NATIONAL PTA®

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

TOOLKIT

NATIONAL PTA DIVERSITY COMMITTEE
JUNE 2015:
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About National PTA
National PTA® comprises millions of families, students, teachers, administrators, and business and community leaders devoted to the educational success of children and the promotion of parent involvement in schools. PTA is a registered 501(c) (3) nonprofit association that prides itself on being a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families and communities, and a strong advocate for public education. Membership in PTA is open to anyone who wants to be involved and make a difference for the education, health, and welfare of children and youth.

Acknowledgements
This publication was developed with the support of the National PTA Diversity Committee.

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PTA.org/diversitytoolkit
I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your commitment to PTA. Please take a moment to review this Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit.

The purpose of the toolkit is to help you understand how to achieve your diversity and inclusion goals. Not all of the answers are contained here, but it is an important beginning. This is a collaborative effort.

This information connects to the future of PTA. Our diversity chairs realize that the work needs to be done at the state and local levels and in our communities.

With such diverse populations in our schools, there is no one way to promote parental involvement. Diverse populations and cultures have different definitions of parental involvement. We must learn to listen to their opinions and to their needs.

Included in this toolkit is useful information on how PTA can achieve effective outreach to diverse populations. One strategy is by building relationships and by removing the obstacles that prevent diverse populations from joining the PTA. It is not enough to have the information on diversity and inclusion but we all must work together to make it happen.

Current times challenge us to do more with less—less time, less budget and fewer people to do the work. With your help, your passion and your dedication we can overcome these challenges and maintain our focus on the children.

Diversity means empowerment. It means sharing our differences and similarities. PTA needs your connections to make it happen!

Diversity and inclusion is a reality. But, it is not enough to ask for a more diverse membership. PTA needs to be inclusive and we must work on retaining new and existing members in order for the work to be accomplished.

The diversity chairs are the agents of change. National PTA Diversity Committee thanks you for the opportunity to share with you and to be a resource when you need assistance.

Best wishes and thank you again.

Warm regards,

Mike Dimich
National PTA Diversity Committee Chair 2013-2015
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KEY TAKE-AWAYS

In November and December 2014, the National PTA Diversity Committee conducted a survey of PTA leaders at the state and regional levels to ask about their needs and concerns. The content of this toolkit is based on what the committee learned from the survey answers and written comments. The committee will continue to listen to your needs in order to develop the toolkit as a useful resource.

Starting and maintaining diversity initiatives can be rewarding and a little overwhelming and intimidating. To assist in your efforts, we have provided numerous resources to help you with your efforts. The following key take-aways can provide some quick solutions to starting or enhancing your diversity initiatives.

- Assemble a diversity committee
- Set goals, milestones and realistic expectations
- Try new ideas
- Communicate with community groups and leaders
- Celebrate your successes

Set Goals, Milestones and Realistic Expectations

To keep your diversity initiatives on track and to measure the effectiveness of your efforts, the diversity committee needs to establish goals. Goals are crucial to the success of your initiatives and allow for accountability in leadership and members. Additionally, goals are needed to establish a budget, plan for staffing, and set timelines for completion. Setting milestones for your goals will allow you to pace and streamline your diversity efforts for efficiency and success. To stay on track, you will need to reassess your milestones monthly or quarterly and make adjustments accordingly.

Setting realistic expectations among the diversity committee members and to the groups that you represent is important. Oftentimes, new committees start very passionately and want to undertake numerous objectives but may not have the required resources or approval to complete those tasks. It can become disappointing to both leaders and members when tasks are not accomplished. It can also create a negative perception with the groups being served if expectations fall short consistently. Establish realistic goals that can be accomplished with the resources that you have within the timeframe allocated. Communicate regularly to minimize misconceptions and plan for consistent communication across various channels to keep everyone informed.

