

A PTA/PTSA Graduation/Prom Night event is coordinated by a committee whose chairman is an appointed or elected member of the executive board. The committee members can include other members of the board, the principal, a faculty member, the president (ex officio) and other PTA members appointed by the president. The major responsibility of this committee is to provide a safe, healthy, legal and supervised recreational event for students in cooperation with the community. A secondary responsibility may be to raise necessary funds to host the event.

### What to Consider

Some issues for a committee to consider when planning any graduation or prom night activity follow.

### Activities

- Be inexpensive, involve many members and student and be fun.
- Do not involve commercial or advertising obligations.
- Do not conflict with other PTA, school or community events.
- Create goodwill for PTA in the community.

### Safety

- PTA must ensure that young people are under proper adult supervision when participating in PTA activities, and that correct safety and security procedures are always followed. (See References at the end of this worksheet for further sources of information.)
- Parents and students must be made aware of the risks involved in hiring limousine, charter bus or van services that may have no insurance coverage, unlicensed drivers and/or provide alcoholic beverages. Contact local offices of the Public Utilities Commission to verify the licenses of these services.
- When school district buses are used for the events, the school district safety procedures must be followed.

### Health

- Health issues can differ according to the location and organization of an event. Organized events at theme parks or recreational areas — where added supervision is provided and food is catered by professionals — create fewer problems than those that are self-catered and supervised by local sponsors.
- Every event must be drug-, alcohol-, and smoke-free. Careful consideration must be given to food handling, rest room facilities, rest areas and availability of personnel certified in first aid and CPR.

### Legal Issues

- When undertaking an event or activity, local ordinances regarding large group assembly permits, fire safety and health regulations must be obeyed. The school district, district PTA, city and county agencies must be consulted for specific directions.
- “Parents’ Approval and Student Waiver” forms should be completed for each student participant. (See California State PTA *Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide*.)
- It is illegal for a person under the age of 18 to participate in any form of gambling (including casino activities).

The California State Penal Code section numbers concerning gambling and lotteries are as follows:

§319	Lottery defined
§320	Punishment for preparing and/or drawing a lottery
§320.5	Gambling: Charitable Raffles (effective July 1, 2001; SB 649 McPherson, Chapter 778)
§321	Punishment for selling and/or disposing of lottery tickets
§322	Aiding lotteries
§326.5	Bingo Law. Any PTA considering bingo must check with local authorities including county counsel and/or city attorney regarding pertinent local ordinances. Consult with council and/or district PTA for specific bingo guidelines.
§330	Gaming

- The State of California Attorney General’s Guide for Charities, California Department of Justice states “It is a crime in California to conduct an illegal raffle.” (Refer to the California Attorney General’s Guide for Charities and §320.5 Gambling: Charitable Raffles effective July 1, 2001.)
- Information on how to conduct a legal raffle can be obtained by going to the California Attorney General’s website, [www.ag.ca.gov](http://www.ag.ca.gov). Raffles may include but are not limited to donation drawings, duck derby and cow chip bingo. (Legal Raffles for PTA, Finance Chapter)
- It is illegal for anyone to possess any controlled substance without a valid prescription! Other pertinent California Laws:
  - California Education Code Section 48900. It is unlawful for a student to possess, offer or sell any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant on school premises or at any school activity.

- Alcohol Beverage Control Act, Section 25658. No person may sell, furnish or procure intoxicating liquor (including beer) for anyone under the age of 21.
- Alcohol Beverage Control Act, Section 25658 and 25662. It is illegal for any person under the age of 21 to possess, obtain or consume beer or alcohol.

## Transportation

In situations where PTA sponsors activities and secures transportation, such as “Grad Night” (hereinafter referred to as “events”), the PTA must provide accessible transportation at no additional cost to students with mobility disabilities in compliance with the requirements set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Local PTA units shall coordinate with their local school and/or school district to obtain updated lists of accessible transportation providers if such lists exist. Questions from PTA units, districts or councils regarding a request for accessible transportation should first be directed to the school district. Additional questions may be directed to the California State PTA Vice President for Leadership Services.

When local PTA units secure transportation for participating students for events, local PTA units must comply with the ADA which does not permit services that are different or separate from that provided to other individuals without disabilities, unless such action is necessary to provide an individual with a disability or class of such individuals with a good, service, facility, privilege, advantage, or accommodation or other opportunity that is as effective as that provided to others.

If the local PTA unit secures accessible transportation to events, as described above, and it fails to arrive, the PTA shall make every reasonable effort to secure alternative accessible transportation to enable students with mobility disabilities to still attend. In no instance shall a local PTA unit inform students with mobility disabilities that they must secure their own transportation.

A student with a disability who requires a one-to-one aide as part of his or her Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) shall be permitted to attend any PTA event with his or her aide, as the student’s family deems necessary. Further, no fee shall be charged for any PTA event ticket for the student’s aide. For any event where a student requires an aide, the cost of the aide’s transportation shall be borne by the PTA. PTA may ask to be reimbursed by the event venue, affiliated school and/or school district.

