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# PTA FOR YOUR CHILD

Talking to Principals:  
What Principals Value about PTA  
*Handout*

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# National PTA Asked Principals

- What do you personally value about PTA?
- What benefits does PTA bring to your community?
- What has been the specific value of PTA during the COVID pandemic?
- Can you offer one piece of advice for PTA leaders to successfully work with principals?

# Thank You, Principals!

*National PTA thanks the principals who responded to our survey. Special thanks to the following individuals who provided quotes and video for this presentation:*

- Angela Hodges, Principal, Wiley Middle School
  - Leander ISD, Texas
- Dr. Doug Daugherty, Principal, Sope Creek Elementary School
  - South Cobb School District, Georgia
- Steven Cook, Assistant Principal, Brown Elementary School
  - Hazelwood School District, Missouri
- Thomas Santo, Principal, Zane North Elementary School
  - Collingswood Public School District, New Jersey

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# What Principals Personally Value about PTA



## What Principals said they personally value about PTA:

- Partnerships, collaboration and supportive relationships.
- Communication and community connections.
- Collaboration with the school and community to creating excellence for the school.
- Advocacy for all children.
- Ability to take action and get things done.



"On our own, we reach a certain limit. With PTA's support, we elevate that to a whole new standard."

Thomas Santo, Principal  
Zane North PTA, Collingswood, NJ

In my experience, (PTA) has been the single most powerful connection between community and school.

Angela Hodges, Principal  
Wiley Middle School, Leander, TX



# Personal Value: Messaging Suggestions



“We want to work with you, the staff, and students to create excellence in this school.”

“We will lead that discussion in the community.”

“Let’s talk about how we—PTA and Principal—can work together to get started.”

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## Community Value and Principals

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# What benefit does PTA bring to your community?

- Engages community
- Bridge between school and community
- Voice beyond the schoolhouse
- Feedback
- Communication

*"A continuous pathway for engagement, activities, events, and involvement."*

Principal Survey Respondent

# Community Benefit: Messaging Suggestions



“How can PTA work with you to bridge the gap between home and school?”

“Let’s talk about how PTA can help you promote school goals and identify resources to support those goals.”

“Let’s chat about how PTA’s planned events for the year can increase community engagement in the school.”

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Value During  
COVID and Crisis

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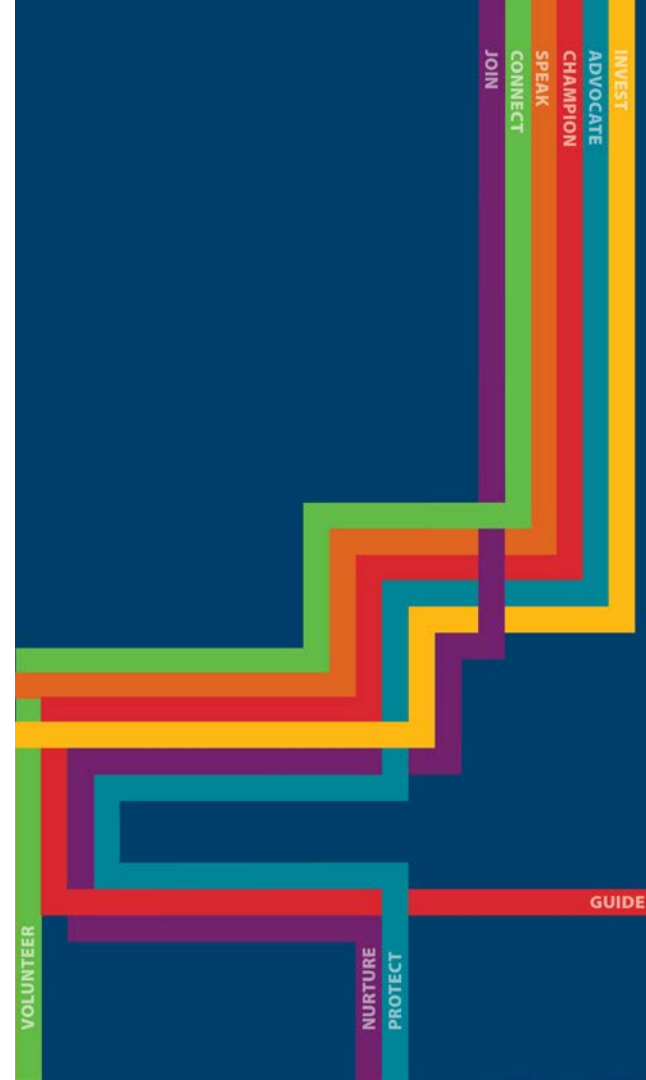
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"They have been a wonderful conduit for supporting and explaining tough decisions while, at the same time, being a source of encouragement and support for our teaching staff."