Assemble a Diversity Committee

To better understand the diverse community that you are serving, assemble a diversity committee that fully represents your community. What are the key diversity groups in your community? Think beyond ethnicity. What are some of the groups in your community that should have representation? Who are the leaders and key influencers in the community? Having a well-balanced team of diverse members can assist you in identifying key concerns as well as gain “buy-in” to get others in the community to support and contribute to your diversity and inclusion initiatives.
**Try New Ideas**

Having a diversity committee allows your PTA to explore and learn through new experiences. By including different perspectives and experiences in the brainstorming and planning phases, some of your best ideas will be created. As you plan your events and activities for the year, make sure that you get input from as many viewpoints as possible. Solicit ideas from team members who may be more quiet or reserved, as they have valuable contributions as well. Don’t be afraid to try something new or step outside of the box. Some ideas may work well, and some may not. Your committee can learn and grow from these experiences.

**Communicate with Other Diversity Groups**

When looking to implement diversity initiatives, you do not need to operate in a vacuum. PTA affiliates across the U.S. have organized many diversity committees that have implemented and executed very successful initiatives. In addition, you can reach out to diversity groups in your community, within your state, in a neighboring state, or across the U.S. Connecting with other diversity groups or leaders can provide insight and best practices to enrich your initiatives. Additionally, this toolkit has numerous resources and best practices to jump start or further enhance your initiatives.

**Celebrate Your Successes**

As you pursue your diversity and inclusion goals, be sure to applaud your own hard work and successes. You and the groups that you serve all have daily demands and responsibilities. Therefore, it’s important to pause and take time to celebrate milestones and accomplishments and recognize the progress that you’ve made. Celebrations and recognition can take many forms: an informal, inexpensive “thank you” email, letter or greeting card, a public acknowledgement to the entire committee, an informal potluck meal, or awarding thoughtful keepsakes. The key message is to take time to acknowledge and celebrate accomplishments, keeping the committee motivated and encouraged.

**Key Take-Aways**

- Try new ideas by including different perspectives in brainstorming.
- Communicate with other diversity groups to gain insight.
- Celebrate your successes and accomplishments regularly.
NATIONAL PTA DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY†

“The National Congress of Mothers, irrespective of creed, color or condition, stands for all parenthood, childhood, homehood.”

~ Alice McLellan Birney, 1898 Cofounder of National PTA

Those words, true in 1898, are even truer today. PTAs everywhere must understand and embrace the uniqueness of all individuals, appreciating that each contributes a diversity of views, experiences, cultural heritage/traditions, skills/abilities, values and preferences. When PTAs respect differences yet acknowledge shared commonalities uniting their communities, and then develop meaningful priorities based upon their knowledge, they genuinely represent their communities. When PTAs represent their communities, they gain strength and effectiveness through increased volunteer and resource support.

The recognition of diversity within organizations is valuing differences and similarities in people through actions and accountability. These differences and similarities include age, ethnicity, language and culture, economic status, educational background, gender, geographic location, marital status, mental ability, national origin, organizational position and tenure, parental status, physical ability, political philosophy, race, religion, sexual orientation and work experience.

Therefore PTAs at every level must:
- Openly assess beliefs and practices to assure inclusiveness and guard against discrimination;
- Make every effort to create a PTA board and membership that is inclusive and reflective of its community;
- Encourage that all PTA activities at the school be planned by a committee which is representative of the population;
- Foster programs and practices that eliminate bias, prejudice and misunderstanding within their communities;
- Become acquainted with the leaders of the many diverse groups in the community and collaborate with them to increase parent, family and community involvement;
- Educate its leaders and members to the needs, cultural beliefs, traditions and family structures of the population they serve; and
- Propose change wherever discriminatory practices are perceived.

PTA values and appreciates diversity, which enriches and strengthens the structure of our society within our state and nation.

†This policy should be used in its entirety with no portion quoted out of context. Look for supporting documents and presentations at www.pta.org/diversitytoolkit. For more information about National PTA Resolutions and Position Statements visit: www.pta.org
CONNECTING FAMILIES TO TODAY’S PTA

Why do we need/want ALL parents to be knowledgeable and involved in their child’s education?

In our schools today, students are exposed to more complex learning and serious issues than ever before. Students are dealing with new standards, new curriculum and standardized exams. They also face issues such as cyber bullying, sexting and social media exposure. In order for parents to support their children and assure that they receive a well-rounded education, parents need to be aware of students’ school work and what they face on a daily basis. Since parents are a support and an encouragement, they play a vital role in their children’s educational process. Parents who are knowledgeable and involved can guide their children on the path to graduation.

