**Alabama PTA Committee**

**Reference Guide**

*Committees are essential to the work of Alabama PTA. Through committees, specific programs are addressed.*

**Committee Chairs & Committee Responsibilities**

* Persons suggested for standing committee chairs shall not be contacted until elected by the executive committee.
* Each standing committee chair shall be responsible for the implementation of the plan of action once it has been approved by the executive committee. Any additions to the plan of action must be approved by the executive committee before action can be taken.
* No material or form letters representing Alabama PTA shall be published without the approval of the president.
* Committee chairs shall present a written report outlining the work of their committee prior to each board of directors meeting. Written annual reports listing all activities from the previous year are to be submitted prior to the Alabama PTA convention to the Alabama PTA office by the required date. A copy of all reports should be retained in the chair’s own file.
* Any specific responsibilities will be included in the individual committee description.
* Committee Chairs should seek additional members to serve on the committee. The size of the committee is usually related to the projects or programs to be undertaken for the school year.
* Under each committee are ideas to help you assist local units.

In addition to this reference guide, a committee chair and committee members should:

* Review materials on the Alabama PTA website: [www.alabamapta.org](http://www.alabamapta.org) and the National PTA website: [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)
* Be familiar with Alabama PTA bylaws and Standing Rules: <https://www.alabamapta.org/bylaws>
* Be a current PTA member either locally, or at the state level as a member of Alabama ALL.

This will be verified via MemberHub.

**AWARDS**

Alabama PTA and National PTA offer a wide variety of awards for local units and councils through an application process.

The Awards Committee shall:

* Be aligned to the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships. The National Standards provide for

1. Welcoming All Families

2. Communicating Effectively

3. Supporting Student Success

4. Speaking Up for Every Child

5. Sharing Power

6. Collaborating with the Community

Awards are available for elementary, middle/junior high and secondary schools in each of the National Standards.

* Present additional awards include: Excellence in Education, Fannie Mitchell Nelson Outstanding Council, Council Legislative and Advocacy Award, Outstanding Principal, Outstanding Superintendent, Outstanding Support Staff member and other Local PTA Membership and Council Awards.
* The Awards Committee will communicate with local and council units concerning award types, due dates and how to be considered for the award.
* This committee will secure impartial judges and complete the task of having the plaques made prior to the annual Alabama Convention.
* This committee works closely with the Vice President of Programs.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Good communication, with its membership and the community at large, is essential to the strength of any organization. All PTA committees work with the communications committee to promote their programs and projects. Together they inform current and potential members about PTA activities.

The members of the Communication Committee should have

* Good writing skills.
* Facebook knowledge in use.
* Experience or willing to learn Wix website development.
* Experience or willing to learn how to send communication via MemeberHub.
* Able to create, or willing to learn visual depictions with our Alabama PTA Canva Pro account.
* A self starter in keeping the website current.
* Communicate various committee information with President approval.

This may include creating the post or visual.

This position may require evening and weekend work but is flexible in job completion.

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION**

Building inclusive communities requires PTA leaders to question their own assumptions, intentionally build relationships and invite diverse perspectives to the table. Enhancing diversity, equity and inclusion in schools is an ongoing journey. This committee will develop a plan for outreach to local units. This committee will determine needs for initiatives and events that can best serve communities of local units.

 The plan can include, but is not limited to

* Create a survey to reach out to local units.
* Schedule a meeting with local leaders to gauge demographics of community.
* Benchmark other PTAs across the country to see what is working; best practices.
* Schedule meeting with community leaders to partner with services available.

**EXCEPTIONAL CHILD**

PTA is committed to serving all children and youth. Exceptional children—gifted, over and under achievers and the physically and mentally challenged—should not be overlooked. Children and youth differ in their individual and personal abilities, interests, and needs. Exceptional children with intellectual, psychological, emotional, physical, and social problems, which deter their participation in activities considered to be routine, should have all due rights, privileges, and opportunities. Their personal worth and contribution to society must be recognized.

* As a member of the Exceptional Child Committee, you would help communicate resources from the National, State and Local levels when possible.
* Communicate activities at the Alabama State Board of Education

***Suggested Local PTA Activities***

* Become acquainted with local agencies that provide services to exceptional children and youth and their families.
* Be familiar with the educational needs of exceptional children as required by state and federal laws.
* Initiate study groups so parents, teachers, and volunteers can provide exceptional children educational programs to help with everyday living: personal hygiene, dental care, nutrition, safety and accident prevention.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Protecting the lives of children is a major goal of PTA. The home, church, school and community must unite their forces to determine needs and to develop programs that will protect children and youth. These efforts should include general safety and comprehensive health education that addresses the social, emotional, intellectual, and physical needs of individuals throughout their lives. Meeting these needs requires safety and health education opportunities be made available in schools and communities. Children and adults can learn to make knowledgeable decisions affecting their own health and safety. The goal is the encouragement of lifestyles that promote good health, prevent accidents, and minimize the effects of disease and disability.

