

BUILDING A MORE DIVERSE, EQUITABLE & INCLUSIVE SCHOOL

MSAAC Meeting | March 17, 2021

Hunt District
PTA
everychild.onevoice.®



Clarke, Frederick, Loudoun, Warren, Winchester

OVERVIEW

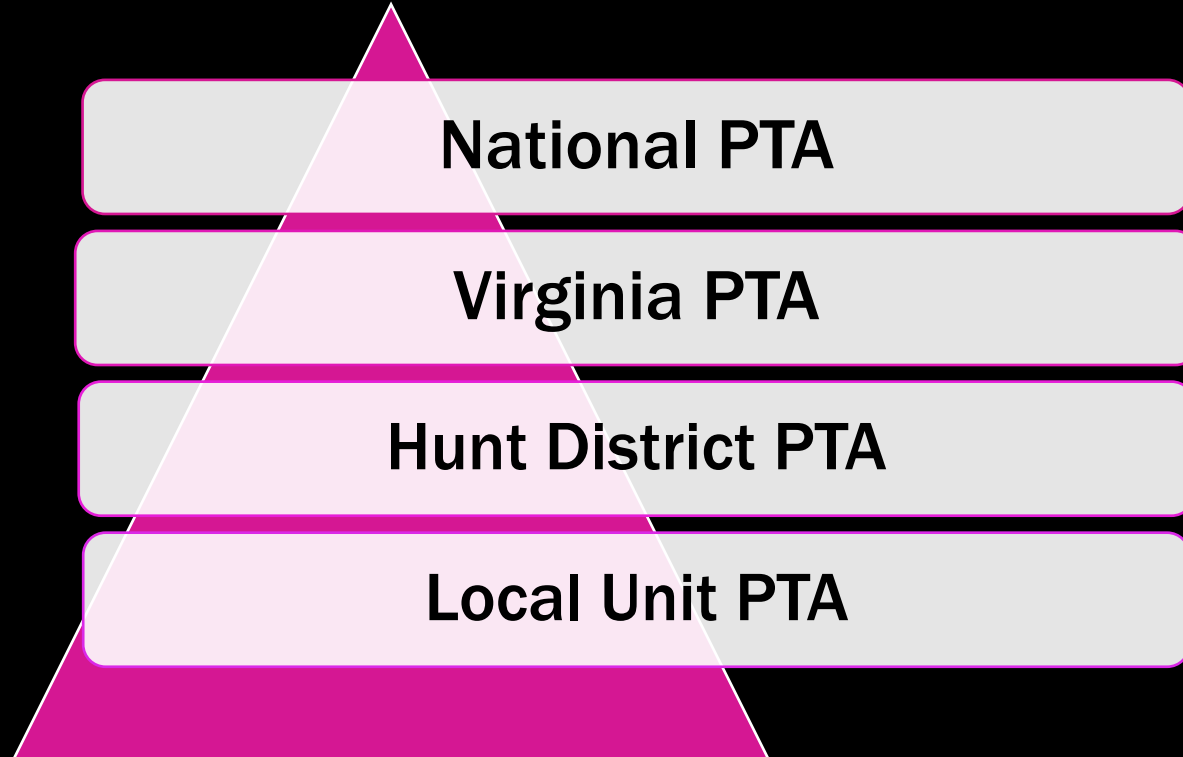
- Introduction of PTA
- Advocacy in Action
- Inclusivity In Your School
- How You Can Partner With Your PTA

WHAT IS THE PTA?

PTA Mission:

To make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

PTA CHAIN OF COMMAND



ADVOCACY IN ACTION

POSITION STATEMENT
Adopted by Virginia PTA Board of Directors

ADVANCING EQUITY & DIVERSITY

For more than 120 years, the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) has worked toward bettering the lives of every child in education, health and safety. Equity and diversity have been central to the values and beliefs of the National PTA from the time of its founding to its merger with the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers in 1970 to present day.

The Virginia PTA has long-standing commitments to the principles of anti-discrimination and anti-racism and we value and appreciate the diversity which enriches and strengthens the structure of our society within our state and nation.

Celebrating the diversity of views, experiences, cultural heritages and traditions, skills and abilities, and preferences that make up our communities is at the core of our work. PTA Officers are actively engaged, daily, in the ground work within each school building of fostering an inclusive and equitable school climate.

Community partners to address structural economic, and educational structures. PTA Officers will support, and advocate for programs and policies to eliminate structural inequities that limit the educational opportunities of students.

