

NATIONAL PTA

Multicultural Reference Guide

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Legacy and Future

Legacy can be defined as “the long-lasting impact of particular events or actions that took place in the past, or of a person’s life.” Both the legacies we inherit and the legacies we create define our organization and the work we do. This guide was inspired and informed by past National PTA President Otha Thornton, who initiated the association’s focus on multi-ethnic groups through the *Every Child in Focus* campaign.

Thornton was the first African American male to be elected as president of National PTA, and he served from 2013-2015. This guide also includes the work of family and community leaders on National PTA’s 2013-2015, 2015-2017 and 2021-2023 Diversity, Inclusion and Outreach Committees, National PTA’s Center for Family Engagement and ForgedEd, LLC.

This updated version offers a rich array of strategies, resources and information that all of our PTA members—and our communities—can utilize to be welcoming and inclusive to our growing diverse populations. It has been revised to reflect National PTA’s [Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#), so that we can work more intentionally towards our mission of making *every child’s* potential a reality. We will continue to update this guide as we learn about and embrace the growing diversity of lived experiences in our PTAs and communities.

Getting Started

The following pages of this guide contain information, resources and key strategies to enhance PTA’s inclusion of traditionally underrepresented children and families. More specifically, this guide can be used to connect your PTA to educational organizations and resources to further learning around different people and cultures in your community as well as enable further development of partnerships between families, PTA leaders, administrators, teachers, community leaders and community organizations.

Using this Guide:

- This Multicultural Reference Guide is not meant as the only resource for information on students, families and communities represented in our schools, but as a guide toward continued learning with people across broader communities.
- Each community group’s chapter includes subsections titled:
 - **In Focus:** Offers a statistical representation of the community in U.S. public schools.

- **Things to Know:** Offers tools, information, readings and learning resources for PTA members and leaders to learn from and use to further their own PTA's DEI journey. Resources are directly linked.
- **Organizational Connections:** Lists organizations that could increase culturally competent partnerships with the PTA and school community. Organization's titles are bolded and linked.

Putting this Guide to Practice—Steps and Considerations

Reaching out to traditionally underrepresented communities is an essential step in maintaining the strength of PTA's grassroots advocacy. The following are simple steps that local PTAs can take to engage and empower every family:

1. Do an initial self-assessment.

Use the following tools to complete an audit and understand where your PTA is in terms of being diverse and inclusive and to learn more about the local communities you aim to serve.

- a. **Start with a [Diversity Profile](#)** of your PTA families, school and community. Learn about the groups represented in your community and how well you have included them historically. Use the information to set initial goals on increased community participation and engagement.
- b. **Inventory your communication resources, opportunities and challenges** in reaching out to all communities and groups:
 - i. **Resources:** Consider what outreach resources are available from individual volunteers, your schools and community groups and organizations. These include talents, materials, money, time, goods and services. What are the school policies and avenues for communicating with families?
 - ii. **Opportunities:** What prescheduled school or community events provide an opportunity for connecting with every family, including those from currently underrepresented communities?
 - iii. **Challenges:** Which languages are used in the schools? Do you have translators (paid or volunteer) for each language present in your community? Which forms of communication are most accessible and useful for your target audience(s)?
- c. **Other questions to ask** when assessing your PTA's communication practices include:
 - i. Are materials informative, published regularly and accessible by all families? How do they address language barriers?

- ii. Do the school and your PTA provide opportunities for families and staff to share information in a variety of ways (e.g., email, home visits, phone calls or printed materials)?
- iii. Is it easy and convenient for parents to contact teachers and provide feedback to the school around policies and issues of concern?

2. Listen to your communities and communicate effectively.

Becoming familiar with what matters most to the families and communities you seek to engage will help you effectively adapt your messaging about PTA to these audiences. Here are tips for effective messaging:

