



# Parliamentarian

2019-2020 RESOURCE GUIDE

## **Table of Contents:**

Position Responsibilities	5
Sample Plan of Work	7
Parliamentary Procedure in Action	8
PTA Governing Documents	9
Standards of Continuing Affiliation	10
Bylaws, Standing Rules	11
Meetings	16
Motions and Voting	23
Nominating Committee Support	31
Guidelines for Nominating Committee	32
Keeping Records	35
Resources	36

# Introduction

The parliamentarian advises the president and other officers, executive board members, and members of the PTA on matters of parliamentary procedure. The parliamentarian serves as a consultant, especially in a meeting, where only the chair has the authority to rule on questions of order or to answer parliamentary inquiries.

All members of the PTA, whether in a leadership position or not, should understand the fundamental rules of parliamentary procedure in order to preserve their rights and to know whether the procedures are being followed for the benefit of all members. This knowledge will ensure order, expedite business and guarantee that the association continues to promote the Vision, Mission and Purposes of PTA.

# About PTA

**VISION** Every child's potential is a reality.

**MISSION** To make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

## PURPOSES

- To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, places of worship, and throughout the community;
- To raise the standards of home life;
- To advocate for laws that further the education, physical and mental health, welfare, and safety of children and youth;
- To promote the collaboration and engagement of families and educators in the education of children and youth;
- To engage the public in united efforts to secure the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being of all children and youth; and
- To advocate for fiscal responsibility regarding public tax dollars in public education funding.

## PTA NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

- **Standard 1: Welcoming All Families into the School Community**  
Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.
- **Standard 2: Communicating Effectively**  
Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.
- **Standard 3: Supporting Student Success**  
Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.
- **Standard 4: Speaking Up for Every Child**  
Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.
- **Standard 5: Sharing Power**  
Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.
- **Standard 6: Collaborating with Community**  
Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.



# Position Responsibilities

A parliamentarian must have a fair and impartial mind and attitude, as well as knowledge of parliamentary procedure. A parliamentarian in PTA – serving at any level – needs to have a fundamental knowledge of PTA and all of its governing documents – not only the Vision, Mission and Purposes, but also the bylaws, standing rules, policies, etc.

## The parliamentarian:

- Serves as an officer of the association
- Is appointed by the president subject to the approval of the executive board:  
The newly-elected president calls a meeting of the newly-elected officers (per the bylaws, within 30 days of the election meeting for Local PTAs or within 60 days of the election meeting for Council PTAs) to make appointments to fill the remaining positions.
- Completes the responsibilities of an executive board member
  - Is a member of the association
  - Serves for a term of one year. May be appointed to a second consecutive term.
  - Attends all meetings, executive board and membership
  - Completes FOUNDATIONS Leader Orientation by October 15 after appointment, if not completed previously
  - Completes and submits a Plan of Work to the executive board for approval
  - Maintains a procedure book and delivers to the incoming parliamentarian all official materials within 15 days from the date on which the parliamentarian takes office
  - Signs the ethics/conflict of interest form, as adopted
  - Follows all Texas and National PTA policies and procedures
  - Performs duties as outlined by the bylaws and as may be assigned by the president or the membership
- Maintains a copy of governing documents of the association and brings them to every meeting:
  - Bylaws - Obtain a current copy of the bylaws on file with Texas PTA annually, after August 1, and distributes them to all executive board members.
  - Standing Rules - Obtain a current copy of the standing rules on file with Texas PTA annually and distribute to all executive board members.
  - Parliamentary Authority: Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR)
  - Certificate of Incorporation (only required if incorporated, majority of PTAs are not incorporated)
- Is familiar with the governing documents of the association and is ready to assist in their use
  - May be asked to read from any of these documents by the president or any member
  - May be asked to explain wording in the governing documents or parliamentary procedure by the president or any member
  - Is familiar with Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, since that parliamentary authority is referenced for points not covered by the bylaws, standing rules or policies

# Position Responsibilities

- **Prepares for the meeting**

- Confers with the chair prior to the meeting about business on the agenda and advises on questions and procedure that may arise
- Brings resources and materials (governing documents, ballots, ballot box, blank tellers report form)

- **Assists the chair**

- When requested, advises the chair on points of parliamentary procedure. The chair makes the decision whether or not to follow the parliamentarian's recommendation.

Example: He or she may read or quote a rule but not give an opinion. If there is a question of how to proceed, the chair is the only one with the authority to decide questions of order or to make rulings, which are subject to appeal by a member.

- Sits near the president to be convenient for consultation
- Notifies the chair of any errors in procedure that may affect the basic rights of any member or affect the outcome of the proceedings as quickly and as quietly as possible.

Example: While a majority vote is usually necessary for most motions, a two-thirds vote is sometimes required. The parliamentarian may quietly hand a note to the chair as a reminder of the necessity for a two-thirds vote in the affirmative for the pending motion.

- **Maintains a position of impartiality**

- Does not make motions
- Does not participate in discussion/debate
- Speaks only at the request or with the permission of the chair

Example: Any member who needs parliamentary information makes the request to and through the chair. The chair decides whether to allow the parliamentarian to speak or not.

- Does not vote unless the vote is by ballot

- **Maintains records of the position**

- May be asked to confirm accuracy of the bylaws and standing rules and chair a committee to review and recommend amendments to these documents. Bylaws and Standing Rules must be reviewed at least once every 3 years and submitted to Texas PTA for approval.



