Local-Level Reflections

Program Basics for the School Coordinator





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Melinda

Hello everyone! My name is Melinda Samberson and I am the Vice President of Programs and Resources for Texas PTA.

It's so good to see everyone! Today, we will be discussing the basic procedures for the Council PTA Reflections program.

We are grateful for you coordinating the program for your school's PTA at the local level. If you are on this call and at the district level, thanks for being here!

I would like to take a moment to thank you for supporting Texas PTA and the countless volunteer hours you provide to bring PTA programs such as Reflections to the students on your campuses. Reflections would not be as successful, or the longest and oldest PTA program, without your support!



Melinda

Georgia O'Keeffe describes her Art as her language - "I found I could say things with color and shapes that I couldn't say any other way—things I had no words for.".

This is why the Reflections program is meaningful. The arts are critical to the learning process and partners in educating our children.

The Reflections program provides an opportunity for ALL students to explore and express themselves through the many facets of the arts.

You will find many Reflections entries showcased throughout this presentation from last year's program, including this one from Kassia Tan, a high schooler from Spring Branch ISD, and one of our outstanding interpretation winners.

Today you will learn



- The steps to leading your program at your campus and how to utilize the tools and resources to help make your program a success!
- How the PTA Reflections program supports student success and connects families and schools to one another and to their community.





Melinda

During this training, we will first focus on understanding and walking through Reflections. Our goal is that you will be confident in hosting the program as well as being able to field questions from your families and students.

We will look at how Reflections can support student success outside of the program and how art connects families within their communities. Did you know that there is a free turn-key parent education program titled The Value of Arts Education: Why It's Important for Your Child. This is a benefit as a PTA. This program can be downloaded from the Texas PTA website and presented at one of your meetings for the families in your district or on your local campuses.

So moving on, we will first review the Texas PTA Mission Statement.

Texas PTA Mission Statement

Our Mission

To make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

Our Purposes

To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, places of worship, and throughout the community;

To raise the standards of home life;

To advocate for laws that further the education, physical and mental health, welfare, and safety of children and youth;

To promote the collaboration and engagement of families and educators in the education of children and youth:

To engage the public in united efforts to secure the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and social well-being of all children and youth; and

To advocate for fiscal responsibility regarding public tax dollars in public education funding.





Melinda

Keep in mind that we are PTA members who have committed ourselves to fulfill Texas and National PTA's Mission. We honor the values and fulfill the purposes by serving the role of a Reflections program coordinator.

Take a look at the words - no where in the mission is fundraising mentioned. We really want to make sure we are communicating who we are and what we do at every opportunity - as we introduce a program, do the reflections kickoff, celebrate our students, etc - this will help others understand why membership is so important. It makes our voice louder as we advocate.

The Reflections program promotes the welfare of children in schools and the collaboration and engagement of families and educators. Given the challenges of our time, investing in our children's mental and emotional well-being is crucial. Access to the Arts is more important than ever. The Reflections program provides a valuable opportunity to

do just that on your campus.

Alright, now it's time to hand the presentation over to your Arts in Ed Liaisons Risa Ginther and Jennifer Perry. Risa?



Founded in 1969 by then Colorado
PTA President, Mary Lou Anderson,
National PTA Reflections has encouraged
Millions of students to explore their artistic
talents by giving positive recognition.

Risa Introduction

Did you know the Reflections program is 55 years old?!

The program continues today as our cornerstone arts program to engage nearly 300,000 students in pre-k through twelfth grade each year – Reflections is one of the nation's oldest and largest student recognition programs in the arts. So, we should all be very proud to be a part of this great legacy!

Let's talk about the current theme for the year.

2024-2025 Reflections Program Theme







Accepting Imperfection, will be the 2024-2025 Reflections theme!

Accepting Imperfection was suggested by a Texas student from Barbara Bush Middle School PTA in North East ISD! We are super excited for Paige and cannot wait to see how our Texas students interpret her theme!



Congratulations once again to Paige Opaska!



Risa

Before we discuss the Reflections program, let's take a look at how National PTA selects the theme that students center their Reflections entries around each year. They host a Nationwide Theme Search Contest and any student, Pre-K through twelfth grade is eligible to participate with no limit on how many themes they may suggest.

As you might already know, this year's theme is "Accepting Imperfection" Not only is this an amazing theme, but it was also suggested by a Texas student! Paige had this to say about what inspired her to suggest this theme; "I feel like Accepting Imperfection is especially relevant today with what we are exposed to through technology. I think we all need to take a step back and remember that imperfection is beautiful. (This theme is) a reminder to myself that mistakes are welcome because they are a part of being human. Our flaws are as much a part of us as our strengths, so being imperfect should be perfect enough for us."

National PTA Reflections Theme Search Contest



National PTA needs a creative theme for the 2026-2027 Reflections program year. The student who submits the winning theme suggestion will receive \$100, and their theme will be presented at the 129th Annual National PTA Convention in June 2025.

The deadline to submit a theme suggestions is November 5, 2024

Texas PTA will then select 5 themes to present to National PTA for consideration.



www.txpta.org/reflections-theme-search

Congratulations to the most resent winner of the Annual Theme Search Contest. Ben Morgan from Lewis and Clark Middle School PTSA in Idaho. The winning theme for 2025-2026 is I Belong!

As winner, Ben will receive \$100 from National PTA and his theme will be used to inspire hundreds of thousanch of artists across the nation as they participate in the PTA Reflections art program. Congratulations to Ben and Idaho State PTA on this achievement!

