

INTRODUCTION

Texas PTA is the oldest and largest children’s advocacy organization in the state. Nearly 600,000 members volunteer in their schools and communities to make life safer, education richer and experiences more meaningful for all children.

Planning and promoting PTA programs and events is a primary responsibility in PTA as all of our programs and events are tied to our work as child advocates and supporters of public education. PTA programs serve as a tool to educate the membership and to draw the members into a community of support for the children and families served by PTA. Programs today are creative and meaningful. PTA leaders acknowledge the heavy demands of family schedules and plan programs that invite whole family participation. PTA is unique in that it offers a way for families of differing religions, cultures, economic groups and political interests to unite in support of one common issue – the health and welfare of children. No other organization exists to serve this function so completely.

PTA programs should keep the membership informed of issues, educate parents and provide a sense of community that unites neighbors far beyond involvement in their children’s school.

PARENT EDUCATION AS A PTA PRIORITY

Parents are a child’s first and most important teachers. The parents “role as a model” is a critical and essential ingredient in a child’s learning process. How prepared for this role are most parents? Unfortunately, knowledge of how to rear a family is not an inborn characteristic. All persons who become parents need in-service, on-the-job training. They need to continue to learn day-by-day about themselves and their children. Having skills to deal with problems, and knowledge to make correct decisions, allows parents to feel more comfortable in their roles.

PTA’S RESPONSIBILITY

From its beginning in 1897, PTA has had as a primary concern improving the welfare of children and youth. As such, parenting courses have been a cornerstone of PTA programs and projects. Ranging from discipline to nutrition and from communication skills to career planning, topics are unlimited. PTAs provide discussion groups, distribute materials and

cooperate with other organizations in sponsoring seminars and workshops. In planning for the PTA year, Local and Council PTAs are encouraged to place parent education at the top of their priority list.

As the budget is prepared, funds should be allotted for projects, programs, and materials. Besides regular PTA meetings, special times and topics should also be planned for parent education sessions.

SUGGESTED TOPICS OF INTEREST

These topics cover only a few broad areas that can be developed in a course of study under the parent education program.

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ABOUT PTA

VISION

Every child's potential is a reality.

MISSION

To make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

PURPOSES

- 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.
- 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 and spiritual education.

PTA VALUES

- **Collaboration:** We will work in partnership with a wide array of individuals and organizations to broaden and enhance our ability to serve and advocate for all children and families.
- **Commitment:** We are dedicated to children's educational success, health, and well-being through strong family and community engagement, while remaining accountable to the principles upon which our association was founded.
- **Diversity:** We acknowledge the potential of everyone without regard, including but not limited to: age, culture, economic status, educational background, ethnicity, gender, geographic location, legal status, marital status, mental ability, national origin, organizational position, parental status, physical ability, political philosophy, race, religion, sexual orientation, and work experience.
- **Respect:** We value the individual contributions of members, employees, volunteers, and partners as we work collaboratively to achieve our association's goals.
- **Accountability:** All members, employees, volunteers, and partners have a shared responsibility to align their efforts toward the achievement of our association's strategic initiatives.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

The positions on each Local PTA executive board vary from PTA to PTA. The position titles and duties relating to parent education and programs are sometimes separate and sometimes combined. The major difference between the two positions lies in the focus of the activities, while the duties are very similar.

PROGRAMS CHAIR

PURPOSE

PTA is known for its effective methods of getting diverse groups to work together. Our challenge is to maintain our position as mediator and coalition builder. This difficult task requires a balance of differing views of parents, children, legislators, taxpayers, teachers, administrators and the general public.

PTA-sponsored programs provide opportunities for education on issues, dialogue and consensus building. PTA gains strength through effective programs, promoting growth as an organization and as individuals.

GOALS

PTA programs create opportunities for interaction between teachers, administrators, parents, students, and community members. Programs are events planned to build community, provide information, celebrate student success and inspire action. The goals should include fellowship as well as fun.

PARENT EDUCATION CHAIR

PURPOSE

The need to value and support each child in his daily life and in his education is a responsibility for both parents and the community. PTA recognizes that the home is the major influence on the life of a child and the major source for development of character, values, attitudes and abilities. The home environment must provide the love, warmth and encouragement each child needs to develop his capabilities to the fullest. The importance of the family and of the home is clearly stated in the mission and purposes of PTA. Parent education programs and projects provide information on issues affecting children and youth and help parents

become more aware of the need to become actively involved in all areas of concern in the lives of children. PTA-sponsored study/discussion sessions offer parents the opportunity to become more knowledgeable and more capable in handling their responsibilities.

GOALS

The Local PTA Parent Education Chair works with others in the community to provide opportunities that empower parents. This chair should promote parent education study courses and strive to make members aware of the importance of, and need for, parent education.

