



Given the impact of COVID-19, student participation in the arts, particularly in arts programs like [Reflections](#), is now more important than ever to help them process their thoughts and feelings. As many school communities will be learning remotely, National PTA supports and encourages our PTAs to run their Reflections programs virtually.

Try these tips, from PTAs across the country, on how to host a Reflections program online.

### **Program Promotion**

Without a physical school building, you will have to get creative to promote Reflections! Try some of these ideas to get the word out:

- Create TikTok video promos or host a Zoom art night and invite secondary level students to lead draw-alongs for younger students. Have fun and create a “challenge” between classes or grades for the most entries entered!
- Reach out to school and PTA leaders to learn the best methods for communicating with your school community. Be flexible, innovative, and persistent—if something does not work, don’t give up!
- Create email campaigns to make a call for submissions and communicate key program dates and deadlines through social media. Do not be hesitant to repeat information on multiple platforms. The more references people have, the more likely they are to connect with the program.
- Connect with your school’s teachers and ask them to include [informational flyers](#) in their beginning-of-the-year materials for students.
- Place signage on popular drive-by locations. Does your school have a fence? Consider decorating with [theme-specific signs](#) from [Shop PTA](#). You can also use dollar store yard signs and DIY your own Reflections signage!
- Consider tailoring your messaging to today’s world by highlighting the importance of the arts for students’ social-emotional needs.
- Promote the program during virtual meetings. Use technology platforms your school community is already using to insert Reflections announcements, promotions and deadlines. Consider sharing links to materials and websites in the chat function.
- Some parents have decided to home-school their students this year due to COVID-19, so don’t miss out on communicating with them. Visit the [Texas PTA website](#) to find information on how Home-School Families and students attending Non-PTA Schools can participate in Reflections.

### **Collecting Student Information and Entries**

Local and Council PTA levels are welcome to collect entries digitally and then only send Texas PTA physical entries. Texas PTA would still like to receive the physical entry, but that way you only worry about the advancing entries – 30 or less.

- Utilize our fillable [Student Entry Form \(en español\)](#). Both Texas and National PTA will accept typed signatures on the student entry forms.
- Consider using Google Forms to collect student information and have students upload pieces to [Google Drive](#). Many PTAs are choosing this method for the collection of pieces and find the platform user-friendly and robust, with plenty of storage. Create different folders for the arts categories and Special Artist division and label files consistently to stay organized.
  - [How to set up a Google Form](#)
  - [How to add file upload question on Google Form](#)
  - You will likely not need to increase the storage capacity of Google Drive, but if you do, the options are affordable and found [here](#).
- If Google Drive isn't a good fit, try another online storage platform that you and your community are proficient in, such as:
  - [Dropbox](#)
  - [OneDrive](#)
  - [Box](#)
  - [Amazon Cloud Drive](#)
- Share your name, email address and phone number with your Reflections participants to assist with the technology needs that may arise. Be flexible in allowing entries to come via email or flash drives for anyone having trouble with the technology.
- Offer a socially distanced art drop-off option if you do not wish to collect pieces virtually or choose a hybrid model. Use [CDC guidelines](#) to ensure the health and safety of your community.
  - Set up a mailbox or central location for drop off (e.g., the school, PTA leader home, central library or other public location).
  - Host a socially distanced and touch-free drop-off event. Provide a large window of time when artwork can be dropped off.
  - Encourage students to save and submit artwork onto jump drives in order to avoid storing larger physical pieces.
  - Provide clearly labeled and multiple bins for the artwork to ensure that the works can be dropped off with no-touch ease. Let the artwork sit for several days before handling.

## Reviewing Student Entries

Once collected, the online review process will also require some creative thinking due to the important step of anonymizing the student submissions and providing judges with “blinded” pieces for review.

- If you used Google Forms or Google Drive for collection, consider creating an anonymized Google Sheet that includes the student's Title of Work, Artist Statement and a link to Google Drive storage place.
  - [How to use Google Sheets](#)
- Host a virtual judging event via Go to Webinar or Zoom, where your reviewers can learn more about the program and are trained to judge remotely. You could even try live judging with

breakout rooms to provide judges with a private “space” to review the pieces in their respective categories.

- Utilize [Texas PTA’s Digital Scorecard](#) that is customizable to include entry information but removes the student’s personal information to ensure blind virtual judging. By using a fillable Student Entry Form, you can easily cut and paste this information. Give student entries a number or code to easily keep track of blinded forms.
- If you choose to collect physical pieces, host a socially distanced review event with your judges at school or in a public location. Use [CDC guidelines](#) to ensure the health and safety of your community. Display works at a distance to ensure no-touch judging. Provide a large window of time when artwork can be reviewed.

## **Celebrating**

A remote program opens new opportunities to celebrate your amazing artists, and celebration events (even virtual ones!) give communities something fun to look forward to during these difficult times.

- Plan, promote and communicate with your school community about your celebration events early and often to get everyone excited.
- Create and post celebratory videos and online exhibits on social media. Consider creating a PowerPoint presentation of the artwork. Check out National PTA’s virtual exhibit [here](#).
- Host a live, virtual event to announce and award your winners and/or to celebrate your young artists. Try Facebook Live or YouTube.
- Order or create certificates and awards as a keepsake. Consider sending medallions instead of trophies to curb the celebration budget. Use [Shop PTA](#) to buy and ship awards directly to winning students and participants.
- Host a socially distanced award pick-up day or a walk-through ceremony where the family can watch their student receive their award without sitting in an audience. In communications, clearly outline safe pick-up instructions to ensure health and avoid confusion. Read how [Texas PTA held their walk-through ceremony](#) in early August!
- Ask students to send you photos and create a video compiling footage from winners holding or opening their awards, reading their artist statement or reflecting on their creative process. Check out how National PTA incorporated student interviews in our celebration video [here](#).