

# PARTNERING WITH ADMINISTRATORS

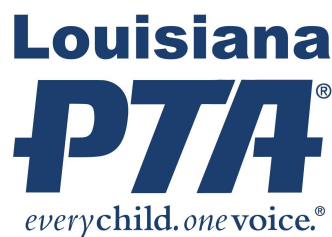
Engage purposefully and build a strong partnership with the school's principal by doing the following.

- **Collaborate on Planning:** Work together to establish administrative goals and to explore how the PTA can actively involve families in providing support.
- **Tap into Available Resources:** Discuss how LAPTA and National PTA programs and resources can enrich and reinforce student learning. You can find these resources at [PTA.org/programs](https://pta.org/programs).
- **Maintain Professional Communication:** Maintain a respectful and professional dialogue with the school's leadership even in cases of disagreement.
- **Emphasize Independence:** Help school administration recognize that the Local PTA Unit operates autonomously as a child advocacy group while being a part of and benefiting from a larger, experienced National association.
- **Establish Regular Contact:** Consider scheduling regular monthly meetings over coffee or lunch with the principal or arranging periodic phone calls. Extend invitations to the superintendent to attend Board meetings and maintain effective and routine communication.
- **Increase Visibility:** Encourage the principal to provide reports during PTA meetings, contribute articles to the PTA newsletter, or write posts for the PTA blog. Organize inclusive events like "Chat with the Principal" or "Coffee with the Superintendent."
- **Promote Family Engagement:** Share the National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships materials and collaborate on enhancing family engagement to improve student success. Consider participation in the National PTA Schools of Excellence program.
- **Support Budget Participation:** Empower parents with the information they need to effectively advocate during the school's budgeting process. Assist parents in advocating for the education budget.
- **Maintain Alignment:** After phone calls and meetings, ensure follow up by summarizing discussions and confirming any action steps to be taken by the PTA or administration.
- **Request Participation in Teacher Meetings:** Request the opportunity to address teacher meetings, emphasizing the PTA's role as an educational partner and a vital link between home and school.

## Don't:

- **Be adversarial.** Find common ground. Model civil discourse, even if they are difficult to deal with.
- **Comingle funds.** Mixing private and public funds is forbidden and illegal.
- **Give up control of the checkbook.** PTA is a separate entity from the school. PTA funds are controlled by PTA members and the Board of Directors. The checkbook resides with the Treasurer.
- **Cede control of PTA meetings.** All members, even administrators, have the same rights at meetings. The PTA President runs the PTA meeting, in compliance with PTA Bylaws and using Robert's Rules of Order.
- **Get in trouble with the IRS.** Know the IRS rules. PTA's funds are not school funds. Only use the PTA's EIN.
- **Open the PTA to theft.** No administrator wants to deal with the negative publicity surrounding a PTA's poor money management. Ensure financial reports and audits occur regularly. Follow all money handling rules.
- **Entangle administration in personality issues.** Sometimes personal issues interfere with PTA function. Work through any personal problems without involving administration. Seek help, if necessary, from LAPTA.
- **Become an ATM.** PTA funds are raised to further PTA's mission and goals, not to supplement school budgets. Collaborate with administration, but do not allow the PTA to be viewed as a bottomless source of funding available for all administration requests. Raise awareness rather than raise funds.

See more operating guidance and best practices at [LouisianaPTA.org/guidance](https://LouisianaPTA.org/guidance).



# PARTNERING WITH TEACHERS

The success of the PTA hinges on the strong partnership between the PTA and the school's educators. Engage purposefully with the teachers by using the following guidelines.

- **Collaborate on Planning:** Working together builds strong relationships. Involve parents and the community in supporting teachers.
- **Invite Teacher Engagement:** Encourage teachers to attend meetings and share their insights. Explore ways to involve teachers who may not be able to attend in-person meetings. Create a campaign that emphasizes the value of PTA for teachers and encourages them to become members.
- **Identify Volunteer Opportunities:** Collaborate with teachers to identify volunteer opportunities related to classroom and extracurricular activities. Recruit volunteers to assist with these opportunities.
- **Show Respect:** Express your appreciation for teachers and let them know that the PTA values their contributions. Build a positive working relationship between home and school to improve students' success.
- **Solicit Feedback:** Seek input from teachers regarding the impact of PTA initiatives and the success of PTA programs. Encourage teachers to provide suggestions for improvement through surveys and other channels.
- **Foster a Sense of Community:** Organize informal social gatherings, fun nights, family sporting events, and outings to promote and increase relationships beyond the classroom.
- **Express Appreciation:** Thank teachers for their support of the PTA and their dedication to children's well-being. Plan meaningful activities during Teacher Appreciation Week and acknowledge their hard work.
- **Demonstrate Cooperation:** Recognize that the PTA-teacher relationship is a partnership aimed at supporting teachers. Approach all interactions with teachers in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration.

## Don't:

- **Criticize teachers for missing PTA meetings.** While attendance at PTA meetings is a good goal, remember that many teachers have their own family activities and PTA events to attend. Also, some teachers have had bad experiences with certain parents. PTA support does not have to include meeting attendance.
- **Bribe or blackmail.** Teacher recognition or support of their classrooms should not be tied to teacher's membership in PTA.
- **Become an ATM.** Demonstrate that advocacy is better than fundraising to secure needed resources. Talk to teachers about their needs and brainstorm ways to make those needs known in the community.
- **Show up unexpectedly.** School is a teacher's workplace. Schedule a meeting or provide notice. Be respectful of the teacher's time. Do not interrupt class time.
- **Assume knowledge.** Schools are vibrant workplaces and teachers must keep track of more than just PTA activities. Keep teachers informed about PTA events and schedules. Ensure teachers know about upcoming fundraising or classroom activities. Brief teachers on PTA priorities and successes. Help teachers understand the value PTA brings to their place of work.

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