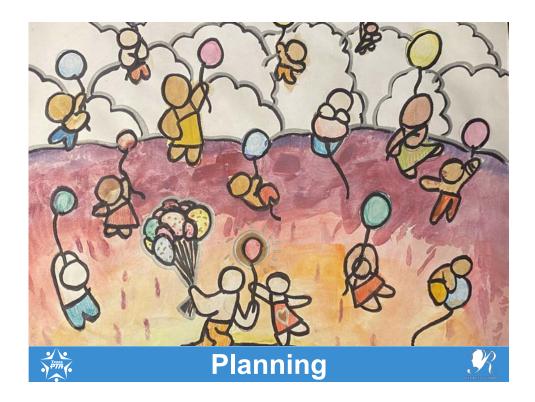


Risa

The National PTA theme search for the 2026-2027 school year has already started! This is another fun way for students to participate in Reflections. Texas PTA will select five themes to present to National PTA. This means this year's theme "Accepting Imperfection" was selected back in 2022. The student who submits the winning theme suggestion will receive \$100 and they will get to watch as thousands of students across the nation, create art centered around the theme they thought up!

The deadline for students to submit their theme suggestions is November 5, 2024.

Does anyone have any questions about the Reflections Theme Search Contest?

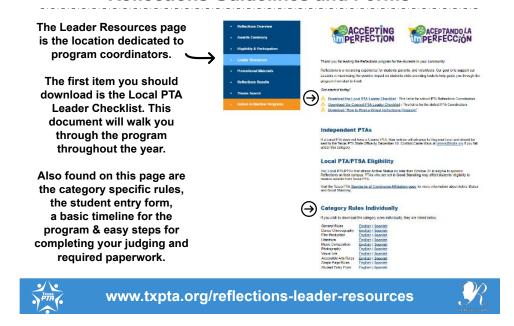


Risa

Now let's dive into the Reflections program itself! First things first, where do we find all of the materials?

I now would like to introduced Jennifer Perry. Jennifer serves as two local Reflections Chair in Lewisville ISD. She has joined the TEXA PTA Arts in Education Liaison team to share her expertise. Welcome, Jennifer!

Where to find the Texas Specific Reflections Guidelines and Forms



Jennifer

You will find Texas specific guidelines and forms in the Reflections area of the Texas PTA website. You should start on the Leader Resources page which is dedicated to program coordinators. From there you can toggle to the other pages on the menu.

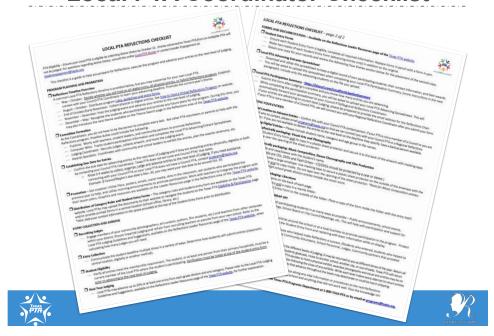
Texas PTA has tailored the Reflections guidelines just a bit, so it is important to download from Texas PTA's website rather than the National PTA site. The main difference is that Texas PTA will only accept 2D entries in the visual arts category and National PTA has started allowing 3D entries. We have asked that National PTA separate the two formats as they are wildly different and hard to compare. Until then, we will continue to only accept entries in 2D.

If you do not wish to download all of the rules and forms to post on your own PTA's website, you can simply share the link to our Eligibility and Participation page. There, the student or family can download a packet with everything included in one PDF.

Need posters, fliers or logos to promote your program? Visit the Promotional Materials page. We have some items created for you, or you are welcome to create your own!

What we will focus on today is the Local PTA Leader checklist which is the 1st link at the top of the Leader Resources page.

Local PTA Coordinator Checklist



Jennifer

This checklist is a guide to help you prepare for Reflections, execute the program and advance your entries to the next level of judging. There are two different documents so you will want to ensure you have downloaded the one for Local Coordinators and not the one for Council Coordinators. The variance is that the Local document has procedures for you at the school PTA to advance your entries to district level and the Council document is for the district level of Reflections to advance to state. The procedures for each level are slightly different.

Program Eligibility

The Reflections Program is open to all Texas students who meet the necessary requirements.

If a student attends a school supported by a Local PTA:

- The student must participate in the program through their campus PTA.
- The student or at least one person from their household must join their campus PTA. The
 campus may determine a date by which the member must join the PTA.
- That Local PTA must attain Active Status no later than October 31 for that student to be eligible
 for state and national level Reflections judging.
- PTAs who are not in Good Standing by Spring, may affect students' eligibility to receive awards from Texas PTA.

If a student attends a Non-PTA school or is homeschooled:

- They must participate in the Reflections program through Lone Star Statewide PTA.
- The student or at least one person from their household must join Lone Star Statewide PTA through <u>www.joinpta.org</u> by October 31.
- There is a separate timeline for Lone Star Reflections. Any student wishing to participate should contact Texas PTA at programs@txpta.org for more details.



Visit txpta.org/standards-of-continuing-affiliation for more information about Active Status and Good Standing.



Jennifer

You will notice the first paragraph is about PTA eligibility. Hosting the Reflections program is a benefit for having a PTA on your campus. You will need to ensure that your PTA attains Active Status by October 31 to be eligible for state and national level Reflections judging.

To attain Active Status, your PTA must do the following by October 31:

- 1. Remit to Texas PTA state and national membership dues for at least 20 members.
- 2. Submit to Texas PTA the name and contact information of at least one current board member, preferably the President.

Local PTAs must comply with all of the following standards to remain in Good Standing with Texas PTA.

- Maintain Active Status with Texas PTA.
- 2. Review Local PTA bylaws (and standing rules, if applicable) every three years and submit to Texas PTA for approval.
- 3. Each year, electronically file and have accepted by the IRS the

1. "Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax".

It is important to work closely with your fellow board members to check on the Status of your PTA.

You will notice on this slide, that we do have a route for a student to participate in Reflections even though they do not attend a school supported by a PTA or are homeschooled. If you are approached by a family in this situation, please connect them with Carrie Mays at programs@txpta.org to receive deadlines and instructions. They will need to join Lone Star Statewide PTA by October 31 to participate.

