

Maryland **PTA**

ARTS IN EDUCATION Maryland PTA Reflections Program



Maryland PTA Reflections Program 2017-2018

Theme: "Within Reach!"

Guide for Local/Council Chairs

Important Deadlines:



BEFORE YOU BEGIN: PLEASE NOTE, YOUR PTA/PTSA UNIT MUST BE UP TO DATE WITH SOCA REQUIREMENTS TO ADVANCE BEYOND YOUR LOCAL/COUNTY LEVEL!

(For a complete list of those requirements please refer to page 7 of this guide)

Local Unit Artwork submissions
in counties with an active council

Each PTA Council will set their own
deadline. **(must be on or before
Friday, January 5, 2018).**
My Council Deadline is _____

Local Unit Artwork submissions
in counties without an active PTA
councils

Entries must be received at the
Maryland PTA office by close of business
Friday, January 5, 2018.

Council Artwork submissions to
Maryland PTA

Entries must be received at the
Maryland PTA office by 4:30pm
on **Friday, January 26, 2018.**

Local Unit 2017-18 Theme Search Contest Entries must be received at the Maryland PTA office by
Friday, Nov. 10, 2017.

All PTAs must complete a **PTA Participation Form** online to register for the Maryland State PTA Reflections program ASAP (See section 6.1).

5 Central Avenue
Glen Burnie, MD 21061
410-760-6221
1-800-707-7972

Dear Reflections Chairs,

Welcome to the **2017–2018** Maryland PTA Reflections Program, and thank you for volunteering to chair this wonderful arts enrichment program! Enclosed you will find everything you need to help you run a successful Reflections program at your local school.

Please read all of the materials carefully.

We NEVER want to disqualify a student's entry because the instructions were unclear – read carefully and contact your council or MD PTA if you have ANY questions.

QUICK REFERENCE:

This year's theme is: **“Within Reach!”**

- **Local Unit entries are due to your PTA Council no later than _____.**
(check with your Council and write in the date due to your Council)
No PTA Council may set their date due later than January 5, 2018! Local unit entries in counties without a PTA Council must be received at the Maryland PTA office by January 5, 2018.
- Council winning entries must be **RECEIVED** at the Maryland PTA office no later than January 26, 2018 close of business – **NO EXCEPTIONS!**
- **Council chairs are responsible for ensuring winning entries meet ALL REQUIREMENTS.** Please be sure your winning entries have met all Maryland PTA and National PTA requirements plus all program requirements, **BEFORE you submit the entries.** Entries must be disqualified if they are incomplete or if the Maryland PTA and National PTA requirements are not met, for example, local unit not in good standing.
- **Contacting the State PTA Office:**
To start the Reflections Program year, read all of the information provided for the most up to date rules, deadlines and submission deadlines. Please contact the **MD PTA State Arts in Educations/Reflections Chair, Traci Tatum**, at artsineducation@mdpta.org. As a Council or Local Reflections Chair, it is important to provide the State Chair, and MD PTA State office (office@mdpta.org), with your contact information to ensure that you receive Reflections Program updates and reminders.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. National PTA Reflections: Introduction

- 1.1 About the Reflections Program
- 1.2 PTA Reflections and the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships
- 1.3 Maryland State PTA Reflections Guidelines

2. Program Planning

3. Organizing Your Team

- 3.1 Roles and Responsibilities
- 3.2 Tips for Recruiting Reflections Volunteers
- 3.3 Recruiting Volunteer Judges

4. Promoting Reflections

- 4.1 Program Messages
- 4.2 Student Recruitment Messages
- 4.3 Ideas for Promoting Reflections

5. Collecting and Judging Student Entries

- 5.1 Understanding Program Rules
- 5.2 Judging Process

6. Opportunity for State and National Recognition

- 6.1 Report Participation
- 6.2 Advance Winning Entries to the Next Round

7. Celebrate! Recognize Student Participation and Achievement

- 7.1 Ideas for Recognizing Students Locally
- 7.2 Regional and State Level Recognition
- 7.3 National PTA Recognition

8. Wrapping Up

- 8.1 Recognize Partners and Volunteers
- 8.2 Return Student Artwork
- 8.3 Evaluate your Program

Appendices

1.1 About the Reflections Program

The National PTA Reflections program is PTA's cornerstone arts program. It was developed in 1969 by Colorado's PTA President Mary Lou Anderson to encourage students to explore their talents and express themselves. Since then, the Reflections Program has inspired millions of students to reflect on a specific theme and create original artwork. **Each year, students in Grades Pre-K – 12, are recognized for bringing the theme to life in the following six categories: dance choreography, film production, literature, musical composition, photography and visual arts (INCLUDED THIS YEAR: 3D Art).**

Top entries from our State PTA Reflections contest advance to National PTA for the final round of judging. National PTA awards are announced each May.

