



Virginia
PTA[®]
everychild. onevoice.[®]

HOW TO RUN A SUCCESSFUL REFLECTIONS PROGRAM



Learn more and get involved! [PTA.org/Reflections](https://pta.org/reflections)





AGENDA

Reflections Basics

Design Your Program

Promote Participation

Judge Entries

Celebrate Students

Advance Winners

Reflections Theme Contest

Timeline Recap



REFLECTIONS PROGRAM BACKGROUND

- Founded in 1969
- National Arts Contest
- Students “reflect” on the theme and submit artwork with artist statement.
 - 2025-2026: I Belong!
 - 2026-2027: What My Culture Means To Me
 - 2027-2028: Dreams Build Tomorrow

CATEGORIES AND GRADE LEVELS

6 Art Categories

Students submit their completed works of art in one or all of the available art categories:

- Photography
- Visual Arts
- Film Production
- Literature
- Music Composition
- Dance Choreography

5 Grade Divisions

Students participate in the appropriate division for their grade:

- Primary (PK-2)
- Intermediate (3-5)
- Middle (6-8)
- High (9-12)
- Accessible Arts (All Grades)*

The Accessible Arts Division is a participation option for students who identify as having a disability and may receive services under IDEA or ADA: Section 504

PROGRAM OUTLINE

1. Students create artwork and submit it to your school's Reflections Contest.
2. Use local artists (or art, music, or dance teachers) to judge entries.
3. Celebrate your participants
4. Advance your Outstanding Interpretation (1st place) entries to your Council PTA, or to Virginia PTA (if not in a council).



Virginia
PTA[®]
everychild. onevoice.[®]

DESIGN AND RUN YOUR LOCAL REFLECTIONS CONTEST



Learn more and get involved! [PTA.org/Reflections](https://pta.org/reflections)



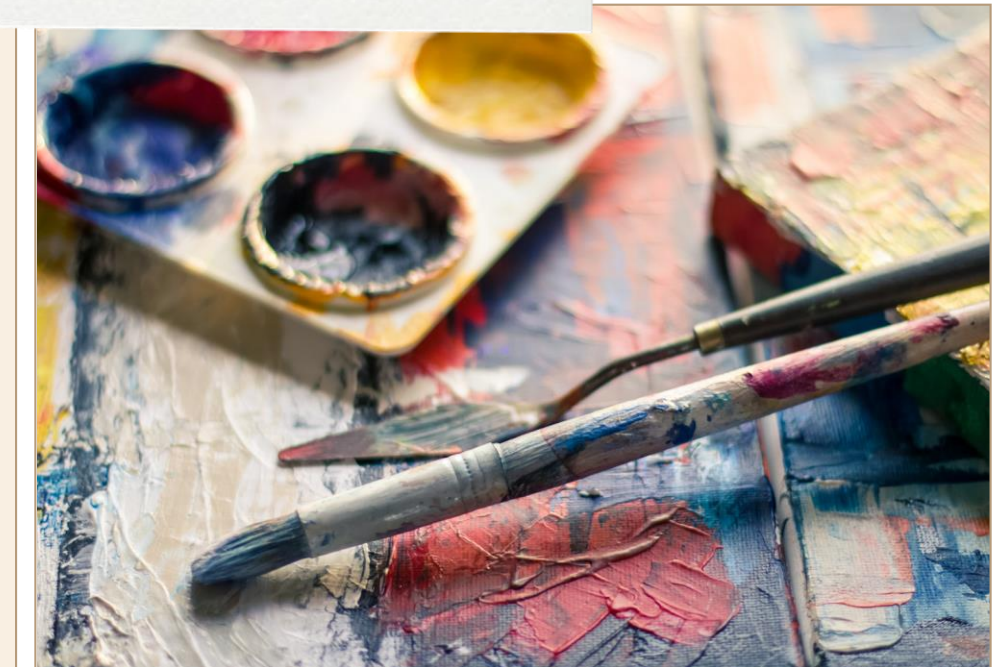
WHERE TO START

- Start program with recruiting a Reflections Chairperson.
- Questions to ask your PTA about the program.
 - Will your PTA accept entries in all art categories?
 - Can students create an entry in class?
 - Will art teachers allow students to create an entry in class to demonstrate a specific technique?
 - Will a grade level teacher or MS/HS English teacher encourage literature entries?
- Promotion- encourage entries from:
 - After-school clubs
 - Family Art Night
 - Home



BUDGET

- What is your program going to need?
 - Award certificates
 - Ribbons, medals, or other recognition
 - Food to serve at awards event
 - Decor
- Verify that your approved PTA budget has a line item for Reflections
- Funds considerations
 - asking local businesses for donations
 - grants or sponsorships



COMMUNICATION!!!

