

# The ABCs of



## **Officers' Training** School of Information

**May 10, 2016**

**East Cobb County Council**



# The ABCs of **PTA**<sup>®</sup>

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## **What is PTA – Parent Teacher Association?**

Established in 1897, PTA is the oldest and largest volunteer child advocacy organization in the United States. Since its founding, the National PTA and its state branches, districts, councils and local units have played an integral role in establishing, maintaining and safeguarding programs and policies that promote the health, safety, nutrition, welfare, protection and education of children and youth.

The National PTA and all of its constituent PTAs exist to achieve the purposes of the PTA and fulfill the PTA Mission.

**The National PTA Purposes and Mission  
are your guides for all decisions you make for your local unit PTA!**

## **The Purposes of the PTA are:**

- To **promote the welfare of children** and youth in home, school, community, and place of worship;
- To **raise the standards** of home life;
- To **secure adequate laws** for the care and protection of children and youth;
- To bring into closer relation the **home and the school**, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth; and
- To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the **highest advantages** in physical, mental, social & spiritual **education**.

## **The Mission is threefold:**

- To **support** and **speak** on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children;
- To **assist parents** in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children; and
- To **encourage parent and public involvement** in the public schools of the nation.

# PTA is the largest and oldest child advocacy association in the United States!

## What is an advocate?

An advocate is someone who speaks for another. In the case of PTA-- ***we speak for children.***

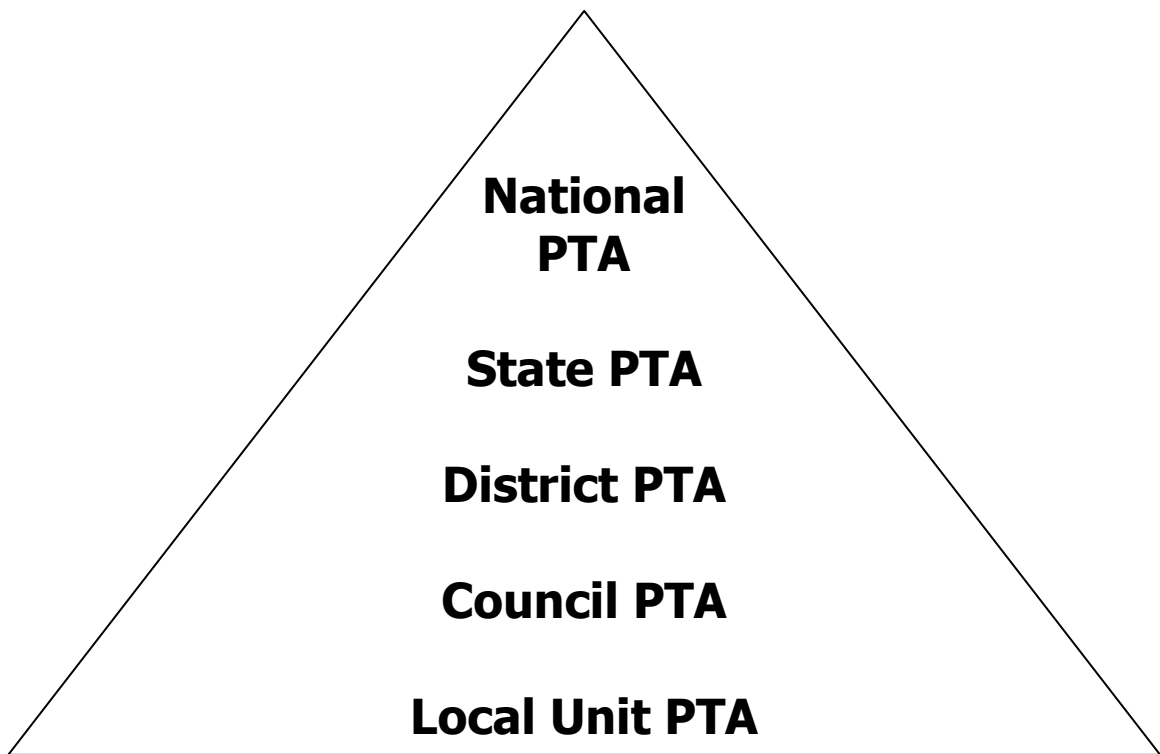
The reason our organization exists is to follow the PTA Mission and Purposes.