As a Local Leader of this program, you will play a critical role in promoting exploration of arts and culture in the home, school and community. Students who participate in the Reflections Program may not recognize themselves as artists when they sign up—but by the end of the Reflections celebrations, they will.

“Within Reach!”, the 2017-18 Reflections program theme, was submitted by Rachel Sperry of Northwood, N.D., through the National PTA Reflections Theme Search Contest. When asked what inspired her theme, Rachel said, "I tell myself to let my imagination fly when writing and sketching." The theme helps Rachel to explore her imagination and she hopes it will inspire others to be creative.

1.2 PTA Reflections and Family-School Partnerships

Research shows students with involved parents are more likely to:

- Earn higher grades and pass their classes -
- Attend school regularly and have better social skills
- Go on to postsecondary education

The National PTA Reflections program is a valuable tool for building stronger partnerships in your school community. Consider how you can apply the following PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships to your Reflections activities:

- **Standard 1 – Welcoming All Families Into the School Community.** Promote PTA Reflections to all families in the school. Emphasize that every child's participation is valued, and offer tips for how parents can support their children's artistic expression.
- **Standard 2 – Communicating Effectively.** Share Reflections Program information and reminders through a variety of channels, including your school or PTA website, newsletters, PTA meetings and more.
- **Standard 3 – Supporting Student Success.** Emphasize that PTA Reflections is designed to support students' learning by enhancing quality arts education. Entries can be created in school, and the program can be used to support curriculum.
- **Standard 4 – Speaking Up for Every Child.** Use PTA Reflections to rally families to speak up for the value of arts education—to work with teachers, school administrators and legislators to keep the arts in your school, despite budget cuts.
- **Standard 5 – Sharing Power.** Give students a voice by encouraging them to enter the annual PTA Theme Search Contest. Invite parents and caregivers to volunteer with the PTA Reflections Program, and welcome their ideas.
- **Standard 6 – Collaborating with Community.** Seek community partners to support PTA Reflections with prizes and exhibit space.

For more information about PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships, including an implementation guide and assessment forms, visit the National PTA website: [pta.org/Family Engagement](http://pta.org/FamilyEngagement)

Additional Opportunities

2018–19 Reflections Theme Search Contest

National PTA Reflections sponsors a student-focused Theme Search Contest annually to determine a theme for the next year. The winner for the 2018–19 school year will be selected in January 2018 and will receive \$100 from National PTA and recognition at the 121st Annual PTA Convention.

Maryland PTAs deadline for 2018-19 theme contest submissions is **November 10, 2017 (NO EXCEPTIONS!!!)**. For theme search student entry form and a list of past themes, see Appendix A.

Mary Lou Anderson Reflections Arts Enhancement Grants

The National PTA Mary Lou Anderson Grant Program provides matching-dollar funding to local PTAs to support in-school and after-school arts enhancement programs in local communities. PTAs serving at-risk student populations are particularly encouraged to apply. **Applications will be available at PTA.org/Reflections in January 2018.**

For more information, visit: PTA.org/Reflections

1.3 Maryland State PTA Reflections Guidelines

The materials included in this packet are based on information provided by the National PTA Reflections Program Chair and are meant to provide the *general* rules applicable to PTAs throughout the nation. However, there are specific guidelines and rules which must be followed to meet Maryland PTA Reflections program requirements:

Maryland PTA Reflections Program Guidelines

- Local PTAs must meet all Maryland PTA Standards of Affiliation to participate beyond your local/county level in the Reflections Program. Please contact the office staff for complete information about your unit regarding the Standards of Affiliation: (410)760-6221 or toll-free at (800)707-7972, or via email at: office@mdpta.org.
- In Maryland, students may only participate in the Reflections Program through a PTA that is affiliated with their school and is in good standing. Students no longer attending a PTA school may not enter the Reflections Program through their former school.
- In Maryland, home-schooled students may not participate in the Reflections Program.

