

“It takes a whole community to raise a child.”

...adapted from ancient African saying

The California State PTA recognizes that involvement of diverse populations enriches PTA activities and, more important, enhances the well-being of all children and youth.

As advocates for children, PTA is most effective when we:

- Celebrate our diversity.
- Identify and break down barriers in our organization that keep people out or minimize their involvement.
- Create and work together on common goals.
- Include in our active membership a representation of all ethnic, cultural, religious, economic and social groups in the community.

In evaluating whether or not the PTA is as effective as it can be, here are some questions to ask:

- Are there large under-represented groups of California's population missing from the PTA's active membership?
- Is there enough representation from all groups to give the unit the understanding needed to be advocates for all children?
- Does the way the public perceives PTA allow PTA to attract a more diverse membership or lessen the ability to be heard as advocates for all children?

WHAT IS OUTREACH?

Outreach is PTA's commitment to include the entire community in all phases of PTA programs and activities. It is of such importance that it must be given top priority when planning PTA activities.

A concerted effort must be made to involve every member of the community in PTA, including but not limited to parents, step-parents, foster parents, grandparents, students, teachers, school staff, school administrators, law enforcement officers, governmental services and agencies, and businesses. Everyone needs to be included.

WHAT TO DO

- Form an outreach committee whose members are representative of the school and community.
- Survey the school and community members by questionnaire, by telephone, or door-to-door. Find out what type of activities would involve them. Find out what might prevent them from becoming involved: language barriers, transportation, baby-sitting needs, times of activities, etc. Find out what constitutes involvement to the people being surveyed.

Officer and Chairman Job Descriptions

- Develop an outreach plan that responds to survey findings.
- Set reasonable goals. What do you want to accomplish?
- Develop activities that include and would be of interest to students, single-parent families, working parents, grandparents, senior citizens, people with disabilities, non-English-speaking people and community business people.
- Provide a translator for meetings, as needed.
- Reach out through other groups to co-sponsor events or activities with
 - Other committees or chairmen within the PTA organization;
 - Student leadership and school organizations;
 - Parent advisory committees, such as local area councils, bilingual and booster groups to other unit, council and district PTAs in the community, area and state;
 - Government and community groups and agencies, to senior centers and civic organizations, to cultural groups, local chambers of commerce and businesses.
- Promote and publicize activities through PTA newsletters, e-mail, website, flyers, local newspapers, personal telephone calls, public service announcements (PSAs), and other newsletters. Determine what is the most effective method of distributing printed material: mail, take home, handouts, or personal delivery by adult.
- Communicate opportunities beyond PTA activities to appreciate and learn more about cultures from around the world (e.g., museums, festivals, special events/activities, books, TV programs, videos and movies).

EVALUATING OUTREACH

Evaluate each activity while in progress or at its completion. Evaluate accomplishments at the end of the year. Ask members of the committee:

- Were outreach efforts successful?
- Did those participating show an interest in the program?
- Will they come again? Will they bring others?
- Was it accessible to them?
- Will they become involved on the PTA board?
- What would they do differently?
- Were there conflicts in planning (scheduling, translators, facilities)?
- Was the program timely and of interest to the participants?
- How could more people be reached?
- What made the program a success?
- Were goals reached? Do goals need to be revised?

YOU KNOW OUTREACH HAS SUCCEEDED WHEN

- The make-up of the PTA reflects the make-up of the school community.
- There are some new PTA board members every year who represent all parts of the school community.
- New people are at each PTA association meeting, and many come to the next meeting.
- PTA members ask questions and make suggestions during association meetings.
- The involved membership includes students, teachers, community, and extended family members, not just parents.
- People respond to flyers, newsletters and website information translated into all the languages within the school.
- Members talk and socialize together before the association meeting starts.
- Membership and outreach are part of all PTA activity planning.
- The PTA board and membership does not think in terms of “them” and “us.”

RESOURCES

National PTA Office
330 North Wabash Avenue, Suite 2100
Chicago, IL 60611-3690
312.670.NPTA • FAX 312.670.6783
www.pta.org • e-mail info@pta.org

California State PTA Office
930 Georgia Street, Los Angeles, CA 90015-1322
213.620.1100 • FAX 213.620.1411
www.capta.org • e-mail info@capta.org

- Membership (*California State PTA Toolkit*)
- *Parents Empowering Parents (PEP) Guide*
- *Los Padres Eligen Participar* (Spanish *PEP* Guide)
- *Involvement Makes a Difference* (English and Spanish)
- *Parent Involvement* (English and Spanish)

Local Schools; Local School District Office

County Office of Education

Human Resources Departments in local and county school district office

County Human Relations Commissions

03/2004