Programs that reduce student academic achievement, particularly for minority students, who are historically underserved and undersupported.

PTA Officers will support state, professional, and community organizations that promote equity and social justice.

POSITION STATEMENT

SAY THEIR NAMES: ADDRESSING INSTITUTIONAL OR SYSTEMIC RACISM

Institutional racism is racism embedded as a routine practice within society or an organization, cumulatively and disparately impacting historically disadvantaged peoples.

Ongoing institutional racism and deeply embedded injustices, prejudices and inequities in the fabric of our nation have caused the violent deaths of innocent Black and Brown men, women and children over the years at the hands of a percentage of police officers and ordinary citizens.

National PTA stands firmly against racism in all forms and the culture of oppression that permeates the United States. As an association that represents all children, we must **listen, educate and advocate** beyond rhetoric and rise to correct all inequities and injustices.

In 1970, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers and the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers came together as one association because they understood the power of unity in our efforts. In the spirit of that unity, let us come together at all levels—national, state and local—to examine our policies, procedures and programs and eliminate any practices that disenfranchise or discourage Black and Brown families. We must look within ourselves and then call upon all other institutions to do the same if we are to end the practices that so adversely affect our children.

National PTA recognizes that African Americans have suffered from institutional racism for over 400 years. While civil rights legislation and grassroots advocacy have created progress, recent events compel us to recognize additional work is needed. As a nation born out of a need to be liberated and free to live out our true creed, we must acknowledge that racism is a learned behavior. We believe in fundamental human rights and loudly condemn systems that impede any individual's right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness as unconstitutional. Further, we view the systemic harm, abuse and attack on individuals and communities of color and other marginalized groups in the United States reprehensible and as civil rights violations.

As a nation, we continue to suffer from a legacy of racial division, dismissiveness, dissension and skepticism, failing to remedy past sins. This continued suffering raises profound questions in generation after generation regarding fairness and integrity in all of our institutions as they relate to Black and Brown communities.

National PTA believes that it is our duty to disrupt the systems that propagate institutional racism. We call upon our PTA members to **listen, educate and advocate** to demand change to end institutional racism. Our efforts must be intentional, purposeful and persistent until every individual enjoys the freedoms guaranteed to all Americans.

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POSITION STATEMENT

Position Statement on Inclusive Curricula in K-12 Education

National PTA supports the implementation of diverse and inclusive curricula in K-12 public schools nationwide. As the largest child advocacy association in the nation, PTA is committed to the creation of innovative curricula and the necessary accompanying professional development that support culturally and linguistically responsive teaching and learning so that the history of all students—including but not limited to African American, Latino(a), Native American, Asian and LGBTQ groups—is accurately represented and taught.

Culturally and linguistically responsive teaching and inclusive curricula should:

- Emphasize academic success for all students,
- Enhance cultural competence by fostering understanding of students' cultures,
- Promote family engagement by making connections between home language and school language, and
- Develop critical consciousness by recognizing racism, classism, and other issues in the world and developing a student's awareness to openly address these situations.

Race and diversity are important factors in teaching, learning, and family engagement. Our schools have become more racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse in the past decade, culturally and linguistically diverse.

POSITION STATEMENT

HARMFUL SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY CHANGE EFFORTS

National PTA recognizes that LGBTQ youth who experience family rejection based on their sexual orientation or gender identity face serious health risks, including being over eight times more likely to report having attempted suicide, over five times more likely to report high levels of depression and over three times more likely to use illegal drugs compared with their peers. Conversely, the Family Acceptance Project demonstrates that LGBTQ young adults with an increased amount of family acceptance had significantly higher levels of self-esteem, social support, and general health compared to peers with low levels of family acceptance.

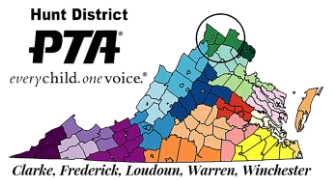
Startling statistics from the Center for Disease Control show that suicide, as of 2017, is now the second leading cause of death among youth ages 15-19. An LGBTQ youth that is highly rejected by their family is eight times more likely to take their own lives than those from more accepting families. Furthermore, 14.6% of high school students identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. According to the American Psychiatric Association, being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (LGBTQ) is not a disease, disorder, illness, deficiency or shortcoming.

