



PTA PROGRAMS  
Quick-Reference Guide  
2009 - 2010

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## **Welcome**

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Welcome to PTA leadership!

Your role as PTA program chair carries a good deal of responsibility, but it is also a wonderful position to have. You are about to embark upon an enriching, challenging, and fulfilling opportunity to support your community's school and children.

The PTA national organization has created this quick-reference guide to help orient you to your major areas of responsibility. It will help you gain a basic understanding of important concepts and familiarize you with resources that are available to you from the national organization. This guide supplements—but does not replace—the materials you receive from your state PTA.

PTA is striving to meet the needs of today's parents by bringing them together to speak on behalf of every child and by offering them the best tools to help their children be successful in school. We hope this quick-reference guide becomes an invaluable tool as you work for children and families.

## Keys to a Successful Program Year

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### Overview

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In the research synthesis *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections on Student Achievement*, Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp concluded that there is a positive and convincing relationship between family involvement and benefits for students, including improved academic achievement.<sup>1</sup> This holds true regardless of race/ethnicity, class, and education levels of parents.

In order for PTAs to remain relevant in their schools, demonstrate their value in supporting student success in the era of No Child Left Behind, and expand their presence into more communities, they must realign their work in a way that successfully translates the research findings into practice by designing and implementing programs and strategies that:

- Link all parent involvement efforts to student learning
- Shift perception of local PTA leaders' role from "agent of the school" to "advocate for parents"
- Become an inclusive organization that represents the diversity of the school's community
- Create opportunities for building trusting relationships among parents, families, and the community that bridge class and cultural differences
- Recognize and address barriers to parent involvement
- Build social and political connections for families that support effective advocacy and promote shared power

<sup>1</sup>Mapp, K., (2004). *Supporting Student Achievement: Family and Community Connections with Schools. Family, School, and Community Connections Symposium: New Directions for Research, Practice, and Evaluation.*

## What You Should Know

Since the inception of the National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs in 1997, PTAs have been working hard to raise awareness about the National Standards and the positive impact family involvement can have on student success.

In 2007, the Standards were revised to expand the focus of PTA's work—promoting not only what schools can do to involve parents, but what schools, parents and communities must do in partnership to support student learning. Now is the time to move from awareness to action and focus greater attention on the application of the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships through local programs and practices.



## The PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Standards are most effective when they are used to guide the development of PTA family involvement programs, practices, and policies in partnership with school staff and when possible, community members. Schools can't increase family involvement and student success alone, and neither can PTA. Organizing your work according to PTA's National Standards also helps you reenergize members and refocus everyone on the common goal: student success.



### Building Successful Partnerships

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PTA's strategy for moving the National Standards from awareness to action is the Building Successful Partnerships (BSP) process. PTA recognizes that there is no single "right way" to effectively address the needs and interests of any given school or school district. What's needed is a process that's flexible enough for any school community to move through each step in the process in their own way and at their own speed. Every step in the process offers different stakeholders an opportunity to make a contribution at different times and with varying degrees of involvement based on their interest and ability. The BSP process calls for leadership to be broadly distributed, yet focused on a common set of goals. Keep in mind: BSP is a process, not an event.



## BSP Process

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**Creating Awareness** involves actively and continuously educating multiple audiences about the importance of family and community involvement in education and how these stakeholders can be involved.

**Taking Action** requires every stakeholder to do something that will lead to measurable changes that positively impact children and families, as well as teaching and learning. Measuring progress is a key element of sustaining buy-in and support for collaborative work.

**Celebrating Success** is something collaboration leaders should constantly find opportunities to do—big or small.



## What Local PTAs Can Do

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Local PTAs play a critical role in developing programs and practices that directly impact family and community involvement, and thus student success. Here are some ideas for how the BSP process can be used to organize your efforts around the National Standards:

### Create Awareness

- Conduct presentations and/or pass out information (e.g. National Standards brochure, 100 Ways brochure, Three for Me postcard) about the importance of parent involvement and the National Standards at PTA and other school meetings, civic association meetings, faculty meetings, or other gatherings of concerned citizens in your community.
- Meet individually with the principal and school board representative to establish relationships and solicit support for the Standards from these key decision makers.
- Mobilize a group of local unit leaders from schools in the same district to meet with the superintendent to share your concerns and successes, and to solicit support for the Standards.

