

Writing a Winning Grant or Award Application

I. General Award or Grant Guidelines

- A. 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.”
- B. 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 that follow up for those who cannot afford it.”
- C. Space is limited, so choose your words carefully.
- D. Award and grant applications should address local activities supported or sponsored by the PTA and not the activities of the school staff (unless it is a joint grant application).

II. Grants

A. Huntsville Council of PTAs – huntsvillepta.org

1. **Amount:** \$500
2. **Deadline:** October 1 (fall grants); March 1 (spring grants)
3. **Eligibility:** For the fall grants, elementary, middle, and high school PTA/PTSAs are eligible to receive funding. For the spring grants, only elementary and middle school PTA/PTSAs are eligible to receive funding. High school PTA/PTSAs are not eligible to receive the spring grants because the Huntsville Council of PTAs offers \$7,000 of scholarships to high school students during the same time frame.
4. **Criteria:** The grant requests will be judged by an impartial Grants Committee using the following criteria:
 - i. The funds must be used to support the entire school population and not a specific group, section, or grade level.
 - ii. The project for which the funds are requested must promote one or more of the six national standards.
 - iii. Those who have not received recent grant funding from the Huntsville Council of PTAs will be given a degree of preference in the grant determinations.
 - iv. PTA must be in good standing with Alabama PTA and with the Huntsville Council of PTAs.
 - v. Grant funds will not be awarded for a project or program for which grant funds have been awarded within the past two years.
 - vi. Recipients will be expected to implement the program within one year and report back to the Council in writing on the implementation of their program. Failure to submit a timely grant report will make a PTA ineligible for additional grant funding until the report has been submitted.
5. **Is financial need a factor in making grant awards?** No
6. **Projects, programs, or other efforts that would support this award in 2016-2017:**

7. **Will we pursue this grant?** Yes No

B. Non-PTA grants

1. Kohl's Cares Associates in Action program -

<http://www.kohlscorporation.com/CommunityRelations/Community04.html>

- a. **Amount:** Volunteer hours from Kohl's employees, plus up to \$500
- b. **Deadline:** Ongoing (4-6 weeks advance notice required)
- c. **Eligibility:** Nonprofit organization that works with youth
- d. **Criteria:**
 - i. There must be an activity/event that would need a minimum of five Kohl's Associates from one location volunteering for a minimum of three consecutive hours in one day.
 - ii. The activity must benefit a qualifying youth-serving 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
 - iii. Funds must be used to support youth within the larger community.
- e. **Is financial need a factor in making grant awards?** No
- f. ***Projects, programs, or other efforts that would support this award in 2016-2017:***

g. ***Will we pursue this grant?*** Yes No

2. Lowe's Toolbox for Education Grants - <http://www.toolboxforeducation.com/>

- a. **Amount:** Between \$2,000 and \$5,000 per school is available. Lowe's will donate \$5 million to schools and school parent teacher groups at more than 1,000 different schools during the school year.
- b. **Deadline:** There are two Lowe's Toolbox for Education grant cycles in a school year. The Fall 2016 grant cycle will open on August 1, 2016 and close on September 26, 2016. **Eligibility:** Schools and/or PTAs
- c. **Criteria:**
 - i. There is a preference for funding requests that have a permanent impact such as facility enhancement (both indoor and outdoor) as well as landscaping/clean up type projects. Projects that encourage parent involvement and build stronger community spirit will be favored.
 - ii. Please note the grant money cannot be used to pay for memorials, stipends, salaries, artists in residence, field trips, scholarships, or third party funding.
 - iii. Only 10% of any award granted can be used toward outside resources such as labor, installation, consultation and delivery.
 - iv. Lowes seeks ways to provide the greatest impact, with basic necessities taking priority.
 - v. Lowe's will only consider grants for projects that will be completed within one year of when the grant is received.
- e. **Is financial need a factor in making grant awards?** Yes
- f. ***Projects, programs, or other efforts that would support this award in 2016-2017:***

g. ***Will we pursue this grant?*** Yes No

3. Target Field Trip Grants - <https://corporate.target.com/corporate-responsibility/grants>

- a. **Amount:** Up to \$700
 - b. **Deadline:** Grant applications accepted between noon CST August 1 and 11:59 p.m. CST October 1.
 - c. **Criteria:**
 - i. Field trips must connect students' classroom curricula to out-of-school experiences.
 - ii. Grants will not be given to programs taking place outside of the U.S., U.S. protectorates, or Canada.
 - iii. Grants will not be given to athletic teams or events.
 - d. **Is financial need a factor in making grant awards?** No
 - e. ***Projects, programs, or other efforts that would support this award in 2016-2017:***
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- f. **Will we pursue this grant?** Yes No

