

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice

Train-the-Trainer



Made possible by a grant from National PTA

CT PTA Mission: To Make Every Child's Potential a Reality by
Engaging and Empowering Families and Communities to
Advocate for All Children.



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Use and customize resources to create your own DEIJ initiative & success story



CORE FRAMEWORK

What is DEI?

D

Diversity

(The Roster)

Who is invited to the room? Are we reaching all families in our school community and unconnected parents?

E

Equity

(The Access)

Who has the resources to participate? Are we removing barriers like transportation and costs?

I

Inclusion

(The Microphone)

Whose voice actually influences decisions? Are defensive attitudes shutting down new input?

J

Justice

(The Ownership)

Who feels valued and safe? Do families feel this is their PTA?



[DEI Resource Guide \(English\)](#)

[DEI Resource Guide \(Spanish\)](#)

[DEI Guide for PTA Local Leaders \(English\)](#)

[DEI Guide for PTA Local Leaders \(Spanish\)](#)

[Advocacy | CT PTA](#)

[Advocacy | National PTA](#)

Equality VS Equity



WHY IT MATTERS

Why Does DEIJ Matter to Your PTA?

PTAs serve every child and every family. When DEIJ principles guide our work, we build stronger connections, increase engagement, and create environments where all students thrive. Research shows inclusive family engagement leads to better academic outcomes, improved behavior, and higher graduation rates.

Welcomed Families Engage More

Families who feel valued are more likely to participate in their child's school.

Students Thrive When Seen

Students benefit when their home cultures and identities are reflected at school.

Equity Closes Gaps

Equitable practices help close achievement and opportunity gaps across all demographics.



STRATEGY 1

Expand Participation Beyond the Usual Suspects



Resources

[Poll Your Community](#)
[Family Engagement Checklist](#)
[Sample Invitation Scripts](#)

Overview

Many PTAs engage the same families year after year. Personal invitations and flexible opportunities help welcome new voices, working parents, and underrepresented families.

Real-World Examples

Poll Your Community: What are they thinking?

Personal Invitation Campaign: Board members each invited three new families — several accepted, bringing new volunteers and stronger representation.

Micro-Volunteering: Offering 30-minute tasks or at-home options increased participation from busy caregivers.

Community Liaison Outreach: Partnering with bilingual parents and community leaders built trust and broadened engagement.



STRATEGY 2

Break the Clique & Build Trust

Overview

Trust grows when families see that PTA decisions are transparent, leadership reflects the school community, and all voices are welcomed. Creating clear communication and meaningful participation opportunities builds stronger relationships over time.

Real-World Examples

Transparent Decisions: A PTA shared a simple “what we decided and why” summary after each meeting so families understood how choices were made.

Representative Leadership: A PTA personally invited parents from different grades, neighborhoods, and language groups to consider board or committee roles.

Consistent Communication: A PTA sent the same key updates by email, text, flyer, and translated message so more families received the information.



Resources

[Board Recruitment Planning Sheet](#)
[Trust Building Reflection Worksheet](#)
[Community Listening Session Guide](#)
[Diversity Outreach, English](#)
[Diversity Outreach, Spanish](#)



STRATEGY 3

Design Events That Welcome Everyone



Resources

[Inclusive Event Planning Worksheet](#)

[Accessibility and Transportation Checklist](#)

[Multilingual Communication Planning Guide](#)

[Budget-Friendly Event Ideas](#)

[Inclusive Holiday Programming Guide](#)

Overview

Inclusive events are **intentionally designed** to remove barriers that prevent families from participating. Small changes can significantly increase participation and strengthen school-community connections.

Real-World Examples

- **Varied Scheduling:** Offer events at different times — mornings, evenings, and weekends — to accommodate working families.
- **Reduce Costs:** Keep events free or low-cost; seek donations to eliminate financial barriers.
- **Virtual Options:** Hybrid formats allow participation from caregivers who cannot attend in person.
- **Multi-Language Communication:** Share materials in the languages your community speaks.



STRATEGY 4

Navigate Tough Conversations & Defensive Attitudes

Overview

Difficult conversations are inevitable, but conflict doesn't have to derail engagement. The goal is not to win an argument — it's to **preserve trust and keep everyone engaged**.

Resources

[Navigate Tough Conversations & Defensive Attitudes](#)
[De-escalation Flow Chart](#)
[Courageous Conversations](#)



Real-World Examples

"The PTA only listens to the same group of parents."

"Thanks for sharing that concern. Let's talk about ways we can broaden participation and ensure more families feel represented."