- Use your PTA website and/or school website as well as other forms of communication to promote the Standards. For example, post success stories to show how the Standards have been used to create a more family-friendly school climate, or how they have impacted your efforts to promote parent involvement, parent-teacher relationships, and student success.

### Take Action

- Obtain support from your principal to adopt the National Standards as a part of parent involvement policy and commit to being actively engaged in helping to create and support family involvement programs and practices.
- If your school has already adopted the 1997 Standards, present the updated Standards as an opportunity to strengthen the parent involvement policy in ways that offer more guidance on what success looks like and intentionally connect family involvement to student success.
- Reach out to family members that have not traditionally been involved with the PTA or the school. Host get-togethers in the community (e.g. local library or community center) as a way of building trust with families and members of the community.
- Work with school staff to co-create learning opportunities (webinars, workshops, book clubs, blogs, etc) that help families better understand how to support student learning.
- Know what success will look like before you plan a program and assess your progress along the way.

### Celebrate Success

- Prepare a PTA Report to the Community (**[www.pta.org/CommunityReport](http://www.pta.org/CommunityReport)**) which highlights your goals and accomplishments from the school year.
- Apply for the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Family-School Partnership Awards (**[www.pta.org/hearst](http://www.pta.org/hearst)**)
- Send a letter to the principal thanking him/her for their support throughout the school year.
- Build a relationship with local media outlets and keep them informed of programs and practices going on in your school.

When your PTA plans and implements programs—national or local—or advocates for a new policy or practice, your PTA should be able to answer the following questions:

- Did the program meet its goal?
- Were there measurable benefits or outcomes (i.e. changes in behavior, attitudes, knowledge) for individuals participating in the program?
- Did the program strengthen PTA's image, voice, and value in your school and community?

Programs and practices should be planned in response to a need or priorities of the school community. Each program or action should be appropriate for the audience and take into account the diverse needs of families related to accessibility, scheduling, languages, cultures, and family structures.

The programs must be relevant, have clearly defined goals, and, when appropriate, be sustainable over time.

To pull all this together, your PTA needs to have a team that will focus on the creation and implementation of programs.



### **The Program Planning Committee**

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The program planning committee builds the framework for a successful program year. The purpose of the committee is to create and facilitate the execution of carefully-thought-out plans. With a positive attitude and an exciting program, the committee can help generate enthusiasm and motivate other parents and community members to get involved. The National Standards should serve as the platform for your committee and should serve as the litmus test for every new or existing program.

If you already have a committee in place for planning programs, make sure that it is representative of the entire school community, and that the committee members can dedicate enough time to the planning process.

If you don't already have a committee in place, create one that will allow you to tap as many resources as possible. Make sure your planning team reflects the community you are trying to reach. Consider including students, business leaders, men, single parents, cultural leaders, multilingual members, etc.

The optimum size of the team will vary depending on the size and needs of your PTA, as well as the programs your PTA is thinking of conducting. If the team is too large, it may become inefficient; if the team is too small, the members may burn out.



### Tips for Success

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- Find ways to include all families in PTA programs. Creating a welcoming school climate is essential to increasing family involvement.
- Collaborate, or at least coordinate, with the principal in the planning of each program or event. They can contribute valuable ideas, and their involvement in the planning process will make them more invested in PTA.
- Thank everyone who participates, from volunteers to donors to attendees.
- The PTA president and treasurer should handle any money spent or earned as advised in the *PTA Money Matters Quick-Reference Guide*. ([www.pta.org/MoneyQRG](http://www.pta.org/MoneyQRG))

## Creating and Implementing PTA Programs

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### Overview

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Your PTA should have an outline for how to develop effective programs and implement those programs efficiently. The following planning outline defines the key steps involved in designing, delivering, and evaluating a program.



### Steps for Creating and Implementing a PTA Program

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- Identify needs and priorities.
- Establish goals for your program.
- Define the scope of your program.
- Determine how the program incorporates the Standards.
- Determine how to deliver the program.
- Create a budget for your program.
- Develop a plan of work.
- Decide how to distribute the work.
- Secure support and resources.
- Get the word out.
- Deliver the program.
- Evaluate the program and follow up.



### Identify Needs and Priorities

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Effective program planning is informed by the needs, wishes, and desires of the beneficiaries of the programs. Students, parents, teachers, school administrators, and community members all need to be heard.

