

Local PTA Leader's Guide

Join us to
celebrate
Reflection's 50th
anniversary!



COLORADO PTA Reflections Local Unit Guide

Use this guide to help you **spark student creativity** with PTA Reflections.

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#PTAReflections

www.copta.org/parent-engagement/reflections/

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1. Getting Started

- **Register Your Program at [PTA.org/Reflections](https://pta.org/Reflections) ([Jeffco entries register at jcpa.org](https://jeffcopta.org)).** This lets us know you are planning to participate, gives us your chair's contact information, and is necessary to submit your entries should you have an entry advance to the national level of judging.
- **Gather program materials, deadlines and instructions from the Colorado PTA (copta.org) and the National PTA site (pta.org/ReflectionsToolkit).** There are so many resources for you to successfully offer Reflections in your school! Customize your **checklist** to organize tasks and schedule local program deadlines. **Student Entry Form:** National PTA has a new entry form. Please do NOT use any old or modified entry form with your submission. We recommend that you fill in the PTA info before distributing forms. If you do not know your PTA ID #, contact your council/regional leader. **Colorado PTA does not use the National PTA online submission process. Jeffco Council has additional submission requirements – contact Jeffco PTA for details.**
- **JUDGING AND DEADLINES:** We suggest that you set your deadline about one month prior to your council or regional deadline. This allows time to collect your entries, review them for qualifications, judge them and celebrate your advancing entries. **[Council and Region deadlines are listed on the Colorado PTA website.](#)** Judging should be unbiased and anonymous (more information provided in Section 3 below). This is a great opportunity to engage members of your school community and introduce them to this wonderful program and to the amazing opportunities you are providing for your school. You will be selecting five entries from each art category and division to advance to the next level of judging (Jeffco Council PTA allows three entries to advance due to the volume of entries it receives). It is up to you how to celebrate your program and recognize your advancing entries.

Entries from PTAs in a council advance to the council for judging (Boulder Valley Council, Denver Council, El Paso Council, Jeffco Council, Thompson Council); the council judges entries and celebrates its students before advancing up to five winning entries in each art category/division to the state level of judging.

Entries from PTAs not in a council advance to Regional judging. Up to five entries in each art category/division are sent to the state office where they are judged with other PTA entries from regions. The state chair will coordinate judging and announce the winning entries (up to five entries in each art category/division). These entries are then advanced to the state level of judging.

Each council has its own deadlines which are different from the regional deadlines. If you are unsure how and when to advance your entries, contact reflections@copta.org

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At the State level: Colorado PTA will select one Gold Award and two Silver Award winners in each art category/division to recognize. The Gold Award winners advance to the national level of judging.

- **Recruit a committee of 4-6 parent and teacher volunteers.** Volunteers will enrich the program by bringing a variety of ideas, talents and skills; and they will make your job much easier and more enjoyable by ensuring that program tasks don't fall on your shoulders alone. Assigning project leaders and dividing tasks will save time and energy. Use the **volunteer sign-up sheet** to help recruit volunteers with specific skills/interests.
- **Recruit a team of 6 or more arts experts to review student submissions.** Inviting professionals in the arts community to participate as reviewers will increase the credibility of your program and exposure for PTA. All reviewers must have a working knowledge of their assigned arts area. Use the **program flier** to help introduce Reflections to local arts professionals. The toolkit provides letters and judging rubrics to use to work with your judges.

TIP: Ask arts teachers to help you identify working professionals in your local arts community. Consider local arts agencies, arts and cultural organizations, colleges, community leaders, and prominent artists.

TIP: It may take up to 10 min. to review dance, film, music and writing submissions; whereas, photography and visual arts may take only 5 min. Be mindful of your reviewer's time and recruit additional judges for each category where need.

National Arts in Education Week (Sept. 10—14, 2018) is the perfect time to kick-off your program and announce the 2018-19 program theme: "Heroes Around Me" Use **#ArtsEdWeek** and **#PTAReflections** to connect with thousands of program leaders from across the country.

Visit copta.org/parent-engagement/reflections/ for more tips and ideas. Watch our video trainings and take the Reflections Leader e-learning course (Go to pta.org, PTA Leader tab, elearning). You'll become a Reflections expert in no time!

2. Promote Your Program

- **Download materials for students:** Visit the CO PTA website to download and distribute student materials including [official rules](#) and [entry form](#). Please review official rules and ensure your PTA/PTSA is in "good standing" status of affiliation with CO PTA. It is the responsibility of the state and local PTA/PTSA to determine each student's eligibility in the National PTA Reflections program.
- **Available Arts Categories and Divisions:** All student entrants must follow official guidelines and arts category submission requirements, including a signed entry form. Please review the special artist division rules to learn more about opportunities for students with disability.

