

Tips for Writing PTA Award Applications

“Tell Your Story”

PTAs across the State are doing amazing work to *make every child’s potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children*. We are also fortunate to have dedicated administrators, educators, and support staff working with our students every day. This year we encourage you to celebrate all of these people as well as your PTAs!

Here are some general suggestions for writing an award-winning application:

1. A good application is one that uses *descriptive language* that details the project/program rather than giving conclusions. For example, instead of saying “parent night was a success,” descriptive language tells why it was a success, i.e., “One hundred parents attended parents' night, whereas in the past no more than 50 parents have ever attended. As a result, we have 20 new PTA members.”
2. Descriptive language also avoids just making lists such as, “Our PTA held a health fair, a spaghetti night, and a parents' night.” Instead it informs the reader what the PTA accomplished and why: “We held a health fair in our community because the majority of children and adults have not had hearing or eye tests. Three hundred (300) children and adults were tested, and 35 were found to need follow-up. PTA is now working with the hospital association to provide that follow up for those who cannot afford it.”
3. Space is limited, so choose your words carefully.
4. Award and grant applications should address local activities supported or sponsored by the PTA and not the activities of the school staff (unless it is a joint grant application).

Family-School Partnership Awards

a. General Information

i. **Deadline:** March 1, 2019

ii. **Mailing:** Mail *two* complete application packages to Alabama PTA, 3066 Zelda Road, PMB 252, Montgomery, AL 36106 (*Note: Do not mail them to the physical office on Union Street*) **AND** if you are part of a Council, please check to see what they request. Huntsville Council of PTAs, Montgomery County Council of PTAs, Birmingham City Council of PTAs, Tuscaloosa Council of PTAs, etc.

iii. **Instructions:** You must complete a cover sheet with general contact information about your school and your PTA. Write an accompanying narrative of up to **two** double-spaced pages, which includes the details about your program, the program goals, and the success of your efforts. When possible, use actual measurements to quantify your efforts such as the number of participants, the number of volunteer hours, the number of recipients, etc. The award cover sheet contains additional specific requirements about the award application. – **OR** – You can fill out the fillable pdf by going to <http://www.alabamapta.org/pta-awards>.

iv. **Good standing:** PTA must be in good standing with Alabama PTA (dues paid, bylaws upto date, insurance up to date, officer and membership lists received) . Check with your Council for their requirements.

v. **PTA Programs:** Make sure that you include only efforts that are organized and implemented by the PTA and are not school-sponsored projects or programs.

vi. **Eligibility:** No award will be presented for the same program two years in a row.

vii. **Category:** P-8 schools must decide whether they are applying in the elementary or middle school category.

viii. **Additional information:** Download the Awards Reference Guide at alabamapta.org under the *My PTA* tab.

b. Standard 1 – Welcoming all Families

i. **Standard:** 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.

ii. **Examples of activities that would support this standard:** Three for Me program, All Pro Dads, iMom Mornings, welcome-back coffees, PTA telephone calls to all new students and families, Dads' Night at the Movies, welcome yard signs for new kindergarten students,

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Award applications can be found [HERE](#)

cultural heritage nights, back-to-school party for students, camps to welcome all incoming students, family reading or math nights, family movie night

c. Standard 2 – Communicating Effectively

i. **Standard:** Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

ii. **Examples of activities that would support this standard:** newsletters (electronic or print), creative uses of PTA websites or blogs, surveys, use of technology to engage parents, PTA seminars about how to have an effective parent-teacher conference, school calendar with dates of all PTA events and meetings for the year, student planners to communicate with parents

d. Standard 3 – Supporting Student Success

i. **Standard:** 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.

ii. **Examples of activities that would support this standard:** PTA sponsored academic clubs or programs, A/R store, Math SuperStars programs, PTA programs to encourage healthy eating/lifestyles, seminars to help parents prepare their children for college, classes for parents about technology students are using in the classroom, seminar to help parents understand student data

e. Standard 4 – Speaking Up for Every Child

i. **Standard:** 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.

