

Parent Involvement assists parents and other adults with issues they face in nurturing the development of children in their care. Programs should help parents and other caregivers strengthen their parenting skills and family involvement in their children's lives. Since parenting covers many areas of PTA interest, the committee chairman should work with other chairmen, as appropriate, in planning activities.

#### **DUTIES**

- Appoint a committee. Work with the president and principal to have a broad-based committee appointed that is representative of the school community.
- Obtain or, if necessary, develop a procedure book that includes information from PTA materials such as the *Parents Empowering Parents (PEP) Guide* and other district, state and National PTA publications and resources.
- Provide forums for sharing cultural and life experiences so others understand and value their potential contribution.
- Survey parents to determine interests and needs in the home/school community. Consider program topics such as parenting skills, advocacy, reading, writing, math, health, violence prevention, the arts, and family life/sex education.
- Develop a parent outreach program that provides opportunities for interaction and engagement for all families, especially underrepresented groups.
- Plan a program. Ask the principal or designee and representatives from other school site groups that include parent members (e.g., Title I, school site councils, English Learners Advisory Council) to work with the committee to develop a year-long program of parent education/involvement activities. Be sure to budget for program expenses.
- Present the plan to the PTA board for approval. Submit the recommendation of the PTA board to the association for their consideration and vote of approval.
- Collaborate with other PTAs and community agencies to obtain information, materials and speakers. Explore ways to work with them in providing and publicizing parent education activities and co-sponsoring events.
- Publicize the activities. To be successful, each program or activity must be well publicized through the use of the PTA newsletter, e-mail contacts, fliers, the principal's letter, local newspaper articles and most important, through the use of personal telephone calls. Contact local preschools, nearby schools, and neighbors to invite them to participate.
- Evaluate. In order to plan for the next year, evaluate the effectiveness of the current year's parent involvement program by using a year-end survey or an evaluation sheet filled out at each event.

#### **SUGGESTIONS/IDEAS**

- Work with school staff and parents to develop an ongoing parent involvement action plan.
- Sponsor parent information programs on issues such as substance abuse, health, child development, parenting issues such as discipline and teaching decision-making skills, curriculum, textbooks and computer-assisted learning and other topics identified by parents and community. Offer language translation when needed.
- Take meetings into the community to make parents and others feel welcome.
- Offer a variety of family activity opportunities. Use sensitivity in setting dates, times and places for programs and events.
- Promote teacher-parent communication, and encourage staff development training to assist teachers in working with and involving parents.
- Encourage parents to attend school-sponsored functions such as back-to-school nights and parent-teacher conferences.
- Put parenting tips in the school or PTA newsletter.
- Start a Parent Center at the school with information about parenting, community resources, school information and policy, curriculum, etc.
- Establish a Parent Shelf in the school office or library, where parents can pick up free materials or check out written and/or audio-visual materials on topics of interest to parents.
- Create a welcome packet for new parents, with parenting and school-related information.
- Develop a program and information brochures designed to empower parents as advocates for their children at school and during parent-teacher conferences.

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### The National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs

National PTA, building on the work of Dr. Joyce Epstein of Johns Hopkins University, adopted six standards for effective parent involvement programs in 1997. The standards, guidelines for use in developing programs to involve parents and families, were updated in 2007 to reflect recent research. The standards focus on what parents, schools, and communities can do together to support student success. Comprehensive local parent/family involvement programs will be most effective if they include all of the standards. Keep these standards in mind when planning parent involvement programs and activities.

**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, 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.

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### PTA INSURANCE

When planning PTA events and activities you must always refer to the *Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide* that is updated and mailed annually to unit presidents. If you have any questions or concerns about the event contact the California State PTA insurance broker. **Never sign a Hold Harmless Agreement on behalf of the PTA** (1.3.4a, 5.5). If the PTA is asked to sign a Hold Harmless Agreement for any reason, the PTA should contact the California State PTA insurance broker. When directed by the insurance broker to sign the "Facilities Use Permit Addendum" for events held on public school campuses, locate the form in the *Toolkit*, Forms, Chapter 9. Contact information for the California State PTA insurance broker can be obtained from the California State PTA office.

### RESOURCES

California State PTA, 916.440.1985; [www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org)

*List of PTA Materials:*

*Parents Empowering Parents (PEP) Guide* (English or Spanish)

*Parent Talk* brochure (English or Spanish)

*Parent Involvement Pocket Pal* (English or Spanish)

*Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide* (English and Spanish) mailed annually to PTA presidents

CABE, California Association for Bilingual Education; [www.bilingualeducation.org](http://www.bilingualeducation.org)

FINE, Family Involvement Network of Educators; [www.finenetwork.org](http://www.finenetwork.org)

National PTA, 312.670.6782; [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)

National Network of Partnership Schools (Johns Hopkins University); [www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000](http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000)

National Standards for Family-School Partnerships, National PTA

PIQE, Parent Institute for Quality Education; [www.piqe.org](http://www.piqe.org)

The California PARENT Center; <http://parent.sdsu.edu/>

California Department of Education, Publications Division, Sales Office, 916.445.1260. See Educational Resources Catalog; [www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/)

U.S. Department of Education; [www.ed.gov/](http://www.ed.gov/)

EdSource, 650.917.9481; [www.edsource.org](http://www.edsource.org)

01/2009