These direct us to always look after the health, education, safety and well being of children. Congratulations on answering the call to become a leader and advocate for the children of your local unit.

## The levels of

**PTA<sup>®</sup>**

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**The Local Unit PTA is the foundation of the entire organization!**

### **Websites:**

National PTA – [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)

Georgia PTA – [www.georgiapta.org](http://www.georgiapta.org)

East Cobb County Council PTA – [www.ecccpta.org](http://www.ecccpta.org)

# The Levels of PTA

## National PTA

At the National level of PTA, policy is set, guidelines reviewed, legislative priorities put in place and the general direction and theme for all PTAs developed. **Alice McLellan Birney**, from Marietta, Georgia, **Phoebe Apperson Hearst** and **Selena Sloan Butler** are held in the highest esteem as the founders of the modern day organization known as PTA.

## Our Founders' Vision

These women knew there is no stronger bond than that between mother and child. To the mothers, then they reasoned, must fall the responsibility for eliminating the threats that endangered their children. They called for action and more than 2,000 people responded--mothers, yes, but also fathers, teachers, laborers, and legislators, all with a commitment to children.

Mrs. Birney addressed the crowd, "It is my privilege to extend to each and all of you a heartfelt welcome, and to express the hope that this large and gratifying audience, this more than encouraging response to our universal call, may prove an earnest of the success destined to crown the work which our best and highest efforts are now consecrated."

From that first meeting of the National Congress of Mothers grew a groundswell of support. Problems were identified and strategies devised to resolve them. Through consistent hard work, sometimes after decades of perseverance, the dreams became reality: child labor laws, a public health service, hot lunch programs, a juvenile justice system, and mandatory immunization were accepted as national norms.

Mrs. Birney had appealed "to all mankind and to all womankind, regardless of race, color, or condition, to recognize that the republic's greatest work is to save the children." But in many states segregated schools were legally sanctioned. To address those students' special needs, Selena Sloan Butler founded the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers in 1926. The two PTAs formally merged in 1970.

Today, PTA continues to flourish because leaders have never lost sight of its goal: to change the lives of children across our great nation for the better. Though much has been accomplished, many of our children still lack the quality education and basic healthcare they deserve, and our current society presents numerous risks to their well-being. PTA continues to strive on their behalf to raise educational standards, ensure adequate medical care, and effect necessary legislation to secure for our nation's children a safe and abundant future

## State PTA:

Each local unit PTA in Georgia receives its charter from Georgia PTA and, therefore, is organized under its authority. Each PTA is governed by Bylaws which define its purpose, leadership, and procedures and is also subject to policies and procedures outlined in the Georgia PTA Leadership Resource Guide. This guide is the "user's manual" for PTA leadership and is a crucial resource for every officer.

The Georgia PTA:

- Sets the tone and direction for PTA activities in the state
- Conducts trainings and workshops
- Determines state priority committees
- Develops and coordinates a statewide membership drive
- Coordinates the National PTA Reflections program
- Develops legislative priorities for the year
- Provides direction and definitive answers to districts, councils, and local units
- Develops state PTA Leadership Resource Guide (LRG)
  - Defines duties of officers and chairs
  - Includes forms for membership, money transmittal, priority reports, etc.
- Trains local units upon request. Simply fill out the **field service request form!**

### Georgia PTA Training Events\*

Your PTA will be stronger and more successful if you are an active participant in trainings and other events provided by the various extensions of Georgia PTA.

**CLT: Convention and Leadership Training (CLT)** / June 23-25

The Classic Center, Athens, Georgia

Registration on line at [www.georgiapta.org](http://www.georgiapta.org)

**PTA Advocacy Conference** / September 2016-Atlanta

**PTA Day at the Capital** / February 2017- Atlanta

**Workshops and Universities** pertinent to priority areas

### District PTA:

#### You are a member of the 9th District PTA

- A district is a group of PTAs within a certain boundary of counties.  
Georgia's 9th District PTA consists of PTAs in the following:  
**Carroll, Cobb, Douglas, Haralson, Paulding, Polk Counties & City of Marietta**
- Liaison between state and all other levels of PTAs
- Conducts Conferences\*:
  - Fall Conference (tentative – October 2016)
  - Spring Conference (tentative – March 2016)

**Local unit PTA/PTSA's and Councils should send representatives to both conferences.**

- The District Director is available to provide training, assist in the development of new PTAs and answer any and all questions from council and local units.