DUTIES OF CHAIR

- **Preparation** - Prepare for the position by reviewing all materials from National and Texas PTA and attending training offered by National, Texas and Council PTAs. Study PTA bylaws and procedure book provided by the former chair.
- **Awareness** - Be aware of the problems concerning education today, such as changing neighborhood schools, politics in public education, finance, parenting with all of its implications, absenteeism and involvement. Study all aspects of these issues and provide guidance through informative, challenging programs.
- **Survey** - Survey the members to determine their needs and concerns, and set goals to present programs that meet these needs. Meet with the principal to receive input from the teachers and staff.
- **Teamwork** - Build a team creating a committee. Assign tasks so that everyone becomes involved. Work with all PTA chairs to implement programs that will permit a maximum number of members to participate. The Local PTA chair can be an effective liaison with community organizations that have similar goals. Seek opportunities to be represented in these organizations and to participate as a coalition member in community-wide presentations.
- **Planning** - Complete a Plan of Work community-wide and present for approval by the executive board. Anticipate expenses for inclusion in the proposed budget.
- **Coordination** - Coordinate the efforts of

committee members. Verify that plans are going according to schedule on arrangements and publicity.

- **Development** - Develop programs to help families learn to communicate and live together in a wholesome manner. Remember to plan, publicize, present, and evaluate each program thoroughly.
- **Opportunity** - Provide opportunities for persons of different races, colors, creeds and philosophies to study and develop skills that promote awareness, tolerance, acceptance, support and interaction.
- **Publicity** - Publicize through the Local PTA newsletter, website, marquees, posters, newspapers, radio and television, and personal contact. Many stations will work with you on creating public service announcements. Community businesses and neighborhood associations can be encouraged to promote the programs by advertising on signs and through in-house communications. The school district may be an additional resource in reaching parents of all students in the district.
- **Assistance** - Assist parents in developing and improving their parenting skills.
- **Advocacy** - Advocate action that will improve the community as a whole and benefit all children.
- **Documentation** - Document the position with a procedure book that includes printed resource materials, a Plan of Work, copies of reports, evaluations, and other helpful materials. (may be stored electronically)
- **Evaluation** - Evaluate efforts. Determine what was successful and what could be improved. Record recommendations for your successor.
- **Recognition and Sharing**- Apply for awards offered by Texas PTA in order to recognize the achievement of your Local PTA and to allow other Local PTAs to duplicate your success.
- **Resources** - Maintain a file on the programs, speakers, materials and other pertinent information in order to establish continuity. Pass these on to the succeeding programs chair.

PLAN OF WORK

At the beginning of each term all board members are required per the bylaws to complete and present a Plan of Work to the board for approval.

A Plan of Work is a detail list of all goals and expenses that a board member has for their term of office. Plans of Work must be approved before any expenses can be incurred for a position.



Plan of Work Plan de Trabajo

Officer/Chairman Name:
(Nombre de Oficial/Presidente de Junta) Nancy Newsletter

Position: Newsletter Editor **Year:** 20XX – 20XX
(Posición) (Año)

Reproduce as needed for the appropriate number of goals.
(Se puede reproducir para metas adicionales.)

Responsibilities/- Duties: (Responsabilidades)	Edit, compile and distribute PA newsletter. Provide PTA communications for PTA board.	Committee Members: (Miembros del Comité)	School secretary, principal, Kindergarten parent, 5 th Grade parent
Goal: (Meta)	Ensure newsletter is current, information is pertinent and timely.	Evaluation Process: (Proceso de Evaluación)	Check with board, membership and staff to ensure newsletter information is relevant and timely.

Specific Action Steps (Proceso Especifico de Acción)	Start Date (Fecha de Empezio)	Completion Date (Fecha de Terminación)	Budget (Presupuesto)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect monthly articles from board, teachers and staff. Include general PTA articles from Council/Texas/National PTA Compile and generate newsletter to distribute by the first of each month Generate newsletter for special events 	June 1	May 31	\$250 (copy charges for parents who request a hardcopy newsletter)
Act as communication liaison between our Local PTA and Council/Texas/National PTAs for gathering newsletter content	June 1	May 31	\$0

Resources: (Recursos)	Board members, school secretary, teachers, room parents ,principal and staff to provide content for newsletter.
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PROCEDURE BOOK

A procedure book serves as a permanent record of activities and ensures an ongoing PTA program of work. It should contain material and information needed for the job. A three-ring binder with tabbed dividers keeps your records organized.

