

Hints for Directory Chairs

GATHER INFORMATION:

Do not ask your school office to share student information with you. The strict interpretation of the privacy law limits information that schools are able to provide. Only in certain cases can the school or district release student's names, grade levels, activities and photos. Having said that, the local PTA (via Council) may request a list of student information from the District which will have been purged of student names whose parents have not provided consent. Utilizing this list does not take away the requirement to have the parent's written consent to publish, and it also comes with some drawbacks. The information provided does not include everything you might want to publish (email, cell numbers, etc) and it seems to take a while to obtain.

START TYPING:

You will never receive 100% of your consent forms, so set a cut-off date. Give your PTA board a deadline as well, as you will be looking for some information from them (program dates, board roster, etc). Remember that you want to distribute your directory as early in the school year as possible. Consider including Directory corrections and/or updates in future PTA newsletters.

WHAT TO INCLUDE:

Your Directory may be the only PTA 'face' that many of your members see, and it may be the main reason many of your members join PTA. Give them as much information about PTA and your school as you can. Follow the guidelines as provided by Council and you're certain to have an award-winning Directory. Some suggested items that you might include are:

- Directory dedication (if appropriate)
- Names and contact information of your PTA's officers and chairmen
- PTA meeting dates and program dates
- List of your PTA past presidents, PTA Life Memberships, special honors and awards
- National, State, Area 15 and Council presidents
- Student/Parent names, addresses, phone numbers and email (students can be listed by grade, but cannot be listed by class or teacher)
- Parent Committees (Room Reps, Library Aides, School Store, etc.)
- School Board of Trustees and meeting dates
- School Calendar
- Student art
- Information about the name or history of the school

DIRECTORY COVERS:

Your cover should be eye-catching and contain all of the information required by Plano ISD Council of PTAs. Many PTAs use their school's logo or student artwork.

DISCLAIMER:

PTA directories are the private and personal use of your members. Any other use of the Directory is a violation of PTA and district policies. Print a disclaimer in your Directory.

Example: This Directory is for PTA and student use only. Any other use is strictly prohibited. Information in this Directory may not be used for business or solicitation purposes by anyone. This includes businesses operated by PTA members as well as outside businesses. We appreciate your cooperation.

SPONSORSHIPS:

This option is becoming more popular today, especially as printing costs continue to soar. While it is tempting to use the income from ads to offset directory costs, we urge you to be cautious if you choose to go this route. Sponsorships should in no way be disruptive, libelous, obscene, inflammatory, sexually inappropriate for the age of the audience, or endorse actions endangering the health or safety of students. Once you've opened your directory to one sponsor, you may have to accept any advertiser. Review all advertisements with a very critical set of eyes. Do not give an

opportunity to create dissension. You might consider setting up a committee of PTA volunteers to establish guidelines regarding appropriate sponsors and pricing, as well as giving final approval of each printed ad. Print a disclaimer in your directory. Example: PTA cannot endorse the services or products advertised within the Directory.

PROOFREAD! PROOFREAD! PROOFREAD!

Sorry to be the bearer of bad news, but there is no shortcut! Your computer will not find all of the mistakes. Have someone else help you proofread. This gives another point of view and a fresh set of eyes. Check all names, addresses and phone numbers.

DISTRIBUTION:

Distribute your directories as early as possible – October or early November. Remember to send a copy to the Council Directory Chairman for judging. You do not have to wait until March; it is fine to send it when completed. Follow distribution guidelines provided by Council.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

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