***Suggested Local PTA Activities***

* Study the comprehensive health education program or plans in your school. If a health program has not been implemented, determine areas in which PTA can assist.
* Plan informative programs and workshops that will give parents and teachers current information on physical, mental, and emotional health issues.
* Advocate for adequate preventive services and treatment facilities in your area.
* Sponsor a health fair.
* Support prevention of tobacco, alcohol, and drug abuse; family life education; nutrition; prevention of child abuse and neglect; prevention of teenage pregnancies; AIDS education.
* Participate in Red Ribbon Week.
* Present the importance of all types of safety (cars, bicycles, school buses, home).
* Sponsor programs on bullying, conflict resolution and mediation.
* Plan programs on substance abuse, media and internet safety.

**PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

The mission of the PTA is to make every child’s potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children. We believe that family engagement should transform the lives of EVERY child in America.

* When parents are involved, students achieve more, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnic/racial background or the parents’ education level.
* The more extensive the family engagement, the higher the student achievement.
* When parents are involved in their students’ education, those students have higher grades and test scores, better attendance and complete homework more consistently.
* When parents are involved, students exhibit more positive attitudes and behavior.
* Different types of parent/family involvement produce different gains. To have long-lasting gains for students, family engagement activities must be well-planned, inclusive and comprehensive.

***Suggested Local PTA Activities***

* Evaluate current programs, policies, and practices of your school and your PTA using National PTA’s National Standards for Parent Involvement Programs.
* Work with school administration to survey faculty and parents regarding needs and resources.
* Establish a parent/family involvement policy.
* Provide information, programs, and activities which improve interaction between parents and teachers. Responsibility of PTA is to provide education and opportunities to facilitate parent/family involvement,
* Examples: Parent and Student Orientation; Parent-Teacher Conference Tips; Open House; Parent-Teacher Work Nights; Family Math Nights; Read-A-Thons; Counselor’s Corner (a time when the school counselor can discuss parenting tips, learning styles of children, anger management, etc.).
* Develop a school directory and use to promote and expand parent involvement.
* Provide information on community resources that would be beneficial to your school population.
* Vary meeting and program times to meet the variety of schedules of parents.
* Distribute a volunteer survey form. Provide single, short-term, as well as long-term volunteer opportunities. Identify projects that can be done at home as well as at school. Follow up on all responses.
* Provide continuing training opportunities for volunteers who have been coordinated with the principal, school staff, and the volunteer committee. Volunteers should follow all school policies. Provide a sign-in/sign out sheet and identification tags for volunteers.
* Establish and maintain procedures for record keeping, recording number of volunteer hours, variety of assignments, schedules, substitutes, and the history of the volunteer project so evaluation of the project’s effectiveness can be made.
* Thank all volunteers. Consider certificates of appreciation, a luncheon, or reception.

**REFLECTIONS**

The arts are an ever-present influence in the life of every individual. They play an important role in personal development; foster social, moral, and spiritual insight; and stimulate original thinking. Opportunities should be provided for cultural and creative experiences in the home, school, and community. Every individual should have the chance to enjoy works of art and give creative expression to ideas and experiences.

* As a part of the Reflections committee, you will be responsible for working closely with council leaders and local unit leaders not part of a council to guide them in participating in the Reflections Program.
* At the start of the school year you will share information from National and Alabama PTA such as due dates and process for submitting entries
* You will identify judges (at least 2 per category) to judge at the Alabama PTA level.
* This committee works closely with the Vice President of Programs.

***Suggested Local PTA Activities***

* Participate in the Reflections Program. Guidelines are given to local presidents.
* Maintain a list of available persons with special artistic talents as potential speakers/volunteers.
* Cooperate with children’s theater, choral, and instrumental music groups.
* Encourage a cultural arts section in the school library to include books, pictures, and music.
* Work with the local board of education, school administrators, and teachers to promote school programs in the cultural arts.
* Cooperate with school officials in planning field trips to museums, art and craft exhibits, plays, puppet shows, operas, and concerts.
* Encourage observance of National Music Week and school sponsored music festivals.
* Exhibit works by local artists, art objects belonging to PTA members, and work done by school children.
* Publicize opportunities for art classes in the community.
* Create community interest by displaying teacher and student cultural arts achievements in the public library, recreational center, board of education building.
* Encourage high school seniors to apply for the Ballentine Memorial Reflections Scholarship.

**SCHOLARSHIPS**

Alabama PTA has 4 scholarships.

* Elizabeth Baldwin Hill Scholarship-awarded annually to a college junior pursuing teacher certification in a publicly supported Alabama college or university
* Mary Edith Jones General Scholarship- one-time award to a graduating senior who plans to pursue higher education at any accredited institute of higher learning, including vocation, trade schools, two and four year colleges and universities. The applicant or parent/guardian must be current members of a local PTA in good standing.
* Sally Mitchell Reading Scholarship-Local unit PTAs in good standing may submit an application for a $500 award for their school library or a classroom teacher for reading materials.
* Yvonne Ballentine Memorial Reflections Scholarship-one-time $500 award to a high school senior participating in the Reflections Program.

This committee will be responsible for:

* Communicating the information
* Collect applications
* Secure judging of applications
* Coordinate and order awards prior to the annual Alabama PTA convention