SUGGESTED TABLE OF CONTENTS

DIRECTORY

Local PTA Fact Sheet

Your name, address, phone number and term of office

Rosters of National, Texas, Area, Council and Local

PTA boards

Names and phone numbers of resources used

JOB DESCRIPTION

Responsibilities of your job

Month by month "To Do" List

PLAN OF WORK

Copy of your approved Plan of Work

BUDGET

Local PTA budget

Treasurer's reports

Voucher forms

Tax exempt forms

In-depth breakdown of expenditures for your job
(can be put with your Plan of Work)

BYLAWS

A current copy of the Local PTA bylaws

EVENTS, PROJECTS, PROGRAMS

List on a separate page each event, project or program (include dates, responsibilities, expenses and evaluation)

REPORTS

A copy of all forms turned into the National, State, Area, Council or Local PTA.

Award forms

Annual report: A summary of year's activities that should not exceed one page (include your recommendations).

VOLUNTEER HOURS

Use a calendar to keep track of your hours and turn them into the Volunteer Chair.

PTA MATERIALS

Handouts and updates received from Texas, Council and Local PTAs

Agendas and minutes

NEWSLETTERS

PAST YEAR'S INFORMATION

Personalize your procedure book to best fit your needs. Ask yourself, "If I knew nothing about the job, could I do it with this procedure book?"

INFORMATION YOU SHOULD PASS TO THE NEXT CHAIR:

- Plan of Work and Budget
- Actual amount of money spent doing your job
- List of resources – don't forget the most important resource: YOU
- Copy of all reports
- Handouts – include the number of copies made, who they went to and supplies used
- Activity Summary – be specific and give details (who, what, when, where, how)
- Include sample notes, maps and diagrams used.
- Month by month "To Do" list
- Estimate the number of hours you spent on the job
- Recommendations

SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS

Many times, the PTA program is the first image that parents and educators have of PTA. A well-run program may be one of the most important public relations tools for promoting PTA.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM?

Each program should focus on one of the five I's of programming:

- Inform - to provide information
- Instruct - to teach how to do something
- Interest - to peak interest in further study
- Inspire - to motivate to gain further information or to act
- Involve - to bring the community together and to understand the need for action

All programs should also be entertaining and enjoyable.

DETERMINE A PROGRAM TOPIC

- Use a committee to review ideas.
- Involve the membership by asking their opinion.
- Send surveys and questionnaires to parents, staff, neighborhood and community during the school year.
- Read newspapers, watch television, and listen to what people are discussing.
- Determine what is needed.
- Identify what will be relevant to the people attending.

ARRANGE FOR —EFFECTIVE PUBLICITY

- Newsletters
- Websites
- Local media
- Press releases
- News articles
- Cooperation among other community groups to help pass the word
- Telephone chain/tree
- Board member support

EVALUATE THE PROGRAM OUTCOME

- Use an evaluation form to determine the following:
- Did the program do what it was supposed to do?
- Was it interesting?
- Was it relevant to the needs of the audience?
- How could the program be improved?

WAYS TO EVALUATE SUCCESS

- How the program was conducted – was it well-run, smooth and on time? (process)
- How did the audience feel, respond? (quality)

ROADBLOCKS TO SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS

- Weak or ineffective publicity
- Unexciting or poorly constructed title (does it pique the interest of a reader?)
- Poor timing (conflict with football games, academy awards, holiday time, etc.)
- Irrelevant content (why attend if it has no meaning?)
- Poor presentation (too long, poor speaker, too much delay, boring, etc.)

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO INEFFECTIVE PROGRAMS

- Use National and Texas PTA program materials, videos, and speakers.
- Use themes.
- Combine programs with other Local PTAs.
- Develop a network with other Local PTA chairs in your community for ideas, speakers, etc.
- Involve the membership in the planning.
- Use other community groups (Lions clubs, Rotary clubs, etc.) in planning, publicity and participation.
- Try special formats (father-son night, grandparents' night, etc.).
- Try something new and different. Be innovative.
- Survey to discover the best time for programs (day or evening).
- Offer babysitting, tutoring, or a special student workshop during programs.
- Choose a program chair.
- Appoint a program planning committee.
- Determine resources available for program planning: money, information, volunteers, speakers, or celebrities.
- Choose a program that represents the Mission and Purposes of the PTA.

PLANNING A PROGRAM

GETTING STARTED:

- Survey what is appropriate, interesting, and of value to your PTA members.
- Remember to be inclusive – that is, to consider everyone’s interests when planning.
- Make a timeline or list of all necessary tasks in the order that they should be undertaken and the deadline for which each task should be completed.
- Work closely with publicity committee to reach desired audience.
- Create a budget.
- Assemble all necessary resources.
- Monitor and revise the plan of action.
- Are committee members doing their jobs?
- Are deadlines being met?
- Are resources adequate to complete the program?

EVALUATE THE PROGRAM:

- Were the goals of the program met?
- Was it worth the time and money?
- Who benefited from the program?
- How did they benefit?
- What was the response from the audience?
- Should the program be repeated?

