

PTA'S PROCESS FOR BUILDING SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS STARTS WITH THE NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS



National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

15 Ways PTAs Can Support Military Families

<p>Standard 1: Welcoming All Families into the School Community Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other—to school staff—and to what students are learning and doing in class.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it a point to welcome families new to the community and provide information about the school. Consider having a committee to assist new families, especially for those who transition midyear. • Create a welcome packet with coupons for local restaurants and shops. Offer parents access to a computer at school while they are moving. • Extend personal invitations to join PTA and attend meetings. • When a family has to leave your school, ask how you can help ease the transition. Reach out to the new school and PTA to let them know that the family is coming.
<p>Standard 2: Communicating Effectively Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication about student learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find ways to use technology (e.g., Skype, Facetime, email) to help deployed parents keep in touch with what is happening at school and participate in meetings if their schedules allow. • Provide resources to help teachers communicate with families about sensitive issues, such as deployment.
<p>Standard 3: Supporting Student Success Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the school administration in finding ways to include caregivers who may be deployed or working from another city in parent-teacher conferences. • Make personal calls to families to ensure they understand the role they can play in supporting their students' success at school. • Educate teachers to increase their sensitivity during classroom discussions about issues such as war, casualties, and other aspects of military action.
<p>Standard 4: Speaking Up for Every Child Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly, and to have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a "get to know you" event so families can meet key leaders from the school community. • Provide schools and parents with their respective rights and responsibilities under the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children.
<p>Standard 5: Sharing Power Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families, and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices and programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think about your leadership calendar: Do families who arrive midyear, or those who will only be at your school for a year or two, have equal opportunities to participate in school governance? • Be sure your PTA board and committee meeting times and locations are flexible to accommodate military schedules.
<p>Standard 6: Collaborating with Community Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services and civic participation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with agencies in the community to share resources that might help military families • Use family-serving professionals and volunteers to conduct training for families to help them build resiliency skills.