- a. **Begin by listening.** Use [this resource](#) to learn more about the individuals in your community, their needs and potential opportunities for partnering.
- b. **Make and maintain contact.** Initiate contact and talk frequently with members of families or community groups. Maintaining communication is critical. Develop strategies that are adapted to the needs of different families including language, timing, travel and distance or proximity.
- c. **Make communication a two-way, ongoing process.** Frame your message about PTA in ways that relate to the needs and concerns of all of the diverse groups in your community. Spread this information to children and families in a variety of formats. Ask for feedback and listen carefully.
- d. **Honor the diversity of families.** Build relationships one family at a time. Recognize that not all families from any one community are the same. Get to know the needs of individual children and families. Work with school staff and families to welcome their differing demographics and perspectives.
- e. **Remember that you are always communicating.** What you do and how you do it can speak as loudly as your carefully crafted messages. Work to be culturally competent and use inclusive language. Invite families and individuals to self-identify across different communities. Use affirming language that is preferred by the child, family and/or community. Be vigilant about preconceptions and making inferences.
- f. **Use the [resources available from National PTA](#) for presentations.** Examples of resources include PowerPoint presentations, an e-learning course called “[Creating and Delivering a Speech](#),” and a PTA One Voice blog series on [Best Practices for Effective Presentations](#). The [PTA One Voice blog](#) is a regular source for tips shared by PTA leaders around the nation.

3. Promote meaningful family engagement.

Across income and background differences, students whose families are engaged are more successful. Follow the National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships:

- a. **Create a welcoming PTA climate** and contribute to a respectful, inclusive school community.
- b. **Support student success** by sharing information between parents and teachers and facilitate continuity in educational progress, records, placement and registrations by talking with children, parents, teachers and school administrators.
- c. **Speak up for every child** by helping families understand how the school system works and empowering families to be self-advocates.
- d. **Share power** by giving all families a voice in decision-making and developing connections between families and local and state officials.
- e. **Connect families to community resources** and develop the school as a community hub.
- f. **Create a strategic plan** for engaging diverse families. Use various National [PTA resources for support](#). Build a diverse leadership team that can support you in reaching out to a variety of families. One way to focus your self-assessment, outreach and engagement activities is to enroll in the [National PTA School of Excellence program](#), which is designed to promote family-school partnerships for enriching children's educational experiences and well-being.
- g. **Address the barriers families face.** All families want the best for their students. Many experience barriers that prevent them from supporting their students through traditional routes. Be aware of the barriers that your families may face, such as transportation, language, safety concerns, financial concerns and the need for resources. Break down barriers and build bridges where possible, e.g., find translators, coordinate meetings in other community locations, etc.
- h. **Actively recruit and involve parents of different communities in PTA leadership.** Invite families to participate in leadership in authentic ways by informing family members about opportunities, seeing assets and strengths in non-traditional ways and making a direct ask. Help potential leaders see their potential and examine traditional ways of doing things to ensure all potential leaders can be included and have access to development opportunities.

4. Create community connections.

Not only can partnering with community organizations create greater shared resources and alliances to serve families and schools, but these groups can help connect you with traditionally underrepresented families through their own activities, leaders and members. Some tips to consider:

- a. **Respect cultural traditions within communities.** Culture is a big part of the lives of many students and families and a source of pride. Cultural education grounds students and families with traditional values and sets them on the path to success. Cultural festivals celebrate cultural identities and are one of the most effective ways to meet and build partnerships.
- b. **Understand the need for consistent inclusion.** Continued underrepresentation in leadership and teaching roles highlight the importance of including families from many different communities in your PTA's diversity efforts.
- c. **Connect with community-based groups.** Find groups that serve target populations like social clubs, service agencies, public libraries and parks, civic organizations, foundations, police and fire stations, hospitals and religious organizations.
- d. **Consider ways that potential partners' missions overlap with PTA goals.** In deciding which organizations to engage, ask yourself: What can these organizations potentially bring to a collaborative relationship with PTA that would be useful, valuable or a resource in advocating for children?

5. Serve as an information resource for parents, families, educators and community groups.

Some ways you can demonstrate your value to the school and community include:

- a. **Provide information about current issues.** Provide guidelines for families and teachers to discuss issues related to current events and experiences affecting different communities. Make use of PTA position statements and resolutions
- b. **Distribute information about community resources** that serve cultural, recreational, academic, health, social and other needs of families and educators.
- c. **Provide information to the broader community**, including those without school-age children, about school programs, events, needs and National PTA's corporate sponsors and discounts.
- d. **Empower parents** with access to conference workshops and e-learning modules on parenting skills.
- e. **Spread the word about PTA leadership** and training opportunities, state and national conventions and National PTA's online e-learning platform, Thrive.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is defined as the interconnectedness and overlapping of systems of oppression based on social categories like race, gender, class and ability that affect individuals and broader communities of people. Intersectionality provides us a framework for better understanding how compounding aspects of oppression can affect students and their families in different ways as well as how we as PTA members and leaders can best serve students and their families accordingly.

