

PTA Election Forums

PTA members are advocates for education. This includes non-partisan involvement in the elections of those that have influence on education. With that said, there are Limitations that you need to be aware of operating as a nonprofit organization.

No need to reinvent the wheel. The National PTA has A set of guidelines to follow. When in doubt, check these guidelines and your By-Laws. The PTACHC is here to help as well. Questions can be asked of the board to research for local units.



<https://www.pta.org/docs/default-source/uploadedfiles/hostingacandidateforum.pdf>

PTA Election Forums

Highlights

- Keep your forum NONPARTISAN
Broad range of issues, Equal billing, Equal Time, Invite all candidates, Both candidates in a two-person race (proceed if late cancellation), moderate questions, no partisan signs inside event. Campaign tables outside ok.
- Candidates – desire an large audience, guarantee of neutrality a trusted host, informal voter access time, provide candidates with the PTA mission
- Engage media – will draw attendance and raises profile



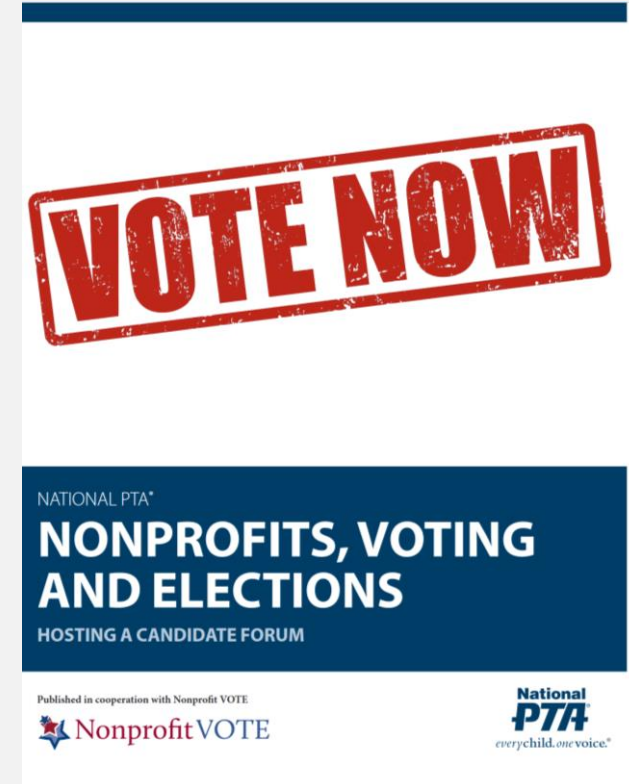
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PTA Election Forums

Highlights - Planning

- All candidates do not have to have the same questions, but must have equal time to present their view
- Use prepared questions provided to candidates and spontaneous questions from moderator or audience
- Followup questions to evasive answers are acceptable.
- Many formats are acceptable, including Debate, Town Meeting Q&A, Hearings, Unconventional, and Informal.