Assess needs by conducting surveys, holding focus groups, and/or talking with representatives of each group of stakeholders. Then gather the results to determine how best to reach the stakeholders. Knowing what your audience really needs will guide the program plan.

As you plan, focus on the thing(s) your PTA can reasonably expect to accomplish, and be specific about what needs your program will address.



### Program Priorities Checklist

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The National Standards will help you determine what kinds of programs your school needs most. Consider these questions:

- How family-friendly is your school? (Standard 1)
- Does the school keep all families informed about important issues and events in a format (including multiple languages) that all families can access and understand? (Standard 2)
- How closely are your school's family and community involvement programs and practices linked to student learning? (Standard 3)
- How well does your school support parents as advocates? (Standard 4)
- Do all families feel they have a voice in making decisions that affect their child's education? (Standard 5)
- Does the PTA and the school work closely with community organizations? (Standard 6)



### Establish Goals for Your Program

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The program planning committee should define clearly what a program is designed to accomplish. Such a foundation will help build support for the program and make it possible to evaluate the program's success.

- Formulate goals that are S.M.A.R.T.: Specific, Measurable, Attainable and Agreeable, Relevant, and Timely.
- Put each goal in writing and share it with the PTA leaders, PTA membership, and school principal.
- Revisit the goals along the way. Throughout the planning and execution of the program, stop to check whether you are on track to meet the goals.

- Revise goals as needed to reflect the actual time frames, specifics, and measurable outcomes of the program. Goals may change and evolve based on what you learn in your planning phase.
- Communicate the goals to the school community and potential volunteers and donors so people know why the PTA is implementing the program and why they should be involved.



### **Define the Scope of the Program**

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To plan a program efficiently, a PTA must first define the scope of the program.

What are the results you're trying to achieve?

- Will this be a one-time event or a year-round effort focused on changing policy and practice in the school?
- Will community members as well as parents and school staff be able to participate?

The scope of the program may be defined in part by the resources available to carry it out. A yearlong campaign to promote healthy lifestyles or the development of a volunteer management program (such as Three for Me) to increase parent involvement would require more planning than a one-week event such as PTA Take Your Family to School Week. Know what resources you have and what you can reasonably commit to each program.



### **Determine How to Deliver the Program**

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To reach the most people, include a variety of actions, events, activities, and delivery methods in your program (when resources permit). Possible program formats include the following:

- A guest speaker, video presentation, or panel discussion on a specific topic
- Monthly newsletters or fliers sent to parents and families
- A resource fair focused on a specific topic, such as health and safety, parenting, or after-school programs

- An open house, parents' night, or community forum
- A poster, essay, or oratory contest
- A yearlong campaign
- Advocacy efforts

As you decide how to reach the school community, review past programs to determine what was successful and what was not. Again, consider the community's needs and the committee's goals.

Before undertaking any financial enterprise, a PTA should check with school, local, and state authorities to determine whether the planned activity is prohibited by state or local law or by school policy, or whether the PTA requires any special permit.



TIP

### **Gather Input from Everyone You Want to Reach**

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It would be a big mistake to choose a program and decide how to deliver it without making sure that the target audience for the program has had an opportunity to provide input. While it is often helpful to start a conversation with just a small group, as the plan develops, try to create opportunities to get feedback from the larger school community. Effective program planning is a collective process and requires input from a variety of stakeholders.

Getting more people involved through surveys, meetings, and one-on-one conversations will significantly increase buy-in and participation, as well as improve the quality and relevance of the program.

Be as inclusive as possible in the planning process. Remember, parents aren't the only stakeholders. Invite principals to planning meetings, welcome their input, and share information with them along the way. Also reach out to community groups, legislators, and school boards to communicate plans, share resources, and celebrate successes.



## Create a Budget for Your Program

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Even though some individuals, organizations, and businesses in the community may be willing to donate many of the items you need to run a program, you need to estimate how much the program will cost. Not only will this information be useful in soliciting donations, but also it will also help in allocating monies from your PTA treasury for items not donated and keep you on track financially.

### Budget Worksheet

The sample budget worksheet on page 15 is designed to help you account for most of the costs of implementing a program or an event. Remember, one size does not fit all. Budgeting for a one-time Math Night will be different from budgeting for a year-round parent involvement program such as Three for Me or starting and maintaining a community garden.

### Develop a Plan of Work

Once the program planning committee has determined the community's needs, decided on the committee's goals, and discussed the scope and delivery of the program, it must create a plan of work. This plan of work must be approved by the PTA executive board.