What do YOU want parents to know about engagement and involvement?

The key to effective parent engagement is complex. No single technique will have the same effect for all parents. Creating a comfortable and welcoming environment is a beneficial beginning. Regardless of economic status or educational background, parents have tremendous abilities and skills and they instill these in their children every day. Providing parents with knowledge and information about how the educational system works helps them to understand the important role they play. When parents are fully engaged in guiding their children as learners, this can ensure successful educational experiences in a very personally connected way.

What must be done?

Have a clear plan for the goal of engaging parents. Let parents know the important role they play in their children’s education. Do not assume that families know what they need to know. Offer short training segments during PTA meetings on current educational trends and information. Also, keep in mind that parent involvement/engagement is an American concept and might not be common for families new to this country. For this reason, provide information on their role as well as their rights and responsibilities in the school and in their child’s education. Finally, ask parents to participate in school activities and be ready to provide thorough information on the purposes for their participation.

TODAY’S PTA STANDS FOR EVERY CHILD!

- Involve Dads
- Involve Grandparents
- Involve Teachers and Administrators
- Involve Youth
- Involve Students and Families
- Involve Military Families
- Involve Immigrant and Refugee Families
- Involve Foster Families
- Involve Kinship Families
- Involve…Everybody!

For supporting documents and presentations you should go at: www.pta.org/diversitytoolkit
ORIENTATION PROCESS
FOR EMERGING MINORITY LEADERS

Planning and Implementing an Emerging Minority Leadership Conference

Contained in this section are information, tools and resources for you to begin planning and implementing an Emerging Minority Leadership Conference of your own. The National PTA Diversity and Inclusion Committee applaud you for holding your own event. This is an important step in a different direction for this organization. You are a part of this change and a change agent within your organization. As we look at reaching out to communities that have been invisible in the past, building leadership capacity is so very important. Use the materials provided to you as you see fit. The resources and tools are samples of what have been used in the past so that you don’t have to start from scratch. These resources are by no means the only way to put your event together. Use what is useful to you and put the rest on a shelf; you may need it for a future event. We understand that you may face some challenges, so please contact the National PTA Diversity and Inclusion Committee member liaison assigned to your state congress and/or National PTA staff liaisons at diversity@pta.org.

Task Force/Planning Team

Proper planning of your event is essential for its success. Consider appointing a Diversity Committee Chair and/or a team lead to plan and implement your conference.

Conference Goals:
1. To stimulate inclusive decision models
2. To prepare a pool of leaders able to lead and represent diverse groups and communities
3. To support multicultural membership growth

Suggested Outcomes:
1. To develop a plan that will include putting together a task force/planning team to implement a conference to train local minority leaders by strengthening skills needed to take a leadership role at state, council, region and district levels
2. To recruit human capacity able to lead and represent diverse demographic groups
3. To build relationships with staffs at Title 1, English Language Learner and Department of Education Offices

Under the direction of the State Diversity and Inclusion Chair, a task force/planning team should be made up of people who can bring a wide variety of perspectives to the table. However, remember you may not be able to meet all of the needs of all of the people. Consider the following people: a school administrator, a teacher, a community stakeholder, a state PTA representative, a local PTA representative, and a corporate representative. Each of these individuals will bring something different to the table.

The task force will be essential in determining the goals and objectives of this conference. Is the goal to train future leaders, or is it to equip parents with the skills they need to advocate effectively for children in the school or community? An essential part of the planning process is the training assessment. Appendix A is an online tool you may use to help determine your training goals. A smart form is available on the online Toolkit to customize for your needs.
ORIENTATION PROCESS
FOR EMERGING MINORITY LEADERS

Budgeting and Funding

Determining your budget and identifying a source of funding is very important as you start planning your event. Appendix B is an online tool which may be useful as you determine what you need to reach your goal. A smart form is available on the online Toolkit to customize for your needs.

Schedule

To make sure your event goes off without a hitch, it is important to develop a timeline for when things should be completed. Remember the five Ps: Prior preparation prevents poor performance. Your timeline can include tasks to be completed up to the event, who is responsible for each task, and even include any follow-up tasks for after the event. See Appendix C online for a useful tool to assist you. A smart form is available on the online Toolkit to customize for your needs.

