



Family Engagement in a Virtual World

Fresh Ideas for PTA Leaders

Summer 2020

We're in uncharted territory

Families are dealing with:

- Illness
- Financial hardship
- Food insecurity
- Mental health
- Deaths of family and friends



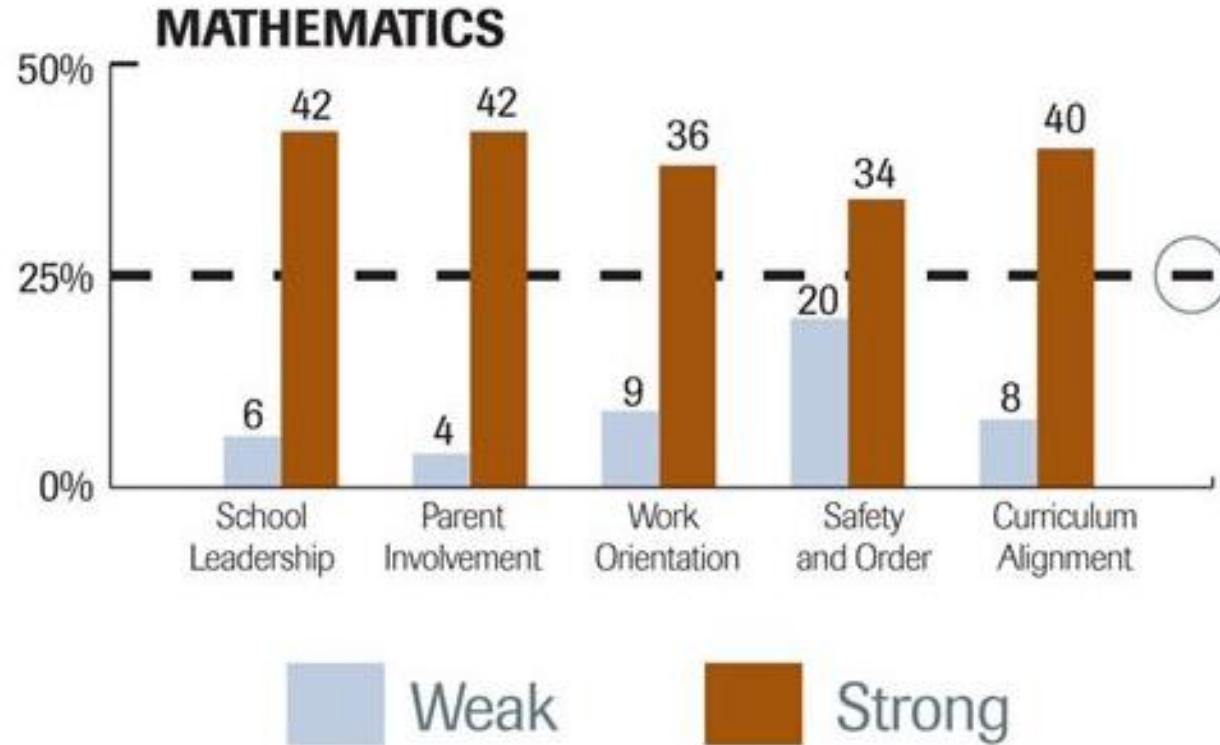
What are families saying?

- 81% worry kids **miss social interactions** (National Parents Union)
- ~9 in 10 worry **children are falling behind academically** (The Education Trust)
- 72% (80% of African American & Latinx parents) say it's somewhat or very likely they'll find **more time to talk** to their children about assignments (Learning Heroes)
- 67% **feel more connected** with their child's day-to-day education (Learning Heroes)

About Tracie Potts

- National PTA Board of Directors
- Family Engagement Fellow
- Family Engagement Advisory Team co-chair
- Former PTA Council VP
- ES/MS PTA President
- MD & National PTA Lifetime Achievement Award
- Montgomery County Champion for Children
- Featured “Learning Hero”





Source: *Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago*

Family Engagement *Matters*

- As important as a high quality principal or rigorous curriculum
- Helps struggling schools “beat the odds”

Define

Family or Parent: *Any* caring adult in a child's life: grandparents, siblings, foster parents, mentors, etc.

Engagement: How PTAs strengthen family connections to their school and child's education.

What is *Transformative* Family Engagement?

→ A shared effort of families, schools, and community leaders to advance programs, practices, and policies that *empower every parent to make their child's potential a reality.*

INCLUSIVE

Embracing and valuing diverse perspectives.



