



AWARDS REFERENCE GUIDE

PTA's mission is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

AWARDS CHAIR'S REFERENCE GUIDE

Each PTA unit that participates in the annual awards season should select a chair to serve as the lead when preparing and submitting all applications. In addition to consulting this reference guide, the awards chair should:

- Review all information on the HCPTA [website](#) and the [National PTA website](#).
- Check with your PTA president for any written materials from National PTA.
- Be familiar with your PTA Bylaws.
- Verify with your PTA president that your name, mailing address, telephone number, and email address have been submitted to Alabama PTA via GiveBacks (a.k.a., MemberHub).

PTA IN GOOD STANDING

(Taken directly from Alabama PTA [bylaws](#))

A local PTA must be in [good standing](#) to receive awards and grants from Huntsville Council PTA. A PTA in good standing:

- (i) Adheres to the purposes and basic policies of PTA.
- (ii) Remits dues to Alabama PTA by dates designated in Alabama PTA bylaws.
- (iii) Has a current officer list on file in the Alabama PTA office via MemberHub.
- (iv) Must have bylaws which have been updated within the last three (3) years, on file in the Alabama PTA Office
- (v) Must maintain its 501©(3) tax exempt status or be actively working in conjunction with Alabama PTA to have its tax exempt status reinstated.
- (vi) Must maintain membership levels as follows: A minimum of 15 members for schools with enrollment of 200 or less students, 25 members for schools with enrollment of 201 to 500 students, and 50 members for schools with enrollment of greater than 500 students.
- (vii) If located with an organized council, follows adopted guidelines of that council, in paying dues and/or participating in other programs.

PTA Values

Collaboration: We will work in partnership with a wide array of individuals and organizations to broaden and enhance our ability to serve and advocate for all children and families.

Commitment: We are dedicated to children's educational success, health, and well-being through strong family and community engagement, while remaining accountable to the principles upon which our association was founded.

Diversity: We acknowledge the potential of everyone without regard, including but not limited to: age, culture, economic status, educational background, ethnicity, gender, geographic location, legal status, marital status, mental ability, national origin, organizational position, parental status, physical ability, political philosophy, race, religion, sexual orientation, and work experience.

Respect: We value the individual contributions of members, employees, volunteers, and partners as we work collaboratively to achieve our association's goals.

Accountability: All members, employees, volunteers, and partners have a shared responsibility to align their efforts toward the achievement of our association's strategic initiatives.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Huntsville Council PTA recognizes the importance of partnerships between home and school and will recognize individuals and organizations that have exhibited a strong commitment to improving these partnerships at their annual Spring Awards Banquet each year. Award applications sent to HCPTA for judging become the property of HCPTA.

- Award applications must be completed by **March 1**.
- Activities from the spring of the previous school year may be included.

TIPS FOR AWARD SUBMISSIONS

A good application is one that uses descriptive language that details the project/program rather than giving conclusions. For example, instead of saying "parent night was a success," descriptive language tells why it was a success, i.e., "One hundred parents attended parents' night, whereas in the past no more than 50 parents have ever attended. As a result, we have 20 new PTA members."

Descriptive language also avoids just making lists such as, "Our PTA held a health fair, a spaghetti night, and a parents' night." Instead, it informs the reader what the PTA accomplished and why: "We held a health fair in our community because the majority of children and adults have not had hearing or eye tests. Three hundred (300) children and adults were tested, and 35 were found to need follow-up. PTA is now working with the hospital association to provide follow up for those who cannot afford it."

Space is limited, so choose words carefully. Award applications should address local activities supported or sponsored by the PTA and not the activities of the school staff.

Huntsville Council PTA has switched to digital submissions. The following awards must be submitted digitally via Google Form links. The links for the applications are listed after each award.

- **Note: These awards are separate from Alabama PTA Awards.**
- **Please see Alabama PTA guide and website for details on Alabama PTA Awards.**

HCPTA OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR AWARDS

Strong PTAs must have the cooperation and support of parents, teachers, principals, and superintendents who support PTA activities. Huntsville Council PTA recognizes educators who put forth special effort to work with their school's PTA through its Outstanding Educator Awards. Submitting an application shows a PTA's appreciation and provides an opportunity to recognize that person locally.

See [guidelines](#) on how Educators can demonstrate support of the National Standards.

