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Diversity and Inclusion Plan

NEED

PTA advocates for every child and we speak with one voice. Each year, as our population becomes more diverse, it becomes increasingly difficult to speak for each child. It is necessary, though challenging, to identify and speak to the variety of needs of a diverse population of children whose current voices are too small to be heard.

Diversity is defined as including and realizing the potential of everyone regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, marital status, socio-economic status, education, mental/physical/emotional challenges, national origin, parental status, employment status, experience, language, religion, ability, age, learning styles, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, geographic/residence, and more.

COMMITMENT STATEMENT

Florida PTA has a history of recognizing the diverse nature of our population, to include the contributions as well as the challenges that this diversity brings to helping realize our purpose. Through on-going efforts, Florida PTA is committed to ensuring that our membership and leadership is more reflective of the diversity of the population of our state. Furthermore, Florida PTA is equally committed to assisting our regions, councils, and local units in recognizing and reflecting their diverse populations.

GOAL

Florida PTA has established a board level Diversity and Inclusion Committee. It is the goal of Florida PTA and this committee to provide the various levels of PTA within our state with the tools necessary to identify the diverse populations in their areas as well as the resources necessary to provide those populations with services and support. Through these efforts, the relevance of the PTA to all families and children can be realized; and, their resulting involvement (and membership) within the PTA will help to strengthen the diversity within our association.

Secondly, through the expansion of the Florida PTA Board of Directors responsibilities, potential leaders from across the state can be identified and mentored. The ultimate goal is to form a pool of qualified leaders who can fill leadership roles at local, county, regional, and state levels, thus bringing more diverse members to our leadership teams and strengthening the diversity within our association.

OUTCOME

It is through the understanding and addressing of the unique needs of our diverse populations that we expect to increase our parent involvement at the local, county, and state levels. We will speak with a more powerful voice since we will be speaking on behalf of all children and the issues they face.

HOW TO ACHIEVE

1. Board Commitment – By approving this policy, Florida PTA will be renewing its commitment to diversity and inclusion. While the Diversity and Inclusion Committee will have significant roles to play, all board members will have a part. Each board member recognizes that creating an environment of and opportunities for inclusion are paramount to the success of these efforts. Thus, we agree to complete the National PTA E-Learning Cultural Competency Course. We also agree to identify an individual who can be mentored to become a future PTA leader or further developed for advance capacities of leadership.

2. Reach out to diverse populations – Using existing census data, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee will determine the diversity of the population of Florida. Utilizing the available resources (from within and outside of Florida PTA), they will create programs at the State Leadership Conference and Convention to address the needs for some of the target groups.

Also utilizing the census data and demographic information, the committee can further disaggregate the data by county. Utilizing more local resources, the committee will communicate with region representatives or county councils to coordinate programs that are more specific to their areas.

The committee is also able to access census data on a zip code level. When requested by a local unit, the committee will research the diversity of the population specific to that area and coordinate available local resources to help that local unit address the needs of their population.

3. Identify potential leaders – Through our connection with local units, council, regions, and outside organizations, Florida PTA Board of Directors will identify those diverse individuals who possess the commitment to children and the drive to make a difference and will provide them with an avenue to leadership roles within the PTA. County council nominating committees will also be encouraged to seek the guidance of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee for any individuals who can fit a leadership need at the county level.

Essential characteristics of potential leaders are willingness to commit and collaborate, as well as being conscientious to learn and execute the mission of PTA.

4. Assess results – Success occurs when results can be measured and members of the association are held accountable. It will be necessary to “set the association up to succeed” by evaluating existing policies, procedures, and plans of work to ensure that diversity and inclusion is a core competency.

Additionally, monitoring programs will be established to track the progress of individuals through the mentorship process, and the change in the make-up of state and county boards (assessing their movement to reflect their populations as a whole). Likewise, membership surveys will be distributed via county councils and region representatives to get feedback on inclusion of diverse populations in PTA leadership.

5. Continue previous processes (Steps 1-5) – Using a model of continual improvement, after assessing the results, we will determine if adjustments to procedures, duties, programs, or the like need to be made. After necessary adjustments are made, we will start back at Step 1.