



PTAs and Political Campaigns

A local option levy for Portland Public Schools is on the November election ballot, along with other measures and candidates.

State law is clear: School district resources may not be used to advocate for or against a ballot measures. That includes PPS money, staff time during working hours, facilities or equipment.

However, PTAs may take political stands and promote or oppose measures – as long as that work does not involve school district resources. Because the work of our PTAs and our schools is often intertwined, these guidelines will help clarify what is, and isn't, appropriate in this political season.

	Political advocacy allowed	Information allowed, advocacy not
Newsletters, materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information is produced and distributed outside of school without using staff time or computers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newsletter is distributed to students at school Information posted on school website (whether PPS hosted or school based) E-newsletter is sent from school computer
Events, meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A PTA's regularly scheduled meeting Community group or PTA has CUB for event outside of school hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance at event is part of school program, with paid teaching staff (e.g. back-to-school night) The event is <u>school-sponsored</u> (e.g. Harvest Festival, school dance) If an event is off-limits to political advocacy, that covers the entire school property, to the sidewalk.

When advocacy is NOT allowed, PTA members may:

- Prepare and distribute impartial written material or make an impartial presentation that discusses election subjects.
- Invite people to sign up to be kept informed of school funding issues.
- Place the issue on the agenda at regularly scheduled PTA meetings. (Volunteer sign-up and other action regarding an issue may take place only after the meeting is adjourned.)
- Wear political buttons at any time.
- Register parents, students and community members to vote.

When advocacy is allowed, PTAs may engage in the full range of political activity: recruiting volunteers, staffing a table with advocacy materials, arguing for a measure, distributing campaign materials and fundraising.

Questions?

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