



Special Artist



SPECIAL ARTIST ELIGIBILITY. The National PTA Special Artist Division is an option for students with disabilities who receive services under IDEA or ADA: Section 504 to have the opportunity and accommodations they may need in order to participate fully in the program. The Special Artist Division offers modified rules and guidelines to ensure that every student has the chance to be part of the National PTA Reflections program.

Who qualifies as a disabled individual under the law? The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines an individual with a disability as a person who: (1) Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of that person; (2) Has a record of such an impairment; or (3) Is regarded as having such impairment.

HOW TO ENTER. Students who identify as having a disability have two ways to enter the National PTA Reflections® Program. All students may enter in only one division. The Student Entry Form requires parent/legal guardian signatures.

Option 1. Enter in grade-level divisions: Regardless of age, students with special needs may enter in the grade division that most closely aligns to his or her functional abilities. Students may not receive assistance other than that which is allowed for all children. The grade divisions are as follows: Primary (preschool – grade 2); Intermediate (grades 3-5); Middle School (grades 6-8); High School (grades 9-12). Students are recognized and awarded prizes as part of the general student population without regard to special needs or challenges.

Option 2. Enter in the Special Artist Division: Eligible students entering the Special Artist Division create his or her own artwork, but may receive non-artistic accommodation and assistance from an adult. Students are recognized and awarded prizes as part of the Special Artist Division.

SPECIAL ARTIST GUIDELINES. Special artists should follow the general rules and guidelines outlined in the arts category rules specific to his or her submissions, modified only by accommodations for individuals with disabilities. The accommodation, in general, should be both specific and limited to the student's disability.

Allowable Accommodations: Given the diverse range of physical and mental disabilities that exist, it would be impossible to outline specific accommodations for each and every disability, but the following provides a non-exhaustive list of allowable accommodations:

- The Special Artist Division will not be divided by age or traditional school grade level.
- Use of adaptive technology is allowed.
- All submissions must be solely created by the special artist. However, a parent, teacher, or other adult may assist the special artist with typing, holding a camera, etc.
- Titles and artist statements are not required for non-verbal students.

Accommodations that are Not Allowed: Individuals providing assistance to special artists may not, in any way, involve themselves in the actual artistic process by:

- Personally selecting a title for artwork.
- Writing, editing, or interpreting a student's artist statement, story, poetry, or script.
- Choreographing a dance, composing music, or writing lyrics.
- Drawing, painting, or personally creating a visual arts submission, choosing a camera angle, etc.