## Plan of Work Plan de Trabajo

Officer/Chairman Name:  
(Nombre de Oficial/Presidente de Junta) \_\_\_\_\_

Position:  
(Posición) **Parliamentarian** \_\_\_\_\_ Year:  
(Año) \_\_\_\_\_

*Reproduce as needed for the appropriate number of goals.  
(Se puede reproducir para metas adicionales.)*

<b>Responsibilities / Duties:</b> (Responsabilidades)	Review the Bylaws and Standing Rules; Assist the president with parliamentary procedures	<b>Committee Members:</b> (Miembros del Comité)	Bylaws review committee if appointed by the president.
<b>Goal:</b> (Meta)	Ensure Bylaws and Standing Rules are up to date and reflect the needs of the PTA; Assist with parliamentary procedures	<b>Evaluation Process:</b> (Proceso de Evaluación)	Effective business meetings; feedback of president and executive board members

Specific Action Steps (Proceso Especifico de Acción)	Start Date (Fecha de Empiezo)	Completion Date (Fecha de Terminación)	Budget (Presupuesto)
Assist the president at each business meeting	July	July	\$0
Be prepared for a ballot vote at any business meeting (supplies including 3x5 index cards, blank teller's report)	July	July	\$5
Assist nominating committee with procedural packets (copies)	April	May	\$0
Review Bylaws and Standing Rules if needed; if needed, submit proposed amendments to membership and Texas PTA, if approved.	July	As needed / appointed	
<i>If Council Parliamentarian, add assisting Local PTAs in updating their bylaws here and in duties/goals</i>			
<i>If Council Parliamentarian, add conducting workshops here and in duties/goals</i>			

<b>Resources:</b> (Recursos)	Council Parliamentarian and Executive Board, Texas PTA Field Service Representative, Texas PTA Parliamentarian Resource Guide and website, RONR, National PTA website
---------------------------------	---

# Parliamentary Procedure in Action

In the English Parliament, the rules and customs developed for conducting business became known as parliamentary law. These rules and customs formed the groundwork for practice for legislative bodies in the United States. These procedures have been adopted by many organizations outside of the government.

Henry Martyn Robert (1837-1923) was an American army engineer from South Carolina, a graduate of West Point, who found time to be active in various church, civic and educational organizations wherever he was stationed. In 1863, he was asked to preside over a meeting. He wrote, "My embarrassment was supreme. I plunged in, trusting to Providence that the assembly would behave itself. But with the plunge went the determination that I would never attend another meeting until I knew something of . . . parliamentary law."

As a result, he began the study of parliamentary law. He authored the Pocket Manual of Rules of Order for Deliberative Assemblies, published in 1876, which was later revised in 1915 as Robert's Rules of Order Revised. PTA adopted Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised as the parliamentary authority. The procedures in this document provide the guideline for conduct in meetings and the format for bylaws and other adopted rules of order.

The rules of parliamentary law protect the rights	Parliamentary procedure:
of the majority,	provides a standard for conduct
of the minority,	is based on common sense
of individual members,	provides order
of absentees,	and provides consistency
of all these together.	

A business meeting is not a class in parliamentary procedure. It is out of order for the parliamentarian, the chair or any member to be constantly raising points of order that naturally occur because members are not familiar with parliamentary procedure. Only the minimum amount of parliamentary procedure is necessary to assure democratic rule.

Like the president, the parliamentarian must maintain a position of impartiality in order to consistently and fairly support the actions of all members. As a result, the parliamentarian may not offer opinions or take any action that would appear to support any side in a discussion. The only time a parliamentarian may affect a pending decision is if the vote on that decision is by ballot.



# PTA Governing Documents

When deciding the appropriate course of action, multiple documents affect the way business must be conducted, and a hierarchy exists. Consider federal and state laws first, then the governing documents of the association, and, finally, procedures and tradition.

Use the following chart to determine which resource to consult or which authority has precedence over another.

## HIERARCHY OF REFERENCES

### Laws of the Land

- Federal Regulations
- Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
- State Laws/Regulations
- Nonprofit Regulations
- Corporation Codes/Regulations
- State's Attorney Office
- Gambling Regulations/Commission (bingo, raffles)
- Department of Revenue (sales tax/use tax/business tax)
- Department of Employment

### Laws of the Association

- Certificate of Incorporation
- Bylaws
- Policies
- Standing Rules
- Parliamentary Authority (Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised)
- Approved Motions

### Procedures

- Written and Unwritten
- Tradition/History

## LAWS OF THE LAND

As stated in the bylaws, PTA is an association "organized exclusively for the charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding section of any future federal tax code." As such, it is governed by all federal and state codes, regulations and laws that apply to PTA as an organization and any of its business activities. These federal and state laws supersede any rules adopted by the association.

Note: As a membership association, PTAs in Texas are not subject to the Texas Open Meetings Act, and, thus, all of the decision-making processes are not open to the public.

## LAWS OF THE ASSOCIATION

### CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION

The Certificate of Incorporation (also referred to as the Articles of Incorporation or Corporate Charter) is the legal document that sets the name, object, and whatever information required to incorporate an organization under state or federal law. Incorporation is sometimes advisable in situations involving owning property, managing inheritance, hiring employees, entering into contracts, protecting against liability, etc. While National and Texas PTA are incorporated, Local and Council PTAs within the state of Texas are usually not.