The plan of work will help the committee think through the specific steps that must be taken to carry out the program, the timeline for executing the program plans, the overall budget for the program (as well as the budget for each specific activity or step), and the resources necessary to put the plans into action. A family-school partnership action plan can be found on page 16.

### Sample Budget Worksheet

Item or Service	Estimated Cost	Potential Resource [WHAT KIND? FINANCIAL?]
<p><b><i>Planning</i></b></p> <p>Needs assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus group</li> <li>• Surveys</li> </ul> <p>Planning meeting</p> <p>Volunteer recruitment</p> <p>Volunteer/staff development</p> <p>Publicity</p> <p>Other</p> <p><b>Planning Subtotal</b></p>		
<p><b><i>Operation</i></b></p> <p>Program materials</p> <p>Printing, duplicating, and photography</p> <p>Office supplies</p> <p>Janitorial services</p> <p>Child care services</p> <p>Transportation</p> <p>Space rental</p> <p>Prizes/incentives</p> <p>Film/picture development</p> <p>Other</p> <p><b>Operation Subtotal</b></p>		
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		

# Family-School Partnership Action Plan – Sample

**School/Location:** Roundtree Elementary School, Anytown, State

**Year:** 2009–2010 school year

**Lead Person(s):** Frank Johnson, Standard 1 action team leader

**Standard:** Welcoming All Families into the School Community (Standard 1)

**Goal(s):** 1. When families walk into the school building, they feel the school is inviting and is a place where they “belong.”

2. The school’s policies and programs reflect, respect, and value the diversity of the families in the school community.

**Results (How will you know when your school reaches this goal? What does success look like?):** More families are participating in school-sponsored events; parents and teachers report increased communication between home and school; increase in volunteer hours; increased presence of principal during student drop-off and pick-up; improved student attendance/decrease in tardiness and absences.

Activities, Practices, Policies	Persons Responsible, Including Lead(s)*	Timeline	Resources and Funding (What do you need and who can supply it?)	Evaluation (How will you determine whether the activity achieved its desired effect?)
<p>1. Hang welcome signs in all the languages spoken in the homes of the students.</p> <p>2. Work with the art, social studies, or history teachers to organize a classroom activity in which students make state and national flags representing their heritages; hang the flags in the school.</p> <p>3. Create reception area by school office for parents and other visitors, with comfortable chairs, reading materials, and access to coffee, tea, and water.</p>	<p>School staff member, parents/family members</p> <p>School staff member, parents/family members Coordinate with art/social studies/history teachers</p> <p>School office staff, parent/family member, community member Coordinate with PTA fundraising chair</p>	<p>Start Aug. 1; Done by 1st day of school</p> <p>Talk to teachers at start of school year; Create flags as fits with curriculum; Host event to unveil flag display</p> <p>Launch plan at start of school year; Funds by Nov.; Complete by start of 2nd semester</p>	<p>Translators—bilingual or multilingual volunteers</p> <p>Signs—\$___ from PTA/school funds; discount or donation from local print/copy shop</p> <p>Art supplies—\$___ from PTA/school funds, donations from community businesses/organizations</p> <p>Place to hang flags—e.g., cafeteria, multipurpose room, library, gym, halls</p> <p>Furniture/accessories—\$___ raised in special fundraiser, or furniture donated by families/businesses</p> <p>Space—near front office</p> <p>Beverages/cups/napkins—\$___ from PTA funds; prepared by office staff</p>	<p>Applicable to all activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback (formal end-of-year survey and informal comments) from family and community members</li> <li>• Improved family and community perception of the school</li> <li>• Increased presence of parents and family members in the school</li> <li>• Increased participation of families in school and PTA events</li> </ul>

<p>4. Offer a wide range of volunteer opportunities—in classrooms/school, for PTA programs, and at home.</p>	<p>School staff member, teacher representative, parent/family member, community member Coordinate with PTA volunteer coordinator</p>	<p>List ready to go at Back-to-School night; Ongoing</p>	<p>Training for volunteers, depending on opportunity—PTA/school/community leaders</p>
<p>5. Create a school policy that ensures that all families are able to participate in school activities/events, regardless of their ability to pay.</p>	<p>School staff member, parents/family members, community member Coordinate with principal (or designee), PTA fundraising chair</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Funding to cover activity costs for all parents, or parents unable to pay—PTA fundraising (specify)</p>
<p>6. Host at least two school events (fun or informational) each semester at community locations to increase access/participation.</p>	<p>School staff member, parents/family members, community member Coordinate with principal (or designee), PTA programs chair</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Space—commitments from community partners (e.g., library, community center, neighborhood place of worship)</p>

\* When filling out this action plan, be sure to record the names—not just titles—of the persons responsible. The descriptors given here are suggestions as to which stakeholders should be represented. The persons listed here will likely form the action team for the standard. Be sure to designate one person to be the lead on each activity.

