



Mentoring a Decision Maker

To Translate
Adapted Translations

Strengthening school administrator relationships is a strategy to help PTA members become effective advocates for their school districts. The goal of this focus is to help PTA members and leaders develop meaningful relationships with key district or campus administrators. Below are steps for strengthening relationships with school administrators and/or elected officials in your schools and district:

- 1. Identify a key leader to establish a relationship with:**
 - At the Council level, each PTA selects a leader to engage. The president or advocacy chair asks members or local units to volunteer to “adopt” one of the leaders who represent the school district. In this document, “leaders” include: school board trustees, state representatives and senators, members of the State Board of Education, members of Congress, and any other key individuals who influence school districts.
 - A member assumes responsibility for choosing only one leader, ensuring the advocacy role is manageable.
- 2. Initiate a relationship with the chosen leader:**
 - Meet with the selected leader to get acquainted, focusing on building rapport without diving deeply into specific education issues.
 - If the leader is at the state level, provide that person and their staff with basic facts about your school district, preferably in a written format that can serve as a reference.
 - Send a brief thank-you note, offering to serve as a resource for the leader and their staff on education matters.
- 3. Develop and nurture the relationship:**
 - Invite the leader to back-to-school events, meetings, and other PTA activities, giving them an opportunity to address attendees.
 - Schedule regular meetings with the leader to discuss the impact of various laws and policies on your school district.
 - Share Texas PTA’s legislative priorities when published, and discuss additional legislative issues identified by your district.
- 4. Provide your contact information:**
 - Ensure the leader has direct access to contact their PTA liaison for guidance on the local implications of pending legislation or policies.
- 5. Maintain timely communication:**
 - Before the leader votes on pending legislation or rules, the designated PTA liaison should contact them via phone or email to explain how the decision would impact the school district and advocate for a specific course of action.
- 6. Recognize and appreciate the leader’s efforts:**
 - Periodically acknowledge the leader’s contributions with personal letters, mentions in PTA newsletters or social media, or through small recognition events for their work on behalf of children in the district.

By following these steps, PTA members can foster meaningful relationships with school district leadership and/or elected officials, ensuring a collaborative approach to advancing education and advocating for the needs of students