## Local PTA Standards of Continuing Affiliation

---

Each membership year, Local PTAs must meet both of the following requirements to attain Active Status with Texas PTA. The membership year begins on August 1.

1. Remit to Texas PTA state/national membership dues for at least 20 members.
  2. Submit to Texas PTA the name and contact information (mailing address, phone number, and email address) of at least one current Executive Board member, preferably the President.
- 

Local PTAs must comply with all of the following standards to remain in Good Standing with Texas PTA. Local PTAs that do not maintain Good Standing will be subject to a Local PTA Retention Plan as described below.

1. Maintain Active Status with Texas PTA.<sup>1</sup> (see requirements above)
  2. Report all members and remit all state/national dues to Texas PTA each year.
  3. Submit to Texas PTA the name and contact information for each executive board member within 15 days of election or appointment.<sup>2</sup>
  4. Annually file and have accepted by the IRS Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax within 60 days of fiscal year end.
  5. Review Local PTA bylaws (and standing rules, if applicable) every three years and submit to Texas PTA for approval.<sup>3</sup>
- 

### **Local PTA Retention Plan (initiated when a Local PTA does not maintain Good Standing)**

**Notification:** Texas PTA will notify the Local PTA of the action(s) required and allow the Local PTA 60 days, from the date of the notification, to attain Good Standing.

**Restriction:** A Local PTA that does not attain Good Standing within 60 days of the original notification will enter a restriction period. While in this restriction period, the Local PTA is not eligible for awards, programs or grants administered by Texas PTA or National PTA.

**Intervention:** If the Local PTA remains non-compliant after 45 days in the restriction period, Texas PTA will assign a Support Team to assist them, including the development of a written action plan to attain Good Standing. Restrictions will remain in place until an action plan is approved.

**Restructure:** For Local PTAs that do not attain Good Standing following the notification, restriction and intervention periods, Texas PTA will begin the process of restructuring the leadership of the Local PTA or revoking the Local PTA's charter.

1. Active Status is used to determine eligibility in many Texas PTA programs and services. Please reference specific program eligibility requirements to ensure your PTAs participation.
2. PTAs submit executive board member information to Texas PTA electronically via the Texas PTA website.
3. Bylaws are submitted via the Bylaws Submission Form found on the Texas PTA website.
4. To ensure acceptance by the IRS, we recommend that all forms (990N, 990EZ, and 990) be filed electronically.

# Bylaws Overview

## Articles

Texas PTA includes the following articles in each set of Local PTA bylaws:

**Article I: Name,** Official name of the PTA and Texas PTA ID number

**Article II: Purposes,** in common with National PTA and Texas PTA; Official 501(c)(3) status

**Article III: Basic Principles,** in common with Texas PTA

**Article IV: Basic Policies,** in common with National PTA and Texas PTA

**Article V: Relationship with Texas PTA:**

- Expectations of the PTA (see Standards of Continuing Affiliation on previous page);
- Consequences due to harm to brand or name;
- Withdrawal of charter expectations;
- Records retention and access;
- Process for dissolution (notification to and representation of Texas PTA at a membership meeting).

**Article VI: Membership and Dues**

- Membership criteria and benefits for local, Texas PTA, and National PTA
- Definition of the membership year
- Texas PTA Honorary Life Members

**Article VII: Officers:**

- Eligibility;
- List of officer positions for this PTA;
- Term of office;
- Procedures for filling a vacancy in office;
- Detailed duties of officers (see executive board position handout for basic duties) including authorized signers for the bank and contracts; financial procedures and reporting requirements at each meeting, annually, as well as tax and IRS reporting; maintaining records of the association such as meeting meetings, records retention policy, adopted and signed ethics/conflict of interest policy, membership rosters, and adopted plans of work; and restrictions for some officers positions such as serving on the nominating committee or the financial reconciliation committee, or voting only when by ballot.

**Article VIII: Nominations and Elections:**

- Nominating Committee composition, how and when they are elected, their duties and report
- Election of officers details including the meeting month and nominations from the floor.

**Article IX: Membership Meetings:** Includes months of the regular meetings, month(s) of the election and annual meetings, quorum (necessary members present to conduct business), no proxy voting, and special meeting process.

**Article X: Executive Board:** Includes composition, eligibility to serve, student members, executive board and executive board member duties, executive board meetings, emergency voting procedures, and removal and resignation from the executive board.

**Article XI: Committees:** Guidelines, term, and duties

**Article XII: Council Membership (if applicable):** Includes representation and dues.

**Article XIII: Texas PTA Annual Meeting:** Selection of local delegates (representatives)

**Article XIV: Fiscal Accountability:** Includes fiscal year, signer restrictions, and financial reconciliation requirements and procedures.

**Article XV: Parliamentary Authority,** Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised

**Article XVI: Amendment of Bylaws:** Includes submission, approval, review, and adoption processes.

## **BYLAWS**

The bylaws of a PTA contain the basic rules relating to the association as an organization rather than to the parliamentary procedure that it follows. These bylaws define the primary characteristics of the association, prescribe how the association functions, and include all rules that the association considers important to the rights and responsibilities of the membership.

Each Local PTA is governed by the bylaws of National PTA, Texas PTA, the Council PTA (if in membership with a Council PTA) and its own bylaws. Since Texas PTA organizes and charters every Local and Council PTA within the state, as authorized by the National PTA, certain information is included in every set of bylaws.

