

Across the country, students, families and educators experience vastly different education systems that either support—or hinder—the ability for all children to reach their full potential. These differences are often due to disparities in opportunities, access and financial resources—and whether or not parents are respected as equal partners in their child's education.

To be part of the solution, National PTA recognizes that we have our own work to do to advance diversity, equity and inclusion across the association and recently adopted the following definitions and beliefs to help PTA leaders:

- ➔ Re-commit to diversity, equity and inclusion in their PTA by communicating these beliefs and definitions with other PTA members
- ➔ Critically reflect on areas where their PTA has had successes and where it has had challenges when it comes to diversity, equity and inclusion



Diversity

Diversity is representation of, and respect for, people from different backgrounds and identities—including but not limited to race, culture, religion, socio-economic status, age, geographic area, sexual orientation and gender identification, language, learning style and physical appearance. It also involves bringing different ideas, perspectives, lived experiences, talents, values and worldviews to the table to represent the broad variety of children, caregivers, educators and communities within the PTA family.

We Believe Diversity is Our Strength...

We represent parents, caregivers, educators and communities of all children, which enables us to best achieve PTA's mission to make every child's potential a reality. Our collective backgrounds, perspectives and ideas allow us to best reflect the rich fabric of 21st century children, families, educators and community members—and create the strongest future and direction for PTA.

To embody and live this belief, PTA volunteers and staff must:

- ➔ Acknowledge and appreciate individual ideas, knowledge and values that are different from our own.
- ➔ Seek out and learn from a diverse set of perspectives, skills and experiences, staying open to the unfamiliar and possibly uncomfortable.
- ➔ Actively recruit and elect a team of leaders who represent the school community you serve.
- ➔ Support units from less represented or resourced areas, backgrounds and perspectives.



Equity

Equity provides fairness in resources, opportunities and outcomes so that all communities get what they need to be engaged and successful. This moves beyond an “equal across the board” approach to:

1. Recognize and address bias and privilege.
2. Understand and attend to specific individual and community needs, providing additional resources to those with greater needs.

We Believe Equity Drives Our Mission...

With schools facing challenges like shrinking budgets and increasing educational inequity, PTA is more important than ever. We continually learn and change to reflect an increasingly complex and changing 21st century landscape in which unforeseen crises can affect our children, families and communities. We seize opportunities to build and share new models and ways of working on behalf of children.

To embody and live this value, PTA volunteers and staff must:

- Champion fair, just and data-informed approaches to children's educational success, health and well-being.
- Prioritize and advocate for innovative, sustainable solutions that work for a diverse range of children and families, especially those underrepresented and/or marginalized in our communities.
- Persist in the face of challenges and hold ourselves and our partners—including educators and policymakers—accountable.



Inclusion

Inclusion is actions, behaviors and social norms that ensure all people feel they are safe, welcomed and that they belong. This means putting diversity into action with skill and intentionality to ensure everyone feels respected, supported and valued—and can fully participate with equal voice and right to be heard. This includes actively seeking out voices that have been traditionally underrepresented and/or marginalized.

We Believe Collaboration Must Be Inclusive...

We can only achieve our mission and vision in full collaboration and partnership with the broadest possible set of volunteers, staff, educators, schools and communities. We foster an association where everyone feels they belong, are integral to achieving our vision and have the opportunity to flourish and contribute at the highest level. That means tending to power dynamics where they occur and setting up a level playing field for all to engage in our work.

To embody and live this belief, PTA volunteers and staff must:

- Work cooperatively and respectfully with colleagues with different roles, goals and approaches.
- Share information, tools, resources and leadership opportunities among association members, partners and communities to increase the impact of our collective work.
- Engage a diverse range of voices and lived experiences from members and prospective members—and seek to meet individuals and communities where they are—especially those currently or traditionally underrepresented and/or marginalized in our association.
- Solicit stakeholder input, incorporate it in visible and meaningful ways, and share credit.
- Account for cultural, status and power dynamics in our many relationships.