# Council PTA:

## You are a member of the East Cobb County Council of PTAs

Cobb County has five Councils including the **East Cobb County Council**, Jessye Coleman Council, South Cobb Council, Tom Mathis, Sr. Council, & City of Marietta Council.

A PTA council is a group of local PTA units organized under the authority of the Georgia PTA to conduct conferences, provide leadership training, and coordinate the efforts of the local units. The Council is the direct line of support and resource to the local units within its geographic boundaries.

Councils serve to:

- Promote the Purposes and Missions of the National PTA and the Georgia PTA
- Unify and strengthen local PTA units
- Promote communication and coordination between local PTA units
- Develop leadership
- Promote local membership

The Council PTA Board of Directors mirrors the Georgia PTA, District 9 PTA, and local unit PTAs in their organization by being made up of executive officers and Priority committee chairs.

The Council PTA's responsibilities are to:

- Instruct, inform, inspire, and interpret for local units
  - Liaise between state and local unit
  - Serve as first contact for information and questions from the local unit
  - Operate within Council Bylaws
  - Develop and conduct meetings and programs throughout the year:
    - **Three general meetings** (specific to bylaws)
      - Officers' & Priority Committee Training – August/September 2016\*
      - Teacher of the Year & Principal Brunch – February, 2017\*
      - Awards & Recognition Meeting – April, 2017\*
    - **Officer and priority chair training workshops:**
      - President's Night – August, 2016\*
      - Officers' & Priority Committee Training – August/September 2016\*
      - School of Information (Incoming Officers & Membership Chairs) – May, 2017\*
    - **Special programs** designed to further the PTA Mission and Purposes (e.g.):
      - Consequences of Crime –throughout the school year
      - Honoring our Heroes – TBD\*
      - Margie Hatfield Scholarship – Deadline February, 2017, Awarded April, 2017\*
      - Sister Schools – throughout the school year
- \*To Be Determined

## Council Delegates:

- Each local unit has four voting delegates (specific to council bylaws). These delegates are usually the PTA president(s), *school principal*, and one or two others depending on whether the local unit has one president or two co-presidents. You need to inform ECCC PTA who your delegates are using the Delegate Form as soon as possible.
- The duties of the delegates are to attend council meetings, vote on behalf of their local unit, and share the information learned at meetings and workshops with their local unit.

## Cluster Area Representatives:

Cluster Area Representatives are an additional resource for the local unit. Our 35 schools are divided into five area clusters with an assigned Representative. Cluster Areas are based on which high schools MOST of your students attend. (Many schools feed into multiple middle and high schools. It is okay for you to attend additional area meetings as long as you cover your assigned cluster first.) Cluster Area Representatives are liaisons between local units and council. They serve as conduits of information and perform duties assigned by the Council PTA Board.

## Local Unit PTA The Foundation of PTA

The PTA at the local level is a self-governing unit linked to the Georgia PTA and the National PTA. Through this linkage, the local unit is part of a nationwide network of adults working for all children and youth. Local units provide parents, teachers, and community members the opportunity to unite to improve children's lives by addressing health, education, and social concerns. PTA successes result from the commitment and efforts of its more than 26,000 local units. Through its own plans, programs, and activities, the local PTA strives to meet the needs of children and youth in its own community.

- Primary goal is to follow the PTA Mission and Purposes. Every program or activity should support one of the six National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

[http://www.pta.org/national\\_standards.asp](http://www.pta.org/national_standards.asp)

- Advocacy organization first! Money raised by the organization should be enough only to cover costs of priority committee programs and the operation of the local unit

- Money raised by the local unit PTA belongs to the local unit and its disbursement is set by a budget adopted by the general membership at the start of the year.