Texas PTA has adopted bylaws templates for all Local PTAs and Council PTAs. These templates include uniform (mandatory) wording that cannot be changed in any way except by a vote of the Texas PTA Board of Directors. Local and Council PTAs only have the authority to change the wording that is specific to their association (amount of local dues, months for meetings, number of officers, etc.) In accordance with the Standards of Continuing Affiliation, PTAs must review and submit their bylaws and standing rules (if applicable) at least once every three years.

If Texas PTA changes any wording, then that wording is incorporated promptly and verbatim into the Local or Council PTA bylaws, and approval by the membership is not required. To ensure that your PTA is operating under the most current bylaws template, a current copy of your bylaws should be requested from Texas PTA after August 1 each year. The request form can be found at [txpta.org/bylaws](http://txpta.org/bylaws).

For more information, contact the Texas PTA State Office by calling 1-800-TALK-PTA or emailing [memberservices@txpta.org](mailto:memberservices@txpta.org).

## **STANDING RULES**

Standing rules are administrative rules for the guidance of an association that may be adopted as needed.

Standing rules:

- Relate to the details of administration specific to your PTA's activities and structure
- May not conflict with approved bylaws
- Are adopted as a need arises
- May be adopted by a majority vote without previous notice
- May be amended by a two-thirds affirmative vote without previous notice or a majority vote with such a notice
- May be suspended, unlike bylaws, for a current session by a majority vote
- When adopted or amended, standing rules must be submitted electronically to the Texas PTA Office for review and approval.

The needs of the PTA dictates the contents of the standing rules and how it functions. Some rules are needed to guarantee that the past efforts will be documented with procedures. Other rules contain procedures for standard operations and other circumstances, necessary for the protection of the association, its officers and its members. No template is provided for standing rules, but suggested wording is provided in the Sample Standing Rules for Local PTAs/PTSA's, available for download at the Texas PTA website.

Note: While not every PTA is required to adopt standing rules, standing rules are necessary for PTAs that engage in certain activities, such as providing scholarships. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires that the selection process, funding and awarding of the scholarships are documented in the standing rules

## **AMENDING THE BYLAWS**

Authority to amend the bylaws rests with the membership. The membership adopts their bylaws, and they cannot be suspended. Notice of proposed amendments must be provided.

The bylaws can be amended (wording within the document is changed) only if:

- a quorum is present;
- previous notice of the proposed amendment(s) was provided to the membership at the previous regularly scheduled meeting or at least 30 days prior to the meeting at which the proposed amendment(s) will be considered for approval; and
- two-thirds of the members present and voting approve the amendment(s).

## **SIMPLE STEPS TO AMEND THE BYLAWS**

1. Form a Bylaws Committee of experienced and knowledgeable PTA members. A special committee may be formed by the executive board or by a motion adopted by the membership.
2. To verify that your bylaws have been updated to the current template, request a copy of your bylaws from Texas PTA by completing the online request form on the website.
  - Only an officer of your PTA who is on record at Texas PTA may make the request.
  - Texas PTA will email a copy of your bylaws on the current template with an approval stamp dated as of the last approval by Texas PTA, along with your standing rules on file and a worksheet to assist you with the items that may be changed by the Local PTA.
  - Allow up to two weeks for processing.
3. Make copies of the documents and the bylaws worksheet for everyone on the committee. It's usually a good idea to review your Standing Rules at the same time to ensure they continue to reflect the needs of your PTA.
4. You might publicize that the bylaws are being reviewed and encourage recommendations from the executive board and the membership. Determine whether these recommendations:
  - Have clear intent and meet the needs of your PTA;
  - Are not in conflict with or in addition to the wording of the provided template.
5. Discuss and approve any recommendations within the special committee.
6. Present the recommendations to the executive board for approval.
7. Provide notice of the proposed amendments to the membership (following the procedures outlined in the bylaws). Notice must include the exact wording proposed for approval.
8. Present the proposed amendments to the membership at a regular or special called meeting.
9. Complete the online submission form via the Texas PTA website. You will need the date of the meeting where notice of the amendments was given and the minutes where the amendments were approved.
10. Wait for approval from Texas PTA before implementing any of the amendments. Amended bylaws do not go into effect until the PTA receives the stamped, approved copy signed by the Texas PTA President.
11. Notify the membership of Texas PTA's approval, and provide access to the approved bylaws as requested.

**Note:** Review the information posted on the Texas PTA website regarding timing for acceptance and review of submitted bylaws.

## AMENDING THE STANDING RULES

The process for amending the standing rules is similar to that of amending the bylaws. One committee may be formed to review and amend both documents. However, if only amending the standing rules, follow these steps.

