National PTA Reflections®
Local Leader’s Guide
2015-2016 - “Let Your Imagination Fly”
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. **What’s New to Reflections?**
   1.1 Student Entry Form-updated
   1.2 NEW-Visual Arts Category Expanded
   1.3 Required Naming Convention

2. **How to Participate in the Reflections Program (North Carolina Specifics)**
   2.1 Local Units WITH Active Councils
   2.2 PTA Council Chairs: For COUNCIL Chairs ONLY
   2.3 Local Units WITHOUT Active Councils
   2.4 Students with Disabilities/How to enter the Special Artist Division Category

3. **Start the Arts!**
   3.1 About PTA Reflections
   3.2 Roles and Responsibilities
   3.3 The Art of Family Engagement

4. **Organizing and Planning Your Program**
   4.1 Organizing Your Team
   4.2 Tips for Recruiting Volunteers
   4.3 Recruiting Judges

5. **Promoting Reflections**
   5.1 Program Messages
   5.2 Student Recruitment Messages
   5.3 Ideas for Promoting Reflections

6. **Organizing Artwork for Judging**
   6.1 Understanding Program Rules
   6.2 Judging Process

7. **Celebrating and Recognizing Your Participants**
   7.1 Recognize Students Locally
   7.2 Regional and State-Level Recognition
   7.3 National-Level Recognition

8. **Wrapping Up**
   8.1 Recognize Partners and Volunteers
   8.2 Return Student Artwork
   8.3 Evaluate Your Program
1. What’s New to Reflections?

1.1 Student Entry Forms-updated
The student entry forms have been modified this year to gather additional information to aid in the judging process. The “Artwork Details” questions must be answered in full. These questions are brief and will not require much additional work on the students’ part or the chairs’.

1.2 New! Visual Arts 3D
National PTA has expanded the Visual Arts category to include 3D artwork:
What is the difference between 2D vs. 3D visual arts pieces?
2D Forms: Architectural drawing, collages, photographic collages, computer-generated image, drawing, painting, printmaking. Dimensions must not exceed 24x30 inches, including matting. Paper entries must be mounted on sturdy material.

Vs.
3D Forms: Architectural model, carpentry, ceramics, design, dioramas, fiber work, jewelry, kites, metal etching/punch work, mobiles, sculpture and wind chimes. Artwork must be able to move for display purposes.

Note: Please pay special attention to the “Submissions Requirements” section of the Visual Arts Rules for both 2D and 3D visual arts entries

New 3D requirements include:
Must include packaging materials and 3 photos of the entry (a combination of angles) for judging, ID and exhibition purposes (entries that require assembling/repairing from transporting will be disqualified).

1.3 Required Naming Convention:
All files submitted to the next level of judging by a PTA will need to be in the following formats. Please note: that if you are a local unit WITH an Active Council-this information may not apply to you. You will need to contact the Reflections Chair for your Council. This information WILL apply to Council Reflections Chairs and Local Unit Chairs that do not have an Active Council (Units submitting directly to the NCPTA Database).

Required Abbreviations for Categories:
Dance-Dance
Film-Film
Literature-Lit
Music- Music
Photography-Photo
Visual Arts- VA
Required abbreviations for Divisions:
Primary- Pri
Intermediate- Int
Middle- Mid
High- Hi
Special Artist- SA

This applies to Dance, Film, Literature, Music, Photography, and 2D Visual Arts Submissions:
Single Entry:
Category-Division-Last-First
Ex: Dance-Pri-Smith-Sally

Multiple Entries for the same student (submission of more than one entry in a category)
Category-Divison-Last2-First
Category-Divison-Last3-First
Ex: Dance-Pri-Smith2-Sally
Dance-Pri-Smith3-Sally

How to name music scores:
Music-Divison-last-first.PDF

3D Visual Arts Submissions: all 3D Visual Arts entries are required to submit 3 photos of varying angles

Single Submissions:
VA-Divion-Last-First-1
VA-Divion-Last-First-2
VA-Divion-Last-First-3

Ex: VA-Int-Jones-Tom-1
VA-Int-Jones-Tom-2
VA-Int-Jones-Tom-3

Multiple Entries for the same student
VA-Divion-Last2-First-1
VA-Divion-Last2-First-2
VA-Divion-Last2-First-3

Ex: VA-Int-Jones2-Tom-1
VA-Int-Jones2-Tom-2
VA-Int-Jones2-Tom-3
2. How to participate in the Reflections Program

2.1 LOCAL UNITS WITH ACTIVE COUNCILS

Local units belonging to an active council must submit entries directly to their Council. Local units belonging to any of the active councils below, please refer to the Council Contact and Entry Requirements Chart for the specific entry submission guidelines and deadlines for your Council.