It is important to keep in mind that while this Multicultural Reference Guide does examine specific communities represented in our schools, individual people often identify simultaneously within multiple communities and social groups. A family may have one child who identifies as LGBTQIA and another child who has been identified as having a learning disability. In addition, within any community, one's experience can be shaped by how one's other identities may show up. Therefore, no one community outlined in the sections below should be taken as an exact portrait of individual people in that community but rather as an outline of one potential part of a person's identity.

A Note on Language

Language matters. It is ever evolving. Names that various groups are called are both unique to local contexts and resonate with national and even international communities. Most importantly, language acts as an affirmation of who we are, our groups and who we hope to be.

We have chosen here to use multiple and varying group names throughout this resource, knowing that is an imperfect solution. These different names may or not be the way members within this community self-identify. The language we have used today may change or fall out of favor prior to us updating this resource. We offer the language here with humility and suggest you always ask individuals and community members what language is affirming for them.

Communities in Our Schools

African American/ Black

In Focus

Of the 49.4 million students enrolled in US public schools in fall of 2020, 15% were Black/ African American. Black/ African American and other students of color are disproportionately more likely to attend schools in which total enrollment of students of color is at least 75% of total school enrollment.¹

Things to Know

- [Addressing Systemic or Institutional Racism - Position Statement | National PTA](#)
- [Marian Wright Edelman, “Every Child in Focus”](#): Campaign spotlight on African American children, video message
- [Being Black Is Not a Risk Factor](#)
- [Black History Month: Teaching Beyond Slavery | Learning for Justice](#)
- [Equity and Excellence: African American Children's Access to Quality Preschool](#)

Organizational Connections

- [The National Urban League](#) promotes programs to secure economic self-reliance, parity, power and civil rights for African Americans.
- [NAACP](#) works to eliminate education-related racial and ethnic disparities in public schools.
- [National Black Child Development Institute](#) (NBCDI) improves and protects the lives of African American children.
- [My Brother's Keeper Alliance](#) is an initiative of the Obama Foundation to connect boys and young men of color to mentoring, support networks and educational and professional skills.
- [National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering \(NACME\)](#) offers support to African Americans and other minorities who want to pursue careers in engineering, technology, math and science.
- [National Alliance of Black School Educators \(NABSE\)](#) provides advocacy, research and professional development on behalf of African American education.

¹ [COE - Racial/Ethnic Enrollment in Public Schools](#)

American Indian/ Alaskan Native

In Focus

The National Congress of American Indians estimates that there are roughly 644,000 native students currently enrolled in U.S. public schools.²

Things to Know

- Understand the structure of federal-tribal relations. Federally recognized tribes hold sovereign nation status. Two major pieces of legislation embody the important concepts of tribal self-determination and self-governance: The Indian Self-determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975, as amended (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.) and the Tribal Self-Governance Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. 458aa et seq.).
- [IA Handbooks | Indian Affairs](#): assists parents in advocating to enhance the quality of education and academic achievement of their children.
- [American Indian and Indigenous Education](#): provides a collection of materials about history and current thinking about indigenous education, as well as an annual teacher education conference.
- [How to Talk about Native Nations: A Guide](#): Offers a guide to terminology about indigenous people and cultures as well as other educational resources.
- [Resource Exchange - Center for Native American Youth](#): a database of resources about issues native youth face and how to provide better support.

Organizational Connections

- [Alaska Federation of Natives](#) seeks to promote the cultural, political and economic voice of the Alaska Native community.
- [Center for Native American Youth](#) provides advocacy, programs and resources to support the health, collaboration and well-being of native youth across the country.
- [National Indian Education Association](#) advances comprehensive, culture-based educational opportunities for American Indians, Alaska natives and native Hawaiians.
- [National Congress of American Indians](#) lists tribal organizations, national organizations and all federally recognized tribes (including contact information for tribal leadership), searchable by geographic location.