Past winners of any HCPTA Educator Award are not eligible to be re-nominated for that same award for 5 years unless they move to a new school or position. Preference will be given to nominees that have not been recipients within the last 5 years. See past Huntsville Council PTA Outstanding Educator recipients [here](#).

Outstanding Administrator Award: Plaque

Categories: Elementary, Middle/Junior High, High School

Criteria: Must be nominated by the PTA of the school they serve.

Maximum 6,000-character count for the narrative answer.

[Application link](#)

Outstanding Teacher Award: Plaque/small trophy

Categories: Elementary, Middle/Junior High, High School

Criteria: Must be nominated by the PTA of the school they serve.

Paraprofessionals are not eligible for this award.

Maximum 6,000-character count for the narrative answer.

[Application link](#)

Outstanding Support Staff Award: Plaque/small trophy

Categories: Elementary, Middle/Junior High, High School

Criteria: Must be nominated by the PTA of the school they serve. Designated for non-certified members of the staff whose support/efforts help encourage and support family-school partnerships. i.e.: office, custodial, cafeteria, librarian assistant, resource officer, paraprofessional, etc.

Maximum 6,000-character count for the narrative answer.

[Application link](#)

Outstanding Volunteer of the Year Award: Plaque/small trophy

Categories: Elementary, Middle/Junior High, High School, Multi School

Criteria: Must be nominated by the PTA of the school they serve.

The nominated volunteer must be a current PTA member with no less than two (2) years of involvement.

Maximum 3,000-character count per narrative answer.

[Application link](#)

HCPTA MEMBERSHIP AWARD

The following award is determined by HCPTA Executive Committee and does not require an application. Membership payment deadline refers to ACH initiated payment via GiveBacks (a.k.a., MemberHub) or a mailed check postmarked on or before the deadline date to Alabama PTA.

Shooting Star Membership Award: This award will be given to the PTAs/PTSAs in each category with the largest percentage of growth based on the total memberships remitted to Alabama PTA by March 1 compared to the previous year's membership total.

The number of Shooting Star Membership Award recipients per category are as follows:

Elementary - Top Three (3)

Middle/Jr High - One (1)

High School - One (1)

Multi School - One (1)

Ties will be recognized in the event of equal percentage membership growth in each category.

HCPTA FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS AWARDS

PTA's **National Standards for Family-School Partnerships** set the bar for how schools and parent organizations work together to support student success. The Standards have contributed to greater awareness and capacity for improving family-school partnerships across the country and internationally for over 20 years.

Each year, Huntsville Council awards PTAs/PTSAs demonstrating outstanding results in implementing each of the Six National Standards. These awards will recognize local PTAs/PTSAs whose programs and activities are based on one or more of the National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships. [Application Link](#)

The six award standards are:

- (1) Welcome All Families
- (2) Communicate Effectively
- (3) Support Student Success
- (4) Speak up for Every Child
- (5) Share Power
- (6) Collaborate with the Community

Be advised National PTA has updated the six standards with a focus on:

1. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
2. An expanded approach to student success to include the whole child development.
3. More clearly defined roles for PTA and School leaders.

Please keep these updates in mind when submitting applications.

One key to Implementing these standards is to prioritize family engagement that is transformative. Parents are crucial to their student's success, and transformative family engagement is paving the way to the future. **The 4 I's of Transformative Family Engagement are:**

1. **Inclusive.** When PTAs are inclusive, they embrace and value diverse perspectives.
2. **Individualized.** When PTAs take an individualized approach to family engagement, they meet the unique needs of every family and child.
3. **Integrated.** When PTAs have an integrated approach to family engagement, they connect and align their efforts with the broader educational system.
4. **Impactful.** When PTAs are impactful, they empower families to support their children's success.

HCPTA Family-School Partnerships Awards: One plaque/small trophy per standard in each category.

Categories: Elementary, Middle/Junior High, Senior High, and Multi-School

When planning PTA activities, consider projects that advance each of the six Standards to ensure a comprehensive approach to building successful partnerships between family, school, and community. PTA programs should be PTA driven or should supplement and enhance those sponsored by the school. Some projects or activities may address more than one Standard, such as (a) a project that addresses parenting skills and student learning or (b) a project that combines volunteering and collaborating with the community.