- If a local unit is in a county where there is an active council, then they have to submit through the council even if the PTA is not a member of the council. The PTA would have to contact the council and see if the council will accept their piece. The only units that are permitted to submit directly to the State Office are those units in counties without a council.

- Items to submit to the council:
  - Art Entry
  - Paper copy of the Student Entry Form for each student entry
  - Electronic copies of Visual Arts Files - 3D Visual Arts submissions only
  - Paper copy of the Local Unit Participation Form

Active PTA Council are:
- Chapel Hill/Carrboro
- Charlotte/Mecklenburg
- Cumberland
- Durham Public Schools
- Guilford
- Hickory Public Schools
- New Hanover
- Rowan/Salisbury
- Wake
- Winston-Salem/Forsyth

2.2 PTA COUNCIL CHAIRS: FOR COUNCILS ONLY

- Councils will be responsible for electronically submitting both the Traditional and the Special Artists Division entries in to the NCPTA Reflections Database
- Active Councils may submit:
  - Up to 30 Traditional entries (any combination from the 4 grade divisions) from PTAs in good standing electronically into the NCPTA Reflections Database.
There is no limit to the Special Artist entries a Council may electronically submit into the NCPTA Reflections Database. *(Council can determine how many Special Artists submissions each local PTA can submit to the Council.)*

- **ALL entries MUST be submitted ON or BEFORE the January 12, 2016 deadline.**
- The **Student Entry Form** MUST be manually entered (NOT SCANNED) using the online submission for each entry uploaded into the NCPTA Reflections database for State judging. The Student Entry Form must be completed in its entirety in order for the system to accept the entry. This procedure will eliminate the many disqualifications of entries due to an incomplete Student Entry Form.
- A **Council Participation Form** must be entered into the NCPTA Reflections Database
- **Please remember,** the acceptable formats for submission are:
  - **Dance:** MOV, MPG, MPEG, MP4 file size must not exceed 200 MB
  - **Film:** MP3, MP4. MP4 must be **audio only** and cannot exceed 200 MB in file size. Scores and lyrics must be PDFs. PDFs cannot exceed 3MB in file size.
  - **Music:** MP3, MP4. MP4 file size must not exceed 200 MB
  - **Literature:** PDF- Do not take pictures of literature entries. Entries need to be scanned PDF files. File size can exceed 3 MB.
  - **Photography:** JPEG, JPG. File size cannot exceed 3 MB.
  - **Visual Arts:** JPEG, JPG. File size cannot exceed 3 MB. **3D entries** must submit 3 JPEG or JPG from varying angles.

### 2.3 LOCAL UNITS WITHOUT ACTIVE COUNCILS (COUNTRIES NOT LISTED ABOVE)

- Entries will be submitted electronically to the NCPTA Reflections database.
- If you are in a county not listed above, your unit will upload its entries directly into the NCPTA Reflections Database **ON OR BEFORE January 12, 2016.**
- **Number of Submissions:**
  - **Elementary:** May submit a total of 12 entries, 6 entries from the Primary Division (preschool- grade 2) and 6 entries from the Intermediate Division (Grades 3-5)
  - **Middle/Junior (Grades 6-8):** May submit 6 entries
  - **Senior (Grades 9-12):** May submit 6 entries
• The **Student Entry Form** MUST be manually entered (NOT SCANNED) using the online submission for each entry uploaded into the NCPTA Reflections database for State judging. The Student Entry Form must be completed in its entirety in order for the system to accept the entry. This procedure will eliminate the many disqualifications of entries due to an incomplete Student Entry Form.