Speaker Information

Speakers or workshop facilitators are an important part of your event. Who you select to present will probably be driven by the goals of and audience for your event. Work with your state PTA to determine where the best resources can be found.

Your state PTA may be able to recommend outside speakers for you to approach. State PTAs have lots of experience holding state conventions. Utilize the expertise right there in your backyard before you spend countless hours investigating and researching speakers. Included in the online Toolkit are sample speaker forms and AV request forms that you may use as you are planning your events.

An agreement between you and the speakers is a good idea. Such an agreement will ensure that everyone is on the same page and help eliminate any surprises. It will also assist you in determining how much to budget for speakers. It is a good idea to have this agreement completed three to six months out.

Have your speaker complete a housing form, if needed, so you won’t have the headache of trying to guess your speakers’ needs. This form is also helpful for your participants if your conference runs more than one day. The online Appendices D, E, F, and G can help you in securing your speaker or facilitator. A smart form is available on the online Toolkit to customize for your needs.

Training/Materials

What’s a training event without handouts and materials? Whether you use PTA training resources or an outside trainer, you will have to decide who will be responsible for duplicating materials. Do you have the capacity to duplicate and collate materials? Will you need to put together a team of people to handle this task? Who is available? How much will it cost to make copies? Did you include this cost in your budget? Again, check with your state PTA to see what is available to assist you in providing handouts. Keep in mind that you will probably need to give outside speakers a deadline to get handouts to you if you decide to perform the duplicating and collating yourself.

Facility

As you select the location, think about the format for your event. Will you have simultaneous breakout sessions? Will you need a space to hold a general session? What about providing meals and refreshments? Appendix B online would be useful for this task. A smart form is available on the online Toolkit to customize to your needs.
ORIENTATION PROCESS
FOR EMERGING MINORITY LEADERS

Travel
Make sure you make participants and speakers aware of any travel policies you have. If travel is required—airfare, per diem, mileage, and other similar costs—these should be included in your budget. Appendix F online can help with this task. A smart form is available on the Toolkit website to customize for your needs.

Registration and Promotion
Registration and promotion should be a simultaneous activity. This allows organizations, community stakeholders and parent leaders to help you put the word out. Having a registration procedure will help you as you plan your event by giving you a running count of the number of participants you can expect. This count will give you an idea of how many handouts to prepare, how much food to plan for, and how many breakout rooms you may need. Oftentimes, a speaker will ask how many people will be attending their session. This helps them develop workshop activities to accommodate the participants. Appendices H and I online can help with this task. A smart form is available to customize to your needs.

Follow-Up
Perhaps the most important aspect of this entire event is the follow-up. How will you measure the success of your training? How will you find out if the skills and leadership training are being put to use? Will there be follow-up phone calls? Will these leaders be asked to participate in council-, region-, or state-level activities? Discuss these options with your state leadership to see where these new leaders will fit.

Next Steps
Use this information as a guide as you begin to plan and implement your event. Also see the section under tools and resource library to plan and implement the event. We have also included a couple of the workshop sessions used for the Emerging Minority Leaders Conference hosted by National PTA. Feel free to use these materials. Remember, you are not alone; feel free to contact National PTA Diversity Committee Liaisons. We are always interested in hearing about successes out in the field. Be sure to share your great ideas and strategies with your peers across the country.

National PTA Diversity and Inclusion Committee wishes you success!

Resources
Will you have resources available for participants? Will you use this opportunity to promote membership, programs or leadership opportunities? Perhaps you will decide to have a resource table set up so that participants can get the resources they need. This is totally up to you and your team.

To see appendixes and other templates you should go to: www.pta.org/diversitytoolkit
**Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives FAQ**

Make sure you make participants and speakers aware of any travel policies you have. If travel is required—airfare, per diem, mileage, and other similar costs—these should be included in your budget. Appendix F can help with this task. A smart form is available on the Tools to customize for your needs.