² [Education | NCAI](#)

Asian American

In Focus

In fall 2020, Asian students made up 5% (roughly 2.7million students total) of public elementary and secondary enrollment in US public schools.³ The U.S. Census Bureau reports the Asian population to include people who indicated their race(s) as “Asian”; or who reported entries such as “Asian Indian,” “Chinese,” “Filipino,” “Korean,” “Japanese” or “Vietnamese;” or who provided other detailed Asian responses.

Things to Know

- [The Asian American Education Project](#): Educational resource providing lesson plans, workshops and other resources for further learning about diverse Asian American communities.
- [Yuri Education Project](#): provides educational resources for broadening historical narratives about Asian Americans
- [Great Expectations: Exploring Family Dynamics and Stress Among Asian-Americans/Pacific Islanders](#)
- [Why Immigration Is an Asian American Issue](#)
- [Asian-American Experience, Issues, and Resources | Ithaca College](#)
- [What is the Model Minority Myth?](#)
- [Bystander Intervention training](#): developed by Right to Be is focused on ending harassment of all forms

Organizational Connections

- [Asia Society](#) is a rich source of educational and cultural resources.
- [UniPro](#) is a foundation serving and advocating for Southeast Asian refugees in the Bay Area.
- [SEARAC](#): A civil rights organization that advocates for social justice for Cambodian, Laotian and Vietnamese American communities.
- [OCA National](#), formerly the Organization of Chinese Americans, is a national organization dedicated to advancing the social, political and economic well-being of Asian Pacific Americans.
- [The National Federation of Filipino American Associates \(NaFFAA\)](#) promotes the active participation of Filipino Americans in civic and national affairs.

³ [COE - Racial/Ethnic Enrollment in Public Schools](#)

People with Disabilities

In Focus

During the 2020-2021 school year, the DOE estimated that roughly 7.2 million children, or 15% of all public-school students between the ages of 3 and 21 years received special education services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).⁴

Things to Know

- [Let's Talk about Ableism](#): An episode from the PTA's web series *10 Minutes to PTA the Transformative Way*
- [Resolution on High Expectations for Students with Disabilities](#): Urges PTAs to support schools in implementing best practices in meeting the needs of diverse students such as inclusion, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), Response to Intervention (RTI) and any other similar instructional practices.
- [Special Education Toolkit - Family Resources | National PTA](#): Plans, information and resources for families of children with disabilities. The Resources section includes a collection of tools for families, how to find special education services in each state and a list of national organizations for further help.
- [Toolkit - Resources - Advocacy | National PTA](#): helps child advocates speak up for children's health and well-being.
- [From Pre-K to Graduation](#): Guidelines to assist with successful transitions throughout a student's school career, including preparation for after graduation.
- [Understanding Federal Disability and Special Needs Policy](#): An overview of federal disability and special needs policies, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- [A Parent's Dictionary](#): Key terms to know when getting started in special education. It includes the most common acronyms used in special education and disability policies and program.

Organizational Connections

- [Disability Visibility Project](#) is an online community dedicated to creating, sharing and amplifying disability media and culture.

⁴ [COE - Students With Disabilities](#)

- [PACER Center](#) provides assistance to individual families, workshops, materials for parents and professionals and leadership in securing a free and appropriate public education for all children.
- [National Center for Learning Disabilities](#) works to improve the lives of children and adults with learning and attention issues by empowering children and parents, transforming schools and advocating for equal rights and opportunities.
- [The Council for Exceptional Children](#) seeks to improve special education policy and practice, and offers resources for families.
- [The Center for Parent Information and Resources](#) hosts many of the resources developed by the former National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities.

Family (Immigration) Status

In Focus

2015 U.S. Census data indicated that roughly 23% of students educated in U.S. public schools were themselves immigrants or lived in immigrant households.⁵

Things to Know

- [Position Statement on Rights and Services for Undocumented Children](#): Highlights that all children residing in the United States, regardless of their immigration status, have the right of access to a quality public education, adequate food and shelter and basic health care services.
- [Fact Sheet: Educational Services for Immigrant Children and Those Recently Arrived to the United States](#): Resource guide, fact sheet and Q and A about supporting immigrant children and families.
- [Students, Immigration Status, and the Right to Public Education](#): Blog produced by ED.gov with information and resources about supporting undocumented children in US schools.