4. **GetEdFunding.com**

- a. GetEdFunding is a free grant-finding resource, dedicated to helping educators and institutions identify funding. GetEdFunding hosts a collection of thousands of grants and opportunities culled from federal, state, regional, and community sources and is available to public and private preK–12 schools, districts, and educators; higher education institutions; and nonprofit organizations that work with them.
- b. This resource of grant and funding opportunities is expanded, updated, and monitored daily. You can search by six criteria, including 43 areas of focus, eight content areas, and any of the twenty-first century themes and skills that support your curriculum. Once you are registered on the site, you can save the grants of greatest interest and return to read about them at any time.
- c. **Projects, programs, or other efforts that would support this award in 2016-2017:**
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- d. **Will we pursue this grant?** Yes No

III. **PTA Awards**

A. **Local (Huntsville Council of PTAs) and Alabama PTA**

1. **Family-School Partnership Awards**

a. **General Information**

- i. **Deadline:** March 1, 2017
- ii. **Mailing:** Mail two complete application packages to Alabama PTA, 470 South Union Street, Montgomery, AL 36104 **AND** two complete application packages to Huntsville Council of PTAs, P.O. Box 18762, Huntsville, AL 35804.
- iii. **Instructions:** You must complete a cover sheet (fillable form on huntsvillepta.org) with general contact information about your school and your PTA. Write an accompanying narrative of up to **two** double-spaced pages, which includes the details about your program, the program goals, and the success of your efforts. When possible, use actual measurements to quantify your efforts such as the number of participants, the number of volunteer hours, the number of recipients, etc. The award cover sheet contains additional specific requirements about the award application.
- iv. **Good standing:** PTA must be in good standing with Alabama PTA and with the Huntsville Council of PTAs (state PTA dues must be paid by December 1, and Council dues must be paid by October 1).
- v. **PTA Programs:** Make sure that you include only efforts that are organized and implemented by the PTA and are not school-sponsored projects or programs.
- vi. **Eligibility:** No award will be presented for the same program two years in a row.
- vii. **Category:** P-8 schools must decide whether they are applying in the elementary or middle school category.
- viii. **Additional information:** Download the Awards Reference Guide at alabamapta.org under the *My PTA* tab.

b. **Standard 1 – Welcoming all Families**

- i. **Standard:** Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.
- ii. **Examples of activities that would support this standard:** Three for Me program, All Pro Dads, iMom Mornings, welcome-back coffees, PTA telephone calls to all new students and families, Dads' Night at the Movies, welcome yard signs for new kindergarten students, cultural heritage nights, back-to-school party for students, camps to welcome all incoming students, family reading or math nights, family movie night
- iii. **Our planned projects, programs, or other efforts that would support this award in 2016-2017:**

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- iv. **Will we pursue this award?** Yes No

c. **Standard 2 – Communicating Effectively**

- i. **Standard:** Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

- ii. **Examples of activities that would support this standard:** newsletters (electronic or print), creative uses of PTA websites or blogs, surveys, use of technology to engage parents, PTA seminars about how to have an effective parent-teacher conference, school calendar with dates of all PTA events and meetings for the year, student planners to communicate with parents

iii. ***Our planned projects, programs, or other efforts that would support this award in 2016-2017:***

iv. ***Will we pursue this award?*** Yes No

d. Standard 3 – Supporting Student Success

i. **Standard:** Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

ii. **Examples of activities that would support this standard:** PTA sponsored academic clubs or programs, A/R store, Math SuperStars programs, PTA programs to encourage healthy eating/lifestyles, seminars to help parents prepare their children for college, classes for parents about basic computing skills (to help their children with their new computers!), seminar to help parents understand student data

iii. ***Our planned projects, programs, or other efforts that would support this award in 2016-2017:***

iv. ***Will we pursue this award?*** Yes No

e. Standard 4 – Speaking Up for Every Child

i. **Standard:** Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

ii. **Examples of activities that would support this standard:** Board position or advisory committee to include parents of special needs students, designated PTA leader to attend school board meetings, seminars or workshops to help parents understand curriculum tracks being offered, luncheon for your elected officials, creative ways to highlight school problems to key decision-makers, one question polled of parents in each newsletter seeking feedback on a range of issues and then use the feedback as a basis for your decisions, directory with contact information on local elected officials and decision makers, legislative updates in newsletter, candidates' forum to discuss issues affecting your school

