

Berkeley PTA Council Email Proposal (Revised 4/17/21)

In order to help people to better manage their email and clarify what statements have the support of the Berkeley PTA Council the proposal is to take the existing email list (bpta_list@berkeleypta.org) and to copy the membership to a new list (bpta_discussion_list@berkeleypta.org). The existing list would become a moderated announcements list for communication of business related to the Council such as upcoming meetings, results of report outs from subcommittees, etc. The officers of the Council would be able to email to the list and others would be able to reach the membership of the list with the approval of the message by an Officer of the Council.

The discussion list would be a “lightly” moderated distribution list and would allow for more general communication of events and ideas that would be of interest to the leadership teams of the different Berkeley PTA units. It is the responsibility of the individual list members to comply with the guidelines listed below.

By a majority vote of the Berkeley PTA Council Executive Board, a member may be removed from the discussion list for multiple violations of the list guidelines or may be placed in “moderated” status, in which each post must be approved by an Executive Board member before being released to the list. Since the discussion email list is an unmoderated forum for communication between members, members should assume that messages do NOT carry the endorsement of the Berkeley PTA Council.

Membership of both lists would be open to all members of the BUSD community upon request. The administrator of the lists would automatically add all Berkeley PTA unit Officers to both lists when elected and uploaded after the annual elections.

Discussion List Guidelines

Messages from members of the discussion list should be about topics of interest generally to the Berkeley PTA leadership community, with the following exceptions:

1. Political postings in supporting or criticizing individual candidates for public office, including School Board candidates, are not allowed. The PTA risks its 501(c)(3) non-profit standing if it is seen as supporting individual candidates (this is an IRS provision which the State PTA monitors fairly closely).
2. Promotional or marketing messages related to specific goods or services are not allowed. Members may respond to requests for referrals for goods/services in the form of the standard "we use this and are happy with it". The respondent should not have a financial interest in the goods/services or be responding on behalf of someone with a financial interest in the goods/services.
3. Copyrighted material.

In addition, here are some general etiquette guidelines adapted from [here](#):

1. Be respectful. While it is easier to say hurtful or disrespectful things without standing face-to-face with someone. It is essential to keep in mind the feelings and opinions of others, even if they differ from your own.
2. Be aware of strong language, all caps, and exclamation points. It is easy for written text to be misread and misunderstood.
3. Be careful with humor and sarcasm. Make sure that it is clear you are being funny and not being rude.
4. Cite your sources. Whenever you are sharing an idea that originated from someone else (even if it is not word for word), it is good practice to cite that source.
5. Be forgiving. Remember that not everyone will know these rules before posting. Try to be understanding of others when they struggle with written communication.