SHOW APPRECIATION:

- Remember to thank every donor and volunteer.

PROGRAM PLANNING TIMELINE

When planning a year of programming, consider the time needed to accomplish each task and plan accordingly.

ONE YEAR

- Review predecessor’s materials
- Write/Present Plan of Work for approval
- Develop a budget
- Survey membership

SIX MONTHS – ONE YEAR

- Check calendar(s) for conflicts
- Contact/Schedule speaker(s)
- Reserve meeting room(s)/equipment
- Contact associated board members for crossover

THREE MONTHS

- Obtain speaker biography/program overview
- Create advertisement
- Plan/Assign duties
- Develop media relationship

ONE MONTH

- Schedule volunteers
- Confirm speaker
- Send publicity to TV stations/cable
- Print publicity in PTA/school newsletter

TWO WEEKS

- Send press release to the newspaper
- Copy handouts/fliers/evaluation forms
- Confirm plans/needs with speaker

ONE WEEK

- Send home flier

TWO DAYS

- Send home reminder
- Remind volunteers

DAY OF PROGRAM

- Meet with speaker
- Check room arrangements for program (microphone, audiovisual, room setup, heating/cooling, etc.)

AFTER PROGRAM

- Evaluate response and results
- Submit article/photograph to newspaper/newsletter
- Send thank-you notes

TEXAS PTA - WEBSITE

www.txpta.org

LEARNING FORMAT

THE LECTURE-DISCUSSION

The main purposes of a lecture are:

- To stimulate interest in a certain field or about a certain problem, and
- To provide information on a subject.

A lecture should always be followed by a question-and-answer period. Encourage members to listen attentively and to participate in the question-and-answer session.

ROLE PLAYING

Group members act out a real life situation. They make up their parts as they go along without script or set dialog. There are two parts. The first is warming up, in which the problem is stated, characters described, the stage set and actors chosen. The second is the actual role-playing during which members act out their version of what the characters would say or do.

The action should only last three or four minutes. Discussion will follow easily.

THE PANEL

A group of three to five people informally present their points of view on a chosen topic. A moderator guides the discussion.

THE SYMPOSIUM

The symposium, like a panel, consists of several speakers. It differs from a panel in that these people give short, prepared talks on various phases of the same subject. A distinct advantage of the symposium is that it brings together several points of view. The question period should be twice as long as the talks.

SKITS AND PLAYS

Skits and plays are elaborated role-playing that make enjoyable introductions to group discussions. They can be presented effectively with a reasonable amount of script preparation. The dramatization presents the problem to the group. Exploration of ideas and audience learning takes place during the subsequent discussion. Because of their emotional impact, skits are an effective way to say important things.

TABLE TALK

Seat any number of participants around tables and assign questions or topics for discussion. Each group chooses its own leader and reporter.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

PTA supports the need for effectively involving parents and families in their child's education. Numerous research studies and years of experience in the educational field have demonstrated that involvement produces meaningful and lasting results. In 1997, PTA responded to the challenge of ensuring student achievement by issuing its own national standards for parent and family involvement. Using the most recent research and working with national experts, PTA updated the national standards in 2007.

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 expand learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE

School of Excellence is a recognition program established by National PTA in 2013 that supports and celebrates partnerships between PTAs and schools to enrich the educational experience and overall well-being for all students.

The path to excellence starts with a joint commitment of PTA and school leaders to work together to achieve PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships. Through the *School of Excellence* program, your PTA and school will gain new ways to engage families in school decision-making, such as improvements to programs, practices and policies related to education, health, safety or the arts.

PARENT EDUCATION

READY. SET. ACHIEVE! (RSA)

With our educational resources, Texas PTA is working to make parents, teachers and students aware of the potentially negative impact of bullying, unhealthy lifestyles or even modern challenges such as the Internet. Most importantly, we are raising awareness among families that positive adult-role models and supporting our children as parents and mentors can make a huge difference in the life of every child.

Ready. Set. Achieve!, Texas PTA's parent education initiative, is designed to provide relevant, meaningful resources to assist PTAs in reaching their goals through parent education. RSA programs are a significant benefit of having a PTA on your campus, as these programs are delivered at no charge to your PTA or your members. Texas PTA also provides access to promotional materials and translation equipment, upon request.

Texas PTA board and staff work together to continually update the program offerings and debut new *Ready. Set. Achieve!* programs each year at LAUNCH. Programs may be requested online via the Texas PTA website. Once requested, Texas PTA staff members will work with you to help ensure a successful program. Please note that you need the desired presentation date for completion of the online request.

