



National PTA® Reflections Local Leader's Guide



Promoting Reflections

One of your most important tasks is to promote the Reflections Program to students and families, to encourage as many students as possible to participate. Taking time to promote the program to school personnel and the community, as well, can help increase participation, enhance family engagement at the school and garner additional support.

Program Messages

Below are some important messages to emphasize as you spread the word about the PTA Reflections Program, especially through the media or to school and community partners:

- **All children deserve opportunities to explore and be involved in the arts.** The arts play a critical role in students' success in school and beyond, enhancing their reading and language skills, mathematics skills, thinking skills, social skills, motivation to learn and positive school environment.
- The National PTA Reflections program is **PTA's cornerstone arts program**. It offers students the opportunity to earn local, state and even national recognition for original artwork they create in response to a specific theme.
- Students who participate in the Reflections Program get an **opportunity to explore the arts and culture, develop creative thinking and problem-solving skills and recognize themselves as artists**.
- This year's entries should reflect upon and interpret the theme: ***The world would be a better place if..***
- **Families can support their children's participation** by creating time and space for students to work on their entries, providing encouragement and needed materials and volunteering to support the Reflections Program.
- Entries should **represent students' unique creativity**—adults are welcome to encourage students but are asked not to assist in any way with their interpretation of the theme or artistic expression.

Student Recruitment Messages

Share the following sample messages with teachers and student leaders to promote the PTA Reflections program. You may find these messages work best with in a school newspaper, during morning announcements, and at activity fairs promoting school clubs.

- *What world needs to know your inner artist! Choreograph a dance, produce a film, write a poem or story, compose a song, take a picture or create a piece of visual art and tell us your interpretation of the theme: "The world would be a better place if..." Pick up a PTA Reflections Entry Form today from <INSERT NAME> and return by <INSERT DUE DATE>.*
- *Discover your world and explore new cultures or your own through dance, film, literature, music, photography or visual arts. No experience is required to participate in Reflections! Choose the arts category you're interested in, create an original piece of artwork based on the theme: "The world would be a better place if..." and be recognized as an artist in your community.*

Ideas for Promoting Reflections

Use the following suggestions to kick-start your plan to promote the PTA Reflections Program.

To Students and Families:



National PTA® Reflections

Local Leader's Guide



Use a variety of channels to reach students and families. Consider creating promotional messages and materials in multiple languages, to reach all families in your school community. Some possibilities include:

- Host a **schoolwide assembly** to introduce the program. Feature examples of artwork from last year's winners at the local, state and national levels.
- Include messages in students' **morning announcements**.
- Hang **posters and flyers** in visible locations, and send copies of flyers home to parents.
- Post the deadline and reminders on signs near **student drop-off** and pickup locations.
- Post announcements and updates on the **school and/or PTA website** and via **social media** (Facebook, Twitter).
- Write an article about Reflections for a **PTA or school newsletter**. Showcase prior years' winners and/or the benefits of arts education. Ask a student to write a similar article for the school newspaper.
- Appoint "**student ambassadors**" to talk positively about the program among peers. Willing students might be found in art or dance classes or clubs, school music programs (choir, band, orchestra) or creative writing or journalism classes.

Among Teachers and Administrators:

Invite arts teachers to serve as Reflections co-chairs, committee members or volunteers. The more involved they are in planning, the more likely they will be to serve as "champions" of the program among other faculty and staff, as well as to students and parents. Other ways to engage school staff:

- Request **time at a staff meeting** to present the Reflections Program to teachers. Highlight the benefits of arts education and invite their ideas about how they might encourage their classes to participate.
- Provide suggestions for how this year's theme might be **linked to curriculum**. Ask a teacher volunteer to create a sample lesson plan and share it with peers.
- Engage school staff in **planning the awards ceremony/celebration**. The school might be willing to hold a school-wide assembly or host a special lunch for participants and winners.

In the Community:

When reaching out to potential community partners, focus on the *impact* of the Reflections Program on students, schools and families. For example, share how a local PTA showcases students' artwork and brings families together to celebrate. Here are some ways your community can get involved:

- Invite community members to serve as **judges**.
- Reach out to nearby gathering places (neighborhood centers, barber/beauty shops, coffee houses) to **exhibit student artwork**.
- Local businesses might be willing to support **fundraisers for Reflections** (for example, a local restaurant might host a "dine out" night, with a portion of receipts benefitting the program). Proceeds might help pay for trophies, ribbons or certificates for student participants; food for the celebration; or a supplies scholarship for a student who might not otherwise be able to participate.
- Other businesses might provide **in-kind contributions**: ask a local arts-supply or craft store for donations of paintbrushes, paper or paints; a local library or print shop might allow students to use their computers and photo-editing software for entries.
- Work with school officials to customize **media releases** to invite local coverage. Don't forget smaller, local media outlets such as neighborhood association blogs and newsletters.
- **Community bulletin boards** can be good places to promote the program or announce student winners.