Dr. Doug Daugherty, Principal  
Sope Creek Elementary School, Marietta, GA

## PTA Value during Crisis per Principals:

- Fosters a sense of normalcy, vital to student well-being and family success.
- Uses creativity to show staff appreciation and to keep families connected.
- Connects and communicates to allow an exchange of ideas and reduction of chaos, confusion and misinformation.
- Reduces stress and calms the tone of discussions creating an environment where students can learn.



# Crisis: Messaging Suggestions

“How can PTA help the school stay connected with home?”

“How can PTA help you battle misinformation?”

“PTA wants to work with you and the staff to create sense of normalcy so children experience less stress and can succeed academically.”



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Advice from Principals to  
PTA Leaders

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# Advice

- Principals are people, too.
- Do not harm the relationship no matter what the response.
- Focus on idea's benefit to school and children.
- Concentrate on outcomes.

*"Remain respectful  
under any  
circumstances."*

Principal Survey Respondent

*"Listen and trust."*

Dr. Doug Daugherty

- Principals want students to succeed, too.
- Listen to their plans and goals.
- Find a way to support the goals.
- Trust is a two-way street.

# Advice

- Principals have a job to do.
- Principals cannot embrace every PTA idea.
- Think about impact on student and teaching time.
- Find common ground.

"I try to support everything my PTA wants as long as it doesn't overly impact the instructional schedule."

Principal Survey Respondent

# You Have the Power to...

- Take ownership of how your principal perceives PTA.
- Expand the way the principal view the role of the PTA.
- Demonstrate that PTA is more than an ATM and not a fundraising machine.
- Empower your entire board to think and speak about PTA differently.
- Show the world PTA is a force making the world a better place for all children.
- Use the mission to guide the conversation: *to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children*

# Value Proposition Overlap: What Members and Principals Value

- Members\*: PTA supports critical academic needs.
- Principals: PTA's support to achieve school goals.
- Members\*: PTA provides a voice on important issues.
- Principals: PTA provides feedback from community.
- Members\*: PTA builds a strong, inclusive school community.
- Principals: PTA provides a bridge between home and school and advocates for ALL children.

\* Research on what members value can be found in the [Membership Campaign Toolkit](#)

# Get Started!

- Change your mindset.
- Take control of the message.
- Communicate.
- Focus on school goals.
- Use data.
- Align PTA work with what principals and members say they want and value.



# First Steps

- Start small – align your assemblies and programs to school goals.
- Identify new strategies that support school goals and demonstrate PTA value.
- [PTA Blog: Working with Principals](#)
- [National PTA Programs](#)
- [STEM + Families](#)
- Programs-to-Go
  - [STEM + Families Science Festivals](#)
  - [STEM + Families Propelling Our World](#)
  - [PTA Smart Talk](#)
  - [Healthy Hydration](#)





*"...as we flourish, people notice. People want to be involved in PTA because they see the direct impact of our work...,the partnership...we have created with the school, and they want to be part of it."*

*Thomas B. Chinn PTA, Missouri*



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*"Once families felt more empowered, we saw an increase in parents wanting to join and become informed on how they could help make our school a better place. Adams Elementary School PTA, Oklahoma*

*Comments excerpted from 2019-20  
School of Excellence PTA Leaders*

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Image from  
[National PTA Membership Campaign Materials](#)

# Partner with Principals



- Communication
- Value
- Relationship
- Trust
- Common Ground
- Support for Schools
- Successful Students
- Engaged Families

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