• **A Local Unit Participation Form** must be entered into the NCPTA Reflections Database

• **Please remember, the acceptable formats for submission are:**
  - Dance: MOV, MPG, MPEG, MP4 file size must not exceed 200 MB
  - Film: MOV, MPG, MPEG, MP4 file size must not exceed 200 MB
  - Music: MP3, MP4. MP4 must be **audio only** and cannot exceed 200 MB in file size. Scores and lyrics must be PDFs. PDFs cannot exceed 3MB in file size.
  - Literature: PDF- Do not take pictures of literature entries. Entries need to be scanned PDF files. File size can exceed 3 MB
  - Photography: JPEG, JPG. File size cannot exceed 3 MB.
  - Visual Arts: JPEG, JPG. File size cannot exceed 3 MB. **3D entries** must submit 3 JPEG or JPG from varying angles.

---

**2.4 Students With Disabilities**

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

**Option 1:** Students who qualify for the Special Artist Division may choose 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.

**Option 2:** 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 no artistic accommodation and assistance from an adult. NCPTA will select one Outstanding Interpretation Award and
up to five Awards of Merit. The Outstanding Interpretation winner will be forwarded on to National PTA for competition. Special Artist winners will receive recognition at the NCPTA Reflections Celebration.

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.

**How to enter the Special Artist Division Category:**
Students wishing to participate in the Special Artist Division and not the traditional level will submit to their Local Unit Reflections Program. Entries in the Special Artist Division must be uploaded into the NCPTA Reflections Database. (See below for information on who is responsible for this task.)

**Local units WITH an Active Council:** will submit Special Artists entries to their Council. Please see the Council Contact and Entry Requirements Chart for the specific entry guidelines for Special Artist. Councils have the right to determine the number of Special Artists submissions each PTA may submit.

**Local Units WITHOUT an Active Council:** There is no limit to the number of Special Artist entries that may be submitted by local PTAs without Active Councils. All Special Artist entries must be electronically submitted by the local chair along with the traditional submissions directly in to the NCPTA Reflections Database on or before January 12, 2016.

3. **Start the Arts!**

Participation in arts programs—like PTA Reflections—plays a critical role in students’ success, in school and beyond. All children deserve opportunities to explore and be involved in the arts.

Consider the following facts from ArtsEdSearch.org:

- Participation in the arts can level the playing field for underserved students.
- Participation in the arts develops the whole child.
- Participation in the arts connects families and schools to one another and to their communities.
3.1 About PTA Reflections

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 Pre-K through grade 12 are recognized for bringing the theme to life through dance choreography, film production, literature, music composition, photography and visual arts.

2015–2016 Reflections Program Theme:

Let Your Imagination Fly

This theme was submitted through the Reflections Theme Search Contest by Rachel Sperry of Northwood, North Dakota.

Students submit their artwork to local PTAs for initial judging. In North Carolina, local winning entries then advance to the Council and/or State round. The NCPTA State awards are announced in March.

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.

3.2 Roles and Responsibilities

As a Reflections Chair 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.

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

• Recruit PTA Reflections Committee members.
• Oversee the PTA Committee’s planning and implementation of the Reflections program.
• Communicate with other PTA leaders during online and in-person opportunities.
• Represent your PTA at arts-related events and collaborations.
3.3 The Art of Family Engagement

The arts—and the National PTA Reflections program, in particular—can be a valuable tool for building stronger partnerships in your school community. National PTA developed the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships to serve as a framework for thinking about, structuring, and assessing family engagement throughout your Reflections program. Visit PTA.org/FamilyEngagement to learn more.

Additional Opportunities

Join the search for a future program theme!

National PTA Reflections sponsors a student-focused Theme Search Contest annually to determine a future program theme. The winner will be selected in January and will receive $100 and recognition at the National PTA Convention.

