



AWARDS REFERENCE GUIDE

PTA's mission is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

Updated: January 2025



AWARDS CHAIR'S REFERENCE GUIDE

In addition to this reference guide the awards chair should:

- ☐ Review all information on the Alabama PTA website www.alabamapta.org and the National PTA website www.pta.org.
- ☐ Check with your PTA president for any written materials from the National PTA.
- ☐ Be familiar with your PTA Bylaws
- ☐ Verify with your PTA president that your name, mailing address, telephone number, and email address have been submitted to Alabama PTA via (GiveBacks) MemberHub.

PTA IN GOOD STANDING

(Taken directly from Alabama PTA [bylaws](#))

A local PTA must be in [good standing](#) to receive awards and grants from Alabama PTA.

A PTA in good standing:

- (i) Adheres to the purposes and basic policies of PTA
- (ii) Remits dues to Alabama PTA by dates designated in these bylaws
- (iii) Has a current officer list on file in the Alabama PTA office
- (iv) Must have bylaws which have been updated within the last three (3) years, on file in the Alabama PTA Office
- (v) Must maintain its 501©(3) tax exempt status or be actively working in conjunction with Alabama PTA to have it's tax exempt status reinstated (See Standing Rules)
- (vi) Must maintain membership levels as follows: A minimum of 15 members for schools with enrollment of 200 or less students, 25 members for schools with enrollment of 201 to 500 students, and 50 members for schools with enrollment of greater than 500 students
- (vii) If located with an organized council, follows adopted guidelines of that council, in paying dues and/or participating in other programs.

PTA Values

Collaboration: We will work in partnership with a wide array of individuals and organizations to broaden and enhance our ability to serve and advocate for all children and families.



Commitment: We are dedicated to children's educational success, health, and well-being through strong family and community engagement, while remaining accountable to the principles upon which our association was founded.

Diversity: We acknowledge the potential of everyone without regard, including but not limited to: age, culture, economic status, educational background, ethnicity, gender, geographic location, legal status, marital status, mental ability, national origin, organizational position, parental status, physical ability, political philosophy, race, religion, sexual orientation, and work experience.

Respect: We value the individual contributions of members, employees, volunteers, and partners as we work collaboratively to achieve our association's goals.

Accountability: All members, employees, volunteers, and partners have a shared responsibility to align their efforts toward the achievement of our association's strategic initiatives.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Alabama PTA recognizes the importance of partnerships between home and school and will recognize individuals and organizations that have exhibited a strong commitment to improving these partnerships at their annual convention each year. Award applications sent to Alabama PTA for judging become the property of Alabama PTA. Award applications must be completed and submitted to Alabama PTA by March 1. Activities from the spring of the previous school year may be included.

TIPS FOR AWARD SUBMISSION

A good application is one that uses descriptive language that details the project/program rather than giving conclusions. For example, instead of saying "parent night was a success," descriptive language tells why it was a success, i.e., "One hundred parents attended parents' night, whereas in the past no more than 50 parents have ever attended. As a result, we have 20 new PTA members."

Descriptive language also avoids just making lists such as, "Our PTA held a health fair, a spaghetti night, and a parents' night." Instead, it informs the reader what the PTA accomplished and why: "We held a health fair in our community because the majority of children and adults have not had hearing or eye tests. Three hundred (300) children and adults were tested, and 35 were found to need follow-up. The PTA is now working with the hospital association to provide follow up for those who cannot afford it."

Space is limited, so choose words carefully. Award applications should address local activities supported or sponsored by the PTA, not the activities of the school staff.

Alabama PTA has switched to digital submission via a Google Form.



For more information or questions ALPTA.awards@gmail.com.

[You can also find more information and the applications here:](#)

Outstanding Educator Awards

Strong PTAs must have the cooperation and support of parents, teachers, principals, and superintendents who support PTA activities. Alabama PTA recognizes educators who put forth special effort to work with PTA through its Outstanding Educator Awards. Applying shows PTA's appreciation and provides an opportunity to recognize that person locally.