## PTA Insurance

When planning PTA events and activities you must always refer to the *Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide* that is updated and mailed annually to unit presidents. If you have any questions or concerns about the event contact the California State PTA insurance broker.

**Never sign a Hold Harmless Agreement on behalf of the PTA** (PTA Use of School Facilities, Running Your PTA Chapter; Budgeting and Fundraising, Finance Chapter). If the PTA is asked to sign a Hold Harmless Agreement for any reason, the PTA should contact the California State PTA insurance broker. When directed by

the insurance broker to sign the “Facilities Use Permit Addendum” for events held on public school campuses, locate the form in the *Toolkit*, Forms Chapter. Contact information for the California State PTA insurance broker can be obtained from the California State PTA office.

- The PTA/PTSA association must vote to sponsor the program each year. The results of the vote must be recorded in the minutes of the association.
- Make certain of insurance coverage when planning a graduation or prom night activity by contacting the California State PTA insurance broker. A list of covered PTA activities and requirements is included in the California State PTA *Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide*. Activities excluded by the insurance company are not allowed.
  - California State PTA-prohibited activities are not allowed. These prohibited activities can threaten the safety, health and welfare of children. (Refer to *Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide*.)
  - Units must further protect the PTA’s liability insurance by having a “Hold Harmless Agreement” (Finance Chapter; Forms Chapter, or the *Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide*) signed by every concessionaire and independent contractor engaged to provide services for PTA events and activities. Contact the district PTA or PTA insurance broker.
- Requirements for PTA-sponsored events on school grounds (Running Your PTA Chapter):
  - “Certificate of Insurance” must be provided by PTA if requested by school district. (Contact the PTA insurance broker.)
  - Additional insurance coverage may be required; refer to *Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide*.
  - PTA Use of School Facilities (Running Your PTA Chapter)
- Requirements for PTA-sponsored events off school grounds (Budgeting and Fundraising, Finance Chapter):
  - From the operator of the facility, obtain a “Certificate of Insurance” (Budgeting and Fundraising, Finance Chapter) with the PTA/PTSA and California State PTA, its units, councils and district PTAs, named as additional insured.
  - Additional insurance coverage may be required; refer to *Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide*.
- The PTA may not join another non-PTA organization or group for the purpose of conducting a graduation or prom night activity. The PTA insurance coverage must not be authorized or used for any event not sponsored by the PTA. Prior to cosponsoring an activity or event with another group, refer to PTA Policies, Cooperating/Co-sponsorship With Other Organizations (Know the PTA Chapter).

## PTA Unit Procedures

- The event and all related work and/or fundraising activity must be approved by the executive board and the association and formally recorded in the minutes of the association. All money raised or derived from the event or associated activities shall be deposited in the unit treasury. No funds shall be expended by the chairman, subcommittee chairmen or committee without approval of the executive board and association. All contracts must be signed by elected officers, one of whom shall be the president, following approval by the executive board and association.
- The president appoints the committee, subject to ratification by the executive board (see Article IX, Section 2, *Bylaws for Local PTA/PTSA Units*).
- The graduation or prom night activity committee must follow the "Guidelines on the Use of Committees," Running Your PTA Chapter.
- Committee procedures must be established prior to beginning the project that include, but are not limited to
  - responsibilities of the chairman.
  - responsibilities of the committee members.
  - clarification of all financial transactions in accordance with PTA/PTSA's bylaws and financial procedures. (See Finance Chapter.)
  - submission of a written report, usually prepared by committee chairman, to the executive board at each monthly meeting including a financial accounting of all monies and donations received and monies disbursed, and activities planned.
  - strict observance of PTA bylaws, policies and procedures.
  - responsibility for storage of supplies and equipment related to the activity and the insurance coverage for these supplies and equipment.
- Anticipate and address these needs and any unusual concerns as early as possible to assure a successful activity.

## PTA Finances

A PTA sponsoring or co-sponsoring a graduation or prom night activity must follow these procedures in all financial transactions.

- A PTA does not raise money for other organizations, nor does it allow its Internal Revenue Service Employer Identification Number (EIN) to be used by another organization. It is vital to remember that the nonprofit status of PTA is determined by how funds are earned as well as how they are spent. PTA units that engage in extensive fundraising activities, not associated with their primary purposes, may have to file Internal Revenue Service Form 990T and pay a tax on any unrelated business income.
- Refer to the Finance Chapter, under the following subjects for further information.

