

- forces.
- Mobilize coalitions, when necessary, to achieve education goals or to support school issues.
  - Be willing to discuss openly issues and options for the school district.
  - Be sure to recognize the educational accomplishments of the school system, students and teachers as well as to address problems.

### **The benefits of partnership**

The PTA and the school superintendent have a common goal—quality education - which cannot be achieved by anyone acting alone; it takes a team effort of parents, teachers and administrators working together. By developing a working partnership—communicating with each other, sharing in the decision making and mobilizing the community to action—together the PTA and the school superintendent can work toward a better education for all children

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# P A R T N E R S

## The Superintendent and the PTA

Today's school superintendent cannot operate in a vacuum. As chief executive officer (CEO) of the school district, the superintendent must interact with the school board, principals, parents, community leaders, teachers and students. The superintendent must be, first and foremost, the education leader for the community. A good working partnership between the PTA and the school superintendent is the best guarantee for a quality education for young people.

## **The superintendent's role: Education leader and coalition builder**

The superintendent's main role is one of leadership—leadership that helps the school board identify clear goals for the schools, leadership that interprets policy guidelines to building principals and staff, and leadership that helps the community understand what the schools are and what they can become

The superintendent also leads the way in bringing together members of the community in support of education. Members of this community coalition include parents, students, adults who have no children in school, principals and district administrators, teachers, support staff and school board representatives. The PTA is a critical element in this coalition since it represents a broad base of parents and others willing to work actively for and with the schools to produce quality education.

The superintendent is hired by the school board and their selection will have a great impact on the kind of schools the community develop  
*\*More on school boards in the PTA publication: The School Board and the PTA.*

## **Superintendent: Building a partnership with the PTA**

The superintendent sets the tone for the ways in which a school district responds to parents and families. Even if the local school board welcomes community involvement in the schools, its success can be affected by the openness and influence of the superintendent.

If the partnership between the PTA and the superintendent is to work, both parties have important roles to play. The superintendent can help the partnership grow and last by taking the following steps:

- Supporting the development of districtwide policies on parent involvement.
- Preparing copies of district parent/community involvement policies and procedures to share with the community.
- Listening to parents.
- Strongly encouraging all schools to have a PTA.
- Requiring PTA and community participation in schoolwide or districtwide advisory groups and committees and in communication processes.
- Sharing the decision-making process with parents and teachers.
- Providing school board agendas, administrative agendas and action items to the PTA.
- Assisting principals and PTA officers in developing a working relationship.
- Meeting and conferring with the PTA and other community groups at their meetings.
- Assigning key administrators to represent the superintendent and to meet regularly with the PTA and community groups.
- Making it a priority to involve the community in addressing school district issues.
- Helping the community identify areas of interest, concern and need.
- Documenting PTA input to the school board.
- Establishing events to give recognition for community involvement.

## **PTA: Building a partnership with the superintendent**

By joining together the voices of parents, teachers and community members, the PTA becomes a powerful partner with the superintendent in working for quality education. Here are some steps for the PTA to follow:

- Become familiar with school policies and procedures.
- Understand and use administrative channels.
- Know the different responsibilities and roles of the board, superintendent and principal.
- Set priorities and goals each year, and discuss these with the superintendent. This is especially true for councils.
- Address issues that will benefit *all* students.
- Expect to be heard as key community leaders and, if necessary, insist on equal access to the superintendent.
- Involve people who will participate actively on committees and task