

Diversity and Inclusion: What's the Difference?

***Inclusiveness takes your PTA's commitment to diversity up to the next level.
You could be practicing diversity, but are you being inclusive?***

A diverse PTA...	An inclusive PTA...
Invites all members of the school community to its meetings.	Seeks out individuals from under-represented groups and invites them personally by letter, phone call, or face-to-face meeting. Neighborhood coffee shops, banks, and grocery stores are great places to reach out to diverse groups of people.
Has membership that reflects the cultures of the surrounding neighborhoods.	Holds cultural awareness events that invite parents and students to share their traditions with each other through traditional food, dance, artifacts, crafts and games.
Understands that their school community may have a significant population for whom English is a second language.	Arranges for a volunteer interpreter to assist with communications at meetings and events, and also for translating printed materials.
Accepts that there is an increasing number of grandparents raising grandchildren and these caregivers have unique interests and needs.	Provides amplification and printed materials at meetings and events for people who are hard of hearing, as well as accessible seating arrangements.
Is aware that approximately 1 in 4 Americans will experience some form of short- or long-term disability in their lifetime.	Sponsors an educational event that allows members of their school community to develop understanding of issues and policies affecting students with disabilities and their families.
Acknowledges that many parents rely on a dual income and are challenged by actively participating in their child's school day due to work obligations.	Provides and effectively communicates many ways to be involved, beyond being on-site during typical working hours. Asks all parents for meeting preferences, then alternates days, times, and locations of meetings to accommodate schedules.
Empathizes with families who struggle to find childcare so they may attend PTA meetings and events.	Arranges for activities and supervision for children during meetings and events by recruiting local teenagers to play games and read stories to children on-site.
Understands that some cultural norms may prevent parents from questioning the authority of school staff, even when asked to take part in a collaborative discussion.	Encourages friendly, informal exchanges between staff and parents, such as "coffee talks". Provides alternative ways to give input, such as written response forms after these face-to-face sessions.
Knows that income does not affect the level of interest parents have in their child's activities at school.	Sponsors parent involvement activities that do not require fundraising or fees to participate, such as a social gathering where parents and children are provided with donated entertainment and food.

Diversity is counting all; inclusiveness is making sure that all are counted.

Reprinted from the handout by Chuck Saylor (National PTA) from the conference "Targeting Diverse Populations and Building Inclusive PTAs" at the 2006 California State PTA Convention