Past winners of any ALPTA Educator Award are not eligible to be nominated for that same award for 5 years unless they move to a new school or position. Preference will be given to nominees that have not been recipients within the last 5 years.

[See past Alabama PTA Outstanding Educator recipients](#)

See [guidelines](#) on how Educators can demonstrate support of the National Standards.

Outstanding Superintendent: Plaque/small trophy

Category: One nominee per school district.

Criteria: Must be nominated by the council of the school district they serve or by three (3) local PTA/PTSA presidents in the school district. Must be a PTA member at a local unit in the school district.

See application for guidelines on written responses.

[Application link](#)

Outstanding Administrator Award: Plaque/small trophy

Categories: Elementary, Middle/Junior High, High School

Criteria: Must be nominated by the PTA of the school they serve.

Written responses should be no more than three (3) pages double spaced, typed using 12-point Times New Roman or Arial font.

[Application link](#)

Outstanding Teacher Award: Plaque/small trophy

Categories: Elementary, Middle/Junior High, High School Criteria: Must be nominated by the PTA of the school they serve. Paraprofessionals are not eligible for this award. [Written](#)



responses should be no more than three (3) pages double spaced, typed using 12-point Times New Roman or Arial font.

[Application link](#)

Outstanding Support Staff Award: Plaque/small trophy

Categories: Elementary, Middle/Junior High, High School

Criteria: Must be nominated by the PTA of the school they serve. Designated for non-certified members of the staff whose support/efforts help encourage and support family- school partnerships. i.e.: office, custodial, cafeteria, librarian assistant, resource officer, paraprofessional, etc.

Written responses should be no more than three (3) pages double spaced, typed using 12-point Times New Roman or Arial font.

[Application link](#)

Local PTA Awards

(All awards for committee and council use)

The following awards are determined by the Alabama PTA office and do not require an application by the local PTA. The only exception is the Golden Apple Award which requires submission of the Golden Apple form. Only PTAs in good standing are eligible for membership awards.

All dues payment deadlines refer to ACH initiated payment via GiveBacks or a mailed check postmarked on or before the deadline date.

Please remember to report your enrollment by September 30 to qualify for some awards by updating the Number of Students found on the Unit Data Page in GiveBacks. **EARLY BIRD AWARD – Oct 1** - Certificate awarded to all PTAs reporting 50% of the previous year's membership. This is determined by Alabama PTA.

Members must be entered into GiveBacks by unit. You do not need to fill out an application for this award.

GOLDEN APPLE AWARD – Oct 1 - You can submit one check or GiveBacks payment for both Early Bird and Golden Apple, but you must submit completed Golden Apple form with principal's or designee's signature via email to alabamapta@yahoo.com.

A certificate awarded to all principals whose PTAs report 100% faculty membership.



Faculty is defined as full-time certified personnel. (Includes, but not limited to teachers, administrators, counselors, librarians, etc.)

Part-time employees and non-certified personnel are encouraged to join but are not required to qualify for the Golden Apple Award.

Principals must be members of their local units.

GOLD LEAF AWARD - December 1 - Certificate awarded to all PTAs equaling or surpassing the previous year's membership. This is determined by Alabama PTA.

OAK TREE AWARD - March 1 - Certificate awarded to all PTAs reporting a 20% increase over the previous year's membership. This is determined by Alabama PTA.

100% MEMBERSHIP AWARD - March 1 - Certificate awarded to all PTAs reporting 100% membership (one paid member for each student enrolled at the beginning of the second month of school). This is determined by Alabama PTA.

100% MEMBERSHIP CONSECUTIVE YEARS AWARD - March 1 - Plaque awarded to all PTAs reporting 100% membership beginning with the fifth year of consecutive 100% membership. This is determined by Alabama PTA.

