

Steps to Running a Successful Reflections Program at your School

1. Budget a few dollars (the program can be successfully done with less than \$100), since it is a "recognition" program. So a few paper certificates and ribbons.
2. Advertise the program to the students, via print, emails, posters, morning assembly, etc.
3. Provide link to the student entry packet - make sure entry forms are filled out with the school PTA and contact information.
 - a. If desired - have a Reflections "workshop" after students finish their morning breakfast or lunch or during recess. Announce that if any student would like to do art, stop by the Reflections tables. On the tables have drawing paper, crayons, colored pencils, writing paper and pencils. Ask the students "What does 'Heroes Around Me' mean to you?" Ask them to draw or write something, and come up and tell you about their artwork or writing. Ask them what they would title their art. Tell them how wonderful they are. Write the title they told you on an entry form (Have a pile of student entry forms - WITH PTA INFO ALREADY FILLED OUT AND DUPLICATED) and attach an entry packet to their creation. Tell them to have a parent help them fill out the top part and to help them write what they told you about their art in the Artist Statement section. Ask them to bring back their entry the next day and put it in the box in the office. Make the Reflections entries collection box colorful and festive so it makes them feel like it is a big deal to put their entry into it. This creates more 'buzz' with other students, who then want to know how they can put something into that special box in the office. Check with your principal to find out the most advisable time to do this "workshop" would be.
4. Set the collection location and date for the other entries.
 - a. Collect the entries.
5. Organize the entries by category and division.
6. Record all entries in a spreadsheet and take photos of all Visual Arts, photography and literature entries. Download and digitally save all film, music and dance entries.
7. Distribute entries to your reviewers (formerly "judges" - but we live in a kinder and gentler era, so no more "judging" of entries....), along with the Reviewer packet which has a welcome letter, instructions, reviewer rubric and reviewers score sheet.
8. Collect back the results.
9. Post award winners.
10. Have a BIG celebration for ALL students who entered. This can be as simple as everyone brings their lunch and has a "special" area in the cafeteria for Lunch with the Principal.
11. Display the art where everyone may view it (as long as it is in a "safe" location, since these are all "priceless").
12. Publicly present the awards at a morning assembly or PTA meeting. Make sure the parents are invited!
13. Send or drop off winning entries to your council or PTA district by the appropriate due date.

Share the workload! Join forces with neighboring schools that also have a PTA. This is a great way to promote team-building between schools, and if the school you partner with happens to be a school your students typically feed into (e.g. elementary school to middle school, middle school to high school), then the Reflections partnership is also helping prepare children and parents for the next level

of education! Just make sure the student entry forms show the specific school the student is from so the entries don't get mixed up!

Tips for Judging:

Recruit a team of 6 or more arts experts to review student submissions. Inviting professionals in the arts community to participate as reviewers will increase the credibility of your program and exposure for PTA. All reviewers must have a working knowledge of their assigned arts area. Use the **program flier** to help introduce Reflections to local arts professionals.

TIP: Ask arts teachers to help you identify working professionals in your local arts community. Consider local arts agencies, arts and cultural organizations, colleges, community leaders, and prominent artists.

Make sure that judges are not part of the immediate unit (parents, teachers, dance/art studio where students from the unit attend).

Sources of Judges:

Literature Judges- Librarians, book store employees, journalists, local authors, English major local college students or college professors not related to anyone in the unit. Faculty from high school (as long as the unit isn't that high school).

For Photography/Visual Arts - Local professional or newspaper photographers, college photography students or instructors, or art museum staff, not related to anyone in the unit.

For Dance - Dance studios outside of the immediate unit, making sure students from that unit do not attend the studio.

For Film and Music - Local colleges with a film/music department, TV news videographers, not related to anyone in the unit

For Music - Similar to Dance - local music schools with no students from the unit attending, professional musicians from music-related non-profits, church band/choir members, not related to anyone in the unit.

The other thing you might consider for your judges is to "share" them with neighboring schools that have a PTA. Especially for Dance, Music and film - since elementary schools don't normally get lots of entries in these categories - use one reviewer for a few schools. Of course, each school would be reviewed separately, but this way instead of 3 schools, each with only 2 or 3 entries in say, the film category, they find one film reviewer, instead of 3.

Make sure that judges only review at a given level. So if a judge, reviews at the unit level, they could not judge at the council or district level, since that might give certain entries an unfair advantage, since the judge had seen the entry previously and might favor it.

And, of course, use blind reviewing for all entries. "Blind" meaning the student's name, parent's name and contact information is not visible. You will want the grade level and Artist Statement visible so judges can review the art against the competence of what they feel a child of that age should be able to achieve.