- MUST operate in accordance with **Local Unit Bylaws** - this is your first resource in all things PTA! **Every member of your Board of Directors should have a copy of your current bylaws.** This includes each officer, the Principal, the Parliamentarian and the chairperson of each standing committee. Copies of the bylaws should be provided at the very first meeting of the new year. Upon request, copies should be made available to all members.

## Consult your bylaws to find the following information:

<u>Officers permitted</u>	<u>Name of Newly Elected Officers for 2016-2017</u>
President(s): _____	_____ _____
Vice President(s): _____	_____ _____
Secretary(s): _____	_____ _____
Treasurer: _____	_____
Month Officer Elections must take place: _____	
Number of Members of the Nominating Committee: _____	
When is the Nominating Committee elected? _____	

## Then, consult your bylaws for this information:

Quorum required for a meeting of the Executive Committee: _____
Quorum required for a meeting of the Board of Directors: _____
Quorum required for a meeting of the general membership: _____

## The PTA Executive Committee

The **Executive Committee** consists of the elected officers, the Parliamentarian and the principal of the school (or a representative appointed by the principal to represent him or her if they cannot attend). The Parliamentarian is appointed by the president and does not have a vote.

The duties of the Executive Committee are to:

- Appoint chairpersons of the committees. Read those into the minutes.
- Approve the **Plans of Work** of committees



- Schedule board and association (General) meetings (Follow the CCSD PTA/Evening Meeting Weeks Calendar) <http://www.cobbk12.org/generalinfo/calendars/>
- Approve routine bills within the limits of the budget
- Conduct the general business of the PTA
- Develop goals of the association for approval by the Board of Directors and the General Membership
- Report Executive Committee action items to the Board at each Board meeting

### **President(s)**

The President is a key role in PTA leadership. They provide leadership, direction, and guidance by fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment where parent involvement is encouraged and respected. They also collaborate with the school and business community on events and programs, attend all training opportunities to grow in the position and stay informed, and facilitate a collective vision and purpose

### **Vice President(s)**

The vice president may be called upon at any time to assume temporarily the place of the president; therefore, he or she should study the president's duties and responsibilities and be familiar with the work of the association. In the event of the president's resignation, the vice president assumes all duties until the president's position is filled in accordance with the bylaws.

### **Secretary**

The secretary is responsible for keeping an accurate record of the proceedings of association meetings. These records are the history of the PTA. Promptness, accuracy, and knowledge of PTA policies are key to this job. The secretary should be committed to helping the president conduct a businesslike meeting.

### **Treasurer**

The incoming treasurer should discuss with the former treasurer the status of current fundraising activities, what money is available to be spent versus what is owed, and the bylaws as they relate to the treasurer's responsibilities.

### **Parliamentarian**

Presidents can and should appoint a parliamentarian. A parliamentarian is not elected but is an important member of the executive committee, as this person works to ensure that the President (or presiding chair) follows proper Parliamentary Procedure according to *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised\**. The Parliamentarian also helps to make certain the organization is compliant with its bylaws and the policies & procedures of Georgia PTA as outlined in the Leadership Handbook and other guides. Although the Parliamentarian is a member of the Executive Committee, the parliamentarian does not speak to issues unless permitted by the President and may only vote when there is a ballot vote.

## Principal

In addition to the elected officers and Parliamentarian, the school Principal or their representative is also a member of the Executive Committee, as stated in your bylaws. The Principal is an important member and makes a valuable contribution to the PTA leadership. He or she is familiar with the students and not only understands their educational needs, but very likely understands their social and emotional needs, as well.

The principal also has a wealth of knowledge about what PTA programs have and have not been successful in the past and why. Having your principal on your team is a tremendous asset.

As the head of the school, the Principal is responsible for each student's education and safety, and should therefore be consulted on all programs, events and activities to ensure that there is no school district policy prohibiting the activity, potential to disrupt the academic criteria, or put children at risk. The Principal should also review and approve information being distributed to the school or local community including newsletters and flyers. See the Georgia PTA publication: Principals and PTA Guide at [http://www.georgiapta.org/documents/Principals\\_and\\_PTA\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.georgiapta.org/documents/Principals_and_PTA_Guide.pdf)

## Executive Committee Meetings

Local Unit bylaws require the Executive Committee to schedule all Executive Committee meetings for the year at the first meeting. The number of meetings will be determined by the needs of the organization and its leadership but it is recommended that the Executive Committee meet at least once a month.