Organizational Connections

- [Multi-Religious Council of Leaders](#) provides advocacy, education and other sustainable and equitable supports to refugee families.
- [Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights](#) assists immigrant children and families with navigating the legal system on national, state and local levels.

⁵ [Mapping the Impact of Immigration on Public Schools](#)

- [Center on Immigration and Child Welfare](#) advocates for and promotes welfare of immigrant children and families through a network of professions from child welfare, immigration and legal fields.

Foster Care and Adoptive Families

In Focus

Approximately 0.3% of children enter the foster care system each year.⁶ As of 2023, there are over 391,000 children in foster care in the United States.⁷

Things to Know

- [Parents' Guides to Student Success](#): Information and activities to help foster parents understand the expectations for children in their care at each grade level.

Organizational Connections

- [Center for Adoption Support and Education \(CASE\)](#) offers mental health services and educational resources for all members of the adoptive and foster community.
- [Child Welfare Information Gateway](#) provided by the Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provides access to print and electronic publications, websites, databases and online learning tools for improving child welfare practice, including resources for families.
- [Legal Center for Foster Care and Education](#) offers information, advocacy and research to improve outcomes for children in foster care.
- [National Foster Parent Association](#) supports foster, adoptive and kinship caregivers nationwide.
- [Children's Defense Fund](#) focuses on legal and political advocacy for all children, especially poor children, children of color and those with disabilities.

Students in Gifted Education

In Focus

Currently, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights estimates that roughly 6% of public-school children are enrolled in gifted and talented programs.⁸

⁶ [Child Welfare and Foster Care Statistics](#)

⁷ [Key Facts and Statistics - National Foster Care Month - Child Welfare Information Gateway](#)

⁸ [Percentage of public school students enrolled in gifted and talented programs](#)

Things to Know

- [Open Education Database](#): Includes 48 essential links for the parents of gifted children.

Organizational Connections

- [Summer Institute for the Gifted](#) provides summer programs that supplement education for gifted and talented youth.
- [MENSA International](#)
- [National Association for Gifted Children](#) provides advocacy, research and professional development opportunities for people working with gifted and talented children.
- [Teachers First](#) offers lesson and unit plans plus other internet resources for educators working with gifted and talented students.
- [Davidson Institute for Talent Development](#) provides educational programs and scholarships for gifted and talented youth.
- [Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted](#) is a nonprofit network providing resources, programming and support for the holistic well being of gifted and talented students.
- Academic talent search programs are sponsored by universities collaborating with secondary schools in specific states: [Johns Hopkins Talent Search](#), [Northwestern University Talent Search](#) and [Western Academic Talent Search](#).

Hispanic/Latino

In Focus

Between 2009 and 2020, the percentage of students enrolled in public PK-12 schools who were Hispanic/Latino increased from 22% to 28%.⁹

Things to Know

- [7 Strategies to Integrate Hispanic Families with PTA](#)
- [Is it Hispanic, Chicano/Chicana, Latino/Latina, or Latinx?](#): A guide to terms commonly used by individuals in Hispanic/ Latino communities.
- [Every Child In Focus Leadership Series: Embracing Family Diversity](#)
- [Taking the Pulse of the High School Student Experience in America](#): Developed by Hispanic Heritage Foundation.
- [¡Colorín Colorado!](#): A bilingual website for educators and families of English language learners.

⁹ [COE - Racial/Ethnic Enrollment in Public Schools](#)

- [En Camino - Educational Toolkit for Families](#): An interactive online resource to support Spanish-speaking families from the National Center for Families Learning.
- [Estándares Nacionales Para las Asociaciones Familia-Escuela](#): National Standards for Family-School Partnership resources in Spanish.

Organizational Connections

- [National Compadres Network](#) focuses on reinforcement of the positive involvement of Latino males in the lives of their families, communities and society.
- [Abriendo Puertas | Opening Doors](#) is a school readiness program that strengthens the leadership and advocacy skills of Latino parents with children ages 0–5.
- [Unidos U.S.](#) is the largest Latino civil rights organization in the U.S. and it offers research, advocacy and affiliate support to improve Latino issues at the local and national levels.
- [LULAC National Educational Service Centers](#) offer educational counseling, scholarships, mentorships, leadership development and literacy programs.
- [Parent School Partnership \(PSP\) Program | MALDEF](#) trains Latino parents to become change agents in their communities.

