



2025-2026 Free State PTA Reflections Program

Carol Ellis, FSPTA Reflections Chair

Before We Get Started

- Please keep your devices on mute, unless otherwise directed
- Please utilize the raise hand feature to ask questions
- There will be a 5 -10 minute break between sessions
- This session will be recorded and posted on the Free State Website



Workshop Objectives

Introduce the Reflections Program for 2025-2026 and give an overview of rules and requirements for participating in the program.



How does it work?



Students **REFLECT** on a common theme and use their imagination to **CREATE** original works of art.

All participants **CELEBRATE** and share their artistic works with their family, school and community.

A Little Bit of History

- National PTA Reflections is PTA's cornerstone arts program
- Developed in 1969 by Colorado's PTA President Mary Lou Anderson to encourage students to explore their talents and express themselves
- Reflections has inspired millions of students to ponder a theme and create original artwork.
- **Each year, students in Grades Pre-K – 12 (including Accessible Arts Division), are recognized for bringing the theme to life in the following six categories: dance choreography, film production, literature, musical composition, photography and visual arts (including 3D Art).**

FSPTA Reflections Guidance

- Available at fspta.org/Reflections in early September
- Reflections Training Module 2025-2026
- Reflections Guidelines 2025-2026
- Student Entry Form 2025-2026
- Student Entrants List
- Local Participation Summary
- This is everything you need to run the National PTA Reflections program in Maryland

2025-2026 Program Theme:



An annual theme is determined
by the National PTA Reflections
Theme Search Contest.

Students may enter their theme
idea according to
**Guidelines on the Free State
website**

Theme Search Contest

- Guidance for the theme search in Maryland will be available in September 2025
- Theme search entries are due to Free State on 07 November 2025
- Selected entries will be submitted to National PTA for consideration
- Use the previous themes list to avoid submitting duplicate themes
- The winning National theme will be used for the Reflections program for 2027-2028

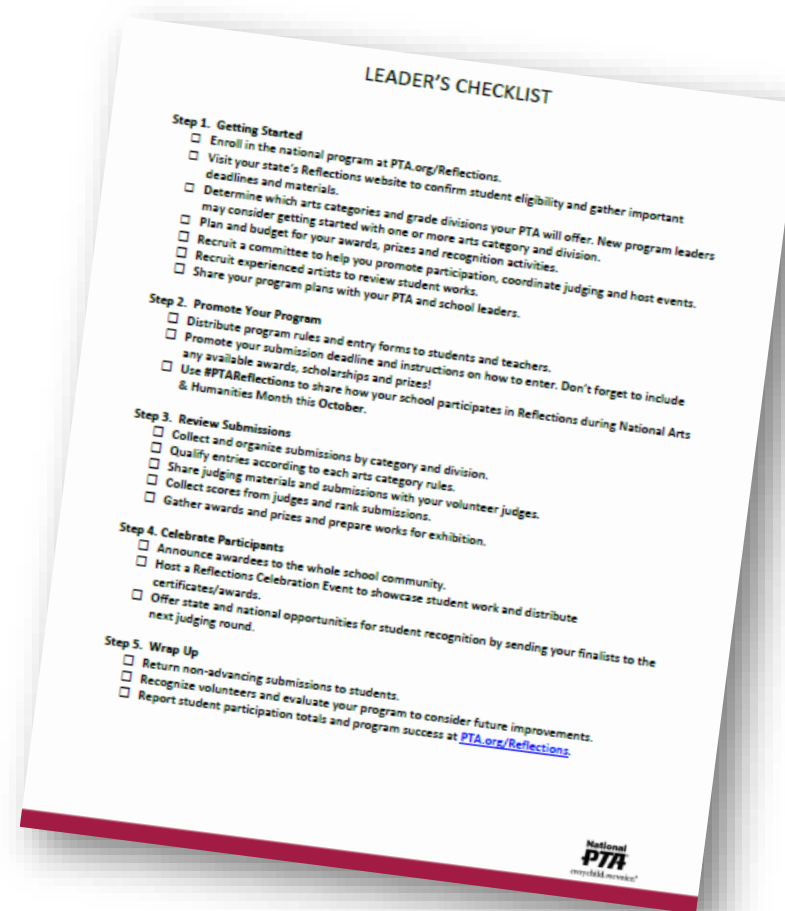
Step 1. Getting Started

- ❑ Enroll Your PTA in the National PTA Reflections program at PTA.org/Reflections
- ❑ Access your Council deadlines and instructions
- ❑ Recruit a **committee** to support you.
- ❑ Recruit a **team of experienced arts judges** to review student works.