1. Form a Standing Rules Review Committee of experienced and knowledgeable PTA members.
2. A special committee may be formed by the executive board or by a motion adopted by the membership.
3. To verify that you have a current copy of your approved Standing Rules, request a copy of from Texas PTA by completing the online request form on the website.
  - Only an officer of your PTA who is on record at Texas PTA may make the request.
  - Texas PTA will email a copy of your bylaws on the current template and the standing rules on file with an approval stamp dated as of the last approval by Texas PTA.
  - Allow up to two weeks for processing.
4. Make copies of the current bylaws and standing rules for everyone on the committee. Review both documents since they both contain information as to the structure and governance of the PTA.
  - If no standing rules exist, use the Sample Standing Rules for Local PTAs/PTSAs, available for download at the Texas PTA website, as a guide to create some for your PTA.
5. You might publicize that the standing rules are being reviewed/created and encourage recommendations from the executive board and the membership. Determine whether these recommendations:
  - Meet the needs of your PTA;
  - Have clear intent;
  - Are not in conflict with or duplicate any wording in the bylaws; and
  - Follow Texas PTA procedures and guidelines contained in Texas PTA publications.
6. Discuss and approve any recommendations within the special committee.
7. Present the recommendations to the executive board for approval.
8. Provide notice of the proposed amendments to existing wording or new wording to the membership, if possible. Notice must include the exact wording proposed for approval. If you are making a large number of changes to the standing rules, a complete revision may be in order. The revision would be adopted in place of the current standing rules and copies should be available to members in advance.
9. Present the proposed wording to the membership at a regular or special called meeting.
  - When amending existing wording:
    - If previous notice was provided, a majority vote of the membership is required.
    - If previous notice was not provided, a two-thirds vote of the membership is required.
  - When adopting new wording, a majority vote is required.
10. Complete the online submission form via the Texas PTA website. You will need to upload the minutes from the meeting where the Standing Rules amendments were approved.

11. Consider any comments or suggestions from the Texas PTA Bylaws Committee, and make any changes necessary that do not change the original intent. If the committee member's suggestions do change intent, then the revised wording would need to be approved by the membership.
12. Provide access to, or copies of the approved standing rules to the membership as requested.

## **POLICIES**

The Texas PTA Board of Directors adopts policies, as needed, to provide direction to the Local and Council PTAs. These policies are posted on the Texas PTA website at [www.txpta.org](http://www.txpta.org).

The Standards of Continuing Affiliation, which state the requirements to maintain "active" and "in good standing" status with PTA are attached to the back of your bylaws.

## **PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

As stated in the bylaws, Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised is the PTA parliamentary authority.

"The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the National PTA and its constituent associations in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not in conflict with these bylaws, the bylaws of the Texas PTA, and the bylaws of the National PTA or the articles of incorporation."

In such case as the bylaws, standing rules or other adopted rules do not address a particular action or process, then Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised is consulted for direction.

*Note: The term "newly revised" refers to the fact that the latest version of this publication is the one designated for use as reference. This publication is revised approximately every 10 years, and the latest edition is the 11th edition published in 2011.*

## **APPROVED MOTIONS**

In the absence of an adopted rule in the bylaws or standing rules, the executive board or membership may elect to adopt a rule for the current meeting. For example, if there is no special rule regarding the length of time allowed for debate, a member may speak up to 10 minutes on the pending motion. The members in a meeting may, however, adopt a motion that would limit debate to a shorter period of time, such as two minutes. This decision could be accomplished by a main motion or by using unanimous consent. (see section on voting)

## **PROCEDURES**

In addition to the governing documents adopted by the association, procedures can be created to address methods of business outside of a meeting.

## **WRITTEN AND UNWRITTEN**

National and Texas PTA have written numerous documents to assist PTAs in details of day-to-day business. These documents are written in the form of publications, resource guides, sample documents, forms and white papers. This publication is one example of a procedural document.

Visit the National and Texas PTA websites to review and download or purchase these resources.

## **TRADITION/HISTORY**

Other methods of operation may have been followed for as long as can be remembered. "We have always done it that way" is a phrase that is often used as the basis for a procedure or process. If a procedure is, indeed, part of a group's history and it does not conflict with any written rules or procedures, then that tradition can and should be upheld. It's always a good idea to revisit traditions to evaluate if they continue to meet the needs of the members, your community and your PTA.

# Meetings

Meetings are held for members to make the decisions that direct the actions of the association and to be kept informed of the progress and business being conducted on their behalf. The members direct all decisions by approving everything from the bylaws and standing rules to budgets and activities.

The PTA bylaws address emergency voting, which can occur outside of a PTA meeting.

Note: Only members may participate in a meeting. While non-members may attend, they may not speak, make motions, debate or vote.

## MEETING GROUPS

- Membership – In these meetings, the members of the association, those who have paid their dues, direct the work of the association.
- Executive board – The executive board consists of the elected and appointed officers, the principal and others listed in the bylaws. Usually, the standing committee chairs are executive board members, and the executive board may also include council delegates, teacher or faculty representatives, and others.

Texas PTA is a membership association, and thus is not subject to the Texas Open Meeting Act.

Only executive board members attend executive board meetings. A non-executive board member may request the permission of the president to address the executive board. A non-executive board member is only allowed to ask a question, give a report or provide information, and then he or she leaves the meeting. A non-executive board member cannot participate in discussion or the voting process.

**COMMITTEES** – Two types of committees exist in PTA.

- A standing committee is a committee whose work is ongoing throughout the year.
- A special committee is a committee with a specific task, and the committee is dissolved once that task has been completed.

*Examples: A Program Committee works year-round, whereas a Nominating Committee is elected, completes the slate, and dissolves after the election.*

## TYPES OF MEETINGS

- Regular meetings – These meetings are those membership meetings set by the bylaws and the executive board meeting that are set at the beginning of the year.
- Special meetings – These meetings are called, with appropriate notice, between the regular meetings in order to address a specific item of business. The PTA bylaws contain special provisions for calling special meetings.

## QUORUM



According to Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, "The minimum number of members who must be present at the meetings of a deliberative assembly for business to be legally transacted is the quorum of the assembly."

