

COMMUNITY RELATIONS: Community Involvement

Relationship with Parent Teacher (STUDENT) AssociationS

- [1. Guidelines for Principals in Developing Positive Working Relationships with PT(S)A.]
 - I. [Through the years,] Parent-Teacher-(Student) Associations (PT(S)A) [have] play[ed] an important role in improving schools by fostering broad understanding of school programs; [encouraging and supporting the establishment of new services;] encouraging public support for program improvements; building positive relationships among school staff[s] MEMBERS, students, [and] parents, AND COMMUNITY; and keeping the school informed about community needs[, desires,] and concerns.
 - II. PT(S)A [have accomplished these results best when the organization has had strong leadership and has maintained its identity as a strong,] ARE independent [group] ORGANIZATIONS THAT [, yet] maintain[ing] close working relationships with SCHOOLS [the principal and staff]. Both the school and its PT(S)A exist to promote the education of each student. [In working toward this jointly-held goal, the following guidelines have been developed with and agreed upon by officers of the PTA Council of Baltimore County:] UNDER MOST PT(S)A BYLAWS, THE PRINCIPAL SERVES AS A MEMBER OF THE PT(S)A **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.**
 - A. The principal is legally responsible for the school’s program and, in this capacity, serves AS the educational leader and final decision-maker at each school.
 - B. THE PRINCIPAL SHOULD COLLABORATE WITH THE PT(S)A IN A MANNER THAT SUPPORTS EFFECTIVE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND AIDS IN DECISION MAKING.
 - III. [In providing leadership and making decision, however, principals recognize the schools are an integral part of their communities and cannot operate in isolation. Each principal should establish the following processes for informing and soliciting the views of staff, students, and parents to aid in his/her leadership and decision-making roles.] ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT COLLABORATION SHOULD [They] include:

- [a.]A. Providing [extensive] COMPREHENSIVE, current information about Board policies, SUPERINTENDENT’S RULES, and LOCAL SCHOOL procedures AND ADVISING PT(S)A SO THAT PT(S)A ACTIVITIES ARE IN COMPLIANCE WITH ALL POLICIES, RULES, AND PROCEDURES
- [b.]B. Offering [advice and] recommendations to the PT(S)A [membership] ABOUT WAYS THE ORGANIZATION CAN SUPPORT SCHOOL GOALS AND BE AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY ADVOCATE FOR THE SCHOOL AND SCHOOL SYSTEM [and, to the fullest extent possible, supporting PT(S)A programs and efforts]
- [c.]C. Encouraging total community support for the PT(S)A AND ITS PROGRAMS
- [d. Seeking the advice of parents of specific student groups or grade levels on issues that have implications for them in particular]
- [e.]D. Engaging in [full and frank] discussions with the PT(S)A [or affected parents and students] WHEN THERE ARE COMMUNITY CONCERNS ABOUT ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL PROGRAM AND/OR OPERATIONS [concerning the background of issues and alternative courses of action] AND KEEPING THE PT(S)A INFORMED ABOUT PROGRESS TOWARD RESOLUTION OF CONCERNS AS APPROPRIATE.
- [f. Involving the PT(S)A executive committee and membership in the study and discussion of issues prior to making decisions or changes]
- [g. Cooperating in formal and informal surveying of community opinion]
- [h.]E. [Continuing efforts to interpret]INFORMING THE PT(S)A ABOUT HOW the curriculum, instructional methods, and [organization patterns in]OPERATIONS OF the school [showing how these] meet student needs. [and demonstrating their relationship to the County program of studies]
- [i. Keeping the PT(S)A and others informed about progress toward the resolution of educational concerns within the school community.]

[The following are recommended roles for principals in connection with certain PT(S)A activities:]

- [a. Elections]

F. [The principal shall] Encourag[e]ING the PT(S)A nominating committee to select a slate of officers THAT [which] is as representative as possible of the entire membership, including new parents and those from diverse geographical, racial, and socio-economic backgrounds.

[b. Membership]

G. [The principal shall] AssistING the membership committee [in securing names and addresses of new parents and class lists, upon request. These lists must be used with discretion and should not include unlisted telephone numbers.] WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO PROMOTE PT(S)A MEMBERSHIP.

[c. Fundraising]

[The principal shall make facilities available for appropriate fund-raising activities which enhance the school program, and shall make certain the activities are in accordance with policies of the Board of Education and established rules]

[d. Programs]

[The principal shall serve as a resource person to the PT(S)A program committee by:]

[(1) Identifying areas of interest or concern that may serve as the focus for PT(S)A programs to foster greater parent understanding

Encouraging staff participation and student involvement

Helping to identify speakers or other resource people

Urging programs that focus on educational activities or concerns.]

[e. Publications]

H. REVIEWING PT(S)A COMMUNICATIONS AND [The principal shall] AssistING AS APPROPRIATE with the [PT(S)A in duplicating and distributing publications to the extent possible, on a predetermined schedule] DISTRIBUTION of PT(S)A INFORMATION . All PT(S)A materials should

be identified as such, and editorials or other articles of opinion shall be signed by their author(s).

I. PROVIDING ACCESS TO INTEROFFICE MAIL AND A SCHOOL MAILBOX DESIGNATED FOR PT(S)A USE ONLY.

[f. PT(S)A Executive Committee]

[Under most PT(S)A bylaws, the principal serves as a full member of the executive committee in his capacity as the educational leader of the school. The principal gives guidance and advice when problems arise or whenever he/she may help to resolve an issue.]

[g. PT(S)A Budget and Expenditures]

J. [The principal's role]ASSISTING in the development of the PT(S)A budget [is, on request, to] BY suggestING ways to enhance the school program. Final determination of the budget and methods for fundraising are the responsibility of the PT(S)A, except when these decisions may conflict with or duplicate school programs. [The principal provides any information necessary to help the PT(S)A make good budgetary decisions, but the decision must be that of the association.] When PT(S)A funds are provided for the principal to spend on school projects, he/she keeps accurate records and makes periodic reports on these expenditures to the PT(S)A.

K. [h.]Establishing a PT(S)A in a new school WITH THE [The principal shall encourage the establishment of a PT(S)A and should seek the] assistance of the PTA Council of Baltimore County (PTACBC). ['s area vice president.]

[i. General]

IV. The principal should become familiar with the following to aid in his/her understanding of the PT(S)A and to develop positive working relationships:

A. General knowledge of national, state, and county PT(S)A policies and the bylaws of the school PT(S)A. [with special emphasis on membership, fund raising, nonpartisanship, and other important issues]

B. The PTA Council of Baltimore County, its publications, training and workshop opportunities, and the role of the PTACBC. [area vice presidents and other county officers in providing assistance to local PT(S)A.]

[(3) The right of the PT(S)A to use interoffice mail and a school mailbox.]

[Also see the statements on fund raising in the policies “Use of School Facilities” and “Relationship with Private Business...” in this series.]

Related Policies: Board of Education Policy 1260, *School Volunteers*
Board of Education Policy 1270, *Parent/Guardian and Family Involvement*
Board of Education Policy 1300, *Use of School Facilities*
Board of Education Policy 2342, *Teacher attendance at PTA meetings*
Board of Education Policy 2361, *Student Carriers*

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