

# Guidelines for PTA Publications

Adhere to [PTA noncommercial, nonpartisan and nonsectarian policies](#).

Communications must be cleared with the PTA president and school principal before printing, publishing or posting. The principal is responsible for the accuracy of school information and compliance with the State Education Code and school district policy. The PTA president is responsible for the accuracy of PTA information and compliance with PTA policies. (Article VI, Section 1i, *Bylaws for Local PTA/PTSA Units*).

## Publication best practices:

- Create a visual identity. PTA publications should be consistent in appearance and easily identifiable.
- Date all publications.
- The name of the unit, council, district and state PTA should be on each publication.
- Publications should list PTA contact information—units should use school address; council and district PTA should use office or mailing address.
- Include references to other PTA resources such as council and district PTA, California State PTA and National PTA publications, websites and social media sites.
- [Develop a plan to reach all members](#).

In PTA publications, publish only a summary of actions taken from PTA association meeting minutes. Do not publish, without written permission, photos or personal information about students or adults. Use of photographs or videos of children requires a Photography Release form, available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

## Advertising and Sponsorships

PTAs may be approached by commercial businesses or individuals seeking a presence in their publications. All advertising should be screened to ensure it meets PTA's high standards and legal obligations.

The California State PTA strongly recommends finding sponsors rather than accepting advertising. See [Sponsorship vs. Endorsement](#). Thank funders and sponsors. One sentence should do it! To preserve the PTA's tax-free income generated from a sponsorship, the acknowledgement thanking the organization must not actually promote the sponsor, its product or services. Become familiar with the [noncommercial policy](#).

- The Sunshine PTA expresses grateful appreciation to the following merchants for making this publication possible:
- The Sunshine PTA expresses thanks to Neighborhood Bank for the use of its parking lot for the car wash.

- Sunshine PTA thanks Romano Pizza for the generous offer to donate 10 percent of all sales made on Saturday.

Mailed publications should meet the guidelines of the US Postal Service. Learn more about [nonprofit mail content eligibility](#).

For any publication containing advertising, use the following disclaimer:

*The mention of any business or service in this publication does not imply an endorsement by the PTA.*

## Copyright Laws

PTA must abide by federal copyright laws governing printed matter, poetry, art, music and computer software. Republish articles, art, photographs etc. abiding by all laws and in an ethical manner.

For complete copyright information, go to [copyright.gov](#).

California State PTA articles and artwork may be used by unit, council and district PTAs without permission. Read National PTA materials carefully to determine when permission to republish is required. Always credit the source.

- It is most important that anything copyrighted, including original artwork, not be reproduced on an item to be sold or to advertise an event. Permission must be secured to avoid litigation. The artist or the syndicating company will generally require a royalty on each item sold and a specific number of complimentary copies of the item.

When showing movies during school or at after-school events or fundraisers, PTAs must observe [movie/video copyright laws](#), site licensing, and promote the event only as permitted by the site license.

## Best practices for Improving Content

- **Ask for feedback.** Use an opinion poll, a questionnaire, or interactive questions on social media.
- **Publicize:** coming events, the results of past events, membership campaigns, and PTA award recipients.
- **Remember, people don't read, they skim.** Use bullets, quotes, charts and graphics.
- **Proofread everything.** Have two to three people proofread before anything is distributed.

## Translating Materials

PTAs should work closely with the school to meet the language needs of those who receive association publications. To translate information and materials, seek help from:

- bilingual parents on the executive board;
- teachers or support personnel in the classrooms or the school district; or
- foreign language departments at local high schools, community colleges and universities.

Consider providing translated content in one of the following ways:

- Present side-by-side translations of articles on each page, or
- Print or post a separate issue.
- Offer all information in English with short recaps of major information in languages needed in the school community.
- Have a bilingual point person to contact or a Web page with information available in each target language.
- Develop audio or videotapes of recorded newsletters, notices and parenting tips in different languages and post on your website.
- Learn how to [reach out to members](#) in your community whose native language is not English.

The California State PTA offers [Outreach Translation Grants](#) to unit, council and district PTAs for written or verbal translation of PTA materials into other languages

## Publication Preparation

Efficient and timely distribution is crucial to the publication process.

- Set a publication schedule at the beginning of the school year and share with contributors.
- Send publication article reminders as the due date approaches.
- Ask board members to contribute articles and reports about their projects and events.
- Advise contributors that material will be edited for space and form (grammar, punctuation, spelling and accuracy of information) for all publications.
- Remember to allow time for review of the publication and approval by the PTA president and school principal before distributing.
- Include the cost of materials, supplies, copying, software, service provider subscriptions and equipment in the association budget.

## Publication Distribution

Send copies of unit PTA publications to council and district PTA presidents. Share your publications with the California State PTA by mailing to the state PTA office or emailing [communications@capta.org](mailto:communications@capta.org). If the publication is in print form, leave several copies in the school office.

Use your publications as a PTA marketing tool. Distribute them to school district superintendents and trustees, businesses, chambers of commerce, service groups, city offices, police departments, libraries, recreation departments, after-school day-care centers, preschools, media outlets, county supervisors, junior colleges, and local state legislators.