- In school
 - Morning announcements
 - Posters in school
 - TV Broadcasts
 - TEACHERS
- To families
 - Social Media
 - Newsletters/Notices
 - Principal Communications
- Include the Entry Form (electronic or paper)
- Reflections graphics are available on VAPTA and National PTA websites.



Local PTA Information			
LOCAL PTA		NATIONAL PTA ID	
LOCAL PROGRAM CHAIR		EMAIL	
STUDENT NAME		GRADE	AGE
PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME(S)		EMAIL	PHONE
MAILING ADDRESS		CITY	STATE ZIP

Ownership in any submission shall remain the property of the entrant, but entry into this program constitutes entrant's irrevocable permission and consent that PTA may display, copy, reproduce, enhance, print, sublicense, publish, distribute and create derivative works for PTA purposes. PTA is not responsible for lost or damaged entries. Submission of entry into the PTA Reflections program constitutes acceptance of all rules and conditions. I agree to the above statement and the National PTA Reflections Official Rules. Signatures (typed or handwritten) are required for all entries.

STUDENT SIGNATURE (Required for all entries) _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE (Required for all entries) _____

CATEGORY AND DIVISION	GRADE DIVISION (Check one)	ARTS CATEGORY (Check one)
(All entrants must select a grade-level division and arts category.)	☐ PRIMARY (PreK-Grade 2)	☐ DANCE CHOREOGRAPHY
	☐ INTERMEDIATE (Grades 3-5)	☐ FILM PRODUCTION
	☐ MIDDLE SCHOOL (Grades 6-8)	☐ LITERATURE
	☐ HIGH SCHOOL (Grades 9-12)	☐ MUSIC COMPOSITION
		☐ PHOTOGRAPHY
		☐ VISUAL ARTS

ACCESSIBLE ARTS DIVISION PARTICIPATION

Students who identify as having a disability and may receive services under IDEA or ADA: Section 504 may also select to participate in the Accessible Arts Division to receive division-specific accommodations and non-artistic accommodations as outlined in the division guidelines. Participating students may use the "Additional Details" field to provide information about how their disability and/or support needs impacted their entry (10 to 100 words, optional). Participating students compete against other students in the division and are awarded as part of the division. See division guidelines for details.

☐ I will participate and compete in the Accessible Arts Division.	☐ I will NOT participate and compete in the Accessible Arts Division.
--	--

ARTWORK DETAILS (As relevant or required based arts category and/or division)

Medium and Materials (Visual Arts)		Dimensions (Visual Arts/ Photog.)	
Word Count (Lit.)		Editing software, if used. (All categories)	
Cite background music, if used. (Dance/Film)		List musician(s) or instrumentation (Music)	

PTA Reflections Program Student Entry Packet | Page 3

 every child, one voice

[illegible]

- Paper vs Google Form
- Form Review
 - All portions must be filled out
 - Entry must have a title
 - Encourage students to write an impactful Artist Statement. Statements are weighed along with entry.
 - Check for signatures
 - Verify all entry requirements (max dimensions, file sizes, file types, etc).
 - <https://www.pta.org/home/programs/reflections/craft-an-entry>
 - Check spelling of all names. Typos will carry through to award certificates

ACCEPTING ENTRIES

- In person considerations
 - Designate a drop off box, cubby, etc.
 - Easy, secure, and accessible
- Digital
 - Google forms with File upload
 - Dropbox

****Note: All Virginia PTA submissions must be digital.****

- Naming convention for all digital files:
ArtCategory.Division.SchoolPTA.LastName.Filetype
 - Example: Dance.Intermediate.KeystoneES.Smith.mp4

**VIRGINIA PTA 2025- 2026 Reflections
Entry Form
Non-Council (Regional Entry)**

DUE January 10, 2026

ONLY USE THIS FORM if your local PTA is NOT in a Council. This form is for regional judging. Regional winners will advance to compete alongside Council winners in the state-level Reflections Contest. Check to see if your PTA is in a Council here: <https://vapta.org/vapta-councils/>

Start now

**VIRGINIA PTA 2025-2026
Reflections Entry Form
*COUNCILS ONLY ***

Due January 24, 2026

Councils MUST complete THIS FORM form to register participation. Councils may upload an excel spreadsheet or submit individual entries. Please remember your council should identify 1st, 2nd, 3rd place winners and recognize all student entries from your local units.