LGBTQ+

In Focus

The percentage of high school students who identify as LGBTQ+ has gone from 15% in 2015 to 26% in 2021.¹⁰

Things to Know

- [LGBTQ Community Inclusivity in PTA - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#)
- [Pronouns: A Guide from GLSEN](#): A guide for how to correctly use pronouns
- [Resolution on the Recognition of LGBTQ Individuals as a Protected Class](#): urges PTAs to encourage states to incorporate standards regarding age-appropriate, medically accurate and culturally sensitive information on LGBTQ issues.
- [LGBTQ Glossary of Terms](#)
- [Connect For Respect - Guide for PTA Leaders](#): Offers ways to engage students to improve the school climate and reduce bullying.

¹⁰ [CDC Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2021.](#)

- [Gender Spectrum](#): Offers a variety of resources to make safe gender-inclusive environments for kids and teenagers.
- [How to Support Transgender & Gender-questioning Youth](#): A guide by the Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago.
- [Movement Advancement Project](#): Resources pages as well as maps showing progress toward LGBTQ equality in each state.

Organizational Connections

- [The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network \(GLSEN\)](#) offers resources specific to education and has conducted biennial national school climate surveys documenting the impact of LGBTQ harassment.
- [GSA Network](#) provides guidelines for helping students and schools foster gay-straight alliances.
- [The Trevor Project](#) provides support for and resources about supporting children in the LGBTQIA+ community.
- [The Human Rights Campaign](#) works to ensure that all LGBTQ+ people, and particularly those of us who are trans, people of color and HIV+, are treated as full and equal citizens.

Linguistic Diversity

In Focus

As of fall 2019 an estimated 10.4% (5.1 million) of students in U.S. public schools were English language learners.¹¹

Things to Know

- [English Language Learners | NEA](#): Toolkit for educating, connect with and generally supporting English language learners.
- [iColorín Colorado!](#): Bilingual website for educators and families of English language learners.

Organizational Connections

- [National Association for Bilingual Education](#) advocates for the academic success and educational equity of bilingual and multilingual learners.

¹¹ [COE - English Learners in Public Schools](#)

- [National Council of Teachers of English](#) is a network of ESL educators providing research, programming and advocacy for students learning English

Male Engagement

In Focus

Research shows that when fathers and father figures are engaged in children’s education, student grades and test scores improve, attendance increases and students are more involved in school activities.¹²

Things to Know

- The [Engaging Fathers and Male Caregivers](#) section of the Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center has multiple resources—from posters to celebrate father figures to research summaries and webinars to guides and templates for practitioners.

Organizational Connections

- [The Black Star Project’s](#) Million Father March asks fathers to take kids to school on the first day as the beginning of a year-long commitment to supporting children’s education.
- [The National Compadres Network](#) facilitates involvement of Hispanic and Latino fathers and men.
- [The National Fatherhood Initiative](#) offers organizational plans and materials for fatherhood programs, research-based insights and parenting tips for fathers and families.
- [The National Partnership for Community Leadership](#) (NPCL) hosts an annual fatherhood conference on fatherhood research and programs.
- [WATCH D.O.G.S](#) is a school-based male engagement program in which father figures volunteer and attend programming to be positive role models and help keep the schools safe.
- [All Pro Dad](#) offers daily advice and local chapters that provides support to fathers to spend quality time and build relationships with their children.

¹² [Father Involvement in Education | Fatherhood.gov](#).

Middle Eastern and North African

In Focus

MENA is an acronym for countries in the Middle East and North Africa, typically including the region from Morocco in northwest Africa to Iran in southwest Asia and down to Sudan in Africa.

The U.S. Census Bureau and many other federal agencies currently categorize people of MENA origins as white.

Things to Know

- [Understanding MENA](#)
- [Middle East and North Africa](#)

Organizational Connections

- [American Muslims for Palestine](#) empowerment through education and action.
- [Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services](#) is the largest Arab community non-profit in the United States with 11 different locations across the country. In operation for 47 years.