"Nobody asked for my input on this decision."

"I hear your frustration. Let me explain how the decision was made, and we'd love your help gathering additional feedback moving forward."

"This discussion is getting heated."

"Let's pause for a moment — can we agree that we all share the same goal of supporting our students and community?"

STRATEGY 5

Leverage Community Partners

Overview

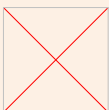
PTAs don't have to engage families alone. By partnering with **schools, community organizations, and local businesses**, PTAs can extend their reach, reduce barriers to participation, and build trust with families who may not already be connected.

Resources

[School + PTA Collaboration Planner](#)
[Family Resource Referral Sheet](#)



Real-World Examples



Translation Partnership

A PTA worked with the principal to use the district's translation platform, ensuring invitations and materials reached families in multiple languages.



Transportation Partnership

A PTA partnered with a local bus company to provide shuttle service to a family event, making participation easier for families without reliable transportation.



Restaurant Partnership

A neighborhood restaurant donated food for a family engagement night, keeping the event free while creating a welcoming atmosphere.



Free Tools to Support Family Engagement

These free or low-cost services can help your PTA connect with families, remove barriers, and build strong partnerships across Connecticut.

Communication & Translation

- **Google Translate** — Translate text, documents, and websites in 100+ languages
- **Microsoft Translator** — Free multilingual translation for text conversations and documents
- **Canva (Free)** — Create eye-catching flyers, posters, and social media graphics
- **ParentSquare** — School communication platform with translation and multi-channel messaging

Meetings & Collaboration

- **Google Meet** — Free video meetings for up to 100 participants (60 minutes)
- **Zoom Basic (Free)** — Host meetings up to 40 minutes with up to 100 participants
- **Google Drive** — Store, share, and collaborate on documents for free
- **Doodle** — Find the best time for meetings and events with ease

Design & Outreach Tools

- **Canva (Free)** — Create eye-catching flyers, posters, and social media graphics
- **Mailchimp (Free Plan)** — Send email newsletters to up to 500 contacts
- **Constant Contact (Free Trial)** — Email marketing and event management
- **Facebook Groups (Free)** — Build community and share updates in a private group

Forms, Surveys & Feedback

- **Google Forms** — Create surveys, sign-ups, and feedback forms for free
- **SurveyMonkey (Free Plan)** — Create surveys and collect feedback easily
- **Mentimeter (Free Plan)** — Engage your audience with live polls and feedback
- **Padlet (Free)** — Digital bulletin board for ideas, resources, and collaboration

Volunteering & Sign-Ups

- **SignUpGenius (Free)** — Create sign-ups for volunteers, events, and donations
- **Track It Forward (Free)** — Coordinate volunteer hours and community service
- **VolunteerMatch** — Find volunteers and connect with local opportunities
- **All for Good** — Discover volunteer opportunities in Connecticut

Funding & Resources

- **DonorsChoose** — Teachers post classroom needs; you can find and fund ideas
- **CT PTA Grants & Awards** — Explore grants and recognition programs for local PTAs
- **Candid (Foundation Directory)** — Find grants and funding opportunities
- **CT State Department of Education** — Family Engagement Resources and tools



Connecticut Support Organizations

These organizations provide training, resources, and support to help PTAs strengthen family engagement and advance DEIJ work across Connecticut.

CT PTA

Training, resources, and support for PTAs across the state.

ctpta.org

CREC Family Resource Centers

Support services for families in CREC districts.

crecschools.org/family-resource-centers

211 Connecticut

Free, confidential help finding local services and resources.

211ct.org

CHDI (Child Health and Development Institute)

Family resources on health, mental health, and development.

chdi.org

CT Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC)

Empowering families of children with disabilities.

cpacinc.org

Alliance for Strong Families & Communities

Strengthening families and communities statewide.

ctstrongfamilies.org

Tips for Success

Start Small

Choose one tool at a time and grow from there.

Be Consistent

Use the same platforms often so families know where to find you.

Make It Easy

Keep messages clear, short, and in the family's language.

Ask for Feedback

The best tools are the ones your families find helpful!



PLANNING AHEAD

In Summary

01

Know Your Community

Audit who is — and isn't — participating in your PTA.

02

Invite Intentionally

Use personal outreach and flexible roles to welcome new families.

03

Build Trust Through Transparency

Communicate openly and ensure leadership reflects your school.

04

Design for Inclusion

Remove barriers to participation in scheduling, cost, and language.

05

Partner Widely

Leverage community partners to extend your reach and resources.

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Thank You!

QUESTIONS?

Email address