

# 2024–25 PTA Leader



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## Section 8: Diversity, Inclusion, & Outreach (DIO)

[LouisianaPTA.org/inclusion](https://LouisianaPTA.org/inclusion)

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# INDEX

Introduction.....	130
Promote Diversity in Your School.....	131
Hold an Inclusive PTA Meeting.....	132
DIO Resources.....	133

## VOLUNTEER FOR ADVENTURE

The 2024-25 theme for Louisiana PTA is “Join the PTA Adventure” which points to the fun side and the direction of your PTA’s work and emphasizes joining as a member. How can you keep PTA fun for yourself and others? What direction is your PTA headed? Have you planned for the PTA’s future? What does your PTA adventure look like? The philanthropic work of PTA is a huge personal opportunity to give to others and to positively impact the lives of children to help them reach their potential!

The Louisiana PTA Board is planning its future, and we see YOU in it. There are Board positions that don’t take much time or that can use your gifts and talents to the fullest. If you’d like to increase your impact on children through PTA work at the state level, please contact LAPTA. We all do it because it’s enjoyable, and you are part of our future plan! Email [President@LouisianaPTA.org](mailto:President@LouisianaPTA.org) to talk about how you might fit in.

## INTRODUCTION

PTA is a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families and communities, and a strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child. DIO supports every child with one voice, no matter their race, ethnicity, zip code, income, gender identity, sexual orientation, immigration status, or abilities. LAPTA recognizes that advancing DIO is an integral part of PTA’s work and its vision of making every child’s potential a reality.

**Diversity** is the range of human differences such as race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values system, national origin, and political beliefs.

**Inclusion** is active, intentional, and ongoing engagement in diversity in which different individuals or groups who may otherwise be excluded or marginalized are accepted, engaged, and welcomed.

**Outreach** is a commitment to create an inviting climate, to form respectful relationships and to share important information about PTA with all community members. Outreach includes efforts that focus on enlisting the participation of all parents, students, and community members in the educational process, and establishing collaborative relationships focused on positive impacts by:

- Using languages represented within the community at PTA meetings and in PTA communications.
- Working to build representative leadership and voice within the PTA of all community groups. The makeup of the BOD should reflect the makeup of the school community.
- Understanding that everyone has value.
- Including students, teachers, community and extended family members.

# PROMOTE DIVERSITY IN THE SCHOOL

As a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families and communities, and a strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child, PTAs are well-equipped to foster the principles of Diversity, Inclusion, and Outreach (DIO) in their schools and community. Diversity is the strength of PTA! Those who are intentional in their DIO efforts are most likely to experience great outcomes that benefit all children and their families rather than just isolated patches of success.

A great place to start DIO work in the school is to establish PTA as a sanctuary for all families to gather information, express opinions, concerns, and needs, and to feel heard and embraced. PTA can be a resource empowering those traditionally less likely to be engaged in their children's learning and well-being by organizing parent or guardian training and events and by sharing information on relevant topics. Analyze the level of diversity, inclusion, and outreach in the PTA's membership, governance, programs, and advocacy efforts. Identify areas of success and other areas in need of more work. Set goals and action plans to address each of these areas.

Form a DIO Committee with clearly defined charges and goals that are periodically reviewed and updated. PTA needs to seek a diverse membership that reflects the diversity of the student body and community it serves through targeted outreach efforts. Consider which groups are less likely to join the PTA or participate in meetings and events. To achieve successful outreach, learn about other cultures, traditions, challenges, and restrictions of the groups needing outreach.

Address issues that matter the most to those needing engagement. Ensure PTA's advocacy efforts represent all children including those typically marginalized and those whose families may not be equally engaged. PTA's advocacy initiatives must be non-political and non-biased. Create a welcoming environment for conversations considered difficult and with a clear understanding that not all members agree on everything, but they must agree to uphold PTA's mission and values. All must agree on the collective goal to serve and to keep all children safe. Engage in ongoing meaningful conversations with school and district administration, school boards, and other stakeholders that recognize the principles of diversity, inclusion, and outreach in all decisions.

In the constant efforts to seek new volunteers, PTA leaders are encouraged to recruit leaders from under-represented groups. Consider the whole person such as individual interests, passions, expertise, color, gender, cultural background, or spoken languages. Recruiting people in areas of PTA work that they are passionate about and interested in is more likely to set them up for success and encourage them to grow as leaders. Recruitment does not end with identifying individuals with leadership qualities. It is important to set them up for success and offer support while providing them with the space needed to put their own personal stamp on their work. Establish fair and equitable practices in all areas of PTA's work, including decision making, nominations, elections, appointments, participation, events, topics, and services. Such practices establish trust and respect for the organization as a whole and its leadership.

Have all PTA meetings and events reflect a welcoming and inclusive environment for all. Most importantly, if leaders are reminded of PTA's mission, vision, and core values as the focus and purpose of all PTA work, they are on the right path to applying the principles of diversity, inclusion, and outreach. Refer to following *How to Hold an Inclusive PTA Meeting* and *How to Organize an Inclusive PTA Event*.

# HOLD AN INCLUSIVE PTA MEETING

When scheduling PTA meetings and times, consider possible conflicts, religious holidays, and work limitations that might prevent some from attending. Possibly alternate days of the week and times of the day. Meetings could be held at two times in one day, such as 11:00 am and 7:00 pm. Survey the school community to find best ways to reach most families.

Assure your meeting location, restrooms, and other needed facilities are accessible to all attendees. A location easy to find makes for prompt arrivals of attendees. Use signage that is clear and legible to all. If the meeting is outside the school, consider locations that are near public transportation and have ample parking.