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- **Offer 1 or more arts category:** dance choreography, film production, literature, music composition, photography and visual arts. Students may enter in one or more arts categories.
- **Offer 1 or more division:** Primary: Preschool-Grade 2, Intermediate: Grades 3-5, Middle School: Grades 6-8, High School: Grades 9-12, Special Artist: All grades.
- **Tips for Program Promotion:** Our goal is to encourage all students to participate in the arts through PTA Reflections. Take time to introduce the program to families and school personnel. Consider the following ideas:
 - Send program fliers home to parents.
 - Post your call for entries on school and/or PTA website and social media as well as newsletters, blogs and bulletin boards.
 - Ask student leaders to hang [posters](#) in visible locations and encourage their peers over morning announcements. Willing students might be found in classes, programs and afterschool clubs that involve the creative, literary, media and performing arts.
 - Host a PTA table or student arts showcase at school-wide assemblies and back to school nights. Have fliers, participation guidelines and entry forms available.
 - Request time at a staff meeting to present the Reflections program to teachers. Gather ideas on how they might encourage their class to participate. Ask how this year's theme might be linked to curriculum and other learning objectives.
- **SAMPLE MORNING ANNOUNCEMENT:** Do you enjoy art, music and dance or have an interest in writing, producing films and taking photos? Then join us and have fun unleashing your inner artist with PTA Reflections! This year's theme, "Heroes Around Me," calls for your own unique interpretation through the arts. Pick up submission guidelines and an entry form today from <INSERT NAME/ROOM> and return by <INSERT DUE DATE>. For inspiration, visit the Reflections national art gallery and learn more about prizes and scholarships at PTA.org/Reflections.

3. Coordinate the Review of Student Submissions

The task of reviewing student entries involves collecting and qualifying submissions as well as providing direction for your team of volunteer reviewers.

- **Qualifying Submissions:** Submissions will be reviewed by arts category and division. Ask your committee to scan and flag incomplete entry forms and works that do not follow program guidelines and submission requirements. If you have time, you can have the student correct any entries so as to not disqualify an entry that a student has worked hard on. Don't send disqualifying entries on to your reviewers/judges. Remember – all entries need an artist statement which expresses the student's interpretation of the theme in his/her artwork.

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- **Reviewing Submissions:** Judging should be unbiased and anonymous. Select reviewers from outside your school; this is a great opportunity to engage members of your community (i.e. retired teachers, business members, etc.) The number of reviewers is up to you and depends on the number of entries you receive. You don't want to overwhelm your volunteers, and with many entries, they like to review together to compare opinions. Give each of your volunteer reviewers a [packet](#) including a **welcome letter**, **instructions**, **rubric** and **score card**. Provide reviewers with the student's work, as well as the title and artist statement for each of their assigned entries. The title and artist statement should be visible and will help your reviewers understand each student's inspiration for his/her work and how it relates to the theme. **Reviewers should select up to five entries from each art category/division to advance to the next level of judging (Jeffco Council allows each school to advance three from each art category/division).**
- **Review Criteria:** The program theme and review criteria are what make Reflections stand out among other arts contests. It's important for reviewers to notice that "interpretation of the theme" is weighed more heavily than the other considerations. Have judges record their points for each student work on the score card. Add together the points from each judge and rank the artwork accordingly. If two entries are tied, the entry with the higher score for interpretation of theme receives more recognition.

TIP: Set your local PTA submission deadline approximately one month before submissions are due to the next round. This will allow ample time for organizing, qualifying and scoring submissions, as well as preparing winners for the next round.

TIP: Conduct "blind judging"—where reviewers do not see student info. Consider both online and in-person review session ideas:

- **To host an online review session:** Assign numbers to each submission and provide reviewers with a list of submission titles and artist statements by assigned number. Share digital copies of student works using CDs, USB drives, online file storage programs, etc.
- **To host an in-person review session.** Display works on tables around the room. Fold the student entry form to show only the judging information section. Place the title of work and artist statement in front of the student's work. Instruct reviewers to rotate around the room and score each entry. If you have several entries, it is sometimes helpful for reviewers to have time to discuss the entries with one another.

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4. Celebrate Your Student Participants

To help you plan, visit copta.org/parent-engagement/reflections for the link to the [PTA Reflections Toolkit](#) for a Reflections celebration event planning guide, template certificate and other celebration tools.

