

Best Practices for Principals and PTAs

PRINCIPALS SHOULD:	PTAs SHOULD:
Join PTA and actively participate in board meetings.	Ask Principals for input and respect alternate views.
Meet monthly with PTA leaders.	Be available to meet during (but without disrupting) Principals' workday. Designate parents with flexible schedules to attend.
Be visible at arrival/dismissal, in classrooms and hallways during the school day. Attend evening events or designate an administrator to be present.	Attend in-school assemblies (or designate a board member to attend), visit classrooms and organize parents to volunteer in classrooms and chaperone field trips.
Engage parents in conversation at school/PTA events.	Encourage parents to engage in conversations with Principals but respectfully leave student-specific complaints to less public settings.
Learn about the mission and structure of PTA.	Learn the Principal's background and experience.
Recognize the autonomy of PTA as an independent, non-profit organization whose mission is to advocate for students and engage and empower families.	Recognize the amount (and limits) of autonomy MCPS grants its Principals, whose job is to meet the needs of students.
Encourage teachers to join, support and actively participate in PTA activities.	Include teachers and students on in planning events and fundraising. Create school-day opportunities for staff to engage.
Collaborate with PTA leaders in planning school events. Coordinate school-sponsored family events when possible to coincide with PTA meetings and activities.	Include Principals in event planning before decisions are made. Coordinate scheduling school/PTA events and activities for the convenience of families.
Share achievement and school climate data transparently and work with PTA to address concerns.	Study data for both good and poor performance, focusing on trends over several years.
Allow PTA leaders to set meeting agendas.	Ask Principals for agenda topics ideas and other input.

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Provide an update on school events and developments at PTA meetings.	Notify Principals of concerns raised by multiple parents.
Involve parents in decision-making by accommodating requests to inform and/or hear concerns.	Provide appropriate setting (like a board or membership meeting) for Principal to inform or voice concerns candidly.
Urge parents to join and support PTA so it reflects the school's diversity.	Urge or facilitate parent participation in school events to reflect the school's diversity.
Support PTA advocacy by providing information and insight to assist with budget testimony, OSSI meetings, and other initiatives.	Support Principal advocacy as needed.
Address concerns about the PTA and/or its leaders promptly and transparently.	Address concerns about the school and/or its administration promptly and transparently.
Communicate regularly with families via newsletters, emails, automated phone calls or the PTA e-list.	Communicate regularly with teachers and administration, including them in PTA newsletters and e-communications.
Focus on "the little things" – showing up at small group events, notes to students and volunteers, participating in Spirit Nights – to build positive morale.	Focus on "the little things" – recognizing staff achievements, making staff appreciation special – to build positive morale.
Build trust by including PTA as a key partner and stakeholder for your school.	Build trust by including the Principal as a key partner and stakeholder for your PTA.

*Created and presented jointly by the Montgomery County Council of PTAs (MCCPTA)
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