1. **What is the benefit of having diversity and inclusion practices within a committee or program?**
   - Today’s society reflects a blend of different ethnic groups, cultures, traditions, languages and family traditions. Our communities and demographics are changing and will continue to evolve. Therefore, it is imperative that we have committees and programs in place to reflect the diverse interests of the people being represented. Having a diverse organization is a wonderful opportunity to learn from each other while impacting positive change in a community. A unified assembly of diverse individuals is one way to provide inclusiveness in decision making and representation to engage, educate, and equip new members to get involved in PTA initiatives and activities. When leadership and committees reflect their communities, they are more likely to receive “buy-in” from the community and; therefore, are more likely to have a higher probability of support and success with their initiatives.

2. **How can I get involved with diversity and inclusion initiatives within my local school or PTA?**
   - If you are interested in volunteering or serving in a leadership position in your school community, please contact a PTA representative affiliated with the school.

3. **What resources are available to get you started with a diversity and inclusion initiative?**
   - Good news! There are numerous resources available to assist you. To get started, the National Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit has numerous resources to assist you and can answer many of your questions. Whether at the local or state level, there are approved resources to assist with creating a diversity committee, policies, identifying activities and events, and sharing inclusion best practices. Additionally, there are resources to connect you with other local or state diversity leaders to assist you in your efforts. PTA.org/diversitytoolkit.

4. **How do you build and support multicultural growth?**
   - Your organization can build and support multicultural growth by having a committed team with a united mission and vision. To extend your reach to attract new members, the leaders should provide ongoing communication through various channels (social media, email, letters and website) to inform and educate the community about your initiatives, activities and events. Plan quarterly recruiting social events to target demographically underrepresented groups and provide a warm and inviting atmosphere. Face to face relationship building is very important for some cultures so create a strategy for engaging individuals when they attend your events. When a PTA organization models great leadership, integrity, and transparency, those qualities can be a catalyst to engage new
members and affiliates to “buy-in.” When individuals see and hear about positive results and feel welcomed, they will want to get involved and invite others.

5. What is the role of the diversity chair at the state level?
- The role of the diversity chair at the state level is to assist the PTA programs throughout the state with diversity initiatives, activities and events. This person should have a strong interest in ensuring that diversity and inclusion programs throughout the state are in compliance with the national policy and reflective of their communities. The diversity chair should be a leader in spearheading and supporting diversity efforts throughout the state and serve as a liaison to the national diversity committee. Additionally, this person should work closely with the state president for recruitment, minority leader identification, and membership increase, especially to address representation gaps and reach out to teachers, administrators and youth.

6. Why is it important to have a diversity chair?
- It is important to have a diversity chair to provide leadership, support and encouragement for local, council and district diversity and inclusion initiatives. Having a point of contact to provide guidance and assistance for programs throughout the state allows for cohesion and consistency of diversity initiatives.

7. How does the PTA National Diversity Committee support the local and state organizations?
- The National Diversity Committee’s goal is to serve as a resource and partner with state diversity and inclusion programs to provide leadership, guidance and support to assist them with their diversity and inclusion initiatives. The National PTA Diversity Committee recently created an online Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit to provide resources 24/7 to help throughout the year. If applicable, the National PTA Diversity Committee can provide training recommendations for your organization, recommend speakers and activities, and provide leadership support with some of your diversity and inclusion initiatives.

8. Why is it important to make accommodations for members if English is not their first language?
- A key factor with lack of growth and engagement is poor communication. If an organization is trying to grow and engage membership, but cannot effectively reach the designated audience, that organization will have some challenges attracting new members. Today, there are numerous languages spoken all across the U.S. Identify the major languages spoken in your local region or district, and provide literature to educate, equip and inform your targeted members. Additionally, provide an interpreter at meetings and events to help foster positive outreach to draw and attract new members.