- Maryland PTA is participating in the Special Artist category. In addition to the grade/age bracketed entries, every PTA may also submit entries meeting the requirement for participation in the Special Artist category.
- Maryland PTA will accept three (3) entries per age division per arts category for judging at the state level this year. Local Chairs should contact their PTA Council to see how many entries will be accepted at the County Level.
- Local PTAs in counties without an active PTA Council may participate in the Reflections Program, and, may send up to three (3) entries per age division per arts category to the state for judging. The entries for all the local units without an active PTA Council will be combined together, according to age and art category, and will be reviewed by judges arranged by the Maryland PTA Reflections chairperson. The three (3) winning entries per age division per arts category will advance to the state competition for judging along with the winners from the counties with active PTA Councils.
- Maryland PTA will honor its winners as follows:
 - Outstanding Interpretation of Theme -- Certificate, Trophy, 3 Complimentary tickets to the Awards Celebration in July and \$75
 - Award of Excellence – Certificate, Ribbon and \$50
 - Award of Merit – Certificate and \$25

Up to ninety entries will be recognized with monetary awards: 30 Outstanding Interpretation of Theme, 30 Awards of Excellence and 30 Awards of Merit (one award per arts category per age division).

- Maryland PTA will honor its 30 Outstanding Interpretation winners at its 2018 Annual State Convention. Details will be sent to the winners at the address provided on their student entry forms. All Award of Merit and Award of Excellence winners will receive their awards in the mail.

Maryland PTA Standards of Affiliation (per bylaws)

(Local Chairs - check with the State Office to make sure your PTA unit meets all requirements before sending entries to the county or state for judging. For example, being in good standing.)

*Units not meeting the Standards of Affiliation by **January 26, 2018**, will be disqualified (NO EXCEPTIONS).*

- Adhere to the purposes and basic policies of the National PTA and Maryland PTA;
- Remit the national and state dues to the Maryland PTA office by dates designated;
- Have bylaws approved every three (3) years according to the procedures of Maryland PTA;
- Have a minimum of twenty-five members;
- Shall submit the names and contact information including phone number, address and e-mail address of all elected officers to the MDPTA office within two (2) weeks of their election;
- Remit bonding, liability and directors and officers insurance premiums by the date designated;
- Have an EIN (Employer Identification Number) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) on file with the Maryland PTA;
- Maintain its status as a corporation, have as required by MD Non-Profit law, at a minimum a president, secretary, and treasurer;
- File the appropriate tax forms, by the required dates, with the IRS and submits a copy to the Maryland PTA office within thirty (30) days of filing;
- Each local PTA shall submit a copy of its annual financial review to the Maryland PTA within 120 days following the local fiscal year end of June 30th.
- Files all appropriate state forms with the appropriate state authorities by the required date and submit a copy to the Maryland PTA office within thirty (30) days of filing;

Maryland PTA Reflections Requirements

Requirements for Reflections:

National PTA uses an online registration system, this helps to alleviate the program's administrative burden, decrease submission errors, improve tracking, and reporting processes along the path to the National PTA round.

- All Local and Council PTAs will continue using the National PTA On-line system (with the exception of the Theme Form, everything is done online);
- Use Maryland PTAs Reflections Guide to plan and implement the program. This includes the National PTA contest rules.

PTAs will NOT use the student entry portal to register their PTA. Instead, go to PTA.org/Reflections and click "Register My PTA."

- Contact information for the Local PTA Reflections Chair and your local PTA unit, such as the PTA ID number, PTA address. A look up link will be available on the form to help you find this information;
- Information about your school including address, principal's name and total student enrollment. A link to Greatschools.net will be available on the form to help you find this information; and
- The number of students participating for each division in each arts category.

To run a successful Reflections Program at your school, please click the following links to access important and very helpful information and tips about the Reflections Program.

- Toolkit: http://www.pta.org/REFLECTIONS_TOOLKIT
- Reflections Library: <http://www.pta.org/StateReflectionsLibrary>

The Reflections Chair will receive an email confirmation with completed registration form and should be printed to use at a later time.

Follow the directions regarding sending artwork. A copy of the student entry forms should be attached to all entries advancing to the next round. Please check with your council for deadline information.

Ensure that all entries reach the council level for judging by the due date. Please check with your Council for more details.

Be sure to Make/Keep Copies of Everything

It is imperative to make & keep copies of the original Student Entry Forms and if possible, the art work that is submitted to the next level of judging in the event of questions.