# Family-School Partnership Action Plan – Template

School/Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Lead Person(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Standard: \_\_\_\_\_

Goal(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Results (How will you know when your school reaches this goal? What does success look like?): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Activities, Practices, Policies	Persons Responsible, Including Lead(s)	Timeline	Resources and Funding (What do you need and who can supply it?)	Evaluation (How will you determine whether the activity achieved its desired effect?)



CHECKLIST

## Planning an Event

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One-time events can be very useful in building relationships among families and school staff. If you are planning an event or activity, be sure to consider the following:

- Determine what role parents and other family members will play, and what role the school will play.
- Set a date, time, and place that has taken into account the school calendar and family circumstances, such as work schedules, that might be a barrier to participation.
- Use a variety of tools to publicize the event.
- Make sure the site for the event is accessible and appropriate for the event. If the school is not the best venue, consider other locations.
- Make sure the site has the necessary audiovisual equipment, lighting, chairs, and tables.
- Make arrangements for parking, refreshments, and child care.
- Determine who will be responsible for all aspects of setup, teardown, and cleanup.
- Celebrate and publicize your success.



DETAILS

## Decide How to Distribute the Work

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The entire program planning committee will likely be involved in the decision making to this point. After the committee has identified what needs to be done to make the program a reality, however, it must decide how to distribute the work. Consider the following models:

- **Full-committee participation.** The entire program planning team participates in the planning for every event or activity in the program plan. This approach requires committee members to volunteer a significant amount of time, but may result in greater investment in the program by committee members and greater participation by the various stakeholders.

- **Subcommittee structure.** Smaller groups (comprising members of the program planning team or additional volunteers headed by members of the team) are charged with planning particular program activities. This approach requires less time on the part of committee members and offers leadership opportunities to more people. It is important, however, to make sure that the smaller groups are diverse and reflect the communities they serve.
- **Executive board model.** The executive board completes the planning for every activity. This approach allows a PTA to streamline the planning process, and could be appropriate if the PTA doesn't have the time or volunteer resources to spread the work out. This approach is least likely to generate buy-in or investment from the stakeholders you are trying to reach and could send a message of exclusiveness rather than inclusiveness.



TIP

### Establish Clear Expectations

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Whether the program is an ongoing initiative or a one-time event, make sure that the program plan is detailed and that everyone who has a role to play feels “in the know.” Set clear expectations for the program planning committee regarding the plan, the timeline, and the resources the PTA will commit to the program. In addition, clearly define roles and responsibilities for volunteers.



DETAILS

### Secure Support and Resources

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Effective program planning will require volunteer time, and may require financial resources, equipment, information to distribute, etc. Some programs will require the help of school staff. During the planning process, determine what resources you need to conduct your program, and secure commitments before the planning is finalized. If you are unable to secure the resources you need, adjust the program plans accordingly.

Be specific when you invite businesses and community organizations to participate. You may ask for their time, their products, or a donation of funding, food, or equipment.



TIP

### Program and Project Funding Sources

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Annual membership dues are the primary source of funds for PTAs; some PTAs are able to do excellent work with no financial resources other than their dues. However, special projects and programs may require additional funds. If dues are not sufficient to finance a PTA's work, supplementary funds may be raised within the context of the mission and purposes of PTA.



DID YOU KNOW?

### Sponsorship vs. Endorsement

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Corporate sponsorship is a funding mechanism in which a commercial concern provides cash, products, or know-how to a charitable or educational organization in return for an acknowledgment of thanks. The acknowledgment of thanks generally takes the form of public recognition for the sponsor's support.

Corporate sponsorship activities stand in contrast to endorsement activities, in which charitable or educational organizations endorse the products or services of commercial concerns.

