



Reflections: Tips to Host an In Person or At Home Program

During the COVID-19 pandemic, National PTA and participating PTA units across the country adapted in response to school closures and remote learning. In the process, we learned new and successful ways to manage the Reflections program.

We've gathered the most impactful tips together for you to use as you prepare for the upcoming Reflections program year, whether your program will be run in person or at home!

Program Promotion and Participation

Your PTA may or may not have access to the physical school building this year. So, you may need to get creative when you promote Reflections to reach new student participants and potential volunteers. Use our [theme and program materials](#) to get started and try some of these ideas to get the word out:

- **Reach out to school and PTA leaders** to learn the best methods for communicating with your school community (e.g., email, phone calls, student folders, social media). Rather than learning by trial and error, ask your community from the get-go so you can work smarter (not harder). But remember, if something doesn't work, don't give up!
- **Take advantage of the PTA Network.** Some state PTAs offer ways for students who are not affiliated with a local PTA to participate in the Reflections program. Check with your [state PTA](#) to see if there are opportunities for homeschool and private school students to take part. You can also ask your council or district PTA to share out the opportunity to participate to reach all eligible students. If opportunities are not yet available, work with your state PTA to create avenues for these students to participate in the program.
- **Develop a consistent communication campaign** using email and/or social media to ensure regular communication with your community. Use the campaign to call for submissions and communicate key program dates and deadlines. Beware of virtual communication burnout—be sure to share student artwork or art activities to inspire your community.
- **Place signage on popular drive-by or drop off locations.** Does your school have a fence or a manual or electronic sign? Consider decorating with theme-specific signs from [Shop PTA](#) or you can also use dollar-store yard signs and DIY your own Reflections signage!
- **Use a two-way communication platform** like [BAND](#) to create excitement and dialogue around Reflections announcements, promotions and deadlines. Consider sharing links to materials and websites in the chat function.

Student Information and Entry Collection

As a best practice, collaborate with your [state PTA](#) to ensure you are collecting submissions in a manner that will be accepted at the next levels of the program (e.g., asking if physical entries are required for advancing to the next level, rather than just photographs of the artwork).

- **Try using a fillable [Student Entry Form](#)** (also available [en español](#)) so students or guardians can complete and submit the form if they do not have access to printing. If you intend to advance pieces to the next level of the program, make sure that the form is accepted by your [state PTA](#).
- **Consider using digital storage platforms** to collect student entry forms and submissions:
 - Share a [Google Drive](#) with your school community. Create folders for each of the categories and divisions offered. Then have students and/or guardians upload their entry form and submission into named folders that they create or using a specific label (For example: First Initial. Last Name_Arts Category_Entry Form, First Initial. Last Name_Arts Category_Submission)
 - If you want to avoid creating and organizing folders in a shared Google Drive, you can instead use a [Google Form](#) to collect student information and entries. Learn how to add the option for students to directly upload submissions in their form [here](#).
 - If Google Drive isn't a good fit, try another online storage platform that you and your community are proficient in, such as [Dropbox](#), [OneDrive](#) or [Box](#).

Student Entry Review Process

Conducting the Reflections judging process online can allow your PTA to expand the pool of arts professionals that you are using to review the pieces:

- If you used Google Forms or Google Drive for collection, consider creating an anonymized [Google Sheet](#) that includes the student's Title of Work, Artist Statement and a link to Google Drive storage place.
- Create a review slide deck to share with your reviewers then host a virtual judging event where your reviewers can examine pieces and ask questions or simply share a link to the slide deck. Be sure your slides allow for blind review by numbering and keeping a key of student entries before removing the student's personal information and leaving the Title of Work and Artist Statement.

Reflections Celebration Planning

Celebrations are invaluable to a successful Reflections program. Try thinking outside the box to maximize the benefits. Using digital media and videos can allow you to celebrate your artists in new ways that reach more people. Develop a hybrid celebration that uses in person and at home elements to show off the arts in your community.

- **Create and post celebratory videos** and online exhibits on social media.

- Consider creating a PowerPoint presentation of the artwork or developing an exhibit on your PTA's website. Check out the Los Angeles 10th District PTA's (California) 2020 Art Exhibit [here](#).
- Develop a virtual exhibit in a photo sharing platform. Review National PTA's 2020-2021 *I Matter Because...* Flickr Exhibit [here](#).
- Check out how Georgia PTA celebrates winners online [here](#).
- **Host a live, virtual event** to announce and award your winners and/or to celebrate your young artists. Try Facebook or YouTube Live to have a more interactive event. If your PTA is more proficient with Zoom, the platform will allow you to stream live on your Facebook account so people connected with your PTA can attend in Zoom and on their Facebook account.
- **Ask students to send you photos** and create a video compiling footage from winners holding or opening their awards, reading their artist statement or reflecting on their creative process. Then incorporate this footage or media into your Reflections celebration.
 - See how National PTA incorporated student interviews into our celebration of the 2020-2021 Reflections Outstanding Interpretation winners [here](#).
 - Check out how National PTA incorporated student art from our recent call for artwork that affirms student beliefs and identities—as well as the importance of Black lives—in this celebration video at [PTA.org/ArtsEd](https://pta.org/ArtsEd).
- **A hybrid Reflections celebration event** provides flexibility for your PTA to use the event to highlight diversity in the arts and the diverse artists in your PTA community. By celebrating diversity, your PTA will offer students positive reinforcement for participation in arts programs, while also fostering inclusivity and a space for them to thrive as diverse artists. Our [Diversity Arts Celebration Guide](#) provides tips and information to enhance your efforts.