Originality

All entries should be artwork inspired by the current year's theme and created expressly for the program. Artwork created and used for another competition or program may not be submitted.

Use of Copyrighted Materials and Plagiarism

Please read these sections thoroughly.

Required Artist Statement/Required Title for Art Work

The statement must include at least one sentence, **but may not exceed 100 words**. The artwork is required to have a title ("Untitled" is not considered a title). The student and or the Reflections chair must fill out the sections of the Entry Form that pertain to the arts category in which the student is submitting an entry.

Guidelines for Display of Art Work

Maryland PTA will follow National PTA's suggestion that when displaying artwork, only the following information about each piece will be displayed:

- *Title of Work
- *Artist's first name and last initial
- *City and state of school
- *Arts area and grade division

Local and council PTAs may want to consider displaying only digital copies of photography and visual arts/3D entries. **Securing the safety of our students is always the top priority; similarly, consider the safety of the artwork itself when it is on display in any and all settings.**

Rules Sheets for all Six Categories and Special Artist Division

Please take the time to read all of the National PTAs Reflections Program General Participation Rules and the Rules outlined in each Arts Division. **Maryland PTA will continue to participate in the Special Artist Division.**

Theme Search Contest for 2018-2019 (See Section 1.2 – Additional Opportunities)

Student Entry Form

All local PTAs should use the on-line National PTA system to complete a student entry forms and to register entries starting at the local school.

www.pta.org/reflections

This is the National PTA website for Reflections. Please be sure to check it out. Here you will find great tools and resources to help promote Reflections in your school and community. For Rules specific to Maryland State PTA, please refer to section 5.1).

Good luck, and please contact your local PTA Council or Maryland PTA (800-707-7972) with any questions!

2. Program Planning

Below are the steps needed to implement your program. As you read through this guide, **use the sample action plan in Appendix B** to make notes about specific tasks, who will be responsible for each task, and when tasks are due.

Your action plan may include the following steps for starting your Reflections program:

Step 1: Orient yourself to the Reflections Program.

Step 2: Organize a team of volunteers. (Including judges)

Step 3: Promote the Reflections Program to students, school personnel and the community.

Step 4: Collect and organize artwork for judging.

Step 5: Recruit judges and begin judging process. (Recruit judges under step 2)

Step 6: Advance winning artwork to the next round of judging.

Step 7: Celebrate student participation and achievement.

Step 8: Wrap up.

To become oriented to the reflections program, continue reading this guide and engage your PTA Reflections Network of National, State and Region PTA Leaders.

We Are Here to Help You!

Traci Tatum, Maryland PTA Arts in Education/Reflections State Chair is responsible for the overall implementation of the National PTA Reflections Program in your state. A key aspect of this role is to provide training to Local PTAs on how to implement and promote the program in their communities.

Throughout the fall, Maryland PTA and National PTA will host opportunities for you to connect with other PTA Reflections leaders. Your Reflections Network is a support system comprised of National, State and Regional PTA Leaders eager to answer your questions and share best practices. **See Appendix C for a schedule of Maryland PTA and National PTA Reflections Network events/training**

3. Organizing Your Team

As a Local PTA Reflections Chair, you will be responsible for overseeing the administration of the PTA Reflections program in your community. This is a big job ... but *you are not expected to do it alone!* Your State PTA Arts Chair is here to help at every step of the process (see box).

We also strongly recommend that you recruit a committee of volunteers to help. Volunteers will enrich the program by bringing a variety of ideas, talents and skills ... and they will make your job much easier and more enjoyable by ensuring that program tasks don't fall on your shoulders alone.

When building your committee, keep the PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships in mind. Welcoming all families, communicating effectively, sharing power and collaborating with the community are all strategies that will enhance your committee and help make your events a success.

3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

As the Local PTA Reflections Chair, you will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Recruit Local PTA Reflections Committee members.
- Oversee the Local PTA Committee's planning and implementation of the Reflections Program.
- Establish a program timeline.
- Communicate with other PTA leaders
- Represent your Local PTA at statewide arts-related events and collaborations.

Additional tasks for you and your committee include:

- Promote the Reflections theme search and program to local students, teachers, parents and the community as a whole.
- Recruit other committee members, Reflections judges and volunteers as needed.
- Distribute and answer questions about the rules, deadlines and student entry forms.
- Collect student artwork.
- Coordinate the local judging process.
- Host recognition activities for participants and winners.
- Register your Local PTA and prepare winning artwork for submission to the next round of judging.
- Return artwork to students.
- Evaluate the process at the end of the year and make recommendations for improvements to the Local PTA Reflections Committee, our State PTA or National PTA.
- Collaborate with other Local PTA leaders to promote Reflections activities and arts advocacy messages through social media and traditional media (i.e., print/broadcast).

