

PARENT INVOLVEMENT/FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

The Parent Involvement/Family Engagement Committee addresses the very foundation of PTA by promoting the education, health, and safety for all children. The inherent goal of the committee is to help strengthen, support, and sustain the involvement of parents in the lives of their children.

The Parent Involvement/Family Engagement Chairperson:

- Attends parent involvement/family engagement training and workshops offered by Georgia PTA, District Directors and Council PTA leadership.
- Strengthens home-school-community partnerships by providing parents and community leaders with the opportunity to answer surveys, participate in the decisions and implementation of programs, and the evaluation process that follows.
- Raises awareness about parental responsibilities and rights under the education legislation, Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
- Works with committee chairpersons to ensure parent and community involvement in all PTA programs/projects/events and school functions.
- Works with the local school Principal on the Parent Involvement Policy.
- Focuses on promoting parenting skills and hosts educational workshops for students and their families.
- Shares information about and works with cooperating agencies that provide services to families.
- Assists Teachers and Parent Liaisons to work effectively with parents to increase involvement and engagement within the classroom and school community.
- Works with the Local Unit Board of Directors to achieve The Model PTA status for the local unit PTA.
- Submits The Model PTA Award Cover Sheet, along with a copy of the Living Document, to the state office, postmarked by the second Friday in March.
- Applies for the Georgia PTA Hearst Family-School Partnership Award.

THE NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

A new way of leading – building family-school partnerships for student success.

More than 30 years of research shows that **family involvement** promotes student success. No matter what their family income or background may be, students with involved parents are more likely to:

- Earn higher grades and test scores,
- Pass their classes,
- Attend school regularly,
- Have better social skills and adapt well to school, and
- Go on to postsecondary education.

When families, schools, and communities work together:

- Student achievement improves,
- Teacher morale rises,
- Communication among parents, teachers, and administrators increases, and
- Family, school, and community connections multiply.

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 and 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.

National Standards Implementation Guide

The benefits of family-school-community partnerships are many: higher teacher morale, more parent involvement, and greater student success are only a few. That is why PTA developed the *National Standards for Family-School Partnerships Implementation Guide*, a tool for empowering people to work together with an end goal of building family-school partnerships and student success.

For each of the six National Standards for Family-School Partnerships, this online guide provides:

- An explanation of each standard and its importance
- Insights to help convince educators of the standard's value
- A success story from a school community
- Action steps for your school community
- Resources to enhance your understanding

Visit the National PTA website at <http://www.pta.org/2757.asp> to download the full guide, as a PDF, which provides additional details, background, research, and success stories.

BUILDING FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS THE PTA WAY

PTA offers a means to develop strong family-school partnerships and involve the community. The process can be tailored to each school. PTA's process for building successful partnerships is grounded in the **National Standards for Family-School Partnerships** and consists of three steps:

- Raising awareness about the power of family and community involvement.
- Taking action to cultivate involvement through specific programs and practices.
- Celebrating success as your school sees increased involvement and its impact.

Visit the National PTA website at http://www.pta.org/family_school_partnerships.asp for more information and to download parent involvement resources, in English and in Spanish.

AWARDS PROGRAMS

Georgia PTA Hearst Family-School Partnership Awards

Get Recognition for Your Collaborative Efforts!

Award Overview:

Georgia PTA's Hearst Family-School Partnership Awards recognize and celebrate PTAs that are effectively demonstrating the PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships in their local school communities.

The PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships are a framework for how families, schools, and communities can work together to support student success. Each standard is rooted in the value of mutual respect, trust and courtesy. The National Standards are used to develop, evaluate, and improve engagement practices at school.

There are three levels of recognition:

- ***The Outstanding Family-School Partnership Award*** is given to one local PTA for exemplary all-around achievement of all six (6) National Standards.
- ***The Family-School Partnership Award of Excellence*** is given to six (6) local PTAs, each representing the best in one (1) of the six (6) National Standards.
- ***The Family-School Partnership Award of Merit*** is given to all local PTAs that apply to the awards program, in recognition of their commitment to building family-school partnerships.

PTA Take Your Family To School Week Awards

Promoting family involvement in children's education has been at the heart of PTA since its founding in February 1897. Take Your Family to School Week and the \$1,897 Awards honor and continue that legacy.

Tell National PTA your plans to celebrate PTA Take Your Family to School Week and your unit could win \$1,897 to support its work. Visit <http://www.pta.org/636.asp> for information and downloadable application.

The awards are funded by AXA Foundation, Proud National Sponsor of PTA.

Parent Involvement Certification

In 2010 Parent Involvement Certification and Assessment was developed by the Family Engagement Committee for PTA leaders across Georgia. Georgia Department of Education recognizes this training for Parent Involvement Coordinators as a pre-certification for their program *360 Degrees of Parent Engagement*.