Program Planning and Promotion



May - October

- Establish contact with the next level of judging.
 - What is their advancing deadline?
 - o How are they accepting entries this year, digitally, physically or both?
- o If you do not know how to contact your Council PTA or your PTA is not in a Council, please reach out to Carrie Mays at programs@txpta.org for assistance. ▶ Decide how you want to host your program, digitally, physically, or both formats.
- - o If new to hosting a virtual program, you might benefit from consulting How to Host a Virtual Reflections Program found in Leader Resources
- Promote the current year's theme and distribute the rules, guidelines and entry forms.

End of October/Early November

- Collect student entries and prepare for judging.
- Ensure that student entry forms are complete and verify the family's membership.

November-December

- Host a judging event and advance your entries to the next level of judging.
 - o If you chose to host a virtual program and your Council chose to host a physical program, collect the appropriate format for those advancing entries.
- Complete your Local Participation Form and upload your advancing entrant spreadsheet.

December-May

- Recognize the students who participated and promote any future plans.
- Introduce the next theme available on the Theme Search page.





Jennifer

The next section lists a Reflections Timeline and there are a few things to consider when establishing your deadlines.

You will first need to connect with the next level of judging to learn what your advancing deadline will be. If you do not know how to contact your Council PTA or if your PTA is not within a Council, please reach out to Carrie Mays for assistance. You will also need to confirm how they would like to receive the entries, digitally, physically or a hybrid of both formats. You can still choose a different format for your program, but what advances will need to be converted to what the Council is requesting.

National and Texas PTA's guide for How to Host a Virtual Reflections Program is available on the Leader Resources page. There are many great tips and ideas that will help you to organize your digital program

I do think that transitioning to a virtual program has widened our

possibilities and helped to reach a larger audience.

- Most entries are already in a digital format, photos, literature, music, dance and film.
- Both Texas and National PTA are accepting digital signatures so student entry forms can be typed. This also eliminates the issue with deciphering young handwriting and forms that are hard to get a good scan or copy from.
- Digital judging can be conducted anywhere in the world. Simply make the entries and scorecard available and the judge can login to judge on their own schedule.
- Finally, both Texas and National PTA host a digital judging. So even if you are sending a physical entry, it will be converted to a digital entry for judging.

You will see that Reflections is somewhat a year-round program. Be sure to follow through and celebrate students as their entries progress through the different judging levels. Keep up the excitement and more students will want to participate the following year.

Texas PTA will release the next year's forms by the end of June. But you already know the next theme so you can immediately announce the theme so students can be working on their projects over the summer.

REFLECTIONS PROGRAM TIMELINE

Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb - May
Plan & Promote Your Program!	Promote Your Program!	Promote Your Program!	Quality Check	Local PTAs Advance Entries to Region/ Council		Council PTAs Return Non-Advancing Entries
Check if your Council is offering Reflections Training	Plan something fun! Highlight Reflections celebrate during	Reflections during	Judging	Return Non-Advancing Entries	Council PTAs Advance Entries to Texas PTA by Jan 15	Council PTA Recognition Ceremony
Launch your program during Back to School		October is National Arts & Humanities Month	Thanksgiving	Council Judging	Local PTA Recognition Ceremony	State Award Ceremony
		Student Entries Due to Local PTAs		Holiday Break		



#ArtsinEducation #PTAReflections



Jennifer

Here is a more visual example of the basic Reflections timeline.

Once you have your advancing entry due date, you will want to back your student's deadline out at least 4 weeks prior. This will give you ample time to process the entries, get them organized and host a judging prior to advancing them to the next level.

Did you know that September and October both celebrate the arts?! We know that the arts impact more than children's creativity such as academic performance, their engagement in school, but my most favorite is by promoting problem solving skills. Utilize these annual celebrations to highlight your Reflections program and the students who participate.

Arts in Education Week is September 9-13. You could plan something centered around the arts for each day that week. Be creative and think outside of the box. Ask the students to show their creative side. Make it fun and tie it back to your Reflections program.

October is National Arts in Humanities Month. It was established to raise awareness around what role arts and humanities play in our communities and lives. Reflections can play an impactful role in a student and family's life, as well as their communities. This is another great opportunity to build a relationship with local organizations and businesses. If you have already received some Reflections entries, you could also showcase these to encourage more students to participate and celebrate those students who completed their projects early. Again, be creative and find ways to incorporate the arts into the school day without interrupting schedules too much or often. With anything, you should speak with the principal about your plan and get their blessing first.

We would love to see what you come up with so please do share. If you are able, you could post on social media using the hashtags #ArtsinEducation or #PTAReflections.

Are there any questions on eligibility or the Reflections timeline?

Register as a Leader for Your PTA



Committee Leaders should register too to receive important communications from Texas PTA!

If you haven't done so already, it is time to register your position on the Executive Board!





https://txpta.my.salesforce-sites.com/OfficerIntake



Jennifer

While we only require one board member to be on file with Texas PTA, it is helpful if all positions are registered. Including those that may not be officially on the board. If they lead a committee such as Reflections, Arts in Education, Healthy Lifestyles and Parent Ed, we utilize the contact list to send important communications and newsletters aimed at those leaders.

Teamwork makes the dreamwork!

- ✓ Establish a timeline
- ✓ Create a committee

Divide up tasks. Roles include:

- Publicist
- Judging Coordinator
- · Computer Wiz
- Event Coordinator



- ✓ Communicate with other PTA leaders
- ✓ Network with other Reflections chairs
- ✓ Represent your PTA at statewide arts-related events





Jennifer

Now that we know the basic timeline, let's discuss your committee formation.

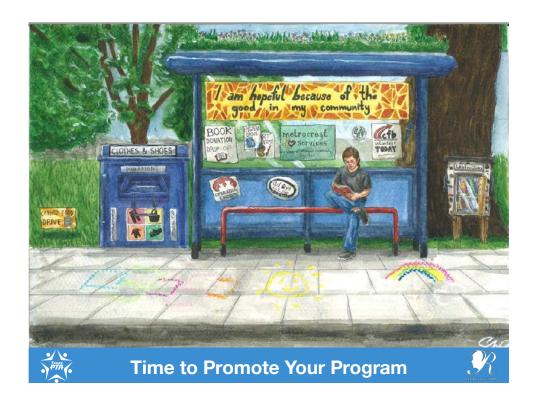
As the Coordinator, don't feel like you must be the person to complete every task. Ask other PTA volunteers or parents to help with hosting the program. Especially parents of students who are passionate about participating in the program. Their parents might be just as passionate about arts in education.