Start now

NOTABLE RULES

- Local Unit MUST be in GOOD STANDING by meeting Virginia PTA's Standards of Affiliation
- Only NEW pieces of artwork inspired by the current year's theme may be submitted.
- Each entry must be the original creative product of ONE student
 - Other individuals may appear in or perform a student's work.
 - An adult may not alter the creative integrity of a student's work.
- Each entry must include a title and artist statement
 - Artist statements communicate what inspired the work, how it relates to the theme, and content of the work. 10-100 words
- Copyrighted material is prohibited, except for CITED background music in dance/film entries, and use of copyrighted works that create completely new and different art.
- Digital technology and/or software can be used to develop, enhance, and/or present an entry but may NOT provide the primary design and/or concept. Entrants must describe tools and method, including any generative elements.

CATEGORY HIGHLIGHTS

- - Solo and ensemble works accepted. Entrant must be choreographer and maybe performer
 - No more than 5min and 1,000MB video file.
- - Animation, narrative, documentary, experimental or media presentation. Powerpoint prohibited
 - Entrant must be screenwriter, cinematographer, editor & producer
 - No more than 5min and 1,000MB video file.
- - Fiction or Nonfiction:
 - May write in primary language as long as English translation is attached.
 - No more than 2,000 words. Single sided paper or pdf file.

CATEGORY HIGHLIGHTS

- - Entrant must be composer and may also be performer
 - Software may be used to produce an audio recording. Algorithmic composition techniques are not accepted.
 - Notation (score/tablature) only required for middle and high school entrants. Alternatively, may include a written reflection with musically technical explanation of how you wrote the music. (100 words or less)
 - No more than 5min and 1,000MB audio file (mp3)
- - Single print/digital image. Collages and collections of photos are not accepted.
 - Entrant must be photographer. May use digital editing (multiple exposure, negative sandwich, photogram etc.)
 - Print: no larger than 8.5x11in. No frames. | Digital: at least 640*960 pixels. 300dpi (resolution).
- - Fine/Design arts (architectural drawing/models, ceramics, collage, digital art, drawing/illustration, crafts, fashion clothes, jewelry, fiber work, mixed media, painting, printmaking, sculpture.
 - 2D: No larger than 24*30in with one digital image. 3D: 3 digital images of artwork at different angles.

JUDGING CRITERIA

- All PTA Reflections program entries are judged on three criteria:
 - Interpretation of Theme - 40pts.
 - Creativity - 30pts
 - Technical skill - 30pts
- If two entries are tied, the entry with the higher score for interpretation of theme receives more recognition.
- UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES may parents or students contact a reviewer to dispute the status/score of an entry.



REFLECTIONS [®]					
Reflections Review Rubric					
Criteria / Level	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	Advanced
Interpretation	1-8 pts.	9-16 pts.	17-24 pts.	25-32 pts.	33-40 pts.
How closely the piece relates to the theme, based on the work itself and the artist statement.	The interpretation lacks clarity and does not communicate the student's concept.	The interpretation lacks clarity and does not fully communicate the student's concept based on the theme.	The interpretation communicates the student's concept based on the theme.	The interpretation clearly communicates the student's concept based on the theme but lacks meaning, purpose and integrity.	The interpretation clearly communicates the student's whole concept based on the theme with meaning, purpose and integrity.
Creativity	1-6 pts.	7-12 pts.	13-18 pts.	19-24 pts.	25-30 pts.
How creative and original the piece is in its conception of the theme and its presentation.	Work is somewhat original and reflects the theme in very conventional ways.	Work is somewhat original and reflects the theme in conventional ways.	Work is original and reflects the theme in conventional ways.	Work is primarily original and reflects the theme in imaginative ways.	Work is highly original and reflects the theme in unconventional, interesting, imaginative and new ways.
Technique	1-6 pts.	7-12 pts.	13-18 pts.	19-24 pts.	25-30 pts.
The level of skill demonstrated in the basic principles/ techniques of the arts area.	Work demonstrates very limited skill of the arts area.	Work demonstrates limited skill of the arts area.	Work demonstrates capable skill of the arts area.	Work demonstrates expertise of skill of the arts area.	Work demonstrates mastery of skill and knowledge of the arts area.
PTA Reflections Review Packet Page 4					
National PTA everychild.ourvoice [®]					