INDIVIDUALIZED

Meeting the unique needs of every family and child.



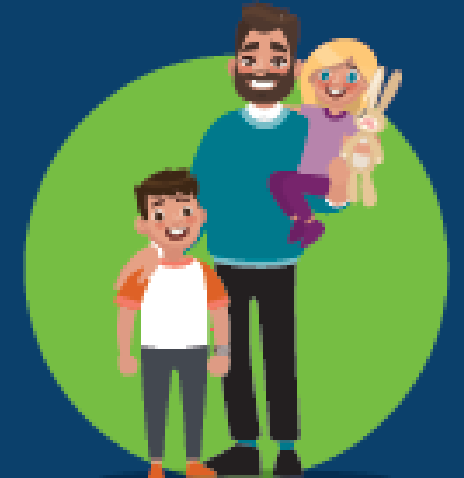
INTEGRATED

Connecting and aligning with the educational system.



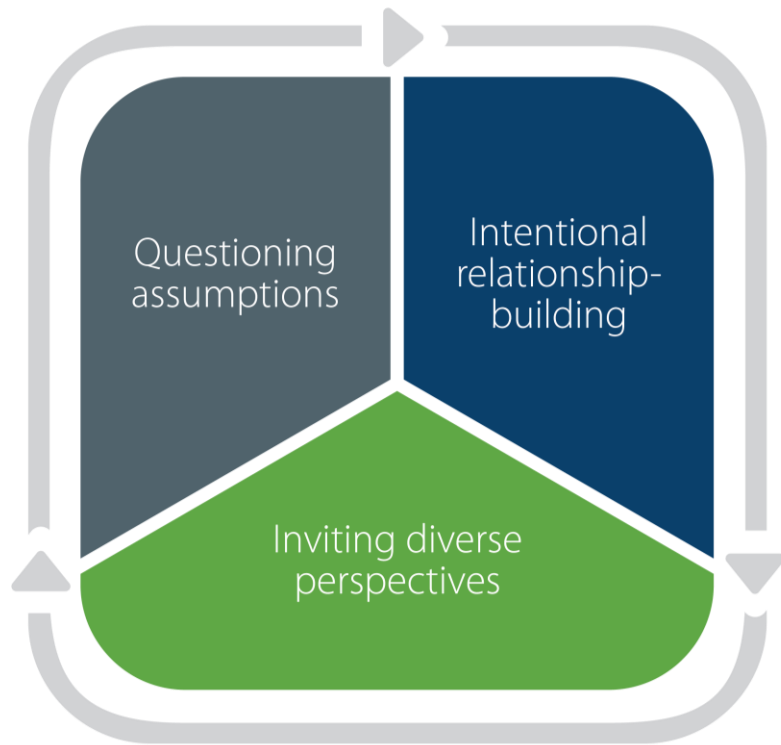
IMPACTFUL

Empowering families to support their child's success.