In setting a quorum, it should be the largest number that can be expected to attend any meeting except in very bad weather or other extremely unfavorable conditions.

A meeting can be called to order if there is not a quorum. Reports can be presented, announcements can be made, but no action can be taken without a quorum.

Quorum is determined in two different ways in PTA.

- Executive board and committee meetings – The quorum is a majority (more than half) of the filled positions. Example: If there are 25 positions on the executive board, but only 12 positions are filled, then the quorum is seven.

*Note: An individual can only serve in one position. An executive board member may temporarily serve in another position while trying to locate an individual to fill the vacancy. Remember, there are no co-officers or co-chairs.*

- Membership meetings – The quorum for membership meetings is stated in the bylaws. The minimum required by Texas PTA for a Local PTA is 10 members, but each PTA determines this number.
- It is the secretary's responsibility to assist the president in confirming quorum at the opening of each meeting.

## **MEMBER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

According to the PTA bylaws, "Membership in PTA shall be open without discrimination to anyone who believes in and supports the mission and purposes of National PTA and Texas PTA."

Paying dues to a Local PTA includes membership in the National PTA and the Texas PTA, with all the benefits of such membership.

Parliamentary procedure is used to protect the rights of the members, but, too often, only the leaders of the group are knowledgeable enough to use it effectively. Leaders and members all need to be aware of their rights and responsibilities.

## **LEADERSHIP ROLES IN A MEETING**

While every member has the responsibility to carefully observe the proceedings and take action when necessary, the officers of the association have specific roles in managing a successful meeting. The parliamentarian's role has already been defined. Other officers' roles are specified below.

### **PRESIDENT**

The success of the association depends largely upon the attitude and skill of the chair, who should be impartial, courteous, tactful, dignified, firm and self-controlled.

The chair who is familiar with parliamentary law can inform the assembly on proper procedure and observe the rules for the protections of all. Following parliamentary procedure allows the chair to facilitate business and ensure fair consideration of all questions.

## The president:

- Secures order and quiet through poise, dignity and respect. Noise is never subdued by noise.
- Shows tolerance for the opinions of all members, recognizing them as a means of broadening judgment and, possibly, benefiting the PTA.
- Prepares an agenda with all business outlined in proper order.
- Stands to call the meeting to order, to put the question to a vote, to give his or her decision on a point of order, and, in large assemblies, to recognize speakers. On other occasions, he may remain seated.
- Refers to himself or herself in the third person as “the chair” and avoids terms such as “I” and “my.” The other officers are referred to by position, such as “the secretary” and not as “my secretary.”
- Serves as ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating and Financial Reconciliation Committees. The president may attend committee meetings but is not under any obligation to do so and is not counted in the quorum.
- Retains control of the entire meeting and does not “turn over” the meeting to anyone. The responsibility for the whole meeting rests with the president.
- Carries out the will of the assembly, as the elected leader, and does not bend the will of the assembly to his own. Leadership is power over problems, not power over people. The president should make preparations to meet anticipated problems.
- Calls for report of a committee, not the report of a committee chair.

Treats all members and all matters equally. When calling for a vote, both the affirmative and the negative vote are required. Even if it appears that the decision is decided by the affirmative vote, the negative vote is called for in order to provide every member his or her opportunity to be heard.

- Ensures that the membership understands the result of the vote pending. If there might be any confusion, the president clarifies the effect of an affirmative or negative vote.
- Verifies the result of a vote, and calls for a counted vote when the rising vote was inconclusive.
- Appoints committee chairs as authorized by the bylaws. When a committee is formed within a meeting, committee members are named before the meeting is adjourned unless otherwise decided by the assembly.
- Provides opportunities for other executive board members to share responsibility and participate in meetings.
- Asks for advice from the parliamentarian when a question is raised about parliamentary procedure.
- Decides all parliamentary questions. If the parliamentarian was consulted, the chair makes the ruling to the assembly and is not obligated to follow the parliamentarian’s recommendation. Such decisions, however, are subject to appeal.
- Uses unanimous or general consent (if there is no objection) in order to expedite business, especially for non-controversial amendments or whenever the will of the membership seems clear.

## **PRESIDENT-ELECT**

PTAs have the option to add president-elect as a position on the executive board. Should a PTA choose to amend their bylaws to add this officer, the position would be available for election in spring following adoption by the members and approval by Texas PTA.

When a president-elect is included as an officer, the term limits for both president and president-elect are limited to one year meaning they can not be re-elected to the same position. The president-elect would serve as an aide to the president and chair meetings in the president's absence, could have other duties, and would then automatically become president the following year.

The first year of implementing this change, the nominating committee would need to slate a president and a president-elect but for all future years, only the president-elect would be elected. When the members elect a president-elect, they are also electing their future president.

President-elect holds the same privileges as president in that they are an ex-officio member of every committee except the Nominating Committee and the Financial Reconciliation Committee.

## **VICE PRESIDENT(S)**

In the absence of the president (and president-elect), the first vice president chairs the meeting. If the PTA has multiple vice presidents and the first vice president is not present, then the meeting is chaired by the next vice president as designated in the order listed in the bylaws.

If the president and all vice presidents are absent, then the secretary calls the meeting to order and follows the procedure indicated below.

## **SECRETARY**

The secretary records all business transacted at the meetings of the association and of the executive board.