See Appendix D for suggested Volunteer Job Descriptions.

3.2 Tips for Recruiting Reflections Volunteers

You may find the following tips helpful when recruiting volunteers to help with your Local PTA Reflections Program:

- **Announce planning meetings widely**, rather than relying on the same small circle of volunteers. Ask the principal to suggest parents who might be interested in getting more involved, and have your board members extend a personal invitation. You might be surprised who steps up!
- Invite a representative of the student council or student government to participate on the planning team—or ask the **student council** to promote the program and host events, with PTA support.
- Consider recruiting **school staff** that has a natural interest in arts education for your committee. These might include choir or band directors or teachers of other art, music, media, technology, journalism or creative writing classes. School administrative staff might be willing to help, too—for example, by collecting and organizing student entries.
- People who don't want to attend planning committee meetings might still be willing to **help with a specific role**. These might include promoting the program through social or traditional media, creating a flyer or banners or making phone calls to solicit community support.
- Community members such as **arts professionals or teachers** might be interested in participating as Reflections judges. See more about this in the section on “Collecting and Judging Student Entries.”

3.3 Recruiting Volunteer Judges

Invite professionals in the arts and community leaders who serve as trustees, donors and patrons of arts organizations to participate as Reflections judges increases the credibility of your program and exposure for PTA. All judges should have a working knowledge of their assigned arts area. Sources of judges might include:

- **Parents** who work as professionals in the arts or arts education.
- **School and community teachers** of music, art, dance, theatre, language arts, writing, graphic design and media arts.
- **Working professionals in organizations or companies** such as museums directors, curators, symphony and choral directors, musicians, librarians, editors of newspapers, photographers and local television personalities.

Always recognize judges in promotions and thank them for their participation. Some PTAs give each judge a small PTA gift or certificate of appreciation.

4. 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.

4.1 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: **"Within Reach!"**.
- **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.

4.2 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 do you imagine would make the world better? What are your visions? Who inspires you? 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: "Within Reach!"*
- *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: "Within Reach!" and be recognized as an artist in your community.*

4.3 Ideas for Promoting Reflections

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

Networking With Other Local PTAs

Connecting with other Local Reflections Chairs can help build your support network.

By communicating about challenges and successes, Local Reflections Chairs can help one another with tasks such as identifying community judges, promoting the Reflections Program in the community, locating affordable vendors and finding additional sources for support.

Find more information about Local PTA Networking calls in Appendix C.

To Students and Families:

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 **school wide 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. You can find sample flyers in **Appendix E**.
- 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.

5. Collecting and Judging Student Entries

The process of judging student entries for the Reflections Program includes distributing and enforcing program rules, collecting artwork, determining eligibility and hosting judging.

The first step of this process is to determine a deadline for students to submit their work. Expect to need at least two weeks to facilitate the judging process and another two weeks to prepare winners' artwork and complete the registration process so that winners may advance to the next round. Therefore, **set your Local PTA deadline approximately one month before submissions are due to the next round. Please see the front cover for Maryland PTA specific dates and check with your local active County Council for their specific deadline.**

5.1 Understanding Program Rules

All students must adhere to the General Student Participation Rules, as well as the rules for their specific arts category. A brief overview of these rules is provided here; **see Appendix F for the 2016–17 National PTA Reflections Rules, including specific rules for each arts category.**

Student Eligibility and Entry Guidelines

Students must participate in the National PTA Reflections program through a Local PTA/PTSA in good standing, as determined by their State PTA. It is your Local PTA Reflections Committee's responsibility to confirm that your PTA is in good standing and to determine each student's eligibility. If you are not sure whether your PTA is in good standing, talk with your PTA President.

The following additional guidelines apply to student entries:

- Each entry must be the original work of one student only.
- A student may develop an entry inside or outside of the school.
- A student may submit entries in more than one arts category.
- Each student entry must be accompanied by a paper student entry form, signed by a parent or guardian. This form can be found in **Appendix G**.
- Student entries must include a title and an artist statement, which communicates the artist's inspiration for the work and how it relates to the theme. The statement must describe the content and include at least one sentence **but not exceed 100 words**.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may participate in the National PTA Reflections program in one of two ways.