SELECTING AWARDS

- You can award students with a unique award or order online from ShopPTA.com
- Certificate is available for download or can order online and complete by hand
- You can also recognize student winners with something unique!
 - Custom items, watercolors, journals, gift cards



CELEBRATE!

- RECOGNIZE ALL PARTICIPANTS
- Announce winners on PTA/School social media, newsletters, website.
- Display art in school hallway, at school administration building, local library, community arts center.



CELEBRATE!

- Host an Awards Celebration
 - In conjunction with a student performance
 - As an “Evening of the Arts” with dessert
 - At a PTA meeting
 - At a School Board meeting (Councils)
 - Invite school/community leaders to celebration events to meet families and learn more about PTA’s support for arts education
- Fun Tips
 - Prepare programs
 - Set-up a photo booth
 - Create a Powerpoint to display entries
 - Invite students to play music as families arrive





Virginia
PTA[®]
everychild. onevoice.[®]

ADVANCE YOUR WINNERS



Learn more and get involved! [PTA.org/Reflections](https://pta.org/reflections)



HOW TO ADVANCE YOUR WINNERS

- Submit ONE winner in EACH ART and GRADE Division
 - Elementaries that serve PK-5 would submit one winner in each art categories per Grade Division (one Primary and one Intermediate)
- All students compete in one round of regional judging before advancing to state-level judging.
 - Units with active councils: Submit winners' entries to your Council PTA. Due dates are set by council but no later than Dec 15th.
 - Units w/o active councils: Submit entries to state.
 - Council-level winners: Submit entries to state.
- More details on 2026-2027 due dates, announcements and celebration will be provided later this year.

VIRGINIA PTA 2025- 2026 Reflections Entry Form
Non-Council (Regional Entry)

DUE January 10, 2026

ONLY USE THIS FORM if your local PTA is NOT in a Council. This form is for regional judging. Regional winners will advance to compete alongside Council winners in the state-level Reflections Contest. Check to see if your PTA is in a Council here: <https://vapta.org/vapta-councils/>

Start now

VIRGINIA PTA 2025-2026 Reflections Entry Form
***COUNCILS ONLY ***

Due January 24, 2026

Councils MUST complete THIS FORM form to register participation. Councils may upload an excel spreadsheet or submit individual entries. Please remember your council should identify 1st, 2nd, 3rd place winners and recognize all student entries from your local units.

Start now

NATIONAL PTA AWARDS

- Merit Award (Bronze)
 - Medal & Certificate of Merit
 - Work featured in virtual exhibition
- Award of Excellence (Silver)
 - \$200 Young Artist Scholarship
 - Medal & Certificate of Excellence
 - Work featured in virtual exhibition
- Outstanding Interpretation (Gold)
 - \$800 Young Artist Scholarship
 - Medal & Certificate of Outstanding Interpretation
 - Work featured in virtual exhibition
 - \$200 Prize for Local PTA Unit



TIMELINE RECAP

**OCT/
NOV**

Students submit entries to local school PTA units. Deadline set by local unit.

**DEC
15**

Local Unit entries due to Council*

*Note: This is the last possible date- Councils can choose earlier dates based on schedule and judge availabilities

**EARLY JAN
DATE TBD**

Non-council affiliated units first place entries due to Virginia PTA using portal.

**LATE JAN
DATE TBD**

Council winners due to Virginia PTA using portal.

MAR 1

State Winners are due to National PTA

**MAR/
APR**

Virginia PTA Winners announced and Student Awards Celebration

MAY 1

National PTA Winners Announced.

Entries will be showcased nationally the following year.



Virginia
PTA[®]
everychild. onevoice.[®]

QUESTIONS

Contact VP of Family Engagement

familyengagement@vapta.org

reflections@vapta.org



Learn more and get involved! [PTA.org/Reflections](https://pta.org/reflections)