### **The secretary:**

- Has a copy of the bylaws, standing rules, membership list, minute's book and a roster of executive board members and committee members for reference at each meeting.
- Prepares, presents and maintains the minutes of the meetings.
- Assists the president in establishing quorum.
- Calls the meeting to order in the absence of the president and vice president(s) and proceeds with the election of a chair pro tem to run the meeting.
- Counts a rising vote, when requested by the chair.

# CONDUCTING A MEETING

## Preparation For A Meeting

- Gavel (if used)
- Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised
- Local PTA bylaws (state approved)
- Local PTA standing rules, if adopted
- Agenda
- Script (if needed)
- Minutes
- Reports: Officer(s), executive board, committee(s)
- Lectern and microphone (if needed)
- Voting cards
- Ballots
- Ballot box
- Blank Teller's Committee report form

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

The order of business is dictated by parliamentary procedure, as found in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised. A motion or unanimous consent is needed to change the order of business.

*Note: If the chair is concerned that quorum may be lost and important business is pending, he or she would be advised to ask the membership to change the order to allow that business to be addressed.*

## AGENDA

- Call to Order
- Opening Ceremonies (optional)
- Reading and Approval of Minutes
- Report of Treasurer
- Letters or Communications
- Report of the executive board
- Reports of Officers and Standing Committees
- Reports of Special Committees and/or Special Orders
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Program
- Announcements
- Adjournment

See the BASICS President Resource Guide for script samples

## CALL TO ORDER

The president, as the chair, stands, raps the gavel once and calls the meeting to order. The president declares whether or not a quorum is present, so both the members are aware and the secretary notes the fact in the minutes.

If the secretary and/or the parliamentarian are not present, the chair appoints a member(s) to perform those responsibilities for the meeting.

## OPENING CEREMONIES (OPTIONAL)

An invocation, pledges to the flags, a poem, a song or an inspirational message may be presented. If more than one of these is used, use the rule of "God before country" when determining the order.

## **READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The chair recognizes the secretary for the reading of the minutes.

The secretary stands and either reads the minutes, announces the minutes draft has been distributed, or announces that the minutes were approved by committee.

The chair can either accept a motion to approve the minutes (either as presented or as amended) or use unanimous consent.

For the current meeting, the chair may allow the membership to approve the minutes at the next meeting or appoint a committee to approve the minutes. Committee approval is recommended when the length of time between meetings causes concern for accuracy (last meeting of the year).

Minutes are presented at every meeting unless they were previously approved by committee, which is simply announced and noted in the current meeting minutes.

## **REPORT OF TREASURER**

The chair recognizes the treasurer for the financial report. A financial report is not optional and must be presented at every meeting.

The treasurer stands, addresses the chair and reads the report, which includes (at the least) the beginning balance, total income, total expenditures and the ending balance. The chair states that the report is filed for financial reconciliation.

## **LETTERS OR COMMUNICATIONS**

The secretary reads any communications received. Action is considered, if required.

## **REPORT OF THE executive board**

The secretary reads a summary report (not the minutes) for the information of the members. If recommendations are presented, the secretary moves the adoption of each recommendation individually.

## **REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEES**

The chair calls for the report of the committee (not the chair's report).

A report from a committee may be informational or require action, as determined by a majority vote of the committee. Reports with information only are read to the voting body. Those reports requiring action are presented as a motion to the membership (no second required), and the members vote to approve either as presented or amended or reject.

The member (usually the committee chair) presenting the report moves the adoption of the motion. If no recommendation is made, no motion is needed.

The chair need not recognize the committee chair if there is no report.

The principal will often report at this time following the president's report.

## **REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES AND/OR SPECIAL ORDERS (IF NEEDED)**

The chair calls for the report of the special committees, if needed.

The reports of special committees follow the same rules as those for standing committees. If no special committees exist, this item of business does not appear on the agenda.

Motions made a “special order” – by a 2/3 vote at an earlier time – are addressed at this point. Also, matters required by the bylaws to be taken up at a specific meeting are in order at this time (election of Nominating Committee, Financial Reconciliation Committee report, election of officers, etc.).

Note: The chair may determine that this business needs to be moved higher in the agenda to maintain quorum.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

The chair announces (but does not call for) business under this item. Unfinished business consists of business left unfinished at the previous meeting or business postponed to this meeting (if group meets at least quarterly). Minutes of the previous meeting will indicate any unfinished business.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

The chair calls for new business. Members may bring any new business before the association (if it is within the scope of the association). A motion is necessary to introduce new items of business.

## **PROGRAM**

The chair introduces the program/parent education chair, who presents the program or introduces the program presenter(s).

The meeting is not “turned over” to the program chair, nor does the program chair “turn the meeting back to the president.” The chair remains in control of the meeting from the call to order until adjournment.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The chair should, if possible, make all announcements. Announcements include the date of the next meeting, important events and activities, etc.

The principal may be asked to speak here.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The chair asks if there is any further business. If any additional business exists, it is handled at this time. If no further business exists, then the chair declares the meeting adjourned.

No motion is necessary to adjourn.

# Motions and Voting

All business brought before the association is put in the form of a motion. Eight steps are required to handle a motion as explained in detail below.

## STEP 1: OBTAINING THE FLOOR

- The member stands and addresses the chair by title, by saying “Mr. (or Madam) President,” or “Mr. (or Madam) Chair.”
- The member does not speak further until recognized by the chair.