National PTA knows that sexual orientation and gender identity change efforts, commonly referred to as "conversion therapy," are proven to be ineffective and pose critical health risks to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth, provoking mental health conditions that lead to anxiety, depression and suicide. In fact, rates of attempted suicide by LGBTQ youth whose parents tried to change their sexual orientation are more than double the rate of LGBTQ youth who reported experiencing no sexual orientation change efforts.

The American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Trevor Project have found that sexual orientation or gender identity change efforts are ineffective and dangerous. Furthermore, The District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, as well as 59 counties and cities recognize sexual orientation change therapies as harmful to youth, and therefore have implemented either laws or regulations protecting against so-called "conversion therapy" practices.

National PTA shall promote and support educational programs that inform families and youth about the harmful impact of sexual orientation or gender identity change efforts and will provide a list of available resources to assist states, districts, councils and local units in planning such programs that affirm all students, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

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IN YOUR PTA/PTO

An organization that recognizes diversity values differences and similarities among people through its actions and accountability. These characteristics include age, ethnicity, gender, language and culture, socioeconomic status, among many different things.

When PTAs respect differences yet acknowledge shared commonalities uniting their communities, and then develop meaningful priorities based upon their knowledge, they genuinely represent their communities. When PTAs represent their communities, they gain strength and effectiveness through increased volunteer and resource support.

IN YOUR PTA/PTO

Initiatives:

- Bringing culturally diverse speakers and performers to school events and assemblies
- Creating a cross-cultural events calendar for the weekly school newsletter
- Translating school and PTA communications into multiple languages
- Encourage LGBTQIA+ students and families to self-identify.
- Advocate for LGBTQIA+ student safety and success.
- Educate parents and communities about LGBTQIA+ discrimination and bullying

IN YOUR PTA/PTO

Equity Initiatives:

- Modify events with early access or quiet spaces
- Build a Parent to Parent Support system for IEP/504 process
- Organizing workshops and trainings for staff, parents and student
- Encourage PTA leadership to speak and engage the families enrolled in PEP

**THE BEST WAY
TO ENSURE
INCLUSIVE
PRACTICES
ARE
OCCURRING:**



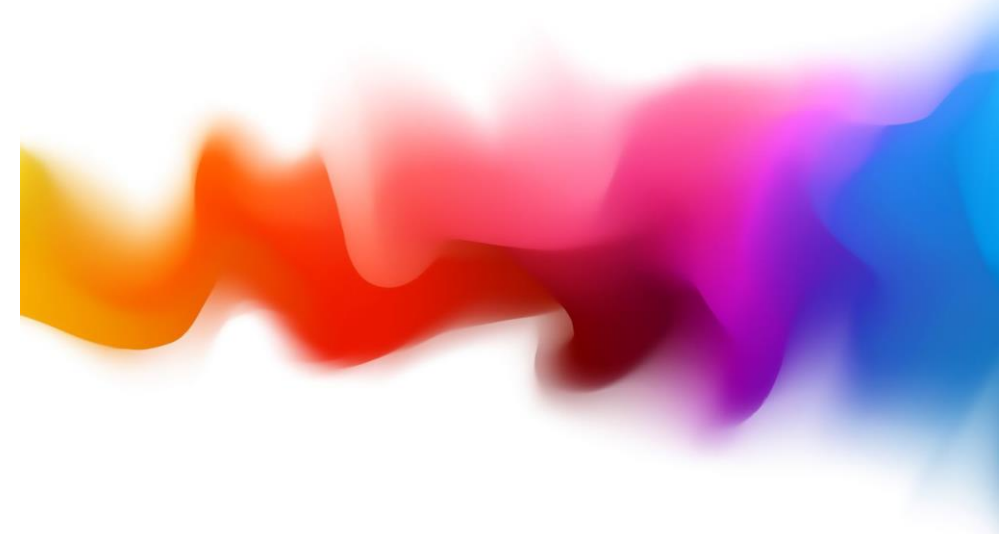
BECOME A PTA/PTO LEADER



USEFUL RESOURCES

- **Virginia PTA D.I.V.E. (Diversity and Inclusion Via Education) Webinar Series**
 - **March 22, 2021 – Courageous Leadership: 4-Point Diversity/Inclusion Plan**
- **Hunt District PTA Equity Committee**
 - **Local Unit Equity Plan Template**
- **National PTA/Virginia PTA Websites**
 - <https://www.pta.org/home/run-your-pta/Diversity-Equity-Inclusion>
 - <https://www.vapta.org/diversity>

THANK YOU!



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