

Guidance on Re-Purposing Grant Funds - Maximizing Impact in Serving your Community

Where to Start:

Before taking action, make sure to gather information on how your PTA can best use the funds to support the needs in your community right now.

- 1. Collaboratively determine the need:** Schedule a time with your PTA Board and School Principal to discuss the opportunity together and identify the need you will use this funding to address. This is an imperative step to identify what are safe actions that can be taken within your community at this time.
- 2. Create an action plan:** Once your PTA has decided on the need, it's time to create your action plan. *If possible*, contact the appropriate school staff member(s) to create an action plan together. This could be the Special Education Team, Family Engagement Specialist, School/District Technologist, Media Specialist or Librarian, School Counseling Team, School Social Worker, or School Nutrition Services Department.
- 3. Expand the impact:** As needed, connect with appropriate local nonprofit groups and school organizations to see how they can help bring your plan into action and further your impact.

Sample Actions to Take:

These examples have been shared with us from PTAs across the country who have been working to address community needs in the wake of COVID-19. Examples that are marked with an asterisk (*) are ones that you can start today! We don't expect you to be able to implement these actions, but are providing them as ideas to help get you started.

Addressing Social Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health

- 1. Issue virtual contests, daily challenges, morale boosters to lift spirits***

Celebrate School Spirit Week Online. Host a virtual talent show or art contest. Post weekly update/check-in videos featuring members of your school community. Use National PTA arts education tools to [start your Reflections program](#).

Who to consult: Your PTA Board. If possible, see if your school's social media platforms can participate.

- 2. Promote family engagement activities***

Organize a chalk the walk (families draw specific objects/characters around a theme in front of their houses); animal safari (Stuffed animals in windows); scavenger hunt (colors, themes, numbers), etc. Encourage families to walk around their neighborhoods and share in on the fun.

Who to consult: Your PTA Board. If possible, see if you can connect with your school's family engagement coordinator or school counselor to reach all families.

3. Coordinate the creation of wellbeing kits (first aid, hygiene and/or mental health care packages)

This would need to be accomplished with zero human contact. Work with your school district or school administration to distribute or create a form for families to order supplies that the PTA pays for.

Who to consult: PTA Board, District level school supports, your school administration, school counselors, local businesses, local nonprofits

Addressing Food Insecurity

1. Support your school district's meal pick up and deliveries with additional meals/groceries/food supports

Connect with your school district and school administration to see if your PTA can fund extended meal distribution (such as on the weekend). Connect with your school administration on the distribution of meal packages.

Who to consult: PTA Board, District level school supports, your school administration, school counselors, local businesses, local nonprofits.

2. Connect with Local Food Bank(s)

Organize information to let families know how to access these resources in your community: Where it is, how to get there, when it is open, what to do when they arrive. Distribute this information via electronic communication, such as email and social media, but also consider using your funds to print flyers (English/Spanish) that can be distributed via your school or district meal pick-up/drop off service.

Who to consult: PTA Board, District level school supports, School administration, school support staff, such as the Social Worker, local businesses, local nonprofits.

3. Help Food Pantries Identify New Locations

Ideally, families should not have to travel far to get to a food pantry. To increase accessibility for those most in need, identify convenient locations to families homes. This could be at your school, the library, community center, or other central locations. Connect with local food banks and non-profits to advocate for and support satellite food pantry locations.

Who to consult: PTA Board, District level school supports, School administration, school support staff, such as the Social Worker, local nonprofits.

Addressing Distance Learning

1. Ensure that all guidance to parents is provided in the appropriate languages for your community*

Double check that all opportunities and instructions for families are in all languages spoken in your community. Advocate for your families to ensure that everyone is receiving the same educational opportunities.

Who to consult: PTA Board, school administration

2. Share distance learning and enrichment resources

Curate a list of resources that enhance your school curriculum. Post online and distribute hard copies to families. This can be done by mail or for pick-up at school district distribution sites (if your school already has this in place). If possible, create themed packets for each week to keep families engaged. You can use this special Office Depot discount for PTAs to have the packets printed and shipped directly to where you need!

Who to consult: PTA Board, your school administration, school counselors, teacher support

3. Coordinate the creation of learning supply kits

Identify supplies that could be distributed to families with food pick-up (if your school already has this in place). Examples of this could be school supply care packages (include things like notebooks, pencils, markers, etc.), enrichment kits to promote hands-on engagement in the arts, STEM, physical activity, or reading (book kits!). A great place to start is [National PTA's STEM @ Home experiment kits](#).

Who to consult: PTA Board, District level school supports, your school administration, local businesses, local nonprofits

Addressing Internet and Device Access

1. Equip families with the knowledge of what is available to them to access the internet at home

Many service providers have updated their low-cost internet offers (several are free for the next couple of months!). EveryoneOn is a nonprofit partner of National PTA who specializes in helping to increase internet accessibility for families across the country. Enter your zip code into their [website](#) to identify the offers in your area (no identifying information needed!). Create and print a flyer to share at school distribution sites. Also consider sending an email to essential businesses in your community to ask if they will post or distribute to customers, if able.

Who to consult: PTA Board, school administration, local businesses

2. Provide families with the tools they need to access the internet at home

Partner with the appropriate school resource staff to purchase and help organize the distribution of WiFi hotspots to families without internet connections in your community.

Who to consult: PTA Board, school counselors, family engagement coordinator

3. Ensure that families have enough devices for all members of their family

Organize a remote device drive to collect used devices and use your funds to have them sanitized and set-up with the appropriate school applications before distributing to families in need. Partner with your school technologist, media specialist or librarian to ensure everything is set-up correctly.

Who to consult: PTA Board, school administration, school counselors, family engagement coordinator