All Executive Committee meetings are *closed* meetings as defined by local unit bylaws and Parliamentary procedure. This means that only members of that body may attend such meetings and participate in the discussion and decisions made inasmuch as their position allows. Guests may be invited at the discretion of the President for a specific purpose, such as to present a proposed program/activity or to provide information, however, they should only be in attendance for the portion of the meeting that includes their presentation and then they must leave. All deliberations that take place in an Executive Committee meeting are confidential and should **never** be discussed with anyone who is not a member of that body.

Minutes are recorded for all Executive Committee meetings, however, these minutes may only be read by and distributed to members of that committee. Actions of the committee are reported at Board of Directors and general meetings, but minutes are not presented or read.

## The PTA Board of Directors

The **Board of Directors** consists of the officers (elected-the Executive Committee), the Standing Committee Chairs (appointed) and the principal or a representative appointed by the principal to represent him or her. Once the Executive Committee has defined goals and identified programs, committees are needed to plan and promote the activities of the local unit throughout the year.

**Standing Committees** or "Priority Committees": These are generally the committees that reflect the vision and mission of the PTA. Standing Committee Chairs help to constitute a quorum.

**Program Committees** or “Special Committees”: These committees usually are responsible for one or two programs during the school year. Don’t help to constitute a quorum.

The duties of the Board of Directors are to:

- Transact necessary business as dictated by the members
- Create or dissolve standing or special committees
- Prepare Plans of Work for each committee
- Attend and Report at Board of Directors meetings
- Report to the membership at the General meetings
- Select an auditor or an auditing committee to audit the treasurer’s accounts
- Review and submit a fiscal year budget to the membership for adoption
- Approve routine bills within the limits of the budget
- Fill all vacancies of positions on the Executive Committee
- Conduct hearings for the removal from office

Please go to <http://www.georgiapta.org/leadership-resources.html> (have your pta card ready for password information) for the Leadership Resource specific to job duties for all offices (section 3



## Local Unit PTA Structure



The members of the **Executive Committee** consist of:

- Officers- President(s), VP(s), Secretary(s), Treasurer
- Principal or his/her designee

The members of the **Board of Directors** consist of:

- Officers- President(s), VP(s), Secretary(s), Treasurer
- Principal or his/her designee
- Parliamentarian
- Standing Committee Chairs (examples follow)
  - Arts In Education
  - Reflections
  - Character Education
  - Communications - Publications / Media /PR
  - Community Outreach
  - Dad’s Initiative
  - Diversity
  - Education
  - Environmental Education
  - Family Engagement
  - Health & Wellness
  - Hospitality
  - Legislation & Advocacy
  - Membership
  - Special Services
  - Youth Services
  - Youth/Student Involvement

**Underlined committees are the Priority Committees encouraged by Georgia PTA.**  
**Special Committees may fall under these priority committees @ your PTA/PTSA – since their work exists for a limited time during the school year.**

**Standing Committees** are committees that will remain in place throughout the entire year. Chairpersons of standing committees are members of your Board of Directors and, as such, factor into the number of members that are required to meet your quorum. Examples: Communications, Community Outreach, Diversity, Environmental, Family Engagement, Health/Wellness, Legislation, Membership, Reflections, Special Services, Youth Services, Dad's Initiative, Room Parent Representatives, Volunteer Coordinator...

**Special Committees** conduct specific business or activities and then dissolve when the business is complete. These committees are still appointed a chairperson and are required to submit a Plan of Work, but the chair does not have a vote or factor into determining your quorum. . Fall Festival, Bingo, Spring Fling, Grade Specific Committees i.e. 7<sup>th</sup> grade dance committee... These committees do not have a vote on your board of directors and they do not help to establish a quorum.

**Priority committees** may be defined as one committee or their responsibilities may be broken up into several committees to better facilitate the work. (Family Engagement- Dad's Initiative, Reading Nights)

A committee begins with a Plan of Work for the year that includes goals, action steps, timelines, and an evaluation for each activity. Once the committee chair prepares a Plan of Work, it must be approved by the executive committee before the committee can take any action. The Plan of Work will also be used by the Budget Committee as they work to prepare a sound, balanced budget.

