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PTA Reflections® Celebration Guide

What Is a PTA Reflections Celebration?

The PTA Reflections Celebration is a powerful tool for encouraging students to explore and be involved in the arts. Together, school leaders and families **offer positive reinforcement for participation in the National PTA Reflections program**.

Parents and community leaders are welcomed into the school to discover the rich culture and artistic skills presented by student artists. An art exhibit with live student performances and an awards ceremony will showcase the importance of arts education in your school.

During the PTA Reflections Celebration, families will:

- Recognize their child's participation and achievement in the arts.
- Discover new opportunities to stay involved in their child's learning through the arts.
- Understand how arts programs provide necessary educational benefits and share their positive experiences with school and community leaders.

Why Is Student Recognition Important?

Celebrating student learning provides an opportunity for schools and families to connect with each other and to their community.

When PTAs and schools celebrate the arts together, all families feel welcomed into the school and are encouraged to take an active role in their child's learning. Research shows positive recognition and engaged families attribute to higher rates of student success.

Celebration events also serve as a platform for communicating the importance of arts education in your school. Ensure school leaders, policy makers and community leaders recognize the value of learning through the arts.

Steps for Planning Your PTA Reflections Celebration

1. **Build your team** to discuss the objectives for this event, as well as plan event logistics (e.g., space, time, date, promotion).

2. **Decorate the school with student artwork.** Prior to the event, recruit parent and student volunteers to assist teachers with displays of student art in the classrooms and hallways. Place your Reflections exhibit in a prominent location in the school such as the lobby, cafeteria, library or hallway.

3. **Plan your awards ceremony.** Secure a location in the school that is large enough for all attendees, as well as performances (e.g., gym, auditorium, multi-purpose room, library or cafeteria). Then identify student artists to exhibit their art or perform during the awards ceremony. Consider including welcoming or closing remarks from your PTA President, PTA Reflections Chair and/

or school principal. You could also invite special guests to deliver remarks. Create a program listing the names of student performers and featured presenters. Also include names of students whose artwork is exhibited.

4. **Gather event supplies** for your awards ceremony and art exhibit. Consider certificates, medallions and prizes to present during your awards ceremony. Visit *PTA.org/store* and click on "Reflections" to see options. Other supplies may be small gifts to recognize guest speakers, as well as table cloths, signage for reserved seats, decorations, audio visual needs and a microphone. Art exhibit materials may include name cards, a welcome sign and refreshments.

5. **Promote your event.** All families are welcome to celebrate the arts together. Send personalized invitations to school leaders, community arts advocates and policymakers. Use all of your PTA and school communications tools. Feature your award winning entries in these communications. Invite local media to attend and generate visibility for your school and PTA.

6. **Host your PTA Reflections Celebration.** Revise the schedule below to best fit your school community. This is one example for a 2-hour event with 30 minutes of celebration in the beginning as families congregate, 60 minutes of awards ceremony featuring student performances and guest speakers, and 30 minutes of celebration at the end.

   - *Set-up:*
     - Decorate reception room and prepare refreshments, exhibits and awards ceremony space.
     - Prepare the welcome table to include programs, marked school maps of exhibit space, as well as PTA membership information.
     - Hang directional signage where appropriate (including parking areas).
   - *Families Arrive:*
     - Welcome families with a program, encourage them to visit the art exhibit and take a membership card if new to PTA.
   - *Opening Reception (30 minutes):*
     - Families visit the PTA Reflections Exhibit and enjoy live student performances.
   - *Awards Ceremony (60 minutes):*
     - Welcoming remarks by school principal and/or PTA President.
     - Keynote speaker such as arts teacher, community arts professional or public official.
     - Presentation of awards.
     - Closing remarks by PTA Reflections Chair, PTA President or student leader.
   - *Closing Reception (30 minutes):*
     - Families visit the PTA Reflections Exhibit and enjoy live student performances.

7. **After your celebration concludes, thank those who helped make it a success.** Be sure to include all of the following groups in your recognition plan: student leaders, volunteers, school personnel and community partners.

Visit **PTA.org/Reflections** for additional resources.
Tweet your Reflections celebration **@NationalPTA** #PTAreflections
Gather more ideas on **Pinterest.com/NationalPTA**