BIG TOPPER AWARD - March 1 - Plaque awarded to all PTAs reporting 1,000 or more paid members. This is determined by Alabama PTA.

OUTSTANDING MEMBERSHIP AWARD - March 1 - Plaque awarded to one PTA in each division with the largest membership percentage based on enrollment (number of students not including Pre-K). Local units can advise ALPTA if enrollment is not correct on the Unit Data Page in GiveBacks. This award is determined by Alabama PTA.

Division I (1-300)

Division II (301-600)

Division III (601-900)

Division IV (901-1200)

Division V (1201+)

COUNCIL AWARDS



OUTSTANDING COUNCIL AWARD – This category is reserved for councils supporting local units. See <https://www.alabamapta.org/pta-awards> to download the application,

Award: Plaque-One (1) Statewide

HELEN TALBOT MEMBERSHIP ACHIEVEMENT AWARD - Certificate awarded to each council that has all active PTAs remitting dues to Alabama PTA postmarked by March 1 or initiated payment through GiveBacks by March 1.

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP AWARD - Certificate awarded to the council with the highest percentage of increase in total membership (as reported by active PTAs) over the previous year's total membership of dues submitted to Alabama PTA postmarked by March 1 or initiated payment through GiveBacks by March 1.

National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships

PTA's **National Standards for Family-School Partnerships** set the bar for how schools and parent organizations work together to support student success. The Standards have contributed to greater awareness and capacity for improving family-school partnerships across the country and internationally for over 20 years.

Each year, Alabama PTA awards PTAs that have provided outstanding results in each of the Six National Standards. These awards will recognize local PTAs whose programs and activities are based on one or more of the National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships.

The six awards standards are:

- (1) Welcoming All Families
- (2) Communicating Effectively
- (3) Supporting Student Success
- (4) Speaking up for Every Child
- (5) Sharing Power
- (6) Collaborating with the Community.

Award: One plaque/small trophy per standard in each category or combined for multiple standard recipients.



Grade Divisions: Elementary, Middle/Junior High, Senior High, Multi-School and Community.

Be advised National PTA has updated the six standards with a focus on:

1. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
2. An expanded approach to student success to include the whole child development
3. More clearly defined roles for PTA and School leaders.

Please keep these updates in mind when submitting applications.

When planning PTA activities, consider projects that advance each of the six Standards to ensure a comprehensive approach to building successful partnerships between family, school, and community. PTA programs should be PTA driven or should supplement and enhance those sponsored by the school. Some projects or activities may address more than one Standard, such as (a) a project that addresses parenting skills and student learning or (b) a project that combines volunteering and collaborating with the community. One key to Implementing these standards is to prioritize family engagement that is transformative. Parents are crucial to their student's success, and transformative family engagement is paving the way to the future.

The 4 I's of Transformative Family Engagement are:

1. **Inclusive.** When PTAs are inclusive, they embrace and value diverse perspectives.
2. **Individualized.** When PTAs take an individualized approach to family engagement, they meet the unique needs of every family and child.
3. **Integrated.** When PTAs have an integrated approach to family engagement, they connect and align their efforts with the broader educational system.
4. **Impactful.** When PTAs are impactful, they empower families to support their children's success.

Read each standard. There are suggestions of programs that align with each one listed below the definition. Local units may apply in multiple categories. Remember awards are based on activities supported or sponsored by the PTA and not the activities of the school staff.