Guiding Principles: The 4 I's

Inclusive



Inclusive
Embracing and
valuing diverse
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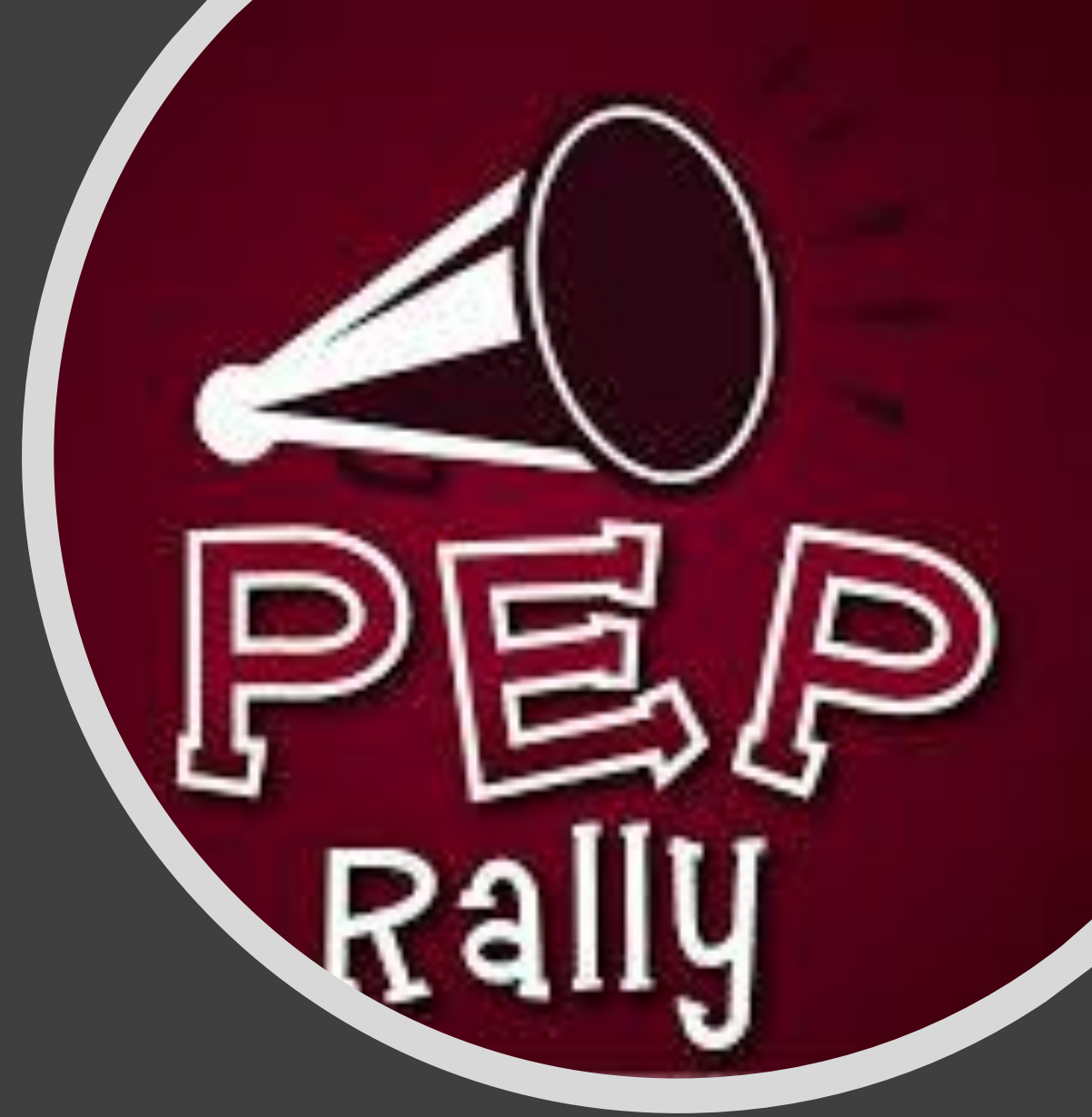
How can your **PTA CONNECT** families?

- Organize **neighborhood activities** like chalk-the-walk or bear hunt
- Post fun or informative **videos of teachers and staff**
- Promote virtual **spirit weeks** online
- Host virtual **family nights** - trivia, games, movies, talent show
- Offer **yoga or mindfulness workshops** for mental wellness
- Share student art in a **virtual art gallery** (Launch Reflections!)
- Create a **little free pantry** (for food donations/pick ups)
- Host a **device drive** to get gently used devices to students

Share your ideas in the comments!

VIRTUAL PEP RALLY!

- High energy!
- Keep it short
- Energize, inform, connect
- Build *Community*
- Music
- Open chat
- Use social media to promote



VIRTUAL PEP RALLY!

- PTA Welcome
- Chat Your Feelings Word Cloud
- Principal (1st day tips)
- Parade of teachers!
- 3 Live Questions
- Surprise Performance?



VIRTUAL PEP RALLY!

Before You Go

Share word cloud

Thanks

Next connect

Membership link

Feedback/Contact



Individualized



Individualized

Meeting the unique
needs of every
family and child.