Possible ways you could split-up the tasks are:

- Finding someone to be the publicist: This person could work with teachers, student leaders, and community partners to promote Reflections.
- Maybe you have a computer whiz on your board: They can help track student participation information and complete required paperwork such as the Advancing Entrant Spreadsheet.
- Ask someone to help be your judging Coordinator: They can

- recruit judges, collect artwork, and help host the judging event.
- Finally, you could use an awards specialist: They can help coordinate
 with community and school leaders to exhibit the entries, plan the
 awards ceremony, or ask local businesses to donate student prizes, etc.

Now that you have your team in place, make certain to communicate the plan and to keep in touch to ensure all of the required tasks are met by their deadlines.



Risa

Now you are ready to start promoting your program!



Risa

Texas PTA has created a flier and poster in both English and Spanish that you could customize with your PTA's program information. You are also welcome to create your own materials. But the possibilities are endless when it comes to promoting the program.

You could host an art night to kick things off. Maybe ask the art teacher or a local store if they can help provide some basic art supplies where students can create or start their entries while attending. Don't forget the other categories as well. Maybe some other parents, high school groups or teachers can help introduce dancing, music, film, photography and literature. Arts in Education Week is September 9-13 this is a great time to kick off the program!

You could host a Reflections booth at back-to-school night, a trunk or treat, an art supply swap, or arts day in the park with invited vendors and sponsors.

Do you have a mascot, you could create a short film featuring them introducing the program and its categories. Then post on your PTA's social media or showcase on your school's announcements.

If allowed, create a space in the school to advertise and distribute Reflections information. Getting the students involved to create a banner could be fun as well! Encourage students to explore looking at the theme from many different perspectives!

Utilize All Your Resources

Not all promotion has to be in person or large family events. You can do so much with virtual promotion as well!

- · Utilize social media and your PTA's newsletters
- · Offer a virtual master class with local artists
- · Form a virtual helpline on specific tasks
- · Ask to join a staff meeting to promote the program
- · Ask the teachers to add the theme to their curriculum in some way



Risa

Utilize All Your Resources

Not all promotion has to be in person or large family events. You can do so much with virtual promotion as well!

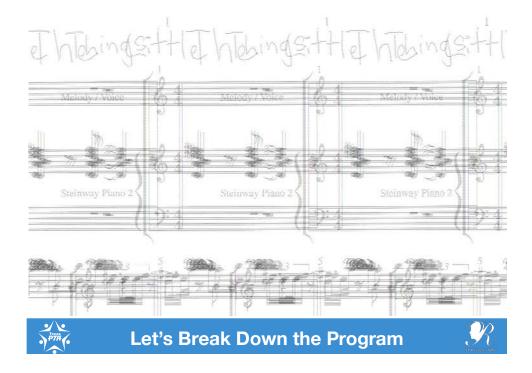
Your PTA probably has a social media feed that you could advertise on. Does your PTA send newsletters? Ask to include Reflections information.

One thing that came out of Covid was that students became more well versed at online classes and meetings. Maybe you could offer a virtual master class with local artists in specific areas such as drawing or painting techniques, storyboarding and writing, film or dance methods?

You could form a virtual helpline on specific tasks such as completing their student entry form or preparing files for digital advancement.

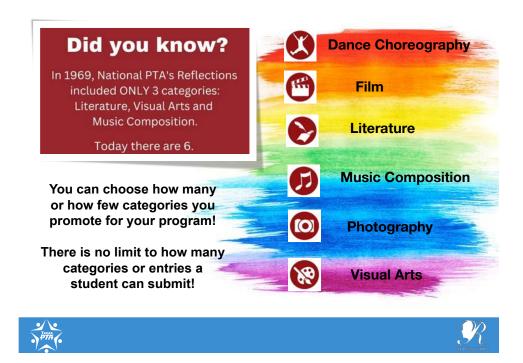
Probably the best way to get Reflections buy in, it to get your principal and teachers on board first. Ask to join a staff meeting before they plan their lesson plans for the year. You can promote the program and ask the teachers to add it to their curriculum in some way. This could be as a writing prompt, art, dance or music theme, etc. Here is an example of how that could work in your favor. For many districts, 4th graders focus on writing throughout the year. If they would use the Reflections theme as one of the writing prompts, you could end up with hundreds of literature entries. Once the literature piece is written, the student would then have the option to submit into Reflections.

Look for other ways at your campus to tie things back to a Reflections promotion.



Risa

Before we dive into the Reflections program itself, does anyone have any questions about what we just learned?



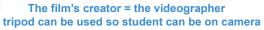
Risa

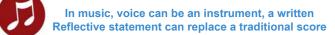
Did you know that when National PTA started the Reflections program, they only introduced three categories? The original program also did not include the special artist category. That was added in 2012 to provide accommodations for students with disabilities.

Today, there are six arts categories. If you are new to hosting the program and that seems too much for you to tackle, you are welcome to customize your program by choosing how many arts categories you would like to include. Although, if a student decided to enter the category you are not promoting, you should NOT discourage them from participating. Collect the entry and move it along to the next level. If there is only one entry, you can advance it without judging.

The great thing about Reflections is its wide-open invitation for art expressions. Students are not limited to pick one category or limited on how many entries they can enter into each category.













Entry may be handwritten or typed, illustrated entries or books are allowed, only literary content is judged



Dance can be performed by one or a group, student choreographer does not have to be a dancer





Risa

Each category has an in-depth set of rules outlining what is acceptable and what would not be accepted. All entries must be new and inspired by the current theme. And each entry must be the work of one student only, group entries are not allowed.