Family-School Partnerships: Hearst Awards

The National PTA Phoebe Apperson Hearst Innovation in Family Engagement Award recognizes and celebrates achievement in building effective family-school partnerships. The recipient of the Hearst Award will receive **\$2,000** and will be **recognized at the Annual National PTA Convention and Exhibition**. In addition, **four Awards of Merit** will be awarded to applicants who demonstrate exemplary family engagement initiatives. Awards of Merit recipients will receive a certificate of recognition

Family engagement is the heart of PTA's core mission. Family engagement is defined as:

- **A Shared Responsibility** - A shared responsibility in which schools and other community agencies and organizations are committed to engaging families in meaningful and culturally respectful ways, and families are committed to actively supporting their children's learning and development.
- **Cradle to Career** - Continuous across a child's life, spanning from preschool programs such as Early Head Start programs to college and career.
- **Across Contexts** - Carried out everywhere that children learn – at home, in pre-kindergarten programs, in school, in after-school programs, in faith-based institutions, and in community programs and activities.

For more information, application and instruction visit National PTA at www.pta.org.

THE MODEL PTA

The Purposes of The Model PTA:

- Encourages and directs the Local Unit PTA to fulfill the requirements to be “In Good Standing”.
- Provides a strong format and defines an effective process for parent engagement, advocacy and partnership in the school community.

Assists the local school community to fulfill the parents’ rights and responsibilities under the current education legislation.

The benefits for the Local Unit to achieve The Model PTA status:

- Provides a course of action to create and maintain a mature parent involvement system within the school.
- Fulfilling this process leads the local unit PTA to be an effective and more efficient school collaborator.
- Accomplishing the Administrative Guidelines enables the PTA to address core issues and connect with parents on a more comprehensive level.
- Increases and enhances parent and community involvement and engagement.

To achieve The Model PTA status, the Local Unit PTA:

- Complete twelve (12) of the fourteen (14) Administrative Guidelines.
- Complete the Operational Guidelines.
- Send in The Model PTA Award Cover Sheet and the completed Living Document (found in the *Reports* section of this resource and on the Georgia PTA website at <http://georgiapta.org/leadership-president.html>) to the state office, postmarked by the second Friday in March.

The Model PTA Living Document provides for easy record keeping, and serves as part of the local unit’s history. Keep track of the local unit PTA’s progress by filling in the completed dates for each guideline accomplished. Both the PTA/PTSA President and the Parent Involvement Chair should maintain a copy of the Living Document in their respective handbooks.

Contact the Georgia PTA Family Engagement Chair with questions, comments, or assistance on The Model PTA for local unit and council participation.

THE MODEL PTA

ADMINISTRATIVE CRITERIA FOR THE LOCAL UNIT PTA

1. Submit Incoming Officers' names and contact information by May 1, and Incoming Chairs' names and contact information by August 31, to the state office. Submit any/all changes to names and contact information, as they occur.
2. Maintain updated and approved Bylaws on file at the Georgia PTA state office; amendments may be made throughout the school year. All board members have a copy of the Bylaws by November 15.
3. Meetings: Prepare a calendar of the year's meetings and events; include Georgia and National PTA events. (*Send a copy of the calendar to the Council and District, upon request only.*)
4. Ensure all committees develop a Plan of Work, include specific goals, and submit to the Local Unit PTA Executive Committee for approval before the school year begins.
5. Submit a copy of the Audit Report to the state office, by the last business day in September.
6. Operate within and maintain an approved working budget. It should be presented and approved at the first General Assembly meeting of the school year, no later than September 30.
7. Submit all State and National portion of membership dues to the state office on a monthly basis, and Council membership dues and fees.
8. Send at least one representative to attend all Council meetings *and* District Fall and Spring Conferences, and submit a report to the board of directors.
9. Membership: Set a goal to increase last year's membership for the current year. A realistic goal is Target membership *or* 2% increase (last year's final membership number plus 2%).
10. Officers and Chairs attend the annual Georgia PTA Convention Leadership Training.
11. Officers and Chairs attend at least two of the following State or National events: National PTA Convention; PTA Day at the Capitol; Georgia PTA Advocacy Conference; PTA University; District or Council PTA School of Information, Priority Fair or other training workshops; a Report Writing workshop.
12. Attend at least one (1) local School Board of Education meeting, and submit a report to the board of directors.
13. Insurance: Georgia PTA strongly recommends that each local unit purchase an insurance policy, by September 30.
14. **ACHIEVE THE MODEL PTA STATUS:** Submit The Model PTA Award Cover Sheet and a completed copy of The Model PTA Living Document to the state office, postmarked by the second Friday in March.