The current *Ready. Set. Achieve!* programs offered by Texas PTA are as follows:

- CRASH
- Don't Stand By, Stand UP!
- Media Madness
- Dollars and \$ense
- Success Starts at Home

CRASH

CRASH is a comprehensive media campaign to help youth and parents throughout Texas understand the dangers associated with distracted driving and give them specific tools and suggestions for lessening the chance of a crash. This campaign utilizes a variety of media and video tools to reach educators, parents and, most importantly, teens to emphasize the message: make good choices when you drive because, if you don't, there can be serious consequences.

The project centers on a documentary about distracted driving issues and includes several shorter stories about various aspects of distracted driving. It also includes a series of informational promos for television and a viewer guide about the issue. The program was made possible through a grant from State Farm Insurance and produced by Christopher Productions, LLC.

Any PTA can request the *CRASH* program as part of Texas PTA's *Ready. Set. Achieve!* initiative.

SUGGESTED MONTHLY FOCUS

The ideas on the following pages are intended to be helpful hints and food for thought as you plan your year. You may wish to have a theme per month, 2-3 themes per year or an annual theme. The best PTA programs are created by people who are responding to the needs and interests of their own PTA members. This may be accomplished by using one of the sample surveys found in the appendix. Always check with your principal before sending anything home to all the parents

SUGGESTED SEPTEMBER FOCUS: HEALTH / MEMBERSHIP

- Combine back-to-school night with a health fair. Have tables in the hallways with displays on nutrition, exercise, good sleep patterns, immunization facts, etc.
- Hold a health fair with vision screening, hearing screening, blood pressure checks and other booths. Provide follow-up information as needed.
- Make back-to-school night an intergenerational affair. Assemble a display showing how school looked and functioned in earlier times, and include examples of ways that health issues and attitudes have changed over time.
- Start a fitness club—aerobics, jogging, walking, etc. Any type of exercise will do. Invite other school neighbors to take part as well. All ages may join in a regular fitness program for exercise and friendship.
- Pull together a school cookbook. Invite students to bring the recipes for their favorite dishes. Emphasize healthful foods, but include everyone’s donation to the book. If possible, get a local merchant to underwrite the cost of printing/duplication, and sell it at a nominal price.
- Host a nutrition night, healthy cooking demonstration, food tasting event, karate or self defense demonstration.
- Use the Local PTA meeting as a focal point of Family Engagement Month. Utilize the membership kits and resources from Texas PTA and National PTA for plenty of membership ideas.
- Advertise the benefits of membership and remember membership is year-round
- Participate in the National PTA Reflections program
- Invite grandparents to join PTA.
- Consider inviting interested grandparents to participate in an after-school program. Children can learn to cook, sew, build things, play games and relate to older people in a positive way, and the elders can have a great impact on the community.

MONTHLY OBSERVANCES	OTHER RESOURCES
Texas PTA Family Engagement Month	American Cancer Society
	American Diabetes Association
SPECIAL DAYS IN SEPTEMBER	American Heart Association
Grandparent’s Day (First Sunday after Labor Day)	American Lung Association
Labor Day	Texas Commission on Alcohol & Drug Abuse
	Texas Education Agency
	Texas Department of Health

SUGGESTED OCTOBER FOCUS: COMMUNITY

- Invite representatives from the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program or your local police department to speak.
- Find out if your community has a historical society. Have someone speak on the history of the community and point out locations of historic significance.
- Celebrate Texas PTA Founders Day. Consider awarding a deserving individual with a Texas PTA Life Membership Award.
- Invite the health department, county extension service or police department to present ideas for a safe Halloween, or gang awareness for older students.
- Focus on parent-teacher relationships and conferences.
- Hold a fall carnival. Include the fire department, police community services divisions, EMS, the library, the health department, etc., to exhibit at your fall carnival.
- Hold a school-wide garage sale. Publicize throughout the neighborhood and invite everyone to contribute items. The proceeds might go toward a beautification project or improvement of the school yard—something that will benefit the whole neighborhood.
- Create a monthly “Lunch Bunch” or “Potluck Partners.” This provides a chance for parents to get together for fellowship and to discuss parenting tips.
- Work with the school to create more choices for children needing after-school care.
- Start a family/community room in your school for families to have a place to come. Various classes can be offered. Many schools have success with a community computer lab.
- Participate in a community service project such as clothes or food collection for those in need; pet food and products for the local shelter; or a book drive for a woman’s shelter or the library.
- Encourage seniors or other community members to volunteer with students in the school by reading to or listening to children read, tutoring, teaching a skill or hobby, or eating a meal with students.