While Reflections is structured like a contest, it is actually an arts program. The beauty of that, is that we do not have to disqualify entries if they strew away from the rules a bit. If there is time, please use that as a teaching moment and work with the student to get the entry back within the guidelines. If the student does not wish to make any changes, the entry can be judged as is and awarded but would not be eligible to advance to the next level of judging.

One item that National PTA added to the rules this year, is a better explanation about prohibiting the use of generative elements like algorithmic techniques and artificial intelligence when creating the entry. Although, a music composition can be created using digital technology

and/or software to develop, enhance and/or present an entry, it may not provide the primary design and/or concept. Entrants must provide a brief description of the tools and method, including any generative elements.

Photography or Visual Arts

Photographic Collage vs. Photomontage What is it? What category is it? Why?



Photographic Collage = many photo prints pasted on to a flat surface.



Photomontages = 1 seamless print of multiple original photos. Produced digitally using photo editing software.













Risa

What is the difference between a photographic collage and a photomontage?

A photography collage is made from pasting together multiple photographs, clippings or other pre-printed materials to create a whole new image. This type of artwork should be categorized as a visual arts entry.

A Photomontage is a seamless print of multiple original photos taken by the student. These photos should be combined and produced digitally using a photo editing software. This type of artwork should be categorized as a photography entry.

Are there any questions about the different categories?

Reflections Grade Divisions







Risa

Now let's look at how the program is divided into grade divisions.

Entries should be grouped into one of the five grade divisions for judging. If your school spans multiple divisions, each group should be judged separately.

One of the biggest changes that National PTA made this year is changing the name for the special artist division. Moving forward, the Special Artist division will be referred to as the Accessible Arts division. This change is in response to concern around the term "special," based on feedback gathered from participants, volunteers and partner non-profit organizations, and recognizes the importance of evolving how we talk about disability to align with and be more inclusive of people with disabilities.

The division-specific guidelines and student entry forms include updated language and the new title. However, the process and structure

of the division was not changed.

Stay tuned! This enhancement is part of larger, forthcoming update to the division that will debut in the future.

Accessible Arts Division

Primary
Grades Pre-K-2

Intermediate
Grades 3-5

Middle School

Grades 6-8

High School Grades 9-12 Accessible Arts
Spans All
Grades

- Students will qualify under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Qualification is verified with parent's signature. You should not ask for proof of disability
- Student may choose to enter under the accessible arts or the traditional grade division.
- Accommodations are allowed to assist in creating the entry (i.e. holding the camera, typing, use of adaptive technology, etc.)





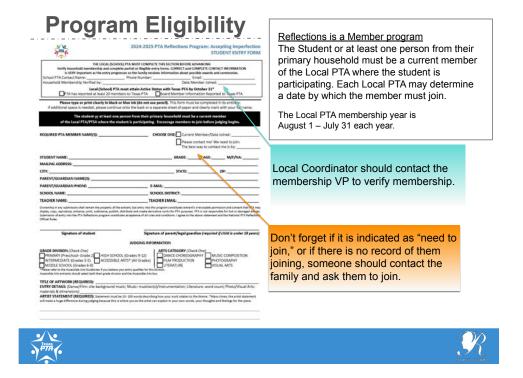
Risa

The National PTA Accessible Arts division is an option for students who identify as having a disability and may receive services under IDEA or ADA: Section 504 to have the opportunity and accommodations they may need in order to participate fully in the program. The division offers modified rules and guidelines to ensure that every student has the chance to be part of the Reflections program.

Qualification is verified with their parent's signature, and you should not ask for proof of disability. Although, if you believe that this was checked on the student entry form erroneously, you could first try to consult their teacher and if needed discuss the concern with the parent. We have on occasion received an entry at the state level under the accessible arts division that should not have been there and had to withdraw the entry at the last minute.

Students have the option to enter either the accessible arts division or through the traditional grade divisions. Although, they may only enter one or the other and not both. If they enter the traditional grade-level divisions, regardless of age, they may enter in the grade division most closely aligned to their support needs. If entering through the accessible arts division, students create their own artwork but may receive non-artistic accommodation and assistance from an adult. Students who enter through accessible arts will be recognized and awarded recognition as part of the accessible arts division.

Are there any questions about the Accessible Arts division?



Risa

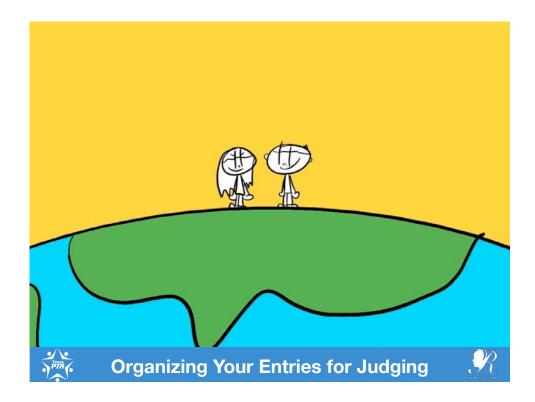
Student entry forms are required to accompany every Reflections entry. If you have chosen to create and utilize a Google form, it must ask all of the same questions and have the exact same wording, including asking for the signatures. A Google form can be very helpful in organizing your digital program. Although, any advancing entries should have the information transferred onto an official student entry form for the next level of judging. Since everything was typed to begin with, you may simply copy and paste everything over including the typed signatures.

All parts of the form are required. If you complete the top of the form with your PTA contact information prior to distributing, then you won't have the handwrite the information later.

Entries will be judged primarily on how well the student uses his or her artistic vision to portray the theme. Many times, the title and artist statement will make a huge difference during judging because this is where the artist can explain in their own words, their thoughts and

feelings for their piece. An explanation of the art form might also be a useful addition to the statement.

When verifying membership, if you find that a student or a family member still need to join, consider this as an opportunity for you to become an ambassador for your PTA and invite them to be a member. And if they have indicated that they need to join, don't forget to circle back and assist them with joining.



Risa

The judging process is used to determine which student entries will advance to the next round of judging and to award other recognition.