The association (**general membership**) consists of:

- All PTA members

The association does the following:

- ✓ Approves the budget and budget amendments
- ✓ Approves amendments to the bylaws
- ✓ Elects the Nominating Committee
- ✓ Elects the officers
- ✓ Adopts positions (i.e. Resolutions)
- ✓ Approves business of the association

In each of the above meetings, the following applies:

- ❖ Each member has only one vote
- ❖ There is **no** proxy voting (designating someone else to vote for you)
- ❖ There is **no** absentee voting – **no** email or phone call votes
- ❖ There is **no** voting or meetings conducted via closed circuit throughout the school
- ❖ Only the body who creates the minutes are entitled to the minutes of that meeting

(e.g. only members of the Executive Committee are entitled to the minutes of the Executive Committee meetings, etc.)

## What are some of PTAs shining achievements?

**1920s** With legislative reforms beginning to take shape in response to PTA initiatives, we launched our own comprehensive education and training programs for members. Parenting skills were a particular concern and the focus of many local and national conferences. We found partners to broaden the scope of our efforts. In 1925, the PTA cooperated with the US Bureau of Education in a Summer Roundup of children to help parents identify and correct children's health problems before they started the 1st grade.

**1930s** As conditions changed, so did PTA's programs. The age of the automobile brought new concerns about child safety. The National PTA responded with a safety education program for school children that continues today as we support the Safety Belt and Child Restraint Project and reach out to children through our School Buys Safety Program, which includes tip sheets for parents and teachers, educational posters, and television public service announcements.

**1940s** A world shattered by war in the 1940s sought a new and better way to resolve conflicts before they erupted into violence and destruction. The National PTA was among the very first organizations to support the fledgling United Nations and the hope it represented for all children around the globe.

**1950s** One of the most high profile projects in PTA history was our participation in the field testing of the Salk polio vaccine in the '50s, and securing the polio vaccination for all school children. It was during this time that the PTA began to recognize America's affinity for prescription and over-the-counter medications, and called for a national conference to address narcotics and drug addiction in youth.

**1960s** Smoking and drug abuse became increasingly common in American culture. During the '60s we called for schools to focus on the risks involved with abuse and created public messages to educate parents and the general public about the dangers of addiction.

**1970s** Violence on television spurred the PTA to action in the '70s as we sought to measure the effects of such programming on our children. Today we offer critical viewing skills workshops around the country to help parents evaluate what they and their children are watching.

**1980s** The alarming rise in sexually transmitted diseases and the advent of AIDS found the PTA once more at the forefront of a difficult issue. We advocate that comprehensive information about the diseases be made available at school and at home to help check the epidemic. And we've designed programs and resources to help parents talk frankly with their children about these issues.

**1990s** Combining thirty years of research, National PTA developed the National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement. These six guidelines are based on the premise that involved parents increase student achievement. These standards evolved further in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to **Welcoming All Families, Communicating Effectively, Supporting Student Success, Speaking Up for Every Child, Sharing Power and Collaborating with Community.**

In recent years, Georgia PTA has been instrumental in securing a graduated driver's license program, increasing the tobacco tax, promoting parental involvement in the schools through local school councils, establishing keg registration procedures aimed at reducing underage drinking, passing *Amendment 2* to allow Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) for school construction funding, and preserving funding for health care providers in schools. In addition, Georgia PTA annually adopts a legislative platform to guide the advocacy work of the association.

# National Standards for Family - School Partnerships

For more than 100 years, National PTA has set the standard for parent and family involvement programs in school communities, addressing the needs of students and their families. In 1997, National PTA introduced the National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement, which became the blueprint for meaningful and effective PTA programs.

Working with leading experts on parent involvement and school-community partnerships, PTA has updated its National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs to reflect recent research and improve parent and community involvement practices. The updated National Standards shift the focus from what schools should do to involve parents to what parents, schools, and communities can do together to support student success. To reflect this change, the standards have been renamed the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships. All PTA programs and efforts should demonstrate a determined focus to incorporate each of these standards.

**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.