Option 1: The Special Artist Division is an optional division of the Reflections Program, accepting students in all grades, for students whose physical, cognitive or mental health challenges meet guidelines set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act. Qualifying students create their own artwork but may receive non-artistic accommodation and assistance from an adult. <INSERT YOUR STATE PTA'S PLANS FOR RECOGNITION FOR THE SPECIAL ARTIST CATEGORY> National PTA will honor one Special Artist from across all arts categories to receive an Outstanding Interpretation Award. Up to five additional Special Artists will receive a National PTA Award of Excellence.

Option 2: Students who qualify for the Special Artist Division may choose instead to enter in one of the traditional four grade divisions (primary, intermediate, middle or high school). In this case, students follow all general rules and arts category rules but may submit their entries in the grade division most closely aligned to their cognitive or functional abilities. These students are recognized and awarded as part of the general student population, without regard to special needs or challenges.

See the flyer promoting the **Special Artist Division in Appendix B**.

Originality

Specific rules related to originality for each arts category can be found in Appendix E. In general:

- An adult may not alter the creative integrity of a student's work.
- Only one student may be recognized for each entry; collaboration with other students is not allowed. Other individuals may appear in or perform a student's work, but the work itself—the dance choreography, film production (i.e., screenplay, camera work and directing) or musical composition (i.e., written score and any lyrics)—must be the creative product of one student alone.
- The artwork must be inspired by the current year's theme and created expressly for the program. Artwork produced before the dissemination of theme or used for another competition or program may not be submitted.

Use of Copyrighted Materials

Use of copyrighted material is prohibited in the literature, music composition, photography and visual arts/3D categories. This includes the use of copyrighted cartoon characters, copyrighted material from the Internet, advertisements or advertising ideas, musical themes from existing copyrighted compositions, copyrighted recorded music, copyrighted photographs or stock images. Use of copyrighted music in dance choreography and film production entries is **acceptable when the title, composer and performer of any music in the submission are cited on the student entry form**.

Film productions, photography and visual art/3D may include public places, well-known products, trademarks or other copyrighted material, as long as that copyrighted material is incidental to the subject matter of the piece and is a smaller element of the whole. Visual arts collages may include portions of existing copyrighted works, such as portions of photos, magazine clippings, internet images and type cut out of a newspaper, as long as those pieces of copyrighted works are used to create a completely new and different work of art. A collage should be judged for its whole—not its parts—and its creativity as an original work of art. Misuse of the above materials constitutes plagiarism—taking and using another's words, ideas or inventions as one's own.

Addressing Student Ineligibility

Occasionally, entries submitted to the Reflections Program are ineligible. One reason for ineligibility is that the Local PTA is not in good standing. It is very important that you check with your PTA President to ensure your PTA is in good standing with the State.

Other common reasons for ineligibility are plagiarism and resubmission. The following recommended procedures apply to both plagiarized and resubmitted entries:

1. **Scan entries** to ensure that all are original and have not previously been submitted to Reflections or another art competition.
2. **Alert judges** to the possibility that some pieces may not be original and encourage them to communicate when one may be questionable.
3. **Check questionable entries via Google** or another search engine.
4. **Return ineligible pieces** to students; explain why they are being returned.
5. **Talk with appropriate school personnel**, such as school counselors, the principal or teachers, about ways to address the seriousness of copying someone else's work or resubmitting artwork with the student and his/her family.
6. If ineligibility is confirmed after judging, **determine whether awards (including award money, pins, certificates, etc.) should be returned.**

5.2 Judging Process

The judging process has two goals:

1. To determine which student entries will advance to the next round of judging.
2. To award other prizes and recognition as determined by your Local Reflections Committee.

All PTA Reflections Program entries should be judged on **artistic merit, creativity, mastery of the medium and interpretation of the theme**. Mastery of the medium refers to the level of skill the student demonstrates in the basic principles and techniques of the arts area. However, a well-developed concept is more important than technique. Entries should be judged primarily on how well the student uses his or her artistic vision to portray the theme.

