



Position Statement 4.5.38 Inclusiveness and Diversity†

*Adopted April 1991 – Revised April 2008
Member Services Commission*

The National Congress of Mothers, irrespective of creed, color or condition, stands for all parenthood, childhood, homehood.

*Alice McLellan Birney, 1898
Cofounder of National PTA*

Those words, true in 1898, are even truer today. PTAs everywhere must understand and embrace the uniqueness of all individuals, appreciating that each contributes a diversity of views, experiences, cultural heritage/traditions, skills/abilities, values and preferences. 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.

Conversely, PTAs must recognize that prejudice exists based upon socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, language ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, and physical abilities. Such discrimination is hurtful, unfair, hostile and unwelcoming. When PTAs tolerate these acts, they repel members, lack representative leadership, and fail to serve all. Prejudice diminishes a PTA's ability to advocate effectively for all children, youth and families.

Therefore the California State PTA believes that PTAs at every level must:

- Openly assess beliefs and practices to assure inclusiveness and guard against discrimination;
- Make every effort to create a PTA board and membership that is inclusive and reflective of its community;
- Encourage that all PTA activities at the school be planned by a committee which is representative of the population
- Foster programs and practices that eliminate bias, prejudice and misunderstanding within their communities;
- Become acquainted with the leaders of the many diverse groups in the community and collaborate with them to increase parent, family and community involvement;
- Educate its leaders and members to the needs, cultural beliefs, traditions and family structures of the population they serve; and
- Propose change wherever discriminatory practices are perceived.

The California State PTA values and appreciates diversity, which enriches and strengthens the structure of our society within our state and nation.

†This position statement should be used in its entirety with no portion quoted out of context.