Military

In Focus

The average child of a military family will change schools between 6-9 times in the course of their K-12 education.¹³

Things to Know

- [PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships to Support Military Families](#): 15 ways PTAs can support military families
- [PTA Resolution](#): Educational Opportunity for Military Children
- [Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children](#): Adopted by 45 states to provide for the uniform treatment of military children transferring between school districts and states.

¹³ [Revolving Doors: The Impact of Multiple School Transitions on Military Children - The Professional Counselor](#)

Organizational Connections

- [Military Child Education Coalition](#) is focused on ensuring quality educational opportunities for all military children affected by mobility, family separation and transition.
- National PTA Military Alliance for Parents and Partners (MAPP) is a group of organizations that work together to provide resources to and advocate for military-connected families. MAPP partners include the following:
 - [Association of the United States Army \(AUSA\)](#)
 - [U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity \(DoDEA\)](#)
 - [Military Impacted Schools Association \(MISA\)](#)
 - [National Military Family Association \(NMFA\)](#)
- Other organizational resources include: [Blue Star Families](#), [DoD Military Family Readiness Council](#), [Military OneSource](#), [Military Spouse](#) and [Tutor.com for U.S. Military Families](#) (free tutoring program).

Pacific Islander

In Focus

In fall of 2020, roughly 180,000 children enrolled in US public schools were Pacific Islander.¹⁴

Things to Know

- [Census Data & API Identities - Asian Pacific Institute on Gender Based Violence Website](#): Census data, terminology and other information about the AAPI and Pacific Islander communities more specifically.
- [The Relevance of Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders in the College Completion Agenda](#): CARE: National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education and the Asian and Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund.
- [Bess Press Books](#): Book publisher specializing in Pacific Islander materials.
- **Educational resources:**
 - [Leadership Education for Asia Pacifics \(LEAP\)](#)
 - [National Pacific Islander Education Network \(NPIEN\)](#)
 - [Pacific Resources for Education & Learning \(PREL\)](#)

¹⁴ [COE - Racial/Ethnic Enrollment in Public Schools](#)

Organizational Connections

- [Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs](#) advocates for social welfare of Native Hawaiians and perpetuates Native Hawaiian cultural traditions.
- [Pacific American Foundation](#) provides educational programs, events and archives about and for Pacific Islanders.
- [Pacific Islander Community Council](#) champions the preservation of the cultural values and rich heritage of Pacific Americans.

Religious Diversity

In Focus

In 2020, roughly 6% of Americans (around 19.7 million people) identified as belonging to a non-Christian religion including Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism. About 30% of Americans identified as religiously unaffiliated and about 64% of Americans identified as Christian.¹⁵

Things to Know

- [Let's Talk About Religious Diversity](#): An episode from PTA web series *10 Minutes to PTA the Transformative Way*
- [Religion Equity in Schools – Protecting Students and Their Civil Rights](#): Information, resources and approaches to making religiously diverse students feel welcome in schools
- [Encounter in the Public Schools | The Pluralism Project](#): Information and the history of supporting multi-religious students in U.S. public schools.
- [Working With Faith-Based Communities - Child Welfare Information Gateway](#): A resource guide including state and local examples of programs working with children and families of different faiths.

Organizational Connections

- [The Global Network of Religions for Children](#) facilitates interfaith dialogue, cooperation and education to advocate for children's rights and well-being.
- The [Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding](#) combats religious prejudice, confronts hate and builds respect for religious difference through education, training, resource dissemination and membership.

¹⁵ [Modeling the Future of Religion in America](#)

Rural

In Focus

Students attending schools in rural locations account for roughly 20% of all students attending US public schools.¹⁶

Things to Know

- [Rural Child Welfare Practice](#): information and resources about better serving children in rural areas.
- [Examining multidimensional poverty](#): Podcast about the intersection of place, race and multidimensional poverty by the Brookings Institution.

Organizational Connections

- [Partners for Rural Impact](#) provides programs, advocates for state and local policy, supports local leaders and increases funding to improve outcomes for youth in rural places.
- [Project Appleseed](#) is a national campaign for public school improvement through parenting, learning at home, collaborating with community, volunteering, communication and decision-making.

¹⁶ [What is the status of educational opportunity in rural America?](#)