Things to Keep in Mind:



- The ALPTA Family-School Partnerships Awards are based on activities supported or sponsored by the PTA and not the activities of the school staff.
- The timeframe for consideration of new programs, events or initiatives supporting excellence in Family-School Partnership Standards includes the months following the awards submissions due date for the previous year as well as those of the current school year. As such, the awards period for this year's ALPTA Family-School Partnership Awards is March 2, 2024-March 1, 2025.
- There is one (1) Google Form application with the six (6) standards individually listed. When completing the application, unit PTAs can specify how their programming/activities meet one or more of the six (6) standards.
- The application asks that you submit a narrative (Narrative should be no more than one typed page per standard.) for each standard your PTA has aimed to meet during the awards timeframe. While PTA units can submit a different narrative for each standard, the same narrative can be submitted for multiple categories.
- One or more programs, events, and initiatives may be used to support a standard.
- If the program, event, or initiative supports more than one standard, please adjust the narrative to describe why the program, event or initiative supports the indicated standard.
- The application allows one full page of supplemental materials to be submitted per standard. This page will need to be uploaded as a separate file. This file may include photos as well as excerpts from newsletters, brochures, and social media posts. All supplemental materials provided for each standard must fit on one (1) sheet of letter-sized paper.

[Application Link](#)

[See scoring Rubric link in application.](#)

For expanded information, please see [PTA National Standards Overview.](#)



Standard 1: Welcome All Families

The school treats families as valued partners in their child's education and facilitates a sense of belonging in the school community.

To implement this standard, a PTA can, for example:

- Identify and attempt to overcome barriers to families' full participation in PTA and/or school activities (i.e., language, jobs, transportation).
- Host programs/events honoring families' culture, values, and identities.

Standard 2: Communicate Effectively

The school supports staff to engage in proactive, timely, and two-way communication so that all families can easily understand and contribute to their child's educational experience.

To implement this standard, a PTA can, for example:

- Identify families' communication preferences or abilities.
- Seek tools, resources, and strategies to ensure communication is accessible (such as language, style, etc.).
- Provide student planners, weekly folders, or other modes of communication.

Standard 3: Support Student Success

The school builds the capacity of families and educators to continuously collaborate to support students' academic, social, and emotional learning.

To implement this standard, a PTA can, for example:

- Host family workshops on planning for college or career fairs.
- Sponsor wellness and fitness programs.
- Host student versus parent math/science or trivia competitions.
- Host a reading/literacy night.
- Provide resources or strategies to support what is being taught in the classroom that can be used at home.

Standard 4: Speak Up for Every Child

The school affirms family and student expertise and advocacy so that all students are treated fairly and have access to relationships and opportunities that will support their success.

To implement this standard, a PTA can, for example:

- Attend school board meetings or appoint a legislative representative who will attend your school board meetings and make a report to your membership.
- Provide contact information for the decision makers and provide updates on legislative issues especially that impact education and children.
- Invite your local or state elected officials to speak on a panel.
- Connect families to school and district decision-makers so that their voice can be heard.
- Share information and prepare families so that they can advocate for their child and all children.

Standard 5: Share Power

The school partners with families in decisions that affect children and families and together— and as a team, inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

To implement this standard, a PTA can, for example:

- Recruit and support new people to have leadership roles in PTA.
- Gather families' input and ensure it is representative of the school community.
- Be transparent with our PTA with families and school.
- Work with the school in providing opportunities for families to take part in programs during and after school hours.
- Host a Kids ID program to address the issue of the dangers of strangers.
- Host an informational night for parents on how to prepare your child for high school.
- Host an informational session on what are the requirements for graduating from high school.
- Show how parents and teachers can promote internet safety at home and school.



Standard 6: Collaborate with the Community

The school collaborates with community organizations and members to connect students, families, and staff to expand learning opportunities, community services and civic participation.

To implement this standard, a PTA can, for example:

- Partner with a sister PTA that is struggling; invite them to your event then assist them with orchestrating their own.
- Partner with other nonprofits agencies like United Way and Junior Achievement for youth leadership programs.
- Collaborate with local churches and community organizations to provide quality after-school programs.
- Sponsor voter registration drives, mock elections, or community recycling projects.
- Host joint community PTA meetings with the elementary, middle/junior high and high schools to showcase what each offer.
- Establish a care closet or food pantry with community partners able to donate items or funds.

For more information about the National Standards and PTA programs that promote family-school partnerships, visit [National PTA](#).