

- Attending PTA council and/or local meetings whenever possible.
- Asking for PTA input on issues of importance to the local school district (e.g., decisions on school boundaries, budgetary matters, etc.).

A final word

As an organization devoted to the well-being of all children and youth, the PTA provides parents, teachers, and students the means to participate and work effectively with the school board. At the same time, the PTA helps the school board to be informed about the community and the needs of children. This partnership improves the quality of education in communities throughout America..

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P A R T N E R S

The School Board and the PTA

Partnerships, teamwork and cooperation. These are the building blocks of education leadership today. Nowhere is partnership more urgently needed than between school boards and parents.

School boards are responsible for taking the lead in identifying the community's education needs and meeting those needs through local school policy. When parents and teachers join together in PTA, they can become better informed, better organized, and more effective partners in working with school boards to achieve quality public education

The school board's role in education

The school board is legally responsible for policies that govern the operation of the school district. The school board's main functions generally are:

- Policy making in all areas of school programs and functions.
- Choosing and evaluating the superintendent, and approving selection procedures for other personnel.
- Overseeing the educational programs and business operations of the district. *The school board has the ultimate responsibility for the activities and services of the schools, according to the laws of various states.*
- Exercising fiscal authority (the right to tax and the right to adopt the budget) in some states. In other states, school boards send their adopted budgets to their local governing bodies who have final authority.
- Long-range planning and goal setting for educational programs of the district.
- Approving curriculum in accordance with state law and state department of education regulations and local goals.
- Representing the public as the employer of school personnel in any collective bargaining process.

How the PTA cooperates with the school board

School boards do a better job when they are challenged and supported by an informed and involved community. PTA bylaws encourage participation in the decision-making process to develop school policy.

In learning to work with your local school board, understand the differ-

ence between administration (superintendent and staff) and policy-making (school board).

The PTA can be a valuable partner to the school board in the following areas:

Communication

- Establish regular two-way communication with the school board
- Appoint a PTA liaison to attend school board meetings and collect copies of agendas and reports
- Keep the PTA membership informed of school board actions and policies through reports in newsletters, meetings and special programs.
- Decide who speaks for the PTA to your school board. *To avoid confusion, it is important that the PTA spokesperson voice the consensus of the PTA, not personal views or opinions.*
- Present PTA positions on issues such as tax increases.
- When appropriate (and following official procedures), report PTA concerns, parents' reactions to school policies and community problems to school officials (principal, school board or superintendent).

Participation

- Encourage the school board to develop and implement a formal, written parent involvement policy.
- Make sure PTA representatives sit on special school board advisory committees and task forces.
- Ask a school board member to help plan and/or attend PTA conferences, workshops and open forums.
- Invite school board members to participate on PTA committees and attend PTA programs.
- Encourage parents to attend school board meetings. Let them know the scheduled date, time, place and agenda items.
- Call public attention to important school issues being decided by the school board.:

How the school board can cooperate with the PTA

The school board can work with the PTA by:

- Appointing a PTA member to advisory committees.
- Sending notices of all school board meetings to local PTA units.