ii. **Examples of activities that would support this standard:** Board position or advisory committee to include parents of special needs students, designated PTA leader to attend school board meetings, seminars or workshops to help parents understand curriculum tracks being offered, luncheon for your elected officials, creative ways to highlight school problems to key decision-makers, one question polled of parents in each newsletter seeking feedback on a range of issues and then use the feedback as a basis for your decisions, directory with contact information on local elected officials and decision makers, legislative updates in newsletter, candidates' forum to discuss issues affecting your school

f. Standard 5 – Sharing Power

i. **Standard:** Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

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ii. **Examples of activities that would support this standard:** Brown bag lunches with the principal, security system that tracks parents' attendance and volunteer hours at the school, any sort of committee that includes parents and school personnel

g. Standard 6 – Collaborating with the Community

i. **Standard:** Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

ii. **Examples of activities that would support this standard:** community-wide party, STEM field trip to partnering companies and organizations, Career Day, field day that includes community partners, tutoring partnership with area companies or other area schools, PTA partnerships with other PTAs, partner with other nonprofits agencies like United Way and Junior Achievement for youth leadership programs, collaboration with local churches and community organizations to provide quality after-school programs, community recycling projects, joint community PTA meetings with the elementary, middle, and high schools.

Outstanding Educator Awards

a. General Information

i. **Deadline:** March 1, 2019

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iii. **Instructions:** You must complete a cover sheet with general contact information about your school and your PTA. Write an accompanying narrative of up to **four** double-spaced pages addressing the criteria listed below. Up to four pieces of supplemental materials (brochures, newsletters, or reference letters) may accompany the application for principals and teachers. Photographs are also acceptable. Up to four letters of recommendation may accompany the application for support staff. The award cover sheet contains additional specific requirements about the award application. – **OR** – You can fill out the fillable pdf by going to <http://www.alabamapta.org/pta-awards>.

iv. **Good standing:** PTA must be in good standing with Alabama PTA (dues paid, bylaws upto date, insurance up to date, officer and membership lists received) . Check with your Council for their requirements.

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v. **Eligibility:** Past winners of any Educator Award are not eligible to be re-nominated for that same award for five years.

vii. **PTA membership:** Educator award nominee must be a member of PTA.

viii. **Category:** P-8 schools must decide whether they are applying in the elementary or the middle school category.

ix. **Additional information:** Download the Awards Reference Guide at alabamapta.org under the *My PTA* tab.

b. Outstanding Administrator Award

i. **Criteria:** Supportive of PTA, number of years in education, effective advocate, civic contributions, parent/family involvement, and education style.

ii. **Special considerations:**

- Administrator must have at least five years of educational experience
- Must be nominated by the PTA of the school that he/she serves
- Must have a master's degree in school administration
- Assistant principals are eligible for this award

c. Outstanding Teacher Award

i. **Criteria:** Supportive of PTA, number of years in education, effective advocate, civic contributions, parent/family involvement, and education style.

ii. **Special considerations:**

- Teacher must have at least five years of educational experience
- Must be nominated by the PTA of the school that he/she serves
- All certified staff members are eligible for this award.
- Paraprofessionals are not eligible for this award.

d. Outstanding Support Staff Award

i. **Criteria:** Supportive of PTA, number of years in education, effective advocate, and parent/family involvement.

ii. **Special considerations:**

- Must be nominated by the PTA of the school that he/she serves
- Designated for non-certified members of the staff whose support/efforts help encourage and support family-school partnerships.

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e. Outstanding Volunteer Award-

This award is only given by the Huntsville Council of PTAs and not Alabama PTA

i. **Criteria:** Supportive of PTA, number of years involved in PTA, effective advocate, and parent/family involvement.

ii. **Special considerations:**

- Must be nominated by the PTA of the school that he/she serves
- Volunteer work must primarily be focused on PTA not on other booster activities

If you need more information, please contact Betsy Nesbitt – Alabama Awards Chair
Betsy-bug@hotmail.com