SPECIAL DAYS IN OCTOBER	OTHER RESOURCES
Red Ribbon Week	County Historical Society
Child Health Day	Fire Department
National Children’s Day	Local Library
National AIDS Awareness Month	Police Department Community Services Division
United Nations Day	Texas Agricultural Extension Service
National School Bus Safety Week	Texas Department of Health
Texas PTA Birthday (founded October 19, 1909)	
Columbus Day	
World Food Day	
Fire Prevention Week	
Texas PTA Violence Awareness & Prevention Week	
Child Health Month	
Crime Prevention Month	
Family Health Month	
Family History Month	

**SUGGESTED NOVEMBER FOCUS:
CHILD SAFETY/AMERICAN
EDUCATION WEEK**

- Plan a month devoted to child safety. Have one main Local PTA meeting, and follow it with a series of coffees or brown bag seminars devoted to safety issues. Topic areas might include child care, domestic violence, fire safety, bus safety, sports safety and stress. Utilize your school nurse, coach, and members of the community such as police and fire department to lead workshops/discussions.
- Focus on American Education Week. Have a civic leader speak on the value of education, and use the event as an opportunity to showcase the programs and projects of your school.
- Sponsor a neighborhood bike safety course. Provide rewards like stickers or certificates for kids completing the course. To increase safety awareness throughout the neighborhood, allow non-bike owners/riders to participate as well.
- Celebrate American Education Week. Possible activities include a contest for students to create banners that symbolize what education means to them; inviting guests such as local business representatives to the school for a tour or lunch; or hosting an open house to get parents, neighbors and other community members into the school.
- Have a program on critical TV/screen viewing skills. As the weather turns bad, children will be indoors more, and parents need to learn how to take charge of the TV, video games, computer and in some cases cell phones.
- Host an internet safety panel, workshop, or discussion with parents.

SPECIAL DAYS IN NOVEMBER	OTHER RESOURCES
National Children’s Book Week	Texas Coalition for the Prevention of Child Abuse
Veteran’s Day	Texas Department of Public Safety
Thanksgiving Day	Texas Safety Association
Parent Involvement Day	Texas Highway Department
National Young Reader’s Day	FBI
National Community Education Day	National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
American Education Week	
National Geography Awareness Week	

**SUGGESTED DECEMBER FOCUS:
FRIENDS AND SHARING**

- Invite representatives from various social service agencies to tell about their work.
- Have a potluck dinner. Everyone should bring something. Invite the whole neighborhood and/or residents of a local retirement home.
- Kick off the creation of a food bank or help an existing one. (Coordinate any efforts of this kind with a local social service clearinghouse so as to fit with already established assistance efforts.)
- Have a holiday party and book exchange.
- Locate another Local PTA to be a partner with yours. Share/trade resources, holiday greetings and ideas.
- Create a peer tutoring program. Sponsor a program that encourages students to act as tutors to other classmates or to students in lower grades.
- Help create and run an after-school hangout for middle or high school youth. Older students frequently need as much attention after school as do younger ones.
- Have parents from different ethnic and cultural groups tell popular folk tales from their native countries. The stories may be recorded and used to create books. (Perhaps the students could illustrate them.) Create a special spot in the library where the tapes may be checked out.
- Conduct a toy drive for those in need.
- Write letters to students in a “sister” school, those serving in the military overseas, or senior citizens in a retirement home.
- Sponsor a non-alcoholic New Year’s Eve party.

SPECIAL DAYS IN DECEMBER	OTHER RESOURCES
Hanukkah	Migrant Resources
Christmas	PRIDE
World AIDS Day	Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse
Safe Toys and Gifts Month	Texas Highway Department
	United Way

SUGGESTED JANUARY FOCUS: LITERACY

- Invite a speaker to talk about literacy programs.
- Ask a librarian to share information about the resources available at the public library.
- Disseminate information about the public library including applications for a card.
- Have a book fair for adults and children. (January is a good month to donate a book to the school library in honor of your Texas PTA Life Members.)
- Have a book exchange. Parents and kids bring books they have finished and trade them with one another for “new” books. (Leftovers may be donated to the school library.)
- Book Buddies. Pair readers and non-readers to share books. The readers improve their skills; the non-readers begin to feel more comfortable with the process of learning to read.
- Create a library of books on audio tapes to give young or sight-impaired citizens access to more books.
- Host a “Young Authors” event where students read their own short stories or poems to an audience.
- Invite an author to visit the school to meet and talk with the students.
- Have a Chinese or Vietnamese parent lead the group in a celebration of Chinese or Vietnamese New Year.
- Plant a tree in honor of Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday.
- Participate in the Texas PTA One World Environmental Program
- Start a volunteer “English as a Second Language” course at night or on the weekend. Be sure to provide child care.
- Help create and run an after-school hangout for middle or high school youth. Older students frequently need as much attention after school as do younger ones.
- Have parents from different ethnic and cultural groups tell popular folk tales from their native countries. The stories may be recorded and used to create books. (Perhaps the students could illustrate them.) Create a special spot in the library where the tapes may be checked out.
- Conduct a toy drive for those in need.
- Write letters to students in a “sister” school, those serving in the military overseas, or senior citizens in a retirement home.
- Sponsor a non-alcoholic New Year’s Eve party

