

October 10, 2019

PTA Leaders:

We have received questions regarding Grade Level Committees. To clarify our position, we offer the following guidance.

A Grade Level Committee (for the final year in the building) should not be a problem **if** the PTA allocates an amount of funds to it which is in proportion to funds allocated for all grades. The celebration of the “graduating class” with such items as class t-shirts or for post-ceremony refreshments will not jeopardize a unit’s non-profit status.

Issues arise with 501(c)(3) non-profit status if a great majority of what a PTA unit does involves raising funds for activities benefiting only a part of the student body, especially if the expenditures are not directly in line with the mission and purposes of PTA as stated below. If a PTA has funds allocated to educational activities for all students and families, advocacy efforts, leadership training, etc. and votes to allocate a portion of its funds to each class for grade level activities, then it would be aligned with its 501(c)(3) non-profit status.

If members want to dedicate most of its fundraising efforts to only benefit a subset of students and the activities are not aligned with the Purposes of PTA, then it is recommended that a separate group be formed outside of the PTA. That group would have to apply for its own FEIN, non-profit status, and insurance. That group should have its own bank account. **No** monies raised by that group should be deposited in the PTA account and the PTA tax exempt form should not be shared with the outside group.

On the question of liability, it comes down to the event sponsored by PTA itself, not with the sub-committee of the PTA running the event. If the event does not have “Play” status on the list provided in the NYS PTA Resource Guide Section 05B Insurance, it is subject to a greater liability risk to the PTA and may not be covered under the PTA insurance umbrella. Great care and consideration should be given to any PTA-sponsored activity, regardless of the grade.

Purposes of PTA

- to promote the welfare of children in their home, school and community
- to secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children
- to bring a closer relation between the home and school so that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children
- to develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children the highest advantage in physical, mental, social and spiritual education.

I hope this clarifies the guidelines regarding Grade Level Committees. Please let me know if you have additional questions.

Warm Regards,
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