Things to Keep in Mind:

- The HCPTA Family-School Partnerships Awards are based on activities supported or sponsored by the PTA and not the activities of the school staff.
- The timeframe for consideration of new programs, events or initiatives supporting excellence in Family-School Partnership Standards includes the months following the awards submissions due date for the previous year as well as those of the current school year. As such, the awards period for this year's HCPTA Family-School Partnership Awards is March 2, 2023-March 1, 2024.
- There is one (1) Google Form application with the six (6) standards individually listed. When completing the application, unit PTAs can specify how their programming/activities meet one or more of the six (6) standards.
- The application asks that you submit a narrative (up to a 3,000-character count) for each standard your PTA has aimed to meet during the awards timeframe. While PTA units can submit a different narrative for each standard, the same narrative can be submitted for multiple categories.
- One or more programs, events, and initiatives may be used to support a standard.
- If the program, event, or initiative supports more than one standard, please adjust the narrative to describe why the program, event or initiative supports the indicated standard.
- The application allows one full page of supplemental materials to be submitted per standard. This page will need to be uploaded as a separate file. This file may include photos as well as excerpts from newsletters, brochures, and social media posts. All supplemental materials provided for each standard must fit on one (1) sheet of letter-sized paper.

For expanded information, please see [PTA National Standards Overview](#).

Standard 1: Welcome All Families

The school treats families as valued partners in their child's education and facilitates a sense of belonging in the school community.

To implement this standard, a PTA can, for example:

- Identify and attempt to overcome barriers to families' full participation in PTA and/or school activities (i.e., language, jobs, transportation).
- Host programs/events honoring families' culture, values, and identities.

Standard 2: Communicate Effectively

The school supports staff to engage in proactive, timely, and two-way communication so that all families can easily understand and contribute to their child's educational experience.

To implement this standard, a PTA can, for example:

- Identify families' communication preferences or abilities.
- Seek tools, resources, and strategies to ensure communication is accessible (such as language, style, etc.).
- Provide student planners, weekly folders, or other modes of communication.

Standard 3: Support Student Success

The school builds the capacity of families and educators to continuously collaborate to support students' academic, social, and emotional learning.

To implement this standard, a PTA can, for example:

- Host family workshops on planning for college or career fairs.
- Sponsor wellness and fitness programs.
- Host student versus parent math/science or trivia competitions.
- Host a reading/literacy night.
- Provide resources or strategies to support what is being taught in the classroom that can be used at home.

Standard 4: Speak Up for Every Child

The school affirms family and student expertise and advocacy so that all students are treated fairly and have access to relationships and opportunities that will support their success.

To implement this standard, a PTA can, for example:

- Attend school board meetings or appoint a legislative representative who will attend your school board meetings and make a report to your membership.
- Provide contact information for the decision makers and provide updates on legislative issues especially that impact education and children.
- Invite your local or state elected officials to speak on a panel.
- Connect families to school and district decision-makers so that their voice can be heard.

- Share information and prepare families so that they can advocate for their child and all children.

Standard 5: Share Power

The school partners with families in decisions that affect children and families and together—and as a team, inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

To implement this standard, a PTA can, for example:

- Recruit and support new people to have leadership roles in PTA.
- Gather families' input and ensuring it is representative of the school community.
- Be transparent with our PTA with families and school.
- Work with the school in providing opportunities for families to take part in programs during and after school hours.
- Host a Kids ID program to address the issue of the dangers of strangers.
- Host an informational night for parents on how to prepare your child for high school.
- Host an informational session on what are the requirements for graduating from high school.
- Show how parents and teachers can promote internet safety at home and school.

Standard 6: Collaborate with the Community

The school collaborates with community organizations and members to connect students, families, and staff to expand learning opportunities, community services and civic participation.

To implement this standard, a PTA can, for example:

- Partner with a sister PTA that is struggling; invite them to your event then assist them with orchestrating their own.
- Partner with other nonprofits agencies like United Way and Junior Achievement for youth leadership programs.
- Collaborate with local churches and community organizations to provide quality after-school programs.
- Sponsor voter registration drives, mock elections, or community recycling projects.
- Host joint community PTA meetings with the elementary, middle/junior high and high schools to showcase what each offers.
- Establish a care closet or food pantry with community partners able to donate items or funds.

For more information about the National Standards and PTA programs that promote family-school partnerships, visit [National PTA](#).