SPECIAL DAYS IN JANUARY	OTHER RESOURCES
New Year’s Day	Literacy Council of Texas
Arbor Day in Texas	Local Library
Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Birthday	National Association of School Nurses
School Board Recognition Month	Texas Education Agency
National School Nurse Day	Texas State Library (pleasure reading materials for blind and physically handicapped)
National Eye Care Month	

SUGGESTED FEBRUARY FOCUS: OUR HERITAGE

- Assemble a display about outstanding citizens throughout the town’s history.
- Have a speaker present information about African-American history including relevant local community events/sites.
- Organize a multicultural fair where families can share and learn about various cultures represented by students in the school. Encourage families to display artifacts, books, clothing, and food specific to each culture, and be available to answer questions. The Local PTA can issue passports to attendees.
- Focus on Founder’s Day. Share the history of the National PTA with members. This is a good month to remind the media of PTA activities and the importance of Founder’s Day.
- Have a historical tour of the community.
- Check with your local museum to see if they will loan the school library a small historical display or history kit.
- Celebrate American Heart Month with a walk-a-thon. Instead of the fund-raising style of having people pledge money per mile for students to walk, have a distance walk in which anyone may participate.
- Celebrate Dental Health Month.
- Celebrate Valentine’s Day. Make valentines for teachers and school staff. Don’t forget school sponsors, local businesses, or those serving in the military overseas.
- Create a “Parents’ Advice Book.” Have each parent and grandparent submit advice that has been important in his/her child rearing experience. Discuss and distribute at Local PTA meetings.

SPECIAL DAYS IN FEBRUARY	OTHER RESOURCES
Founder’s Day for National PTA	American Vocational Association
National PTA Take your Family to School Week	County Historian
Presidents’ Day	Dental Association
Texas PTA Family Engagement Conference (even-numbered years only)	Minority Health Resource Center
Ash Wednesday	National Safety Council
Valentine’s Day	Texas Department of Health
National Read to Your Child Day	
American Heart Month	
American History Month	
Black History Month	

**SUGGESTED MARCH FOCUS:
SELF-ESTEEM/TEXAS PUBLIC
SCHOOLS WEEK**

- Sponsor a month of “Special Student” days. Each teacher should honor a different student each day of the month until everyone has had a special day. On each student’s day, they may bring pictures from home or any other special items that help tell about who he is. The honoree may wear a special hat or name badge or whatever the teacher creates to make the day special.
- Host a bullying awareness or 40 Developmental Assets™ program for students and/or parents. Focus on positive social skills, communication, and standing up for each other.
- Feature student, parent, staff or community member contributions and accomplishments in the newsletter and website. Showcase work done by students for the National PTA Reflections Program and/or the Texas PTA One World Environmental Program.
- Sponsor a family picnic. Include games from the New Games book, and encourage family members to play as a group.
- Create a mural on one of the school walls or the playground. Have parents and kids work together on the design and completion.
- Organize a thank-you note campaign. Get parents and kids to write brief notes to their teachers thanking them for their support and guidance. Have all notes delivered on the same day. Be sure to keep it a surprise.
- Organize an Open House at the school for parents and community members to tour the school and meet the teachers.
- Hold an art exhibit of student work with background music of tape recordings of the children singing and/or the band or orchestra performing

SPECIAL DAYS IN MARCH	OTHER RESOURCES
Texas Independence Day	Alliance for Arts Education
Texas Public Schools Week	Texas Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance
National School Breakfast Week	
Music In Our Schools Month	Texas Arts Council
National Nutrition Month	Texas Education Agency
“Talk to Your Teen About Sex” Month	
TAAS Testing	
St. Patrick’s Day	

SUGGESTED APRIL FOCUS: PROTECTING OURSELVES & OUR WORLD

- Invite a speaker to discuss signs of child abuse and methods of prevention.
- Coordinate a volunteer program either to work with an established child abuse prevention program or to start one where none exists.
- Invite a speaker to talk about child development and developmental stages.
- Celebrate the specialness of children. Have a reception to showcase the talents and special abilities of every child.
- Host an “Escape School” or other Abduction Prevention Program
- For middle and high school students, host a program on the effects and consequences of underage drinking, drug use or date rape.
- Invite a speaker to talk about ways to care for the environment.
- Plant a tree in honor of a Texas PTA Honorary Life Member, the outgoing Local PTA president, the principal or another school honoree.
- Have an Earth Day birthday party.
- Organize a community clean-up.
- Hold a Trash Olympics