- Follow Guidelines In All Formats -

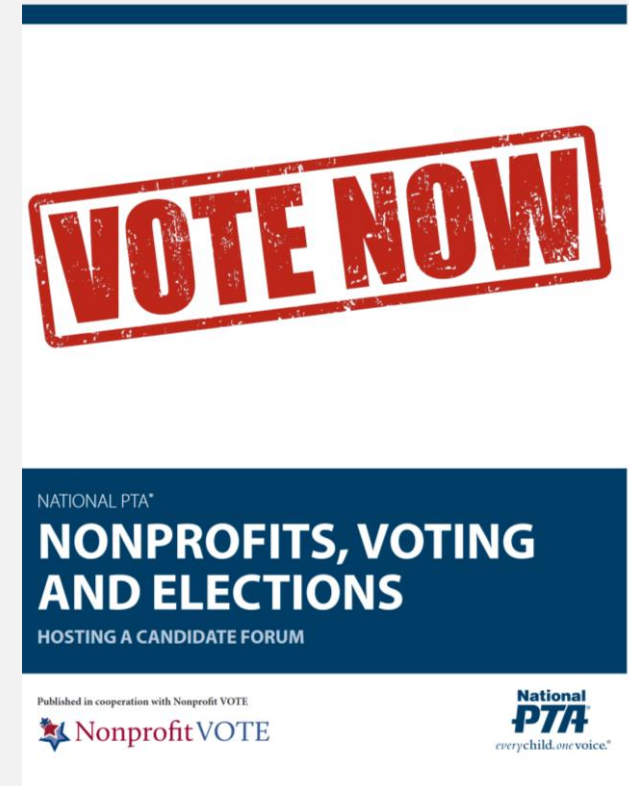


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PTA Election Forums

Highlights - Planning

- Consider partnership with other non-profit organizations
Have a clear understanding of roles and involvement.
- Best times are the middle of the week, 6pm – 7:30pm
Without conflicts with other organizations
- Determine Format ahead of time.
- Budget if necessary.

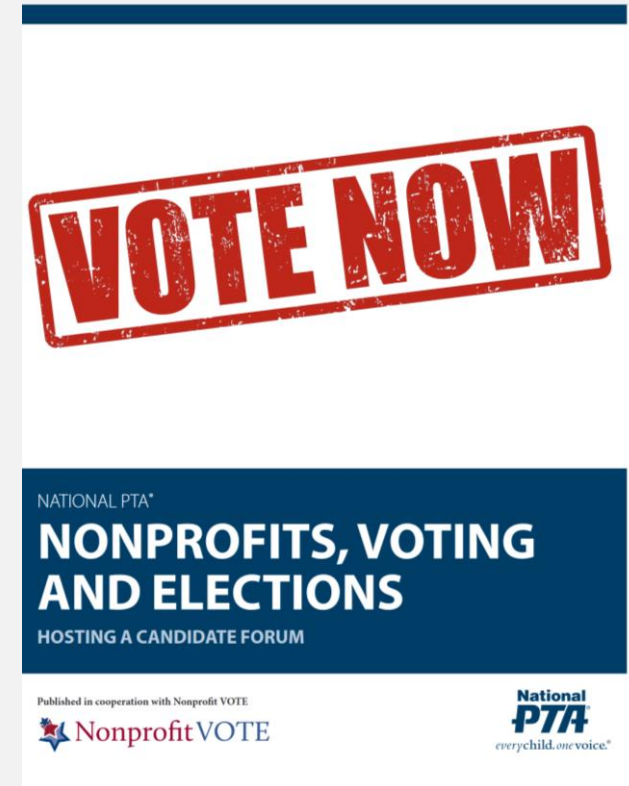


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PTA Election Forums

Highlights - timeline

- Invite all candidates early (An issue this year with late filings)
- Contact media
- Determine Format
- Recruit Volunteer's
- Select Moderator
- Followup with Candidates
- Confirm, Confirm, Confirm - Candidates, Sites, Moderators
- Contact media pre-event
- Confirm timekeeper
- Review Ground Rules
- Reserve time for informal Q&A



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PTA Election Forums

- Recording and posting forum online opens up a larger audience
- LIVE recordings/postings can reduce in-person attendance.
- Pre-visit forum site. Test all power, PA, Lighting, bathrooms, Confirm you have access and backups if staff are unavailable.
- Anything and everything can (and will) go wrong – have a backup plan IN ADVANCE for site reservations, moderators, AV gear. always use two or more cameras. Pack batteries, there may not be power.
- There may be strategic reasons for candidates not to attend. Follow PTA guidelines – most forums can proceed regardless.
- Reserve your facility as early as possible
- If partnering, set clear rules in writing, in advance. Have a plan B If issues arise. Own your forum.
- Avoid intentional conflicts with local organizations when scheduling and be cognizant of potential “candidate poaching” for other events.
- PTACHC courtesy – Coordinate (or Co-host) with PTACHC to avoid overlapping events
- Do not intervene in a security incident. Pause forum, call police.
- If issues arise... adapt. Everyone has at least one issue. You will have most ingredients for a successful forum already in place.
- Double down attendance – Post questions and answers online.



PAST PTACHC ELECTION FORUM

Ideal configuration... good lighting, PA candidate and audience mikes, multiple cameras, equal seating, podium, professional appearance.

Missing – countdown timer.

(there is always room for improvement)_

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSSjoBfKcyFih0IB8GHB53A>