



FOR CANDIDATES AND ENDORSERS

This guide provides essential training for both PTA leaders running for elected office and those who wish to support them. Understanding and following these guidelines protects both individual candidates and the PTA organization while maintaining our nonpartisan mission.

For PTA Leader Candidates

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Highlight Your Experience Appropriately:

- ✓ Include your volunteer leadership experience on your personal resume
- ✓ Mention skills gained through community service (public speaking, budget oversight, policy advocacy, community engagement)
- ✓ Reference your experience in parent-teacher organizations generally
- ✓ Discuss specific accomplishments without using official PTA titles

Example:

"Through my volunteer leadership in parent-teacher organizations, I developed strong skills in community engagement and advocacy."

Campaign Communications:

- ✓ Use your personal contact lists and social media accounts
- ✓ Contact friends you've made through PTA involvement using their personal information
- ✓ Host campaign events using your personal networks

Public Speaking:

- ✓ Share your personal story and qualifications
- ✓ Discuss your vision and platform based on your experience

WHAT YOU CANNOT DO

Using Official PTA Identity:

- ✗ Do not use your official PTA title in campaign materials (e.g., "Vote for Sarah, Region 5 PTA President")
- ✗ Do not name your specific PTA unit or council
- ✗ Do not brand yourself as "PTA Mom/Dad" or similar terminology
- ✗ Do not use phrases like "Join me as a PTA leader for my campaign launch"

PTA Resources and Lists:

- ✗ Never use PTA membership lists for campaign purposes
- ✗ Do not send campaign materials to PTA-designated email addresses
- ✗ Do not use PTA communication channels or platforms
- ✗ Do not use PTA meeting time or space for campaign activities

Implying Endorsement:

- ✗ Do not suggest that PTA supports your candidacy
- ✗ Do not use PTA logos, letterhead, or official materials
- ✗ Do not hold campaign events at PTA meetings or functions

Compliance Checklist

Before Publishing Any Campaign Material or Endorsement:

For Candidates:

- ✗ Does this mention my specific PTA title or unit name?
- ✗ Could this imply PTA endorsement of my candidacy?
- ✓ Am I using personal contacts and resources only?
- ✓ Does this focus on skills gained rather than positions held?

For Endorsers:

- ✗ Does this mention the candidate's specific PTA positions?
- ✗ Could this be interpreted as an organizational endorsement?
- ✓ Am I clearly speaking as an individual?
- ✓ Have I included an appropriate disclaimer?

Sample Disclaimer Language

For Endorsements: "This endorsement represents my personal opinion and is not affiliated with or endorsed by any parent-teacher organization."

For Candidate Materials: "References to volunteer experience represent personal qualifications and do not imply endorsement by any organization."

For Those Endorsing PTA Leader Candidates

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Personal Endorsements:

- ✓ Provide personal testimonials about the candidate's character and qualifications
- ✓ Share your individual observations of their leadership abilities
- ✓ Mention their community involvement and volunteer service generally
- ✓ Highlight specific skills and accomplishments you've witnessed

Example:

"I've had the privilege of working alongside Maria in various community volunteer roles. Her dedication to students and ability to bring people together make her an excellent candidate."

Proper Attribution:

- ✓ Clearly identify endorsements as your personal opinion
- ✓ Use your own name and personal title/profession if desired
- ✓ Make it clear you're speaking as an individual, not representing any organization

WHAT YOU CANNOT DO

Using PTA Affiliation in Endorsements:

- ✗ Do not reference the candidate's specific PTA titles or positions
- ✗ Do not name specific PTA units or councils they've served
- ✗ Do not use your own PTA title when endorsing (e.g., don't sign as "John Smith, Eastside PTA Treasurer")
- ✗ Do not give the impression your endorsement comes from PTA

Prohibited Language Examples:

- ✗ "As PTA President, Sarah has shown..."
- ✗ "Sarah's work as Leadership VP for Region 9 PTA demonstrates..."
- ✗ "Vote for our PTA leader Sarah!"
- ✗ "The PTA community supports Sarah..."

Using PTA Resources:

- ✗ Do not use PTA membership lists to solicit endorsements
- ✗ Do not send endorsement requests through PTA communication channels
- ✗ Do not coordinate endorsements through PTA meetings or events

Red Flags to Avoid



Immediate Concerns:

- ✗ Any use of "PTA" as branding or identification
- ✗ Specific organizational titles or unit names
- ✗ Use of organizational resources or contact lists
- ✗ Language that suggests organizational support
- ✗ Official logos, letterhead, or imagery

When in Doubt:

- ✓ Focus on personal character and individual qualifications
- ✓ Emphasize skills and experience rather than titles
- ✓ Keep endorsements clearly personal and individual
- ✓ Consult with legal counsel if questions arise

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Consequences of Non-Compliance

For Individuals:

- ✗ Potential legal issues with campaign finance laws
- ✗ Damage to personal and professional reputation
- ✗ Possible disqualification from PTA leadership roles

For PTA:

- ✗ Risk to nonprofit status
- ✗ Potential legal challenges
- ✗ Loss of nonpartisan credibility
- ✗ Damage to organizational mission