Use your checklist to Set your Timeline

Keep track of important dates:

- ✓ Submission deadline
- ✓ Judging Period
- ✓ Celebration event date
- ✓ Council/State Deadlines



Check for interest in participating



- Send flyer out early in the year
- Provide entry form and rules to interested students

Step 2. Promote Your Program

- ❑ Distribute rules and entry forms.
- ❑ Describe categories and divisions available
 - **CATEGORIES:** Dance Choreography, Film Production, Literature, Music Composition, Photography, Visual Arts
 - **DIVISIONS:** Primary, Intermediate, Middle School, High School, Accessible Arts Division (all ages if relevant)

Entry Form

Complete before distribution - >

Student Information - >

Student & Parent Signatures - >

Submission Category & Division - >

Accessible Arts Division - >

Title & Details of Submission

Artist Statement

 **National PTA Reflections® Program**
Student Entry Form 2025-2026
"I Belong!"

 **Free State**
PTA[®]
everychild.onevoice.[®]

 **National PTA Reflections® Program**
Student Entry Form 2025-2026
"I Belong!"

 **Free State**
PTA[®]
everychild.onevoice.[®]

To be completed by Local PTA before distribution to students

FULL LOCAL PTA/PTSA NAME: _____

LOCAL PTA/PTSA ADDRESS: _____

LOCAL REFLECTIONS CHAIR NAME: _____

LOCAL CHAIR EMAIL: _____ LOCAL CHAIR PHONE: _____

NATIONAL 8-DIGIT PTA ID # _____ COUNCIL _____ STATE **Maryland** PTA in good standing _____

STUDENT NAME _____ GRADE _____ AGE _____ CLASSROOM _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME(S) _____ EMAIL _____ PHONE _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Ownership in any submission shall remain the property of the entrant, but entry into this program constitutes entrant's irrevocable permission and consent that PTA may display, copy, reproduce, enhance, print, sublicense, publish, distribute and create derivative works for PTA purposes. PTA is not responsible for lost or damaged entries. Submission of entry into the PTA Reflections program constitutes acceptance of all rules and conditions. I agree to the above statement and the National PTA Reflections Official Rules. Signatures (typed or handwritten) are required for all entries.

STUDENT SIGNATURE (Required for all entries) _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE (Required for all entries) _____

CATEGORY AND DIVISION (All entrants must select a grade-level division and arts category.)	GRADE DIVISION (Check one)	ARTS CATEGORY (Check one)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIMARY (PreK-Grade 2)	<input type="checkbox"/> DANCE CHOREOGRAPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC COMPOSITION
	<input type="checkbox"/> INTERMEDIATE (Grades 3-5)	<input type="checkbox"/> FILM PRODUCTION	<input type="checkbox"/> PHOTOGRAPHY
	<input type="checkbox"/> MIDDLE SCHOOL (Grades 6-8)	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> VISUAL ARTS
	<input type="checkbox"/> HIGH SCHOOL (Grades 9-12)		

ACCESSIBLE ARTS DIVISION PARTICIPATION (Check if relevant)
Students who identify as having a disability and may receive services under IDEA or ADA: Section 504 may also select to participate in the Accessible Arts Division to receive division-specific accommodations and non-artistic accommodations as outlined in the division guidelines. Participating students may use the "Additional Details" field to provide information about how their disability and/or support needs impacted their entry (10 to 100 words, optional). Participating students compete against other students in the division and are awarded as part of the division. See division guidelines for details.
I will participate and compete in the Accessible Arts Division.

ARTWORK DETAILS (As relevant or required based arts category and/or division)

Medium and Materials (Visual Arts)	Word Count (Lit.)	Editing software, if used. (All categories)	Dimensions (Visual Arts/Photo.)