9. Why is it important to host and implement EML conferences at the state, region, council and district level?
- Hosting and implementing an Emerging Minority Leader (EML) conference at various levels allows PTA members in different regions across the U.S. to assemble together to network, share best practices and build new relationships. The EML conference provides an environment to train minority leaders and offers a platform for PTA members to present workshops to develop their skills. Oftentimes, people who serve in leadership positions are very busy so the EML conference allows those individuals to step away from their day-to-day tasks and focus on diversity initiatives for a couple of days to re-energize and recharge to keep them motivated as they move forward in their efforts.
## State Diversity & Inclusion Chairs

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Updates to contact information will be posted as changes occur at www.pta.org/diversitytoolkit
MULTICULTURAL MEMBERSHIP GROWTH:
HOW TO ENGAGE WITH NON-TRADITIONAL AUDIENCES

National PTA is committed to multicultural membership and collaborative relationships with all stakeholders in the mission to advocate for every child. The National PTA Diversity and Inclusion Policy encourages all PTAs to value diversity, promote inclusiveness, and facilitate family, community, and school engagement for the benefit of all children.

Reaching out to non-traditional audiences is an essential step in maintaining the strength of PTAs grassroots advocacy. Following are simple steps that local PTAs can take to engage and empower diverse families and multicultural communities.

Do a self-assessment
Start with a diversity profile of your PTA families, school and community. Inventory your communication resources, opportunities and challenges in reaching out to diverse groups. Then assess what matters to your target audiences.

- One way to do this is to enroll in the National PTA School of Excellence program designed to promote family-school partnerships for enriching children’s educational experiences and well-being.
- Diversity Profile: In your PTA area, what are the available demographics of the school-aged children, their families and their neighborhoods? These might include income levels, race/ethnicity, family configurations, special needs, religious preferences and geographic distributions. How well does the current membership and leadership of the local PTA reflect these demographics? [link to demographics at KidsCount, National Center for Education Statics and PEW]. What other significant differences characterize the children, families, neighborhoods, and schools served by your PTA? See the Diversity & Inclusion Worksheet.
- Define your target audiences: Which groups are not as well represented in your PTA structure and practices? Which groups are difficult to reach (language, geography, cultural perspectives, religious differences, etc.) or resistant to a PTA membership invitation?
- Assess your communication resources, opportunities, and challenges.
  1. Resources: Consider what resources are available from individual volunteers, your schools, and community groups and organizations: talents, materials, money, time, goods and services. What are the school policies on distributing flyers, displaying posters and using parent listservs?
    - Materials are available on the National PTA website including promotional materials in English and Spanish.
  2. Opportunities: What prescheduled school or community events provide an opportunity for connecting with non-traditional audiences?
  3. Challenges: Which languages are used in the schools? Do you have translators (paid or volunteer)? How do you contact local media (radio, television)? Do you have the money, facilities, and talent for producing messages in both paper and digital forms? Which is more/less accessible and useful for your target audience(s)?
  4. Assess communication practices; questions to ask:
    - Are communication materials informative, regular and accessible by all families?
MULTICULTURAL MEMBERSHIP GROWTH:  
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• Is there a school policy for teacher communication with families?  
• Are there translators?  
• Is there a policy for family communication with teachers?  
• Do the school and your PTA provide opportunities for families and staff to share information in a variety of ways (e.g., email, home visits, phone calls, printed materials)?  
• Is it easy and convenient for parents to contact teachers and provide feedback to the school around policies and issues of concern?

Create effective messaging by adapting to non-traditional audiences

Effective messaging is not just providing clear, accurate, and useful information or persuasive arguments for the value of PTA. Instead, effective messaging is the successful adaptation of that information to the perspectives, needs, and concerns of non-traditional audiences. Non-traditional audiences may not know about PTA, may not understand the benefits of participating in PTA, or may feel distanced from the issues for which PTA advocates. Becoming familiar with what matters for non-traditional families and communities can help you adapt your messaging about PTA to these audiences.

• Begin by asking.  
  What do these families need to understand about the benefits of PTA? For some non-traditional groups, PTA is not well-known. It is important to spell out why PTA exists, what PTA has achieved, what PTA expects of members and how parents’ membership in PTA benefits themselves, their children, and the school community. See the article, “Improve Diversity to Make a Stronger PTA.”

• Make and maintain contact.  
  A primary strategy should be to talk with members of the families or groups you are trying to reach. Personal relationships are critical in making people feel welcome, understood and respected. Maintaining communication is critical; not just an initial welcome but ongoing interaction can create a basis for PTA involvement. Mentoring non-traditional parents and families can help them understand informal expectations and informal rules. Be careful to be culturally sensitive. Avoid blunt questions about differences and be vigilant about preconceptions and making inferences. See the PTA e-learning course, “Cultural Competency.”