In return for sponsorship, a PTA may thank the sponsor for its contribution; the thank-you may be in writing or on posters, banners, or other appropriate media. The written acknowledgment must be limited to an expression of thanks and can list identifying information for the sponsor. The acknowledgment can never make a qualitative judgment regarding the sponsor or its product, and it cannot request that people patronize the sponsor or buy its products; otherwise, the sponsorship payment will be subject to federal income tax.

Another source of funding can be generated from foundations. These funding sources could be available if the PTA is planning something that aligns with the goals of the foundation and can show measurable results beyond the number of participants. For example, if a PTA is seeking funding to increase student access to the arts, a foundation with similar interests may want to support those efforts. Foundations are less concerned about public recognition and more concerned about impact.



### **Get the Word Out**

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People must know about your program in order to participate. Identify the most effective means to invite people to participate and attend. Use multiple communication tactics:

- Print information in the school or PTA newsletter.
- Post information on the school or PTA website.
- Make personal telephone calls.
- Ask the principal to spread the word in classroom visits, staff meetings, and other communications.
- Advertise in the newspaper.
- Post announcements at the school, local library, grocery stores, banks, etc.
- Circulate fliers in the community.
- Arrange for public service announcements on local radio and TV stations.



### **Develop Spokesperson and Media Lists**

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Create a list of people who can speak on behalf of your PTA (for media interviews, guest speaker opportunities, etc.); make sure you have contact information to go with those names. Also maintain a list of local press members; this information can be obtained from media directories at your library, or by calling local TV and radio stations and newspapers. Build relationships with reporters, and learn their deadlines. Don't forget to work with communications and PR chairs at your state and council PTAs, too!



## Create a Promotions Plan

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A promotions plan serves as a roadmap for how you'll inform members and potential members about your activities and achievements.

### 1. Conduct a program analysis

- What do your members want/need/expect from your PTA?
- What programs have been successful (and less successful), and why?
- What will motivate people to support your program, and what might prevent them from doing so?
- What resources (money, volunteers, etc.) do you have to promote this program?

### 2. Choose a promotions strategy

- Always keep in mind your target audience—who they are will determine what promotional methods are most appropriate.
- Popular avenues of promotion include meeting announcements, newsletters, school marquees, local advertising, electronic mailings, and press releases.

### 3. Create an action plan

- Outline what will be done, when it will begin and be completed, and who is responsible
- You may do an action plan for each individual program you are promoting, or consider a full, single calendar to avoid excessive overlapping of program promotions.

**Sample Promotion Plan**

**Back-to-School Promotion and Action Plan**

**Situation Analysis**

ABC PTA would like to increase participation in the back-to-school event, and increase the number of member sign-ups. A survey of parents revealed the following opinions about our back-to-school event:

- More parents would attend the event if held on a Friday evening (parents too busy on weeknights and Saturdays).
- Parents and volunteers appreciate food items being offered (even if for purchase).
- If entire families can attend, parents don't need to find child-care
- Event invitations, as well as general information about the school, PTA, and volunteering opportunities, need to be available in Spanish.
- Volunteers indicated that shorter work shifts during the event allowed them to participate more and make the event more enjoyable.

**Back-to-School Goals**

- Host an orientation event for faculty and school families on September 28 at 7:00 p.m.
- Increase attendance of event by at least 10% over previous year.
- Offer food items (pizza slices, salads, and drinks) for purchase for no more than \$5 per person.
- Double the number of volunteers working the event in order to have shorter work shifts.
- Create a new multi-cultural committee comprised of bilingual parents and school staff by September 5 to assist with translations, communications, and invitations.
- Renew commitments from past local business sponsors (and find two new sponsors) to donate goods or services to the event.

**Promotion Strategies**

- Evaluation of past promotion methods has revealed that newsletters and take-home fliers have been successful; a new suggested method involves enlisting a team to personally call all new families with a welcome and event invitation.
- Produce fliers, articles, posters (for local merchants), and other advertisements—in English and Spanish.
  - Deadline for fliers (responsible for distribution): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Deadline for articles (responsible for distribution): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Deadline for posters (responsible for distribution): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Deadline for invitations (responsible for distribution): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Deadline for press releases (responsible for distribution): \_\_\_\_\_
- Form an event committee and publicity team, and invite school staff to take part.



## Evaluate and Follow Up

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Look at the goals you established at the beginning of the program and the responses on the feedback forms.

- Did the program meet its goals?
- Did participants find the program useful?
- Did the program encourage action?
- How might the program be improved?

