

1.6 PTA PRESIDENT – PRINCIPAL RELATIONSHIPS

For the school and the PTA to operate as members of a team, a good working partnership must be established:

- The school principal plays a vital role, as the administrator, in building sound relationships with parents, teachers and students.
- The PTA president, as the representative of the association, also plays a vital role in helping parents and teachers work together.

1.6.1 THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S ROLE

A successful PTA principal:

- Believes in and supports the PTA
- Attends meetings of the executive board as well as PTA association meetings
- Cooperates with the PTA in the use of school facilities
- Makes the PTA feel welcome and an important part of the school
- Encourages cooperation between the PTA and the school in working toward mutual goals
- Keeps PTA informed about school programs, problems and needs
- Understands PTA policies and procedures – and encourages PTA leaders to carry them out
- Helps with program planning and cooperates in fundraising projects
- Offers leadership and guidance, but does not dominate the PTA
- Encourages teachers and other members of the school community to join the PTA, help with program planning, and participate in PTA activities
- Stresses the value of teachers attending PTA meetings and socializing with parents
- Let's teachers know about the importance of sending PTA notices home with the students
- Helps to promote parent attendance at meetings and activities
- Relates to parents in an open, friendly way

1.6.2 THE PTA PRESIDENT'S ROLE

A successful PTA president:

- Plans with – and works through – the principal, not around him/her
- Always includes the principal (or a representative) in meetings
- Plans a calendar in advance, outlining types of meetings and projects – and when they will take place
- Cultivates a welcoming climate at the school site for all stakeholders in the community
- Understands the school's policies and procedures
- Interprets the school to the community
- Shows thoughtfulness and pre-planning in the use of school facilities
- Considers school and district wide schedules when planning PTA activities
- Secures a balance between organizational matters and student oriented activities
- Responds to requests for help
- Respects the roles and responsibilities of others
- Helps foster good home-school relationships
- Provides opportunities for more parent engagement in PTA programs and activities
- Works to promote increased attendance and participation at PTA meetings and events

- Involves students in planning and implementing PTA programs, activities and events
- Encourages teacher participation in PTA planning
- Emphasizes the usefulness of reports that highlight accomplishments and provide suggestions for future work
- Makes certain that, in launching a project, plans are clear and those involved understand what is entailed
- Gives credit and praise when and where it is due

A Useful Resource – LDP

All district PTAs have a California State PTA Leadership Development Presentation entitled "PTA Presidents and Principals."

1.7 PRINCIPALS SERVING AS OFFICERS/CHECK SIGNERS

The California State PTA does not recommend or encourage the practice of principals serving as officers or check signers. This is because a unit that elects the principal to any office:

- Forfeits the administrator's important role of advisor
- Misses an opportunity to develop new leadership from the general membership

In addition, each member elected to a PTA position must be prepared to carry out all duties of the position. And, principals, by virtue of their position, already serve as members with voting privileges of an executive board member (see *Bylaws for Local PTA/PTSA Units*, Article VIII, Section 1).

1.8 SCHOOL STAFF SERVING AS PRIMARY PTA OFFICERS

There are a number of important reasons, relating to conflict of interest, that underscore why school staff should not serve as the primary PTA officers:

- PTA is a private membership association that is independent of the school and school district.
- PTAs that consistently elect school staff to serve in the primary officer positions of president, secretary, and/or treasurer or to a majority of the PTA officer positions risk becoming a school-related organization.
- School-related organizations are subject to school district financial audits and inspection of records.
- While school staff members are an important part of the PTA, care must be taken that they are not dictating or unduly influencing the decisions of the PTA membership, especially relating to fundraising and financial support of the school or school district.

1.9 PTA RESOURCES

PTA unit bylaws – Each unit PTA has its own bylaws, which include due dates and job responsibilities, that each officer should be familiar with, and use to develop a calendar and organize the year's activities.

Council PTA (if in council) – Councils share the responsibility with the district to provide information, training and support for their unit board members. PTA unit leaders should know how to contact council officers (if in council) for assistance and advice.

District PTA – District PTAs are responsible for offering guidance, support and information through regular communication and training for council and unit boards. PTA council and unit leaders should know how to contact district officers for assistance and advice.