We will review the judging process including how to organize artwork and support your team of judges, as well as recommendations on how to rank scores and assign awards.

Entry Collection

- Communicate the student deadline multiple times in a variety of ways.
- Determine how students will submit entries (classroom, central location, digitally or another method).
- ✓ Verify all entries meet the membership requirement.
- Verification must be noted at top of the student entry form prior to advancing to the next level of judging.









TURN IN YOUR REFLECTIONS





Jennifer

Decide how you plan to collect the entries at the beginning of the planning process. Whether that is a centralized drop-off location like the library or in the front office. If you are planning to collect digital entries, go ahead and set-up the folder or form. You want to be ready as soon as a student has an entry to hand over. Communicate the collection plan along with the deadline so that they go hand in hand. If you want the teachers to help collect, be sure to ask permission from your principal.

Once you start receiving entries, take a moment to verify the student entry form is complete and that the entry follows the guidelines. If you have enough time, try to work with those students that may have misinterpreted the rules. Also make sure that each entry has a title and artist statement and educate any students that may want to skip this step.

In case a family still needs to join your PTA, you could set-up membership information nearby with a paper form & envelope to collect dues or a QR code to your virtual membership signup. Make it easier for them to check that off the list!

Prepare Entries for Judges' Review Blind Judging Collect entries and Consider using a organize by arts category numbering system during and grade division judging instead of student names JUDGING INFORMATION GRADE DIVISION (Check One) ARTS CATEGORY (Check One) PRIMARY (Preschool- Grade 2 HIGH SCHOOL (Grades 9-12) INTERMEDIATE (Grades 3-5) ACCESSIBLE ARTS* (All Grades) DANCE CHOREOGRAPHY FILM PRODUCTION MUSIC COMPOSITION PHOTOGRAPHY VISUAL ARTS LITERATURE MIDDLE SCHOOL (Grades 6-8) TITLE OF ARTWORK (REQUIRED): ENTRY DETAILS: (Dance/Film: cite background music; Music: musician(s)/instrumentation; Literature: word count; Photo/Visual Arts: ARTIST STATEMENT (REQUIRED): Statement must be 10-100 words describing how your work relates to the theme. *Many times, the artist statement Il make a huge difference during judging because this is where you as the artist can explain in your own words, your thoughts and feelings for the piece.

Jennifer

Utilize the student entry form to organize your entries. All arts categories and grade divisions must be judged separately. Prior to the judging, the coordinator should calculate 20% of each group (20% primary dance, 20% intermediate dance, 20% primary film, etc.) and then inform the judge(s) of that number so the judge(s) can better decide which entries should advance. When there is only one entry in the group, that entry can advance to the next level of judging without being judged.

In the event there are 1-5 entries in a group, the school may advance up to one entry to stay within the 20% rule. When there are 6+ entries, the percentage should be calculated and then always rounded up to the next whole number. (6-10 entries advance two; 11-15 entries advance three, etc.) While figuring the percentages this way may give an overall percentage of more than 20%, this will be the fairest way to decide which students advance.

Just as the standard grade divisions should be judged separately, the accessible arts division will be judged in the same fashion. The coordinator should calculate 20% of each arts category and grade division entered into the accessible arts division (20% accessible arts primary dance, 20% accessible arts intermediate dance, 20% accessible arts primary film, etc.).

Before we discuss how we find judges, are there any questions about entry collection and organization into judging groups?

Recruit Volunteer Judges

Start early by identifying local artist, cultural organizations and businesses in your community that might be able to assist.



- Look outside of your school as some teachers can identify a students work even without seeing the name.
- ✓ Make a team of 2 or more judges for each arts category. Although a judge may assist with multiple categories.
- Recruit artists with formal training and experience to increase the credibility of your program. But you will need to ensure they keep in mind they are judging artwork from students of all ages and that this is a program to promote the arts and not a contest.
- ✓ You will find judging procedures on the Leader Resources page to assist with recruiting judges, a judging rubric and assigning awards.





Jennifer

Start looking for judges now. To determine the number of judges needed, consider the number of entries received, the number of arts categories and the type of entries being judged. When it comes to finding the right judges, be sure to have someone who has interest and knowledge of the category but remember, that the Reflections program is not a contest. So, it will be important to find someone that understands a kid's point of view and that interpretation of the theme is more important than technique.

If a judge is connected to a student participant, or would know a student's work despite blind judging, the judge should remove him or herself from the judging process for the affected arts category(ies) to prevent a conflict of interest. Teachers from the host school may know student work and/or have a conflict of interest in judging, so it is better to invite teachers from another school that offers the Reflections Program.

Consider hosting your judging digitally. Once collected, the online review process will require some creative thinking due to the important step of anonymizing the student submissions and providing judges with "blinded" pieces for review. If you used Google Forms or Google Drive for collection, consider creating a Google Sheet that includes the student's title of work, artist statement and a link to the digital entry. Judges can utilize a digital scorecard and judge on their own time. Or use a streaming service like Zoom to try live judging with breakout rooms to provide judges with a private "space" to review the pieces in their respective categories.

Judging Guidelines & Score Cards

| Now closely the piece relates to the theme, based on the artwork itself and the artist statement | How creative and original the piece is in its conception of the theme and its presentation | How creative and original the piece is in its conception of the theme and its presentation | The level of skill demonstrated in the basic principles/techniques of the arts area | 8 pts

Entries primarily judged on the interpretation of the theme

	Judging So	core Card						Theme:
	Judge's Name							
	Student Name (numbering system if no names)	Arts Category	Age Group	Title of Work	Interpretation of Theme (Max 20 pts)	Artistic Merit & Creativity (Max 12 pts)	Mastery of Medium (Max 8 pts)	Total Score (Max 40 pts)
1	John Smith	Dance Choreography	Primary	Sample	15	9	7	31
2	Jane Smith	Film Production	Intermediate	Sample	16	7	5	28
3	Jake Smith	Literature	Middle Junior	Sample	17	10	8	35
4	106	Musical Composition	Senior	Sample	18	12	8	38
5	107	Photography	Special Artist	Sample	20	10	8	38
6	108	Visual Arts		Sample	10	9	7	26





Jennifer

To keep your judging as impartial as possible, judges should not see the students' names but only grade division, art category, title of the entry, and artist statement. You can omit the information if judging digitally and use a numbering system instead. If judging physically, you can simply fold the form in half to only show the pertinent information. Please remember to unfold the forms before advancing your entries.

