

The PTA communications leader helps PTA members and the general public understand that PTA:

- Positively impacts the lives of all children and families; and
- Is a relevant, inclusive, influential volunteer-powered association working for the well-being of children and youth.

Obtain (from predecessor) and study the procedure book and other materials related to performing the duties of communications leader:

- Print publications: past issues, deadline schedules, duplicating process and mailing permit information, templates.
- Electronic communications: email account names and passwords, web hosting information, domain name information, social media usernames, logins and passwords, webmaster contact information.
- Calendar of events and contact information for PTA officers and chairmen.
- Budget
- Names and contact information for local media contacts.

Download or obtain the Communications section in Running Your PTA Chapter of the California State PTA *Toolkit* to learn the basics of PTA communications, responsibilities, publications and available resources. A PTA Style Guide is available at capta.org/sections/communication/represent-pta.cfm

Subscribe to California State PTA's and National PTA's print and electronic publications and communications.

Meet with communication board members (newsletter editor, social media chairman, website manager, etc.) before the beginning of the school year to develop a communications plan. Work closely with the school principal and the unit president.

Attend communications-related workshops and trainings.

DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Develop a communications plan by first establishing your PTA's communication objectives. Solicit feedback to verify that current communications are meeting member needs. Determine:

- **Who is the target audience?** Consider who you want to reach.

- **What are the right communications tools?** Determine the best way to reach your audience.
- **What is the right message for each tool?** Think through what needs to be said and how and where to say it. Be concise and to the point.

Consider using:

- Newsletters (digital or print)
- Website
- Emails
- Mobile
- Social media
- Video
- Fliers
- Banners
- Word of mouth

Review PTA calendar of events. Schedule website, social media updates, event promotion and publicity around these dates.

Set submission deadlines for the year for all publications. Create a content calendar for social media and website postings.

Develop a budget to support the plan.

Present the communications plan to the executive board for approval.

A successful PTA communications plan should:

- Adhere to PTA noncommercial, nonpartisan and nonsectarian policies.
- Inform every family in the school of the aims and accomplishments of the PTA.
- Encourage and highlight attendance at PTA meetings and family engagement in PTA projects and activities.
- Foster cooperation with the school in keeping parents informed about school functions, regulations and/or procedures on child-related issues.
- Inform the community about PTA activities and school functions.
- Express appreciation to those participating in or contributing to programs.
- Tackle barriers such as language and culture.

ENSURING QUALITY COMMUNICATIONS

- Make sure that all publications material is cleared with the principal and PTA president prior to publication or posting.
 - Principal is responsible for the accuracy of school information and compliance with the State Education Code and school district policy.
 - PTA president is responsible for the accuracy of PTA information and compliance with PTA policies.
- Use the PTA logo in all communications.
- Abide by copyright laws and republish articles and art in an ethical manner.
- Do not include photographs of or specific information (names, class, email, address, etc.) about adults or students without written permission.
- Keep your message brief and to the point.
- Create visually interesting communications with careful use of photographs, bullets, quotes, charts, and graphics.
- Date all materials.
- Have 2-3 people other than the author proofread prior to publishing or posting.
- Arrange for translation services.
- Learn more at capta.org

ONGOING RESPONSIBILITIES

- Give a regular communications report to your PTA.
- Use PTA publications to promote PTA events and share information.
- Maintain an up-to-date website.
- Use social media to communicate with members.
- Encourage officers and chairmen to contribute short articles and reports for the newsletter, website, or social media site.
- Provide media releases as requested.

11/2013

CREATING MEDIA NEWS

Local media may be interested in news coverage of your PTA event or project if it:

- Piggybacks on breaking news.
 - Be prepared to be one of the experts and demonstrate that PTA is a voice on the issues being debated.
- Ties in with anniversaries and annual happenings.
 - Identify events or dates related to schools and children (i.e. Back-to-School) and find a way to tie them to PTA programs.
- Spotlights a special event.
 - Announce activities that may be of interest to a large audience and invite local VIPs.
- Uses a “hook” or “angle.”
 - Tell the story in a new way. Provide a new angle.