Cite background music, if used. (Dance/Film) and list musician(s)

Instrumentation (Music)

TITLE (Required for all entries)

ARTIST STATEMENT (Required for all entries) In 10 to 100 words, describe your work and how it relates to the theme.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS If technology is used, describe the platform's use in the creation process, including any generative elements (required for all entries, 10 to 50 words). Students participating in the Accessible Arts Division may provide details about how their disability and/or support needs impacted their entry (Optional, 10 to 100 words).



Accessible Arts Division

This **Accessible Arts Division** welcomes students from all grades and offers non-artistic accommodations for students to participate fully in PTA Reflections. **Student recognition and awards are announced as part of the Accessible Arts Division.**

ACCOMMODATIONS

- ☐ Non-artistic accommodations (e.g. adaptive technology; transcribing; holding a camera)
- ☐ Assistants must refrain from being involved in the artistic process (e.g. developing an artist statement, choreography, music lyrics, storyboards, etc.)

Students who identify as having a disability and may receive services under IDEA or ADA: Section 504 may enter in the Accessible Arts Division OR grade division most closely aligned to their functional abilities.





Dance Choreography

Solo and ensemble works of all dance styles are accepted. Entrant must be the choreographer and may also be the performer, or one of the performers. If background music is used, cite it on the entry form.

VIDEO

- ☐ File must not exceed 5 min. and 1 GB in size.
- ☐ Accepted formats: AVI, MOV, MP4.



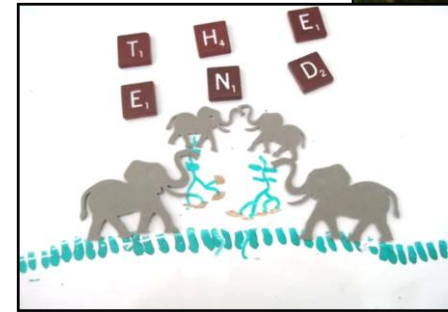


Film Production

Accepted short film styles include: Animation, narrative, documentary, experimental or media presentation. Entrant must be the screenwriter, cinematographer, editor and producer. If background music is used, cite it on the entry form.

VIDEO

- ☐ File must not exceed 5 min. and 1 GB in size.
- ☐ Accepted formats: AVI, MOV, MP4.
- ☐ *Software used to create an entry should only enhance and present the work, not provide the primary design.*





Literature

Accepted forms of fiction and nonfiction include: Prose, poetry, reflective essay, screen play and play script, narrative, and short story. Entrants may write in their primary language as long as an interpretive English translation is also attached. Use of copyrighted material is prohibited.

WRITING

- ☐ Must not exceed 2,000 words.
- ☐ May be handwritten or typed.
- ☐ Single-sided print on 8 ½x11" paper.
- ☐ Electronic file in PDF format





Music Composition

All music styles and combinations of instrumentation are accepted. Entrant must be the composer and may also be the performer, or one of the performers. Use of copyrighted material is prohibited.

AUDIO

- ☐ File must not exceed 5 min. and 1 GB in size.
- ☐ Accepted formats: MP3, WAV.

NOTATION

- ☐ Only required for middle and high school divisions.
- ☐ Score/tablature in PDF format.





Photography

Photo must be a single print/digital image. Collages and collections of photos are not accepted. Entrant must be the photographer and may use a variety of digital editing techniques including but not limited to, multiple exposure, negative sandwich and photogram.



PRINT

- ☐ Must be no smaller than 3x5 inches and no larger than 8x10 inches.
- ☐ Accepted print formats: Mounted on mat or poster board no larger than 11x14 inches.
- ☐ Framed prints are not accepted.

DIGITAL IMAGE

- ☐ Dimensions must be at least 640x960 (pixels) and 300 dpi (resolution).
- ☐ Accepted file formats: JPEG, JPG, PNG.



Visual Arts

Works of both fine and design arts are accepted, including but not limited to:

architectural drawing and models, ceramics, collage, computer generated images and graphics, crafts, drawing, fashion clothes and jewelry, fiber work, mixed media, painting, printmaking and sculpture.



2D WORKS

- ☐ Mounted on sturdy material.
- ☐ No larger than 24x30 inches with matting.
- ☐ Framed entries are not accepted.
- ☐ Include one digital image of artwork with your submission in JPEG, JPG, PNG.