• Make messaging a two-way, ongoing process.  
  Frame your message about PTA in ways that relate to the needs and concerns of your non-traditional audiences. Put your message in their terms, their language, and in the forms they prefer. Ask for feedback and listen carefully. Be prepared to change in response to feedback and be able to show how feedback matters.

• You are always communicating.  
  What you do and how you do it are messages that speak as loudly as your intended messages. Where people sit, who talks with whom, how differences are recognized, respected, and accommodated, which differences go unrecognized or treated as unimportant, and even the routine ways of conducting PTA meetings and events can make people feel more or less welcome. For example, single working parents may have different time constraints and childcare needs than traditional two-parent working families. How are these differences managed in planning a PTA meeting or event?
MULTICULTURAL MEMBERSHIP GROWTH: HOW TO ENGAGE WITH NON-TRADITIONAL AUDIENCES

- Help with formal PTA presentations.
  1. PowerPoint presentations available in this toolkit include:
     - Diversity and Multiculturalism
     - Engaging Immigrant and Refugee Families in the Schools – for leaders
     - Building and Working with Communities – for leaders
     - Collaborative Leadership – for leaders
     - Building Today’s PTA, Recruiting Today’s Families – for leaders
     - Building Your Child’s Tomorrow in Today’s PTA (ENG/SPN) – for external or new audiences
     - Common Threads: The History of the PTA
  2. PTA e-learning course, “Creating and Delivering a Speech”
  3. Best Practices for Effective Presentations
     - Parts 1 & 2, Designing and Delivering Face-to-Face Presentations on the PTA One Voice blog
     - Parts 3 & 4, Conducting Webinars on the PTA One Voice blog

Promote meaningful family engagement
There are good reasons to develop family engagement. Across income and background differences, students whose families are engaged are more successful and parental engagement has been shown to be an essential ingredient in improving schools in urban, low-income areas.

What is family engagement? There are three critical aspects:
• Shared school-family responsibilities and meaningful opportunities for family involvement.
• “Cradle to career” family involvement.
• Expanded arenas for engagement beyond the classroom.

Follow the PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships
• Create a welcoming PTA climate and contribute to a respectful, inclusive school community.
• Communicate effectively with regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.
• Support student success by sharing information between parents and teachers and creating meaningful opportunities for family involvement in student development and learning.
• Speak up for every child by helping families understand how the school system works and empowering families to be self-advocates.
• Share power by giving all families a voice in decision-making and developing connections between families and local and state officials.
• Connect families to community resources and develop the school as a community hub.

Create a strategic plan for engaging diverse families. National PTA offers resources for reaching out to a variety of non-traditional families.
• Hispanic families: See the plan suggested for engaging Hispanic families in the article, “7 Strategies to Integrate Hispanic Families with PTA” in the March 2015 issue of Our Children magazine.
• The One Voice PTA blog is a source for tips shared by PTA leaders around the nation. See “How to Engage All Families.”
• Military families: See the National PTA Milli-
MULTICULTURAL MEMBERSHIP GROWTH:
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- Collaborate with community-based organizations that serve target populations. For example, developing partnerships with organizations that serve Hispanic families can create important alliances.
- Strategies for PTA community collaborations:
  1. In this Toolkit:
     - “Building and Working with Communities”
     - “Collaborative Leadership”
  2. Diverse Community Connectors

Make your PTA an information resource for parents, families, educators and community groups
- Information distribution: Serve as a source and resource.
  1. Provide information on current issues. Make use of PTA position statements and resolutions.
  2. Distribute information about community resources that serve cultural, recreational, academic, health, social and other needs of families and educators.
  3. Provide information to the community, including those without school age children, about school programs, events and needs.
- Empower parents.
  1. PTA parenting resources:
     - Back to School Kits, e-learning on parenting skills, conference workshops
     - National programs (School of Excellence, Reflections)
  2. Leadership and training:
     - Emerging Minority Leadership program
     - State and local leadership opportunities
     - Local parent education programs
     - Serving as a PTA liaison with community groups

Create community connections
Address non-traditional audiences by connecting with them through community groups and organizations. Which groups and organizations are in the neighborhoods served by the PTA? Not only can partnerships create greater shared resources and alliances to serve families and schools but community organizations and groups can connect you with your non-traditional audiences through their own activities, leaders and members.