To facilitate the judging process, judges should receive the title and artist statement for each entry and the rules specific to their arts category. It is important to conduct *blind judging*—where judges do not see the artists' names—in situations where judges may know a student. Here are some tips for conducting blind judging:

- **Literature:** Distribute photocopies of *only* the front side of each literature entry. However, send the *original* manuscript of each winning entry on to the next level of judging.
- **Musical composition, dance choreography and film production:** Prepare a CD or DVD of all the entries for each arts area, as well as a list of the entries, using a code in place of the students' names.
- **Photography and visual arts/3D:** Cover the personal information attached to the artwork by folding the student entry form. If the student has signed the artwork, cover the signature for judging.

The following is a simple judging rubric your PTA may find helpful in evaluating entries and assigning awards. Notice that interpretation of the theme is weighted more heavily than the other considerations.

Sample Judging Rubric		
Interpretation of Theme	How closely the piece relates to the theme, based on the artwork itself and the artist statement	20 pts
Artistic Merit/ Creativity	How creative and original the piece is in its conception of the theme and its presentation	10 pts
Mastery of Medium	The level of skill demonstrated in the basic principles/techniques of the arts area	10 pts

With this rubric, each entry may receive a total of no more than 40 points from each judge. Have judges record their points for each entry on a score card. Add the points from each judge and rank the artwork accordingly. **If two entries are tied, the entry with the higher score for interpretation of theme receives more recognition.**

Sample score card for judges can be found in Appendix H.

6. Opportunity for State and National Recognition

Provide your students with opportunity to share their artwork across the state and nation. National PTA Reflections is a multi-layered competition that has local, council, state and national levels of competition. We encourage all local PTAs participation in Reflections to advance their student winners to the next round.

National PTA offers both paper forms and an online tracking system to support registration of PTA Units and advancement of student entry forms along the path to the National PTA Round. In our State, the National PTA on-line system will be utilized.

6.1 Report Participation

After your judging process is complete, share participation information with your state PTA. Complete the Paper Local Unit participation form and send it with the printed student entry forms for each piece of art that moves to the next round. For states that are participating in the online system for Reflections, please also complete the online participation form and online student entry forms. Use your paper forms as a guide to enter information online before advancing your forms to the next round.

- Complete the online version of the Local PTA Unit Participation Form and/or Council, District, & Region PTA Participation Form at PTA.org/Reflections

6.2 Advance Winning Entries to the Next Round

Since the entire Reflections Program is done online, the Council Reflections Chairs will select & notify their local unit winners. All entries advancing to the state level and any entries from Counties without a Council should be sent to the Maryland PTA office at 5 Central Avenue, Glen Burnie, MD 21061.

- Number of student entries per awards category that will advance.
- Items/forms to accompany artwork.
- Instructions for electronic files.
- Packaging of artwork and shipping instructions.

If you are shipping the packet, we recommend that you use a company that offers online tracking capabilities, just in case the shipment is delayed or gets lost.

Please contact Traci Tatum, State Arts in Education Chairs at artsineducation@mdpta.org.

7. Celebrate! Recognize Student Participation and Achievement

Now it's time for you to be creative too! Follow your PTA and school traditions or add new ways to celebrate student participation in the arts. Recognition helps all students recognize themselves as artists, encourages family engagement and provides opportunities to connect with the community.

7.1 Ideas for Recognizing Students Locally

The PTA Reflections Program offers opportunities for PTA visibility throughout the year. There are many ways Local PTAs celebrate Reflections participants and winners. Examples include:

- Presentations at PTA and school board meetings
- School awards nights, banquets or luncheons
- Announcements in the school newsletter or on the website
- Exhibits at community arts galleries or other public spaces (e.g., shopping malls, community centers, coffee shops)
- Features in local newspapers or television broadcasts
- Sharing photos, links, quotes or anecdotes about the Reflections Program or related events through social media channels such as Twitter or Facebook
- Invite the media to your celebration! **Customize the template media advisory in Appendix J** with your own local details and PTA logo. Email it to the media in your hometown and follow-up with a phone call to encourage their presence or post-event coverage.

7.2 Regional and State-Level Recognition

Maryland PTA award recipients are typically announced mid-March. All artwork will be returned except Literature. If a literature entry is unique, (i.e., an illustrated story), it will be returned unless it is sent to National PTA.

7.3 National PTA Recognition

National PTA award categories include the following:

- **Outstanding Interpretation Awards:** Seven Outstanding Interpretation Awards are given—one to the submission in each arts category, including the Special Artist Division, that best interprets the theme. Winners at this level receive: A certificate, trophy, medal; \$800 cash prize, \$200 for their Local PTA; and a trip to the 2018 National PTA Convention in New Orleans, LA.
- **Awards of Excellence:** These are given to the top three scores for each arts category in each division. Winners at this level receive: \$200 cash prize, certificate, and medal.
- **Awards of Merit:** These are given to the next five highest scores for each arts category in each division. Winners at this level receive: A certificate and medal.