Follow up by publishing a summary of the event

**([www.pta.org/CommunityReport](http://www.pta.org/CommunityReport))** and the outcomes of the program in a newsletter, or post the summary and outcomes on the school or PTA website. Celebrate your successes. Consider distributing resources to people who were unable to attend.

Participant satisfaction forms should be tailored to ensure consistency with the program and the intended outcomes. The sample form on page 26 can be used to evaluate a Building Successful Partnerships presentation, Teacher Appreciation Week events, or any of your PTA programs.

**Sample Participant Satisfaction Survey**

Participant's Name (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Activity \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Did you enjoy or benefit from the activity?**

- a. Yes, very much
- b. Yes, somewhat
- c. Not as much as I hoped I would
- d. No, I did not

**2. Did you get the help you needed?**

- a. Yes, completely
- b. Yes, for the most part
- c. Not really
- d. I did not need help.

**3. Would you recommend this program to others?**

- a. Yes, definitely
- b. Probably
- c. Maybe
- d. No

**4. Why did you participate in this program /activity?**

- a. I thought I would learn something new.
- b. My child was involved.
- c. The topic was important to me.
- d. I had some free time.
- e. Other (Please specify.) \_\_\_\_\_

**Sample Participant Satisfaction Survey**

5. In your own words, what was the most important thing you got out of the program?

6. In your own words, what would you have left out of the program?

7. What suggestions do you have for improving this program/activity?

**I am a** (check all that apply):  Parent  Family member  Principal  Teacher

PTA member  Student  Community member

Other (please specify.): \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your participation!

## Setting Program Timelines

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### Overview

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For some programs and events, the timeline is determined by the needs and interests of the stakeholders (parents, students, teachers, school leaders, the business community, etc.). Timelines also may be determined by the group that developed the program your PTA wants to adopt.



### Timeline Tip

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When setting your timeline, avoid conflicts with religious and cultural observances. In addition, check the school and community calendars to find out what other events are planned and when. There may be opportunities to partner on activities with other community groups. You don't want to force the school community to choose between your event and others, which may happen if events overlap or if there are a lot of events within a short period of time.

Timelines also may be influenced by PTA and national observances related to the program topic. Check PTA's calendar of events at [www.pta.org/events.asp](http://www.pta.org/events.asp) for a list of PTA events and other observances that can guide your planning.



### Building a Timeline

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- Start with the end date in mind.
- Work backward to figure out the dates by which specific planning activities must be done.
- Build in time to spread the word and get people interested.
- Allow time for unexpected situations that may delay the planning process. For instance, make sure that someone else can sign checks if the treasurer is unavailable when a bill needs to be paid.



### Sample Timeline: PTA Community Health Fair

Let's say a PTA has a year-round healthy lifestyles program, and a part of the program is a community health fair held in the early summer. Here is an example of a timeline that works backward from the event date, Saturday, June 2. The countdown helps identify what, how, and when tasks need to be completed.

<b>By the week of April 30</b>	
What:	Form a planning committee that may include students, parents (PTA and non-PTA members), a teacher (preferably the health or physical education teacher), the principal, etc.
How:	Decide whether to issue an open invitation to join the planning committee or personally invite key people; communicate the date, time, and location of the first meeting. Have an agenda for the meeting, and be prepared to build consensus and action plans.
<b>By the week of May 7</b>	
What:	Ask businesses and community groups to donate giveaways, health information (brochures or other literature), coupons, food, space, or time. Find companies or healthcare organizations that can offer hands-on experiences.
How:	<p>Talk to local businesses and organizations about the health fair; tell them how the fair will benefit the community. Communicate your PTA's plans and ask the businesses if they would like to be involved. Discuss with them what they could provide that would meet one of the PTA's needs. Ask them to post fliers announcing the fair (the fliers should indicate who should attend and when and where the fair will be held). Exchange contact information and thank them.</p> <p>To prevent multiple volunteers from approaching the same businesses and organizations, assign each volunteer on this task a specific area or group of businesses.</p>