“Nudges” for virtual programming

Reference to
teacher and
other parents
highlights
social norm
for attendance

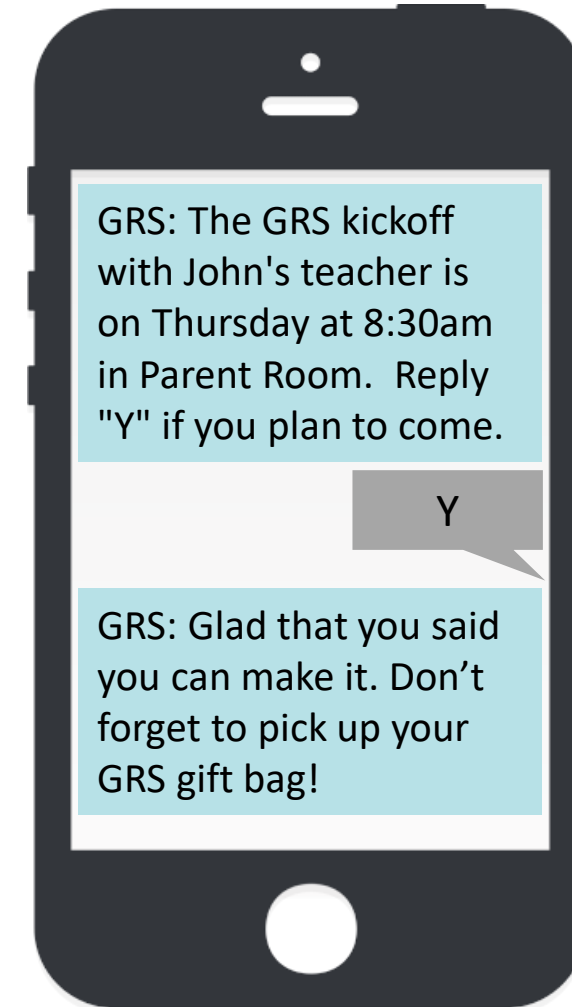
Priming
parent identity
as a teacher



Envelope:
Increases
sense of
importance

Reframed as
an invitation,
not a flyer

Personalized
hand-written
information,
focuses
attention



Personalized
implementation
intention

Reminder of
commitment

Rewards

How can your **PTA HELP** families?

- **CHECK IN** with families you haven't heard from
- **CONSIDER** a handwritten note or phone call
- **ASK** what they need
- **CONNECT** them to community resources
- **OFFER** webinars, video calls, conference calls & town halls to discuss distance learning, mental health, budgeting, COVID-19 updates

Share your ideas in the comments!



- Ways To Give**
- Donate Now
 - Donate at Work
 - Donate on Your Phone
 - Institutional Giving
 - Payment Options

COVID-19 Gift Card Campaign

**Families
HelpingFamilies**

**A Community
Response to
COVID-19**

COVID-19 has had an extraordinary impact on our community. Recovery will take time and a concerted and continued effort. We have seen tremendous generosity from individual school communities that have mobilized to support their families in need. We now hope to take these successful initiatives county-wide through a coordinated community partnership between MCCPTA, MCPS, and the MCPS Educational Foundation.

