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Tips and Ideas for Recruiting PTA Members

Ask

- Make personal asks sharing what PTA means to you/your family.
- Give a short speech (open house, back to school night, orientations) asking people to join.
- Ask everyone to join, not just people you know.
- Ask current members to ask a friend to join.
- When asking, create a sense of urgency for families to join.
- Know your audience and have a relevant PTA message to the person you are asking.
- Invite non-members to an event so they can see what the PTA has to offer and then ask them to join.
- When asking, make sure it is clear that joining does not equal volunteering.
- While at a PTA event, ask those who enjoyed the event that are not members to join to show their support.
- Create and send a membership survey.

Make it Easy

- Send a membership application home with all students (or by mail) the first week of school and then again half way through the year. Copy it on colored paper so it stands out.
- Put a membership application in all teachers' mail boxes.
- Include membership application in the school's "welcome back to school" and "New Student" packets.
- Have applications available in the school office.
- Request board members carry membership applications at all times.
- Have membership applications available at every school or PTA event and online.
- Make the membership application easy to fill out.
- Translate the membership application into different languages.

Highlight PTA Membership at Every Event

- Registrations...head start, kindergarten and new students
- Orientations, open house and tours
- Back to School Night
- Family Nights
- Parent Center meetings
- PTA meetings and events

Membership Drives/Incentives

- At the beginning of the year, hold a social event (barbeque, picnic, spaghetti dinner, ice cream social). Try to get the food donated. Sell membership or charge an event fee that includes a membership.
- Back to School kickoff where families can purchase school supplies, PTA spirit wear and PTA membership. Everyone who joins at the event has the chance to win a gift card.
- Have a turkey(s) give away at Thanksgiving – all member names go in for the raffle.
- Check to see if your state PTA offers ideas, incentives, or programs.
- Create a membership contest between classes or grades. The group that wins gets a prize.
- Have a theme, such as sports (March Madness), gardening (plant a flower for each new member).
- Provide a free school T-shirt with every membership.

Expand your Reach

- Ask local businesses to join.
- Ask school staff to join.
- Ask community members to join, even if they do not have a child in the school.

Promote PTA and Membership Year Round

- Create a visible way to show how many members have joined. Examples: a large thermometer where the level can be increased each week, a tree where leaves are added, a bar graph or a scoreboard.
- Create a display to list PTA activities, benefits, initiatives and accomplishments. Place in in a high traffic area. Update it regularly.
- Check with your state PTA to see if they have a PTA promotional template or look at pta.org/backtoschool.
- Talk to the administration about using the Marquee board outside the school if you have one.
- Hang PTA event banners. Ask to hang it in the entrance of the school.
- Have a PTA bulletin board in the school entrance if the Principal approves.
- Create a PTA Facebook, Twitter, and/or Instagram account and post updates on the pages.
- Highlight PTA membership in the school and/or PTA newsletter. Publish your current membership count and compare it to your goal. Include articles about membership and the benefits of family engagement. Include clip-out membership form.
- Keeping online information current can bring in new members. Items the PTA may want to include: PTA contact information, PTA mission and objectives, PTA history, board member names/contact information, membership application(s), member benefits, member highlight, etc.
- Designate a welcoming committee at all events to welcome and thank attendees and let them know the event was made possible by the PTA.

Promote PTA to the community

- Set up membership tables at youth sports events.
- Have local merchants display “Join PTA Today” posters.
- Line neighborhood streets with signs.
- Hang a “Join PTA Today” banner at the entrance of the library or other community center.
- Ask grocers to include membership fliers in their bags.
- Build relationships with influential community leaders (e.g., business owners, elected officials, religious leaders) who can influence decisions and help grow the PTA.
- Invite a community person as a speaker at a PTA event. Make sure the topic is relevant to families, caregivers, and teachers.
- Partner with another group on a community focused event. Examples: 5K with all the schools in your area, trash clean up a local park, food drive to support a local food bank, etc.

Welcome’s and Thank You’s

- Thank new members for joining. Send an email or make a phone call.
- Welcome new members at meetings, events, and in newsletters.