When publicizing the meeting, consider digital access limitations when sending out fliers electronically. Provide printed notice when needed. Ask teachers to include a reminder on the day of the meeting when children write their homework in their agenda planners. Send it out by email and post on the PTA website, and on social media platforms. Ask room parents to reach out to their rosters. Have handouts with all monthly meeting dates at school and PTA events. Assure digital and paper fliers are sent in all spoken languages in your school. When using any electronic translation such as Google Translate, try to have a native speaker proofread the translated flier for accuracy.

Thoughtfully set up the meeting space. All those who attend should be able to have a good view of speakers, screens, etc. so that all attendees are able to see, hear, and engage with each other. Have all handouts and sign-in sheets near the entrance and easily accessible. Consider seating arrangements that make everyone feel equally engaged and significant rather than classroom style or the PTA Board facing the audience. Board Members, when possible, can spread throughout the space to mingle and meet other members. When holding a virtual meeting, confirm microphones are placed in locations able to pick up the voice of anyone speaking so those attending virtually can hear them.

For the meeting environment, leaders need to be open-minded, presentable, and approachable, making others feel comfortable. Always realize the significance and responsibilities of leadership roles and how they can impact perceptions and recruitment of members and future leaders. Consider PTA Board Members taking turns greeting attendees as they arrive at meetings. Acknowledge new members and attendees as they come in. Name badges make it easier to properly address individuals and to learn their names. Take the time to learn how to pronounce names correctly. Correct pronunciation of names is more than a common courtesy. It is a significant sign of caring and inclusion. Consider having crayons, coloring books, and activities for children accompanying their family members to quietly entertain themselves. Adhere to the meeting agenda, lay the ground rules at the start of the meeting, and treat all with respect and consistency. Allow opportunities on the agenda for feedback and attendee engagement when appropriate, making it clear to all that their suggestions are welcome. Avoid terms that may offend others. When holding a virtual meeting, assign someone to check and address the chat.

If food or beverages are provided, proper sanitary precautions need to be observed. Be sure to consider dietary and religious restrictions as well as food allergies. Provide clear and accessible packaging information and ingredients for those purposes. Serving tables should be accessible to all attendees.

Finally, collect contact information and follow up regarding topics or issues that need to be addressed later. Unless people feel heard, they are unlikely to return to future meetings. Reach out and thank any newcomers. Remember the first time going to a meeting or doing something outside your comfort zone? Make the effort to engage and follow up to create lasting relationships and future leaders!



# DIO RESOURCES

The world of Diversity, Inclusion, and Outreach is vast and ever-changing. National PTA has excellent materials and resources for your use. Find these resources and more at [PTA.org/home/run-your-pta/Diversity-Equity-Inclusion](https://pta.org/home/run-your-pta/Diversity-Equity-Inclusion) where all documents are also available in Spanish.

Commitment to DIO:

[PTA.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/dei-brief-final-072720.pdf](https://pta.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/dei-brief-final-072720.pdf)

Local Leader DIO Guidance:

[PTA.org/docs/default-source/files/runyourpta/2020/diversity/dei-guide-for-pta-local-leaders.pdf](https://pta.org/docs/default-source/files/runyourpta/2020/diversity/dei-guide-for-pta-local-leaders.pdf)

How to Welcome Diverse Perspectives Into Your PTA:

[PTA.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/diversity-outreach-2-pager\\_v3.pdf](https://pta.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/diversity-outreach-2-pager_v3.pdf)

DIO Frequently Asked Questions:

[PTA.org/home/run-your-pta/Diversity-Equity-Inclusion/leadership-tips-and-tools/Diversity-and-Inclusion-Initiatives-Frequently-Asked-Questions](https://pta.org/home/run-your-pta/Diversity-Equity-Inclusion/leadership-tips-and-tools/Diversity-and-Inclusion-Initiatives-Frequently-Asked-Questions)

DIO Community Profile Template:

[PTA.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/dei-community-profile-template-final.pdf](https://pta.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/dei-community-profile-template-final.pdf)

Enhancing DIO Facilitator's Guide:

[PTA.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/enhancing-dei-facilitator-s-guide-final.pdf](https://pta.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/enhancing-dei-facilitator-s-guide-final.pdf)

DIO Action Plan Template:

[PTA.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/dei-action-plan-template-final.pdf](https://pta.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/dei-action-plan-template-final.pdf)

Inclusive Holiday Planning:

[PTA.org/docs/default-source/files/runyourpta/diversity/inclusive-holiday-programming.pdf](https://pta.org/docs/default-source/files/runyourpta/diversity/inclusive-holiday-programming.pdf)

Inclusive Communication During the Holidays:

[PTA.org/docs/default-source/files/runyourpta/diversity/inclusive-communication-during-the-holidays.pdf](https://pta.org/docs/default-source/files/runyourpta/diversity/inclusive-communication-during-the-holidays.pdf)

Inclusive Curriculum in K-12 Schools:

[PTA.org/docs/default-source/files/advocacy/position-statements/inclusive-curriculum-in-k-12-schools-ps.pdf](https://pta.org/docs/default-source/files/advocacy/position-statements/inclusive-curriculum-in-k-12-schools-ps.pdf)

LGBTQ Glossary:

[PTA.org/docs/default-source/files/runyourpta/2020/diversity/lgbtq-glossary.pdf](https://pta.org/docs/default-source/files/runyourpta/2020/diversity/lgbtq-glossary.pdf)

How to Talk About Race and Justice in America:

[PTA.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/how-to-talk-about-race-justice-in-americaaa2a48f1aa3e63899f67ff00009b2bd9.pdf](https://pta.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/how-to-talk-about-race-justice-in-americaaa2a48f1aa3e63899f67ff00009b2bd9.pdf)