iii. ***Our planned projects, programs, or other efforts that would support this award in 2016-2017:***

iv. ***Will we pursue this award?*** Yes No

f. Standard 5 – Sharing Power

i. **Standard:** Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

ii. **Examples of activities that would support this standard:** Brown bag lunches with the principal, security system that tracks parents' attendance and volunteer hours at the school, any sort of committee that includes parents and school personnel

iii. ***Our planned projects, programs, or other efforts that would support this award in 2016-2017:***

iv. ***Will we pursue this award?*** Yes No

g. Standard 6 – Collaborating with the Community

i. **Standard:** Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

ii. **Examples of activities that would support this standard:** community-wide party, STEM field trip to partnering companies and organizations, Career Day, field day that includes community partners, tutoring partnership with area companies or other area schools, PTA partnerships with other PTAs, partner with other nonprofits agencies like United Way and Junior Achievement for youth leadership programs, collaboration with local churches and community organizations to provide

quality after-school programs, community recycling projects, joint community PTA meetings with the elementary, middle, and high schools

iii. ***Our planned projects, programs, or other efforts that would support this award in 2016-2017:***

iv. ***Will we pursue this award?*** Yes No

2. Outstanding Educator Awards

a. General Information

i. **Deadline:** March 1, 2017

ii. **Mailing:** Mail two complete application packages to Alabama PTA, 470 South Union Street, Montgomery, AL 36104 **AND** two complete application packages to Huntsville Council of PTAs, P.O. Box 18762, Huntsville, AL 35804.

iii. **Instructions:** You must complete a cover sheet (found on huntsvillepta.org) with general contact information about your school and your PTA. Write an accompanying narrative of up to **four** double-spaced pages addressing the criteria listed below. Up to four pieces of supplemental materials (brochures, newsletters, or reference letters) may accompany the application for principals and teachers. Photographs are also acceptable. Up to four letters of recommendation may accompany the application for support staff. The award cover sheet contains additional specific requirements about the award application.

iv. **Good standing:** PTA must be in good standing with Alabama PTA and with the Huntsville Council of PTAs (state PTA dues must be paid by December 1, and Council dues must be paid by October 1).

v. **Eligibility:** Past winners of any Educator Award are not eligible to be re-nominated for that same award for five years.

vii. **PTA membership:** Educator award nominee must be a member of PTA.

viii. **Category:** P-8 schools must decide whether they are applying in the elementary or the middle school category.

ix. **Additional information:** Download the Awards Reference Guide at alabamapta.org under the *My PTA* tab.

b. Outstanding Administrator Award

i. **Criteria:** Supportive of PTA, number of years in education, effective advocate, civic contributions, parent/family involvement, and education style.

ii. **Special considerations:**

- Administrator must have at least five years of educational experience
- Must be nominated by the PTA of the school that he/she serves
- Must have a master's degree in school administration
- Assistant principals are eligible for this award

iii. ***Will we pursue this award for one of our administrators?*** Yes No

iv. ***Who will prepare award submission?*** _____

v. ***Who will write recommendation letters to support our application?***

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

c. Outstanding Teacher Award

i. **Criteria:** Supportive of PTA, number of years in education, effective advocate, civic contributions, parent/family involvement, and education style.

ii. **Special considerations:**

- Teacher must have at least five years of educational experience
- Must be nominated by the PTA of the school that he/she serves
- All certified staff members are eligible for this award.
- Paraprofessionals are not eligible for this award.

iii. ***Will we pursue this award for one of our teachers?*** Yes No

iv. ***Who will we nominate or how will we decide?*** _____

iv. *Who will prepare award submission?* _____

v. *Who will write recommendation letters to support our application?*

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

d. Outstanding Support Staff Award

i. **Criteria:** Supportive of PTA, number of years in education, effective advocate, and parent/family involvement.

ii. **Special considerations:**

- Must be nominated by the PTA of the school that he/she serves
- Designated for non-certified members of the staff whose support/efforts help encourage and support family-school partnerships.

iii. *Will we pursue this award for one of our non-certified staff members?* Yes No

iv. *Who will we nominate or how will we decide?* _____

iv. *Who will prepare award submission?* _____

v. *Who will write recommendation letters to support our application?*

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

3. Membership Awards – see dates in Membership Presentation