Entries must be submitted to the NCPTA State Office on or before November 16, 2015. You may download the theme search student entry form and a list of past themes at http://ncpta.org/index.php/programs/reflections-arts-program/

Apply for a Local PTA Arts Enhancement Grant

The National PTA Mary Lou Anderson Reflections Arts Enhancement Grants provide 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/Awards on January 4, 2016 and due Friday, March 11, 2016.
4. Organizing and Program Planning

Below are the recommended steps for administering your Reflections® program. Use this checklist to organize tasks, delegate tasks to your committee and schedule deadlines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Task Leader</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1. Get Started.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Confirm with your president that your local PTA is in good standing with NCPTA and eligible to participate. Check good standing at <a href="https://www.ncpta.org/awards/goodstanding/gs.aspx">https://www.ncpta.org/awards/goodstanding/gs.aspx</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Make sure the Reflections program is included in your PTA’s program budget for the school year.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2. Organize a team of volunteers and plan your program.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Recruit your Reflections program planning committee and engage school personnel and community members for additional support.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Recruit creative professionals to judge student artwork.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Determine which arts categories and divisions your PTA will offer. New program leaders may consider getting started with one or more arts category and division.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Establish a timeline for the following activities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 3. Promote the Reflections program to students and school personnel.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Distribute program rules and student entry form.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Promote artwork submission deadline and instructions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 4. Organize artwork for judging.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Collect and organize artwork for judging.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Rank judges’ scores and assign awards.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 5. Celebrate and recognize your participants.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Host a <a href="https://ncpta.org/index.php/programs/reflections-arts-program/">Reflections Celebration Event</a>.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Provide opportunity for state and national recognition by advancing finalists according to state guidelines.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 6. Wrap up.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Return non-advancing student artwork.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Submit Local PTA Unit Participation Form according to state guidelines.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Recognize volunteers and evaluate your program to consider future improvements.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1 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!

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.

4.2 Tips for Recruiting 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 who have 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, by collecting and organizing student entries, for example.

• 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.”

Suggested Volunteer Job Descriptions

Assigning project leaders and dividing tasks will save time and energy. Use the suggested volunteer job descriptions below to help recruit volunteers with specific skills/interests. Remind volunteers they don’t have to be on the committee to play an active role in the success of your PTA’s Reflections program. Don’t forget to publicly recognize your volunteer team members for their dedication!

Consider the following job descriptions to delegate roles and responsibilities.

Publicist: The publicist communicates with teachers, student leaders, and community partners to promote Reflections participation and recognize student achievement.

Judging Coordinator: The judging coordinator recruits judges, collects artwork, and facilitates the judging process.

Recognition Event Manager: The recognition event manager produces an event to recognize student participation and achievement. This event may be an art exhibit, recital, awards ceremony, or a combination of each.

Computer Wiz: The computer wiz organizes student entry information and shares it with PTA leaders.

4.3 Recruiting Judges

Inviting 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.

5. 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 can help increase participation, enhance family engagement at the school and garner additional support.

5.1 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:

- PTA Reflections welcomes students of all grades and all abilities to explore their inner artist.
- Students may explore one or all six arts disciplines, including: Dance Choreography, Film Production, Literature, Music Composition, Photography and Visual Arts.
- Students reflect on the annual theme in school or at home and are recognized for their participation and achievement in the arts.
- Every student is recognized for their accomplishments with the opportunity for state and national awards and recognition.
- The love of art and celebration of students can bring people together – families, teachers, and friends in the community.
- New academic standards require more critical thinking and problem solving, which translates into more creativity and deeper reflection. That’s why Reflections isn’t just for arts classes.
- 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.

5.2 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 within a school newspaper, during morning announcements, and at activity fairs promoting school clubs.
• Let your imagination fly and unleash your inner artist! 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 what the theme: “Let Your Imagination Fly” means to you. Pick up a PTA Reflections Entry Form today from <INSERT NAME> and return by <INSERT DUE DATE>.

5.3 Ideas for Promoting Reflections

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

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 at https://ncpta.org/index.php/programs/reflections-arts-program/
• Post the deadline and reminders on signs near student drop-off and pick-up 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, and orchestra) or creative writing or journalism classes.

Among Teachers and Administrators: Invite arts teachers to serve as Reflections 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; or 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.