National PTA award recipients are typically announced via news release and on PTA.org at the end of May. State PTA Presidents and State PTA Arts Chairs are notified via email. Each State PTA contacts the Local Units of students who receive national recognition (except for the Outstanding Interpretation Award recipients—see below). Local Unit chairs notify winners.

The National PTA notifies Outstanding Interpretation Award recipients directly and coordinates their travel to the National PTA Convention, where they are recognized. National PTA mails certificates to students who received Awards of Excellence and Awards of Merit following the National PTA Convention, at the end of July.

For more details on National Awards and Recognition, see Appendix K.

8. Wrapping Up

You're almost done! This chapter covers other important items including recognizing volunteers, returning artwork and sharing program information with your PTA President.

8.1 Recognize Partners and Volunteers

After your Reflections Program concludes for the year, one of the most important tasks is to thank those who helped make it a success.

Be sure to include all of the following groups in your recognition plan:

- Students who entered, as well as any students who helped to promote or administer the program
- Family-member volunteers
- School personnel
- Judges
- Community partners that provided donations, such as prizes or exhibit space

Use the acknowledgment letter in Appendix L to thank volunteers and community partners for any donated goods/services.

8.2 Return Student Artwork

National PTA recommends that original photography and visual arts/3D pieces be returned to student artists as soon as possible after judging and/or recognition. Art works submitted electronically, including those in the dance choreography, film production, literature and music composition categories, typically are *not* returned.

Non-advancing artwork can be returned immediately after judging or after your Local PTA celebration. National PTA recommends that artwork be returned by the end of the school-year. Please be sensitive to secondary students needing their artwork for college admission. If student artwork advances, it will be returned according to State and/or National policy (see below).

State PTA Policies

Maryland PTA Outstanding Interpretation entries will be displayed at the 2018 Annual Maryland PTA State Convention. All other artwork will be given to the Councils for return to the participants within the year following the submission to Maryland PTA.

State Reflections Awards Announcement and Entry Return Policy

Maryland PTA will announce its winners during the first week of April 2018. Please do not plan for entries to be returned prior to this date. If you want entries to be included in your Local Awards Celebration, please plan accordingly being sure to schedule your celebration after April 8, 2018. Maryland PTA will make every effort to return all entries with the exception of Outstanding Interpretation Winners.

National PTA Policies

National PTA's award-winning entries are featured online at www.PTA.org/ReflectionsGallery. Visual artworks and photographs are displayed throughout the National PTA headquarters, exhibited at National PTA special events and returned within three years following their submission to National PTA.

8.3 Evaluate Your Program

Evaluation is a critical part of wrapping up your Reflections Program. It is important to understand what worked and what didn't, so that you can plan for an even more successful program next year. Here are a few ideas:

- **Survey Reflections students, parents, school and PTA volunteers, and community partners.** Share quotes in a newsletter, blog or at your PTA and school meetings. With permission, use these quotes to further recognize student achievement on the school or PTA website or share them when seeking funding for your PTA. **See Appendix M for a sample survey evaluation.**
- **Meet with your Reflections Committee** and other team members to reflect on the program, gather feedback and document successes and areas needing improvement. Sharing this information with next year's team will provide a smooth transition from one Reflections Chair to another.

APPENDICES

TEMPLATE APPENDICES ARE AVAILABLE IN THE REFLECTIONS TOOLKIT:

<http://www.pta.org/programs/content.cfm?ItemNumber=3804&navItemNumber=3805>

Be sure to download the following documents:

- Appendix A: Theme Search Entry Form
- Appendix B: Sample Action Plan
- Appendix C: Schedule of State and National PTA Reflections Network Events
- Appendix D: Suggested Volunteer Job Descriptions
- Appendix E: Posters & Flyers
- Appendix F: 2017-18 National PTA Reflections Rules
- Appendix G: National PTA Reflections Student Entry Form
- Appendix H: Sample score card for judges
- Appendix I: PTA Participation Forms
- Appendix J: Template Media Advisory
- Appendix K: National Awards and Recognition
- Appendix L: Template Acknowledgment Letter
- Appendix M: Sample Survey Evaluation