## What to Do

- Secure California State materials listed under Resources and References through unit PTA/PTSA president.
- Study and become familiar with the PTA noncommercial policy, insurance program, financial procedures and unit procedures.
- Become familiar with state and local requirements for large group assembly and charitable solicitations or sales. If the event is to be held on school premises Fund become familiar with school district policy on use of school facilities and equipment and food service requirements.
- Hold committee meetings early in the PTA/PTSA year to pre-plan and formulate ideas before presenting recommendations to the executive board and association. Evaluate all proposed activities to ensure that they will
  - comply with all laws, school regulations, health, safety and security requirements
  - be inexpensive, involve many members/students and be fun
  - not involve commercial or advertising obligations
  - not conflict with other PTA, school or community events
  - create goodwill for PTA in the community
- Establish a budget for the event, including all activities of the subcommittees. Submit this budget for approval by the association. Determine the revenue sources for the event. (Standards for PTA Fundraising, Finance Chapter.)

Remember, plans for any proposed fundraising project must be presented to the association for approval and must be recorded in the minutes. If specified, the net profit must be spent for the purpose(s) for which it was raised.

Subcommittee members should know how much money has been allocated for the subcommittee's use and what records and resources are available.

- If a detailed outline of the graduation/prom night chairman's responsibilities is not included in the PTA procedure book, make one for a successor.
- Assign specific tasks to members of the committee (subcommittee chairmen) such as secretary, financial secretary, fundraising, tickets, scheduling, telephone calls/e-mail, construction, food, games, safety/security/first aid, entertainment, publicity, design/decorations, set up/tear down.
  - The committee is a part of the association and must operate within the framework of the PTA bylaws, policies and procedures.
- Clear date(s) with school and community calendars; reserve needed facilities and equipment.
- Obtain any required permits well in advance of the event. Notify local police, fire and/or health departments as required.

- Secure a “Parents’ Approval and Student Waiver” form for each student participant, as required. (See *Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide* and *Graduation/Prom Night Guidelines*.)
- Make firm arrangements with concessionaires.
  - Remember, contracts must be approved by the association and signed by the president and one other elected officer of the PTA/PTSA executive board.
  - Be absolutely certain that each concessionaire is fully covered by his own insurance and Workers’ Compensation.
- Obtain from each concessionaire: (File originals with the unit treasurer, keep one copy of each.)
  - “Certificate of Insurance” provided by the concessionaire’s insurance carrier
  - “Hold Harmless Agreement” (Finance Chapter; Forms Chapter) or the *Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide*)
- For funds received from ticket sales or fundraising activity, it is essential that at least two people count the money together. Funds (money) should never be handled by one person alone. It is unfair for any individual to be required to have sole responsibility for PTA funds or to be expected to prove that the total of monies received is correct. Money should be counted by the graduation/prom night committee chairman and the unit treasurer or financial secretary. The treasurer (or financial secretary) should issue a receipt for all money received and deposit the funds in a PTA/PTSA bank account.
- Itemized bills, sales receipts, etc., are given to the treasurer for payment by check. ALL BILLS ARE PAID BY CHECK. NEVER PAY ANY BILLS WITH CASH. The final accounting is given to the association and filed for audit.
- Keep accurate records of charitable (cash and in-kind) donations received with any donor information required, and promptly forward to the treasurer. The treasurer shall issue to donors an acknowledgement following appropriate substantiation and disclosure requirements found in *California State PTA Toolkit*, Finance Chapter, Tax Requirements.
- A small amount of funds approved by the executive board (not exceeding the amount authorized in the bylaws), if needed, may be advanced for deposits or other supplies/expenses before the event. Receipts are required to reconcile all advanced funds.

The chairman is responsible for submitting, at each monthly executive board meeting, a written report which includes a financial accounting of all monies received and disbursed, donations received and activities planned.

## After the Event

- Complete an inventory of supplies and equipment related to the activity, establish a location to store reusable equipment; determine if the value of stored materials warrants property insurance coverage.
- Reconcile all advanced funds and submit any outstanding bills promptly.
- Hold a committee meeting to evaluate the event.
- Conduct a student survey.
- Collect written reports from subcommittee chairmen and prepare a report for the association and procedure book.
- Prepare a report of activities, evaluation and suggestions to successor for procedure book.

## References and Resources

*Bylaws for Local PTA/PTSA Units*

*California State PTA Toolkit*, [capta.org](http://capta.org)

Section on Leadership, Use of PTA Committees

*Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide* (Updated and mailed to PTA presidents annually.)

Attorney General’s Guide for Charities, 2005, State of California ([www.ag.ca.gov](http://www.ag.ca.gov))

State of California Penal Code: [www.leginfo.ca.gov](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov)

State of California Education Code: [www.leginfo.ca.gov](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov)

State of California Business and Professions Code: [www.leginfo.ca.gov](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov)

**INFORMATION:** Important information that may be needed during Grad/Prom Night. Please complete and have available in case of emergency/problems.

**Name of Unit PTA/PTSA** \_\_\_\_\_

**District PTA** \_\_\_\_\_ **Council** (if in council) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Principal \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Staff Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Unit Treasurer \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Unit Financial Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

District PTA President \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Local police department (division/branch) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Local fire department (division/branch) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Local health department \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Local Public Utilities Commission \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

School Site Facilities Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Local School District Facilities Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

04/2005