**6. Organizing Artwork for Judging**

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 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**. Local Units belonging to an active council must submit directly to their council, for more information please refer to the Council Deadline and Submissions chart at [http://ncpta.org/index.php/programs/reflections-arts-program/](http://ncpta.org/index.php/programs/reflections-arts-program/). Local units without active councils must upload their entries into the NCPTA Reflections Database on or before January 12, 2016.
6.1 Understanding Program Rules

All students must adhere to the General Student Participation Rules, as well as the rules for their specific arts category. Program rules, required forms and Reflections materials are provided by NCPTA at https://ncpta.org/index.php/programs/reflections-arts-program/.

Only use the forms and materials that are found on the NCPTA Reflections Page.

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.
- **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.**

Originality: Specific rules related to originality for each arts category rules can be referenced at https://ncpta.org/index.php/programs/reflections-arts-program/.

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 the 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 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 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 (https://www.ncpta.org/awards/goodstanding/gs.aspx). 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, and explain why they are being returned.
5. Talk with appropriate school personnel, such as school counsellors, 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.

If ineligibility is confirmed after judging, determine whether awards (including award money, pins, certificates, etc.) should be returned.
6.2 Judging Process

The judging process has two goals:

1. To determine which student entries will advance to the next round of judging for our state Reflections program.
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.

Under NO condition may parents, students, or chairs contact the judge to dispute the status of an entry. All decisions of judges are **FINAL**.

Please note: There may not be a winner in every category and/or division. Instances occur when not every category has more than one entry at every grade level. Judging is based on quality of work. Therefore, an entry may not place at the State Level even if it is the only submission in the category.

**NCPTA reserves the right not to forward any entry on to any level of judging that the judges do not feel meet the standards of a national competition.**

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:** 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 outline of the judging criteria your PTA may find helpful in evaluating entries and assigning awards. Notice that interpretation of the theme is weighed more heavily than the other considerations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Judging Criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation of Theme</td>
<td>How closely the piece relates to the theme, based on the artwork itself and the artist statement</td>
<td>20 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic Merit/ Creativity</td>
<td>How creative and original the piece is in its conception of the theme and its presentation</td>
<td>10 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastery of Medium</td>
<td>The level of skill demonstrated in the basic principles/techniques of the arts area</td>
<td>10 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With these criteria, 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.


**7. Celebrating and Recognizing Your Participants**

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 Recognize Students Locally**

The 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 and press release 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 State-Level Recognition

North Carolina PTA State-level award recipients are typically announced in late March/early April. Results are posted on the NCPTA website ([www.ncpta.org](http://www.ncpta.org)) and announced through the NCPTA E-News.

First, second, and third place State winners and up to six winners in the Special Artist category are individually notified and invited to be recognized at the NCPTA Reflections Celebration. If a State winner is unable attend the Reflections Celebration, their award will be sent directly to the student the week following the Reflections Celebration.

7.3 National –Level 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.

• **Awards of Excellence:** These are given to the top three scores for each arts category in each division and one special artist of each arts area.

• **Awards of Merit:** These are given to the next five highest scores for each arts category in each division.

National award recipients will be notified via email by National PTA in May. National awards and certificates are mailed after the National PTA Convention, by the end of July. Any awards or certificates returned to the National PTA office due to insufficient or incorrect addresses will be mailed to the
appropriate state office. For more details on national awards and recognition, visit http://ncpta.org/index.php/programs/reflections-arts-program/.

8. Wrapping Up

You’re almost done! This section 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 at http://ncpta.org/index.php/programs/reflections-arts-program/ 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 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).

NCPTA Policies

NCPTA does not collect the original artwork since entries are uploaded into our Reflections Database.
Please note: The original Visual Arts and Photography artwork of winners at the National level of competition must be sent directly to National PTA by either the Council Chair or Local Unit Chair if the student is from a county that does not have an active council. Local unit and council Reflections Chairs should keep first place State winners in the Visual Arts and Photography categories until National PTA winners are announced.

National PTA Policies: Entries that receive national awards will be featured in the online National PTA Reflections Program Gallery at PTA.org/Reflections. National PTA will make every effort to return photograph prints and visual artwork within two years. The National PTA office receives electronic files/digital entries in film production, dance choreography, literature, music composition, and photography and these are not returned.

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. Visit http://ncpta.org/index.php/programs/reflections-arts-program/ for a sample program 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.