Entries should be judged on artistic merit, creativity, mastery of the medium, and interpretation of the theme. Mastery of the medium in the context of the Reflections program pertains 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.

These charts offer a basic judging rubric to use in evaluating entries and a sample judging scorecard. With this rubric, each entry would

have a total of no more than 40 possible points from each judge. Have judges record their points for each entry on a scorecard. Add the points from each judge and rank the artwork accordingly. If two entries are tied, the entry with the greater score for interpretation of theme receives higher recognition. If that does not resolve the tie, the judges will need to make a decision on the awards.

Chart of Award Levels

Award of Excellence	These entries are excellent interpretations of the Reflections theme, exceptionally creative, and executed extremely well. These will advance to the next level.	Top 20%
Award of Merit	These entries are very good interpretations of the Reflections theme, very creative, and executed very well.	Amount is up to you, or traditionally 20%.
Honorable Mention	These entries are good interpretations of the Reflections theme, are creative, and executed nicely.	Amount is up to you, or traditionally 30%.
Participation	Every student entry should be recognized for the student having thought about the theme and trying their best to create an entry that interprets it. Your PTA can also choose to award every student with the top three awards and not use the participation designation.	All students not awarded.





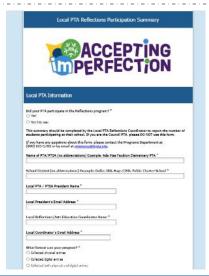
Jennifer

Most Local PTAs use the following award hierarchy, with the award of excellence advancing to the next level. We use these award levels instead of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd so that we can recognize more students.

Some PTAs have also chosen to eliminate the participation level so that every student receives an award. You are welcome to determine different percentages for each award than what is suggested. Do what works best for your PTA. As long as 20% of the entries are advanced and all students receive recognition of some kind, there is no wrong way to celebrate your students!

Local PTA Reflections Participation Summary

- Found on the Leader Resources page under the header Reflections Judging in Eight Easy Steps
- First download the file Advancing entrant spreadsheet from step five
- You will be asked to upload your Advancing Spreadsheet when completing your Participation Summary, link can be found in step six.
- You will also need your Council Coordinator name and email.
- Submit your Participation Summary and your information will automatically be sent to Council.





www.txpta.org/reflections-leader-resources



Jennifer

When you are done with judging, you are ready to complete the required Local PTA Reflections Participation Summary. This form will not only help Texas PTA keep track of how many students have participated in the program throughout the year, but it will also automatically email your advancing information to the next level of judging. Please ensure you are completing the form for Local PTAs and not the Council form.

You will find the links you need on the Leader Resources page near the bottom under Reflections Judging in Eight Easy Steps. First download an Advancing Entry Spreadsheet and add the student information for only the advancing students. If you have already utilized the spreadsheet to keep track of all your entries, make a new file that only includes the advancing entries.

When you complete the online summary, one of the required items is to upload your Advancing Entry Spreadsheet and include the name and email address for the Coordinator at the next level of judging. If you do not know who that is or their email address, please reach out to Carrie Mays for assistance.

There is also a question asking for the number of students enrolled at your school. This doesn't have to be an official most up to date number, but please do your best so we can better see the reach of the program.

Advancing Your Entries

- Confirm the advancing date and location
- ✓ If Advancing Digital Entries Include student name, category, and age group in file names.
- If advancing physically Package entries according to the guidelines







Jennifer

If you have not heard from your Council since the beginning of the school year, or you haven't heard from them at all, reach out to them to confirm the date and location for advancing your entries. If you are not available to deliver the entries to the next level on the day/time they specify, have a backup person available.

If you are advancing digital entries – please include the student's name, category and age group in the file names. Abbreviations are allowed. Each entry will need to be accompanied by an electronic version of their student entry form and ensure that middle and high school music composition entries include a digital copy of the music score.

If advancing physical entries – there are package specifications on the entry guidelines. You will only need to do this for the advancing entries.

Phew.... Finally, you are starting to see the light at the end of a busy two-month tunnel, it's time to celebrate!

Are there any questions before we move forward?



Risa

Now is your chance to be creative too! Try to think of some new ways to celebrate and recognize your participants this year. Celebrating offers positive recognition and encouragement for students to feel more confident and engaged in their own learning. Celebration events also provide your PTA with an opportunity to engage all families and connect with the greater school-community.

Celebrate All Participants



- · Public Announcements
- Virtual Events
- Plan a ceremony
- Host an award pick-up day
- · Share with your School Board or City Council











#TXPTA / #PTAReflections / #localschool / #council / #YourISD















Risa

Recognize! Recognize! Recognize all participating students in as many ways as possible – Public announcements, school events, community-wide events, PTA Meetings, School Board or City Council Meetings, etc. This will help with participation and support for Reflections the following year!

Keep the Excitement Going! – Exhibit entries around the school or at local businesses to promote participation in the program. Protect student privacy by temporarily removing the Student Entry Form and replacing with basic information while on display.

You can choose to go with traditional awards, trophies or ribbons, but you could also think outside of the box. You could create an art prize pack or a gift of some kind. Maybe you have a local business that would like to donate gifts and/or coupons to the students. Your awards can be as creative as the program itself!

Recognize Partners and Volunteers

- Students leaders
- PTA and community volunteers
- School personnel
- Judges
- · Community partners







Risa

Don't forget to thank those who helped make Reflections a success. Not only the students who entered, but also the students who helped to promote or administer the program.

Give a shout out to your PTA and community volunteers for lending their time and talents.

Thank your school personnel for including the program in their curriculums and most likely helping their students with their entries.