3D WORKS

- ☐ Include 3 digital images of artwork at different angles with your submission in JPEG, JPG, PNG.
- ☐ Be transportable and not need assembly

Important Free State Rules

- Submissions for ALL ARTS AREAS may **NOT** be created using artificial intelligence software (such as ChatGPT, DALL-E rotor, hotpot AI, deep AI, Craiyon, nightcafe, or other text-to-art software tools) to generate any part of the content or composition.
- Primary, Intermediate, and Accessible Arts divisions do not require musical notation. Middle and High School grade divisions must include music score/notation, either traditional or tablature, or a written reflective statement that provides a musically technical explanation of how the music was created (100 words or less).
- The recommended Judging Rubric remains:
 - ☐ Interpretation of Theme (40 pts.) How closely the piece relates to the theme, based on the artwork itself and the artist statement.
 - ☐ Creativity (30 pts.) How creative and original the piece is in its conception of the theme and its presentation.
 - ☐ Technical Skill (30 pts.) The level of skill demonstrated in the basic principles/techniques of the arts area.

Step 3. Coordinate Judging

- ❑ Sort submissions by category and division.
- ❑ Review submissions for completeness and qualification.
- ❑ Provide judges with instructions and materials.
 - **IN PERSON:** Display works on tables. Bi-Fold entry form and instruct judges to rotate around the room and complete their score card.
 - **VIRTUAL:** Put entries and entry forms in a shared folder/Dropbox that judges can view. Redact or fold entry form to preserve anonymity.

To hide names and show title and artist statement,

Bi-Fold Student Entry Form Page 1 and full Page 2

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☐ I will participate and compete in the Accessible Arts Division.

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Instrumentation (Music)		

2025-2026 Student Entry Form Page 1



National PTA Reflections® Program
Student Entry Form 2025-2026
"I Belong!"



TITLE (Required for all entries)

ARTIST STATEMENT (Required for all entries) in 10 to 100 words, describe your work and how it relates to the theme.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS If technology is used, describe the platform's use in the creation process, including any generative elements (required for all entries, 10 to 50 words). Students participating in the Accessible Arts Division may provide details about how their disability and/or support needs impacted their entry (Optional, 10 to 100 words).

2025-2026 Student Entry Form Page 2

Submission Instructions

- Due date for submitting entries for Council will be set by Council, NLT 05 January 2026. Locals without Council must submit to Free State by 02 January 2026. Councils must submit entries to Free State NLT 26 January 2026.
- 3 submissions per category/division can advance to Free State from Councils or locals without Councils
- Forms to accompany submission—entry form for each entry, participation form (Appendix 8) , entrants list (Appendix 9)
- Electronic file format in rules sheet for each arts area (Appendix 5)
- Council Awards announced in February, State Awards announced in March, and National Awards announced in May

Standards of Affiliation

Required

- Current Officers List
- Dues
- Bylaws
- Insurance

Best Practice

- Adhere to PTA Purposes and Policies
- Minimum 10 Members
- Maintain EIN from IRS
- Incorporation
- 990
- Annual Financial Review
- Charitable Organization Registration
- Personal Property
- Treasurer and One Other Officer Complete Annual Financial Training

Make your PTA Treasurer your best friend!!



***Must be
compliant by
26 January 2026***

Step 4. Celebrate Your Students

- ❑ Assign awards by category and division.
- ❑ Celebrate your students:
 - a) Announce winners on social media and school website.
 - b) Consider awards from **ShopPTA.com** and donated prizes from community supporters.
 - c) Host a student recognition event for families.
 - d) Showcase student works at school and in the community.
- ❑ Advance finalists to the next level according to state/council guidelines and deadlines.

Step 5. Wrap Up

- ❑ Recognize partners and volunteers.
- ❑ Return non-advancing works if not virtual.
- ❑ Gather feedback from participants, attendees, volunteers and partners. Host a meeting with your committee and share successes at PTA and school meetings.
- ❑ Record notes and contacts for next year's program chair.

Contact Info



National PTA: [PTA.org/Reflections](https://pta.org/Reflections)
Free State Chair: Carol Ellis cellis@fspta.org
Reflections email: reflections@fspta.org

Questions?

