voice—so all families feel invited and welcomed within PTA, and are equipped with the tools to support their child and improve the school, which makes a difference for every child. View our video about this campaign on our [National PTA YouTube Channel](#).

What You Can Do

- **Join the conversation.** National PTA will work with the country's leaders in each group highlighted to provide dialogue, resources and information that will help schools embrace diversity and inclusion. Follow us on [Twitter](#) and use the hashtag [#EveryChild](#)
- **Host Every Child in Focus events.** National PTA invites state PTAs to get involved by hosting their own events or by partnering with the National PTA for a joint-event. Read the [call for proposals](#) and submit your ideas at [PTA.org/ECIFevents](#).
- **Follow our [Every Child in Focus Calendar](#).** Check this page each month for materials to help families and PTAs learn more about each group.
- **Reach out to Families.** National PTA will also celebrate PTAs that are raising the bar in welcoming, engaging and supporting families in student success and school improvements. The intent is to motivate people into action and support the needs of every child.
- **Promote Every Child in Focus in your school.** Download and share the [promotional flier](#). You can

also share our [Guide to Cultural Awareness](#) with state and local PTAs.

- **Read our [PTA One Voice Blog](#)** for PTA Success Stories and additional resources. You can also share your blog! We want to hear local and state PTA success stories on supporting student success through diversity and inclusion. Use our [blog share tool](#) to tell us your story.
- **Share the [Parents' Guides to Student Success](#).** These standards provide clear, consistent expectations for what students should be learning at each grade in order to be prepared for college and career.