Creating Diverse & Inclusive PTA Boards and Memberships

With Yvonne VanLowe, Chair; Idara Umoh, Vice Chair; & Carla Morris, Vice Chair
MCCPTA Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee
Creating Diverse & Inclusive PTA Boards and Memberships

• History of PTA and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) connection
• PTA Local Leader Guidance for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
• Outreach, Programming, Advocating, Governing & Leading
• Advocacy Case Study Example: School Resource Officer Resolution in Montgomery County schools
• Q&A
• Resources
Participation Guidelines

• One person speak at a time
• When we brainstorm or generate ideas, please willingly withhold immediate judgment
• Listen for understanding before responding
• Treat each other with respect and objectivity, remain flexible, and be willing to tolerate some ambiguity
• Be prepared to learn something new
• Keep a sense of humor and have fun!
The History of PTA & Its Diversity & Equity Connection
PTA Roots in DEI Efforts

1897
Alice McLellan Birney and Phoebe Apperson Hearst founded the organization to support their mission to eliminate threats that endangered children.

1926
National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers (NCCPT) founded by Selena Sloan Butler in Atlanta, Ga. in 1926 so that African-American children might have PTA service.
Guidance to PTA Leaders in Supporting DEI Efforts
Diversity * Equity * Inclusion

What do these terms mean?
Diversity * Equity * Inclusion
What do these terms mean?

Diversity
is representation of, and respect for, people from different backgrounds and identities.

Inclusion
is actions, behaviors and social norms that ensure all people feel they are safe, welcomed, and that they belong.

Equity
provides fairness in resources, opportunities and outcomes so that all communities get what they need to be engaged and successful.
PTA Local Leader Guidance for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

**Beginning**
- PTAs are “color-blind” or “identity-blind,” either by design or default, and do not lift up issues of diversity, equity and inclusion in any regular or routine way.

**Emerging**
- PTAs are focused on building membership and leadership comprised of individuals from different backgrounds and experiences.

**Intermediate**
- PTAs are focused on culture and creating an environment in which everyone is comfortable sharing and contributing their experiences.

**Advanced**
- PTAs are focused on systems to improve equity.
- The primary goal is integration of an equity lens into all aspects of the association’s work.
DEI in Membership

**Beginning**
- Not aware that dominant groups have power in PTA
- Membership not representative of school population
- Have not identified the demographic groups in the PTA

**Emerging**
- Expect people to adhere to norms of the dominant culture
- Some progress in membership is representative of the school population

**Intermediate**
- Expect members of the dominant groups to work to reduce barriers for less represented groups in the PTA
- Membership reflects diversity of groups that are served

**Advanced**
- Lead internal processes, practices and culture to eliminate bias and disparate treatment
DEI in Advocacy

Beginning
Fear that lifting and prioritizing issues of inequities will create conflict
Do not have members from underrepresented populations at the table to discuss policy and advocacy

Emerging
Understand disparities in children’s educational success, health and well-being exist, and work to increase member knowledge about these disparities

Intermediate
Create and sustain behaviors and practices to foster an inclusive environment
Have a solid understanding of demographic disparities that exist in children’s educational success, health and well-being and their root causes

Advanced
Speak about diversity, difference, dominant culture and systemic biases inside and outside the PTA
Work with underrepresented communities to co-design advocacy & policy approaches to problems
DEI in Governance & Leadership

Beginning

Have not determined which demographic group(s) are not represented in PTA governance and leadership

Have determined that including under-represented groups requires too much effort and/or change to recruit into leadership

Emerging

Leadership has made a conscious decision to increase knowledge about DEI by seeking and requiring training

Intermediate

Shift the PTA’s norms and practices so that diverse lived experiences are welcomed and can meaningfully contribute

Provide training and coaching/mentoring to members to improve their skills to work across differences and inspire better thinking and solutions

Advanced

Assess and remove the structural barriers that keep under-represented groups from seeking or attaining leadership in PTA
Montgomery County DEI
Case Study: MCCPTA School Officer
Resolution Advocacy
Questions to Think About

• What will you do differently to bring about your own individual transformation and structural change in your local PTA?
• What are you considering doing differently in recruiting and including new board members that reflect the diversity of your school community?
Resources

National PTA
National Diversity & Inclusion Committee, Dr. Sylvia Reyna, Chairman

*Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit* - [www.pta.org/home/run-your-pta/Diversity-Inclusion-Toolkit](http://www.pta.org/home/run-your-pta/Diversity-Inclusion-Toolkit)

Center for Family Engagement

[www.pta.org/center-for-family-engagement](http://www.pta.org/center-for-family-engagement)

*How to Welcome Diverse Perspectives into your PTA*

IDRA – Transforming Education by Putting Children First - [https://www.idra.org](https://www.idra.org)

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Thank you for joining us!