<b>By the week of May 14</b>	
What:	Start communicating activities and details to school staff and all families in the school community.
How:	Use all communication vehicles available to get the word out about the health fair. Post announcements on the school website, run ads in the school and PTA newsletters, send e-mails to all parents and PTA members, make phone calls to community leaders, promote the event when talking to friends and neighbors, remind people of the fair during other events, and so forth.
<b>By the week of May 21</b>	
What:	Notify the local media about the health fair.
How:	Provide the who, what, when, where, and why of the event to local radio stations, television stations, community blogs, and newspapers.
<b>By the week of May 28</b>	
What:	Gather the supplies you will need for the fair.
How:	<p>Coordinate trips to supply stores, as needed. You may need decorations and sign-making material. Plan to pick up any tables, chairs, or rental equipment at this time (arrangements should have been made earlier in the month).</p> <p>Check in with volunteers and businesses that will be contributing time or goods.</p>
<b>By the week of June 2</b>	
What:	Set up and host the health fair.
How:	<p>Set up tables, booths, ticket desks, and refreshment areas. Hang signs and decorations. Arrange space for people to walk and congregate.</p> <p>Greet the vendors, volunteers, and participants. Have volunteers circulating through the fair to troubleshoot.</p> <p>Collect feedback and let attendees know what will happen as follow-up to this event.</p>

## PTA Programs and Resources

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### Overview

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Your state PTA may have well-established programs that your PTA can implement. In addition, the PTA national organization has developed and compiled resources, tools, program models, and advocacy tips for three focus areas: healthy lifestyles, parent involvement in education, and arts and culture. All PTA programs encourage and support opportunities for parents, families, school staff, the community, and other caring adults to be involved in the healthy growth and development of children and youth. Each focus area covers a number of specific topics identified by national research as important to supporting the academic and healthy development of all children and youth. Embedded in all of PTA's programs is the notion that parent involvement is the vehicle through which your program goals will be achieved.



### PTA Program Topics, Tools, and Resources

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- Improving Health and Wellness
- Strengthening Family-School Partnerships
- Promoting Experiences with and Exposure to the Arts

For detailed information about these programs, go to [www.pta.org/programs.asp](http://www.pta.org/programs.asp).



## PTA Awards and Grants

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Learn more about these national award and grant opportunities (and find application information) online at [www.pta.org/nationalawards](http://www.pta.org/nationalawards).

- **PTA Healthy Lifestyles Award**—Host activities to promote health and wellness, and your PTA could win a cash award to support your plans.
- **The Phoebe Apperson Hearst Family-School Partnership Award**—Cash awards and two expense-paid trips to the PTA National Convention are given to a local PTA best exemplifying the National Standards.
- **PTA Take Your Family to School Week Award**—Host an event that welcomes families into the school community and your PTA could win an \$1897 Award to support your efforts.
- **PTA Outstanding Advocacy Award**—At the PTA National Legislative Conference, recognition is given to one state and one local/district PTA that have influenced public perception, awareness, or action regarding children’s issues.
- **Shirley Igo Advocate of the Year Award**—At the PTA National Legislative Conference, recognition is given to one individual that has influenced public perception, awareness, or action regarding children’s issues.
- **The Mary Lou Anderson Reflections Arts Enhancement Grant**—Matching grants are given to enhance arts education in the classroom and other learning environments through activities, materials, artist visits, and special programs.
- **National PTA Life Achievement Award**—You can thank that special advocate for children in your community by giving them the highest honor awarded by the PTA; the fee supports the National PTA Endowment Fund.



### **Program Resources for Building Successful Partnerships**

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Find tools and guides to help create programs that boost parent involvement at [www.pta.org/bsp](http://www.pta.org/bsp).

- National Standards Implementation Guide
- National Standards Assessment Guide
- Power of Partnerships Family Survey
- A Report Card for Parents
- 10 Truths About Parent Involvement
- National Standards for Family-School Partnerships: What We Can Do Together to Support Student Success (Powerpoint for an audience of families and community members)
- Bridging Race, Income and Cultural Differences to Support Student Success (Powerpoint for an audience of families, teachers and community members)
- The No Child Left Behind Act and Title 1 Schools: What Parents Should Know and Do (Powerpoint for an audience of parents)
- 25 Tips for Making Successful Presentations
- PTA Report to the Community Instructions (instructions on how to use the Report to the Community to share family-school-community partnership successes)
- PTA Report to the Community Template (a template for describing partnership successes and sharing with the community)
- Hearst Family-School Partnership Awards (national recognition and monetary awards for PTAs' efforts to build family-school partnerships)



## **Contact Us**

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Contact your state PTA or the PTA Office of Programs and Public Policy for guidance, support, and answers to questions.

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