

Membership Commission

A perspective from a mixed high school student:

Check one box:

- Embrace
- Accept
- Learn from differences
- More than one



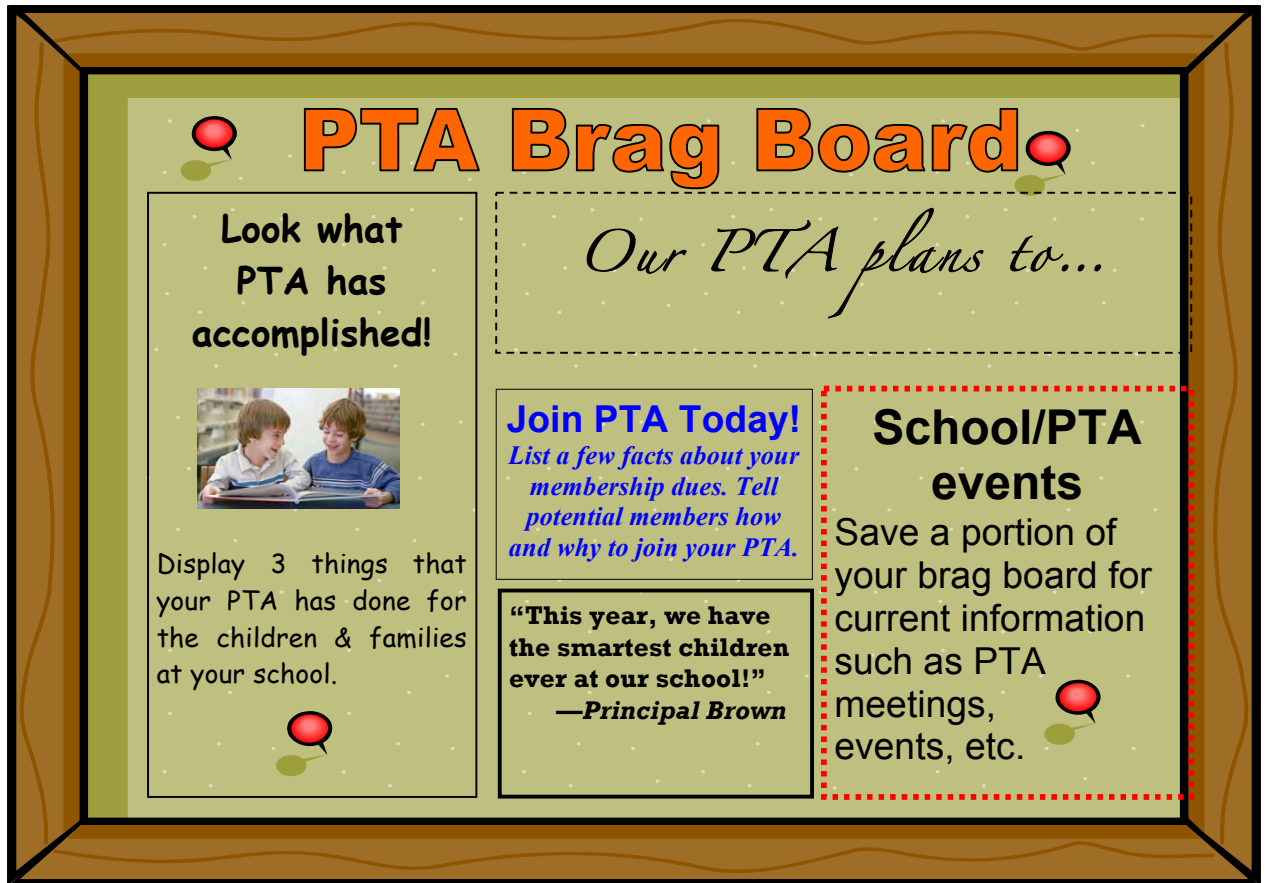
No one ever said going to high school would be easy. Kids get bullied at some high schools everyday for being different. Luckily, at my school this is not a big issue. However, this does not mean that everyone feels included. Many high school students have problems fitting in; I have had my own share. But fitting in can be more difficult when ethnic background becomes an issue. Some things are seen as right or wrong, up or down, in or out, or black or white, but most things cannot be defined so clearly, especially race.