- **Assign Awards:** By student's division and arts category, assign awards based on your rankings. Possible award levels include: Awards of Excellence; Awards of Merit; Honorable Mentions and Participants. You decide how to recognize your top entries.
 - You may choose to publicly recognize volunteer reviewers to inspire students and raise the credibility of your program. However, if a question is raised about the status or score of an entry, it is the responsibility of the PTA Reflections Committee to address it. Under no conditions may a reviewer be contacted and/or respond to disputes regarding the status and score of an entry.
- **Celebrate Student Achievement:** Recognizing your students' participation and accomplishments will help your PTA create family memories that will last a lifetime. You will grow students' confidence by hosting opportunities for family members, school personnel and community leaders to value their artistic skills, creative vision and unique interpretation on the theme.

There are many ways to announce winners, distribute awards and showcase works for the whole school and community to enjoy. Consider the following ideas for recognizing student participation and achievement:

- Announce winners on PTA/school website and in newsletters, social media and
- Award certificates, ribbons or prizes donated by local businesses.
- Showcase student works at PTA and school board meetings and display student works throughout school and community venues (e.g. school lobby, community library, arts center).
- **Opportunity for State and National Recognition:** Provide your students with an opportunity to share their work across the state and nation. PTAs are encouraged to advance their finalists to the next available round. Prepare your entries as described below. Do not mark how your students placed at your school – entries advance equally to the next level.

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Colorado PTA will select one Gold Award and two Silver Award winners in each art category/division to recognize. The Gold Award winners advance to the national level of judging.

TO ADVANCE ENTRIES:

Visual Arts and Photography entries: must be mounted on a stiff backing (like cardboard, mat board, or foam board). Place the completed entry form in a plastic sheet protector and secure it to the back of the mounted art piece. Student's name should not be written on the front of the art piece.

For 3D art, we do not have the capacity to store or display sculptures, ceramics, etc. Please mount three pictures of the piece from various angles, on stiff backing meeting the 24"x 30" size limit, and submit. This will also insure that the pieces are not damaged in transit to advanced levels of judging.

Literature entries: submit two copies with the student name on the back of the last page. Submit both copies and the student entry form (facing out) placed in a plastic sheet protector.

Dance Choreography/Film Production/Music Composition entries: saved on a CD/DVD/flash drive in one of the approved formats (see rules). Protect discs in an envelope, plastic, or cardboard container. Write the student's name on the disc and on the container. Put the disc or flash drive with the student entry form in a plastic sheet protector.

You MUST complete [Winners' Log spreadsheet](#) (found on CO PTA website) and email to council/region program leader. This allows everyone to track entries and have correct information for mailings, awards, and further submissions. Make sure that the student entry forms are complete with signatures and PTA information and that your PTA/PTSA stays in good standing.

You will be notified the results after each level of judging. Make sure your students receive their notices and invitations and encourage them to attend celebrations.

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5. Wrap Up and Report Program Success

- **Recognize Partners and Volunteers:** After your Reflections program concludes for the year, one of the most important tasks is to thank those who helped make it a success. Use the **acknowledgement letter in the [PTA Reflections Toolkit](#)** to thank student and parent leaders, school personnel, submission reviewers and community businesses for their support.
- **Return Student Works:** Return non-advancing works immediately following judging and/or exhibition and no later than the last day of the school year. Electronic submissions (video, music, pdf., and digital photos) are typically not returned. Please be sensitive to secondary students needing their artwork for college admission. If student artwork advances, it will be returned according to state and/or national policies.
- **Meet with your Reflections Committee** and other team members to reflect on the program, gather feedback and document successes and areas needing improvement. Sharing this information with next year's team will provide a smooth transition from one Reflections Chair to the next. Visit [PTA Reflections Toolkit](#) for a sample program evaluation.
- **Share Your Success:** After your program concludes, please share program success with your state and National PTA. Simply, visit pta.org/Reflections and complete a 5 min. survey. Your feedback is important to us and we look forward improving Reflections for future students.
- We also encourage you to share your success with your PTA board and school administrator. Visibility of award announcements, attendance at your event and personal quotes from families and community partners will help capture your program's reach and impact as well as your PTA's ability to support student success, engage families and build community partnerships.

Template tools available for download at copta.org/parent-engagement/reflections **Reflections Toolkit.**

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Boulder Valley Council: rachelvallier@copta.org

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El Paso Council: norabrown@copta.org

Jeffco Council: jeffcoreflections@gmail.com

Thompson Council: virginiasmith@copta.org

Regional Entries: reflections@copta.org