SPECIAL DAYS IN APRIL	OTHER RESOURCES
Student Government Day	Children’s Trust Fund of Texas
Palm Sunday	National Association for the Education of Young Children
Good Friday	
Passover	Texas Agricultural Extension Service
Easter	Environmental Protection Agency
Earth Day	Texas Governor’s Office on the Environment
National Volunteer Week	U.S. Department of Agriculture
National Library Week	Texas Coalition for the Prevention of Child Abuse
Reading is Fun Week	Keep Texas Beautiful
Science and Technology Week	Trees for Texas
Keep America Beautiful Month	Local Police Department, Community Services Division
Listening Awareness Month	Children’s Defense Fund
Mathematics Education Month	Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse
National Child Abuse Prevention Month	State Farm Insurance

SUGGESTED MAY FOCUS: APPRECIATING TEACHERS & VOLUNTEERS

- Have a reception to honor the teachers and school staff.
- Produce a slide presentation and narrative to represent the year’s accomplishments.
- Choose a “Teacher of the Year” for each grade or for the entire school. At the last Local PTA meeting of the year, present the honoree with a certificate and dedicate a new book for the library to that teacher or a Texas PTA Honorary Life Membership award.
- Celebrate Cinco de Mayo. Complete the PTA year with a fiesta. Present new and outgoing officers, teachers and special guests with decorative paper flowers. Decorate the meeting space with piñatas and colored streamers.
- Have a “Let’s Plan for Summer” Saturday. Have a presentation on free and low cost family summer activities, local camps, summer school, etc., available in your community. A resource sheet could be printed in the newsletter or website.
- Kick off a summer reading program with awards to be given when school begins in the fall.
- Sponsor a vision screening booth in the school cafeteria for kids and their families.
- Host a car seat safety inspection by your local police department or hospital staff. Hand out flyers on the importance of seat belts and booster seats.
- Sponsor an alcohol-free graduation prom and/or graduation parties.
- Be sure to thank all volunteers. Pins, certificates, wall of fame, and personal thank you notes are all appreciated.

SPECIAL DAYS IN MAY	OTHER RESOURCES
Mother’s Day	Points of Light Foundation
Memorial Day	Society for the Prevention of Blindness
Cinco de Mayo	YMCA
National PTA Teacher Appreciation Week	YWCA
Child Care Awareness Week	National Safety Association
Family Support Month	
Buckle Up America Week	
Project Safe Baby Month	

RESOURCES

Texas PTA is committed to providing our volunteer leaders across the state with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in their role within PTA. Access to quality educational resources is a key component in supporting this success, as well as continuing to build strong Local and Council PTAs.

FOUNDATIONS

FOUNDATIONS courses provide a broad overview of “what” PTA is, and share important information that every PTA leader should know. In addition to the courses offered for all board members, Texas PTA has also created a series of brief *FOUNDATIONS* courses that provide general information for many Local PTA board positions. It is important to note that these position-specific courses are not meant to be comprehensive training, rather a quick review of each position for newly-elected or prospective nominees. Other than *FOUNDATIONS: Leader Orientation*, all *FOUNDATIONS* courses are web-based presentations.

ALL BOARD MEMBERS

- Council PTA Board Orientation
- Inclusiveness
- Leader Orientation
- Local PTA Board Orientation

POSITION SPECIFIC

- Arts in Education
- Communications
- Environmental Awareness
- Fundraising
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Historian
- Legislative Action
- Membership
- Parent Education Programs
- Parliamentarian
- President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Volunteer Coordinator

BASICS

The *BASICS* series contains detailed information to support volunteer leaders in their specific board position. Texas PTA strongly encourages every board member to attend a *BASICS* course for their own position, as well as any other related positions.

BASICS courses are currently available for face-to-face presentations during LAUNCH and through your Council PTA or Field Service Representative, as well as scheduled web-based trainings hosted by Texas PTA. In addition to the training presentation, all *BASICS* courses have a companion Resource Guide, Quick-Start Guide, and Duties-at-a-Glance. These guides are available via download from the Texas PTA website or for purchase through Texas PTA’s STAR Co-op (online store). Courses marked with an asterisk (*) will debut at a future date.

- Arts Education
- Communications
- Environmental Awareness*
- Fundraising
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Legislative Action
- Membership
- Parent Education / Programs
- Parliamentarian
- President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Volunteer Coordinator

SPOTLIGHTS

PTAs have many unique programs, processes and responsibilities as healthy, thriving non-profits. *SPOTLIGHTS* courses offer an in-depth review of some of these most important and recurring PTA functions.

SPOTLIGHTS courses are available during LAUNCH and through on-demand, web-based presentations hosted by Texas PTA.

- Bylaws and Standing Rules
- Conducting a Meeting
- Financial Reconciliation
- Nominations and Elections

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