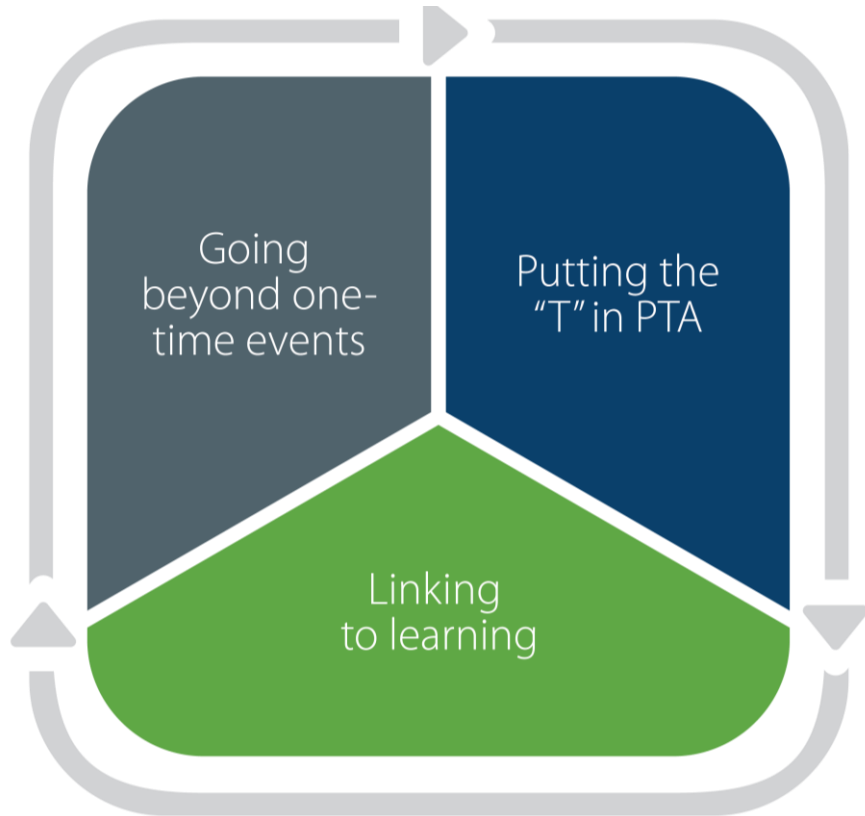


COVID-19 Gift Card Campaign
Donate Online

HELPING FAMILIES

More ideas: <http://onevoice.pta.org/national-volunteer-week-2020/>

Integrated



Integrated
Connecting and
aligning with the
educational system.

How can your PTA SUPPORT teachers?

- Review **virtual/hybrid learning plans** and **grade-level standards**
- Develop **online study groups**
- Offer **virtual story times** using books recommended by teachers or your school librarian
- Find parents who can assist with **online tutoring**

Share your ideas in the comments!

How can your PTA SUPPORT teachers?

- Think creatively about **virtual enrichment programming** (STEM Night, Art Night, Career Day, book club)
- Include families in **morning announcements** or as a **surprise reader**
- **Provide** supplies and manipulatives for learning at home
- Ask teachers how you can **be a resource** during this challenging time

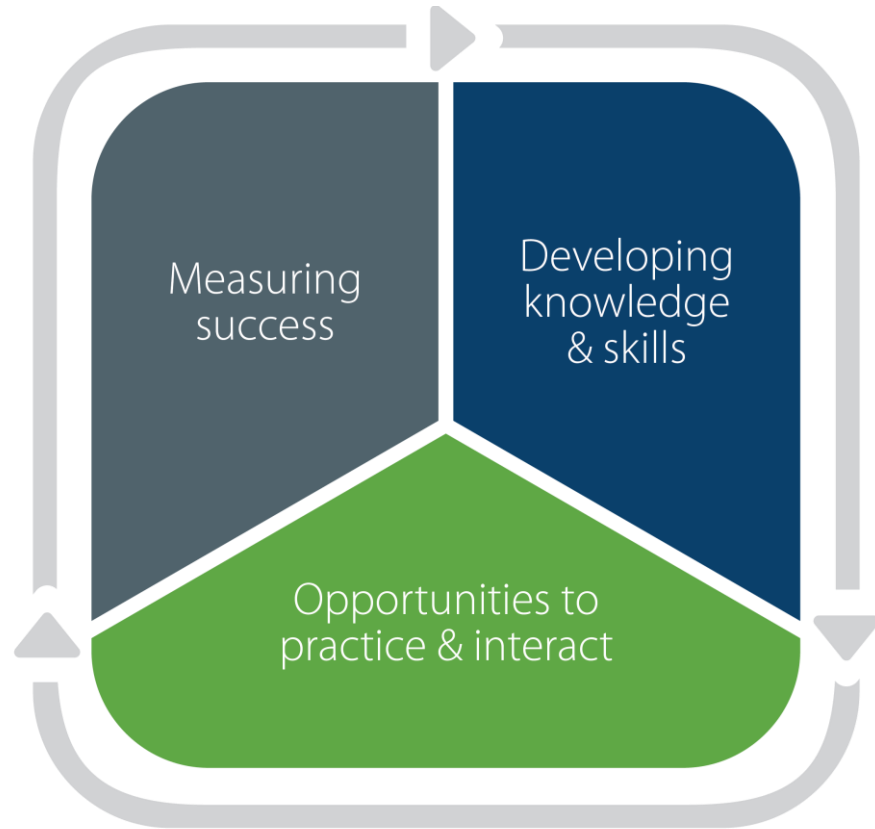
Share your ideas in the comments!

MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL

- Tutoring nights for younger students
- COVID College Prep expertise
- Financial literacy class
- Virtual social (planned by students!)



Impactful



Impactful
Empowering families
to support their
child's success.

How can your PTA be IMPACTFUL?

- Walk families through **online resources** (reading/math sites)
- Show families how to use **tools to support** their kids
- Offer **technology workshops** where parents and children can practice remote learning skills (muting, sharing screens, backgrounds)
- Ask families for **feedback** about your programs

Share your ideas in the comments!

QUESTIONS?



SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE

www.pta.org/home/programs/
National-PTA-School-of-Excellence



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www.pta.org/familyengagement