Huge props go to the judges for making the really tough awards decisions. If you still hold in person judging you could consider hosting a meal for the judges during a judging event.

Did you have community partners donate prizes or exhibit space? Make sure everyone knows about all these great deeds and who all came together to support your PTA.

Return Student Artwork

Did you collect physical Reflections entries? Make sure it is returned to the student in a timely manner.











Risa

If you collected and advanced physical entries to the next level of judging, the entries may be returned to you at different times of the year. Return all artwork prior to the end of the school year as some students graduate, move to another school, another city, or out-of-state. Texas PTA will return all physical entries to Councils in April.

They have not done so since 2020, but if National PTA were to decide to hold a physical exhibit, awarded photography and visual arts entries may be on display for 1-3 years. National PTA would return those entries following the close of any exhibits.

While each level makes every attempt to return entries to the student in the same shape it was submitted, entries that advance throughout the levels may deteriorate or could be lost in shipping. This is another great argument to transition to a virtual program!

Evaluate Your Program







- ✓ Collect feedback from your team
- ✓ Share with your PTA President and/or New Reflections Chair
- ✓ Utilize a free tool such as survey monkey, google survey, etc.





Risa

Now that you have hosted the program, be sure to pass along any knowledge, tips and tools that helped along the way. Take what you learned and improve your processes each year so that the program best suits your school, PTA and families. Your program should only get better by reflecting on what went well and what can be improved.

Get ready for the next year! The 2025-2026 theme is "I Belong!" This theme was submitted into last year's Reflections Theme Search Contest by Ben Morgan from Lewis and Clark Middle School PTSA in Idaho.



Risa

Did you know that your PTA can do so much more by hosting the Reflections program on your campus?





- **Step 1.** Enroll and Get Started (May 1 Oct. 15)
- **Step 2.** Gather and Analyze Community Feedback (August Dec. 1)
- **Step 3.** Build an Excellence Action Plan and Check Back with your Community (*November May*)
- **Step 4.** Reflect On and Summarize Progress (May 1 June 15)
- **Step 5.** Celebrate Your Excellence (Aug.)



www.pta.org/home/programs/National-PTA-School-of-Excellence



Risa

The Reflections program also fits within the National PTA's School of Excellence program action plan.

Over 40 years of research shows increased family engagement is linked to school improvement and student achievement. By enrolling in this program, your PTA and school administrators are making a year-long commitment in identifying and implementing an action plan for school improvement.

The program aims to:

- Provide a framework for PTAs to easily identify and implement best practices in family engagement.
- Build inclusive and welcoming school communities where all families can contribute to enriching the educational experience and overall well-being for all students.
- Help PTAs attract new, action-oriented PTA members who want to focus on the issues that affect our children the most.

- Provide step-by-step guidance and networking opportunities for PTAs to gain support and feedback.
- Celebrate awardees as national leaders in building effective family-school partnerships.

I encourage you to read more on the National PTA website and consider if this is something your campus might be interested in pursuing.

Celebrating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Arts



- Diversity and inclusion in art enhances the artistic experience for both artists and audiences.
- When we engage with art that reflects diverse perspectives, we see new ideas, cultures, and ways of thinking.
- This exposure broadens our understanding of the world and celebrates other cultures through their art.



www.pta.org/home/programs/reflections/artsedtools



Risa

Here is one reason why the Reflections Program is a meaningful addition.

Art isn't just a way to express ourselves; it's a bridge that connects us. It allows us to understand, appreciate, and respect both the differences and similarities among people from various backgrounds or unique physical abilities. Moreover, it inspires us to create artworks reflecting our identity, emotions, and worldview. Reflections fosters art that can be a powerful tool and can help us learn from and engage with other families in a respectful and meaningful manner.

PTA believes that celebrating diversity, equity and inclusion should be done with intention and with best practices in mind, and we believe that Reflections provides an opportunity to do just that.

Carrie post in chat

https://www.pta.org/home/programs/reflections/artsedtools

Texas PTA Connect Programs

The Value of Arts Education: Why It's Important for Your Child

Free and downloadable, ready to present!

- A fifteen minute video of Jenny Parry, Director of Programs for the Texas Cultural Trust, discussing the importance of the arts in education and development of our children.
- Tips for facilitating a discussion following the video presentation with optional activities and links.
- Useful handouts in English and Spanish.
- · More Resources:
 - · Parentsforartseducation.org
 - · Education.com/activities





https://www.txpta.org/connect-programs



Risa

We've said it already, but it is worth repeating. One of the biggest factors in student success is an engaged and supportive family, school, and community environment. Texas PTA's Connect programs help educate and empower school communities through video presentations from subject matter experts, handouts, and materials about the most pressing issues facing our kids.

Current PTA members can choose from a dozen Connect programs to download with everything needed to host a family engagement night, webinar, or PTA meeting about issues like the value of arts in education. But also important topics like mental wellness, vaping, financial literacy, and school safety.

All Connect programs come with a one-page guide, including a Facilitator Guide, suggested discussion questions, and optional activities. And most materials are available in English and Spanish.

PTA leaders are encouraged to invite the principal, assistant principal, school counselor, and/or school nurse to attend and participate as applicable. They can add information about district or campus programs and resources and help answer questions parents might have.



Why is the Reflections program important to your PTA? We would love to hear about the unique way the program enhances the lives of your students.

programs@txpta.org artsined@txpta.org

Risa Ginther & Jennifer Perry, Texas PTA Arts in Ed Liaisons Carrie Mays, Texas PTA Director of Programs & Resources Melinda Samberson, Texas PTA VP Programs & Resources



www.txpta.org/Reflections



Risa

Before we close out this training session, are there any other questions we can answer?

Thank you for joining us today and for stepping-up to be a leader for your PTA!

If you have any questions throughout the year, we are here to help! You can reach Carrie Mays at programs@txpta.org or you can reach all four of us at artsined@txpta.org.

We look forward to seeing all the creative ways your students will interpret this year's theme!