THE MODEL PTA

OPERATIONAL CRITERIA FOR THE LOCAL UNIT PTA

1. The Local Unit PTA Board of Directors appoints a Parent Involvement (PI)/Family Engagement (FE) Chair, and the contact information is sent to the Georgia PTA state office by August 30.
2. The PI Chair attends Parent Involvement training offered by Georgia PTA; District or Council Schools of Information, Priority Fairs, or workshops.
 - ☐ Maintain a Parent Involvement Handbook.
3. Understands the National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships.
4. Implement ways to obtain feedback from parents and community on current parent involvement practices and programs.
 - ☐ Invite all families and community members to fill out the Power of Partnerships Family Survey.
 - o Available in English and Spanish (posted on National and Georgia PTA websites)
 - ☐ Middle and High School – invite students to fill out a student survey.
 - ☐ Host a series of ‘Coffee and Chat with the Principal’ sessions.
 - ☐ Host a forum or summit to discuss parent involvement opportunities and challenges.
 - ☐ Develop your own creative way to access parent, teacher and community feedback.
5. Results of parent and community input are processed.
 - ☐ Calculate the results right away; present a report to the Local Unit Board of Directors.
 - ☐ Identify student, family, and school needs based on the School Report Card, the School Improvement Plan and conversations with the Principal as key measurable goals for the year.
6. Discuss and develop a written Parent Involvement Policy at school*. Does the school have a Parent Involvement policy?
 - ☐ Yes - Ask to see a copy of it!
 - o Ask the Principal if it can be printed in the newsletter for parents to see.
 - o When will the policy be reviewed? Ask the Principal about parent input.
 - o What parent programs are planned for the school year as a result of the policy?
 - ☐ No – Ask if a policy can be written!
 - o Ask the Principal if a parent/school committee could be formed to write a policy.
 - o Share the parent and community input results with the Principal; determine with him/her target areas of need to assist in the development of a written parent involvement policy.
7. Discuss and develop a written Parent Involvement Plan of Work, based on results of the parent and community input, and Parent Involvement policy (if the school has one).
 - ☐ Identify academic, social, economic needs of students and families
 - ☐ Determine goals and outcomes to be accomplished for the school year
 - ☐ Plan/organize programs to be implemented during the school year.
 - o Programs and events can be connected to current issues and affairs, students’ interests, family cultures, curriculum – academic standards!
 - o Identify programs that can be implemented during After School, Before School, or Summer School
 - o Focus on one topic or concern and select a theme; all programs, projects, events centered on awareness and solutions throughout the school year

8. Evaluate!
 - ☐ The process for receiving parent and community input
 - ☐ Programs and events - successes and failures
 - Make recommendations for the upcoming school year.
 - Was there an increase in number of volunteers assisting children in school and at home?
 - Was there an increase in students' achievement as a result of programs and events?
 - ☐ The Parent Involvement Chair
 - How did he/she do?
 - Was there a connection to parents?
 - Do parents feel welcome in the school as a result of practices, programs and events?
 - ☐ Were the National PTA Standards for Family/School Partnerships implemented in all local unit programs, projects, and events?
 - ☐ Did the Chair and or committee members understand how to interpret the School Report Card or the School Improvement Plan?
 - ☐ Did membership increase?
9. Celebrate the work and identify specific ways to thank Parents, Volunteers, Teachers, Staff and Community for all their work this year.
 - ☐ Thank you cards
 - ☐ Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast, Lunch, Brunch
 - ☐ Articles and photographs on the website and in PTA/PTSA newsletter
 - ☐ More...

THE MODEL PTA

OPTIONAL REPORT

The role of the Parent Involvement/Family Engagement Committee is to work with the board and the school administrators through this process of The Model PTA. For those looking for additional recognition and a way to share outstanding ideas that focuses on Family- School Partnerships should complete the local unit PTA application for the Georgia PTA Hearst Family-School Partnership Awards!

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TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

1. Achieve The Model PTA status and receive recognition at the annual Convention Leadership Training Conference.
2. Basic assumptions about families, students and schools:
 - All parents – regardless of their socio economic status and educational background – want what is best for their children.
 - All teachers, administrators and principals want to provide the best instruction they can for all their students – without a thought to addressing behavioral, social or liability issues.
 - Parents feel connected to their child’s educational journey – from kindergarten to college, when they understand what happens in the classroom, each grade level, year after year.
 - Education is an internal journey – most of what we need can be accomplished by networking.
 - The real challenge is finding a unifying purpose/goal and outcome.
3. Local Unit PTAs
 - Discuss this program with board members, and agree together to build an effective parent involvement system in your school with The Model PTA.
 - Date and initial each guideline when accomplished in the Living Document.
 - Mail out The Model PTA Award Cover Sheet and a copy of the completed Living Document form to the Georgia PTA state office postmarked by the second Friday in March.
 - Keep a completed copy of the document on file, as part of the recorded history of the PTA
4. All Council PTA leaders:
 - Attend a workshop on The Model PTA program, and become familiar with this process.
 - Provide workshops and trainings at Schools of Information and Priority Fairs
 - Assist Local Unit PTAs to accomplish the Administrative and Operational Guidelines.
 - Maintain a record of progress of participating local unit PTAs.
 - Appoint council officers to specific areas of The Model PTA, and make local unit PTAs aware of assignments.
5. Georgia PTA:
 - Invites all local unit PTAs to participate in The Model PTA process and in the Parent Involvement Certification and Assessment.
 - Offers workshops at the annual Convention Leadership Training as part of the Reports Writing Workshop, PTA Universities, District or Council workshops.
 - Has developed a system of tracking local unit PTAs participation and achieving status of this program, and will keep Council and District PTA leaders apprised of same.
 - Provides assistance where needed.