For many mixed-race kids, like myself, it is hard to find where they fit in, they feel they do not fit in with any specific race. One of my mixed friends, he is half African American and half white, recently explained to our class that when he lived in his old neighborhood he had a hard time fitting in with the white kids there, because he was black, but he also had a hard time fitting in with the black kids, because his skin was so much lighter than theirs.

We are often asked to classify ourselves as white, black, Hispanic, or Asian but many people do not fit into one of these particular categories. Today our world is becoming more diverse. Students are forced into these boxes of being defined as one ethnicity by society and their schools. On a typical high school campus there are many culture clubs that embrace and celebrate a particular culture. These clubs benefit the students and teach students about other cultures. With these clubs it is important to include everyone, regardless of their background. More than one club, more than one box applies; we need to be open to students belonging to more than one group.

In the end, we need to see each other as simply human. We need to embrace our differences, encourage each other to learn about different cultures, and support one another regardless of our race.

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So, what's on your brag board?

As a new calendar year unfolds, consider making a resolution to showcase your PTA's accomplishments. A Brag Board is a great way to promote your PTA and draw attention to the amazing things your PTA does for the children and youth at your school.

Find a location on your campus that is highly visible to parents, teachers and staff. Then, find a parent who enjoys scrapbooking, share the ideas below, and begin building greater awareness of your PTA. Awareness and appreciation can lead to greater membership!

- Showcase programs that your PTA has sponsored: a movie night, food drive, father-child day, a literacy clinic, the school carnival, a jump-rope relay, or a book fair.
- In another section, list goals your PTA hopes to achieve within the school year. In another, share the importance of membership. Tell potential members how and why to join PTA. List benefits to both parent and child.
- How about a section with an inspiring or helpful quote...maybe one from your principal!

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- The main section of your Brag Board should list school/PTA events and meeting dates. Congratulate classrooms for their membership successes and awesome volunteers.
- Finally, devote a spot on your Brag Board to acknowledge your PTA's diversity. Share multi-cultural events in the languages of your community.

Enlist crafty volunteers to make your Brag Board look especially inviting! Add stickers, ribbons and glitter, and photos of children and PTA members who represent the community, or drawings and poems created by children while parents are attending meetings!



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for Membership

Many PTAs run only one membership campaign a year—in the fall. But those units that run more than one campaign a year have, on average,

20 percent more members!

That's because potential members have more opportunities to **say "yes"** to becoming a member if units run a winter membership campaign.

Some facts:

- Nationwide, approximately 18 percent of PTA members join in January and February.
- Running membership campaigns more frequently reminds your members that membership is everyone's business, especially if you weave membership into programs, activities, and general PTA work, too.
- January is not too late for parents to make a real impact in the current school year. Plus, people who join PTA in January will be ready to renew their membership the following school year.

A PTA January Membership Campaign theme:

"New Year... New Opportunities"

This theme plays on people's optimism that the new year brings new opportunities to improve ourselves, our lives, and the world around us. For parents, the world in which they want to make a difference is largely defined by children and schools.

Encourage parents to make it their number one resolution to be more involved in their children's education. It's a resolution they'll want to keep. And PTA makes it easy.

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It's a New Year...

Take advantage of the New Year enthusiasm with these PTA resolutions for January 2012!

- Send membership forms and fliers home again. How about including them with report cards and school reminders?
- Ask each PTA board member to ask someone to join your PTA—don't wait for them to offer. Make it easy for people to join: have all the sign-up materials close at hand.
- Create a New Year's membership campaign theme. Use a "New Year, New Opportunities" theme. Ask members to "Resolve to be Involved".
- Use a visual board such as a PTA Brag Board to show your school what PTA does, what you have planned, what you have accomplished.
- January is usually a quieter time for schools and PTAs. All of the busyness of the fall is finished. Let membership fill in the blanks!

Resolve to be Involved

As a parent, you know that parent involvement=student success.

RESOLVE to take every opportunity to spread the word about PTA.

RESOLVE to ask just one new person to join PTA!

2012 New Year's Resolutions

1. Ask someone to JOIN PTA!
2. Volunteer at my child's school.
3. Attend a PTA meeting.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