- Consider social clubs, service agencies, public libraries and parks, civic organizations, foundations, police and fire stations, hospitals, religious organizations and community service groups.
- What can these groups potentially bring to a collaborative relationship with PTA that would be useful, valuable, or a resource in advocating for children?
  1. Consider the ways their missions overlap with PTA.
  2. What are the challenges in reaching out to these groups?

- tary Alliance for Parents and Partners (MAPP).
- Male engagement: National PTA offers great tools and initiatives for getting men more involved in children’s learning, school communities and PTAs.
- Urban Family Engagement Network includes profiles of local PTA Teams
- National PTA offers programs for engaging families:
  1. Family Reading Experience
  2. Annual Take Your Family to School Day
- Get ideas for activities and programming from National PTA award winners:
  1. The annual Jan Harp Domene Diversity and Inclusion Award recognizes exemplary programs by local and state PTAs that engage diverse families.
  2. The Phoebe Apperson Hearst Awards recognize innovation in family engagement.

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**Jan Harp Domene**

**Jan Harp Domene** (JHD) served as National PTA president from 2007 to 2009. Her aim was to ensure that families of all backgrounds felt welcomed to the PTA family. She was a strong supporter of the Emerging Minority Leaders Conference and the Urban Family Engagement Initiative originated during her term. After her death, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee proposed the contest in her honor.

The purpose of the **Jan Harp Domene Diversity and Inclusion Award** contest is to recognize PTAs that are dedicated to the needs of all families represented in their schools. The contest highlights PTAs that develop practices that are inclusive and equal for all families and that result in positive change.

**Urban Family Engagement Network**

The Urban Family Engagement Network (UFEN) works in partnerships with local PTAs to engage underserved families to provide them with tools and information about how to address the educational needs of their children. This is accomplished by providing families with knowledge about how to navigate the school system, how to work with administrators and teachers, and about community resources.

The network is located in six different sites. In order to address any obstacles that families might have, the project offers childcare, translation services, interpreting and meals. Sessions are offered in small group settings, making it comfortable for families to discuss ways to be involved.

In the span of 30 months, the UFEN teams were able to achieve the following outcomes in four phases:

**Phase 1:**
Identification of the key influencers affecting the problem and support for working toward solutions.

**Phases 2-3:**
Of the families that are on track to complete the PTA Community Engagement training program, 50% have completed the curriculum and 75% have demonstrated an increased understanding and comfort level with participating in their child’s education, including school events.

**Phases 3-4:**
Of the family members that joined the PTA Urban Family Engagement Network as Community Engagement Leaders, 75% understand how they can continue to support their own child’s education, and are taking action to expand their support of other children and families in their community.

**Phase 4:**
The PTA Urban Family Engagement Network has the ability to sustain its efforts for the long-term through community partnerships, member support and outside funding.
Other PTA Programs and Resources

- **Every Child in Focus Campaign:**
  http://www.pta.org/parents/content.cfm?ItemNumber=3755

- **Men Organized to Raise Engagement:**
  http://www.pta.org/programs/content.cfm?ItemNumber=3099&navItemNumber=4188

- **Mentoring Youth Resolution:**
  http://www.pta.org/about/content.cfm?ItemNumber=3960

- **Military Alliance for Parents and Partners:**
  http://www.pta.org/parents/content.cfm?ItemNumber=3616&navItemNumber=3870

- **PTSA Proud Network for Youth Engagement:**
  http://www.pta.org/ptsa

- **School of Excellence:**
  http://www.pta.org/excellence

- **Special Education Toolkit:**
  http://www.pta.org/parents/content.cfm?ItemNumber=3715&navItemNumber=3728

- **Urban Family Engagement Network (with flyer):**
  https://www.pta.org/programs/content.cfm?ItemNumber=2135