## STEP TWO: ASSIGNING THE FLOOR

- The chair recognizes the member, using his name, if known.
- The chair is under no obligation to recognize a motion made by a member who does not wait for recognition by the chair.

## STEP THREE: MAKING THE MOTION

- After being recognized by the chair, the member then states the motion, beginning with the words: “I move.”
- Motions should be worded in the affirmative; however, if strong feeling must be expressed, it may be done by a negative motion.

## STEP FOUR: SECONDING THE MOTION

A second is necessary to avoid spending time considering a question that only one member favors. A motion coming from committee does not require a second as a group of people have already agreed to debate the item.

- Any member who wants the motion to be considered states: “I second the motion,” or “I second it,” or simply, “Second.” The member does not need to be in favor of the motion to second it.
- A motion is seconded without obtaining the floor.

## STEP FIVE: STATING THE MOTION

- The chair states, “The motion has been made and seconded that... Is there discussion?” Only after the chair states the motion is it before the assembly. The chair must correctly state a motion before the assembly can take action. (Never say, “You have heard the motion.”)
- Do not allow members to state motions by saying, “so moved,” since this makes it very difficult for the secretary to record the exact wording of a motion.
- If no second is heard, the chair may ask, “Is there a second to the motion?” If he or she feels that there is confusion or that the motion was not heard, he or she may repeat the motion.
- If no second is made, the chair proceeds with the next item of business.

## STEP SIX: DISCUSSION OR DEBATE

- Immediately after stating the question, the chair asks the maker of the motion if he or she would like to speak first in debate.
- The chair gives the chance to speak to every member who wishes it. Pro and con speakers should be given alternating opportunities to speak, if possible, and all speakers should tactfully be kept to rules of order and to the question.
- Each member has two opportunities to speak to the motion. A member may exercise his or her first opportunity to speak and, then, may speak only once more after every other member has the chance to speak.
- The chair recognizes a member who has not previously spoken to the motion in preference to one who has spoken.
- All statements must be addressed to the chair and not to another member.
- The chair does not enter into discussion. Should the president wish to debate, the chair must ask the vice president to preside. He or she does not resume the chair until after the final disposition of the question under discussion. The president may vote when the vote would change the outcome (to make or break a tie) or when the voting is by ballot.
- Debate continues until no one wishes to speak or until someone moves to close debate.
- Members cannot close debate by shouting, "Question." A member must seek recognition and make the motion properly and requires a 2/3 vote to pass. ("I move the previous question.")

### Amendments

Before the chair restates the motion, the maker of the motion has the right to modify his/her motion or to withdraw it entirely.

The motion "to amend" is used to modify the wording of the pending motion before the pending motion is voted upon. In order for the members to understand an amendment, the amendment needs to be specific regarding how and where the amendment will change the pending motion.

The most common ways to amend a motion are to:

- Insert (inserting words, sentences or paragraphs) or add (when new wording is added to the end of a sentence or paragraph)
- Strike out words (removing words, sentences, paragraphs)
- Strike out and insert (the inserted words replace struck out words)

Examples:

*Main motion:* "I move we have a parenting program at the park."

*Inserting:* "I move to amend the motion by adding 'in October' after 'program' [effect of amendment if adopted: "I move we have a parenting program in October at the park."]

*Striking:* "I move to amend the motion by striking "at the park" [effect of amendment if adopted: "I move we have a parenting program in October."]

*Striking and inserting:* "I move to amend the motion by striking 'October' and inserting 'November on the school grounds' [effect of amendment if adopted: "I move that we have a parenting program in November on the school grounds."]

*Substituting:* "I move to substitute the following for the motion on the floor: 'that we have an ice cream social'." [Effect of amendment if adopted: "I move that we have an ice cream social."]



## Rules for Amendments

Keep the wording as simple as possible. If the process becomes too confusing, then separate the issues for ease of discussion or decision.

- Only two amendments (primary and secondary) may be pending on a main motion at any time.
- Only one method of amendment may be used at one time. For example, the amendment may insert words in the middle of the motion, but it may not insert in the middle and add words at the end of the statement.
- Discussion of an amendment must relate only to the amendment, unless the whole motion is affected by substitution.
- An amendment must be germane to the question under consideration. If both a primary and a secondary amendment are proposed, both amendments must address the same issue in the motion (such as time or cost).
- Vote first on the secondary amendment, followed by the primary, and then finally the motion.

## STEP SEVEN: PUTTING THE QUESTION

- The chair states, “The question is on the motion to .... Those in favor say ‘aye.’ Those opposed say ‘no.’” (The negative vote is called for on all motions except courtesy motions.)
- The chair always states the method of voting. Voting can be by unanimous or general consent (“if there is no objection...”), by voice, by show of hands, by rising to be counted, or by ballot.

## STEP EIGHT: ANNOUNCING THE VOTE

- The chair states either, “The affirmative has it, and we will...” or “The negative has it, and the motion is lost.” The chair always announces the vote.
- A tie vote on any motion means the motion is lost except on an appeal from the decision of the chair. A tie vote sustains the chair’s decision.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- A motion may be brought before the association for a second consideration by a motion: a) to reconsider the vote, b) to rescind, or c) to take from the table. A lost motion may be brought back as a new motion at any future meeting.
- A motion to ratify is used to confirm some action that requires the approval of the association or of some emergency action taken at a meeting when a quorum was not present. An association can only ratify a request that is within the bylaws or in a motion. Do not ask for ratification for expenditures, unless they are specifically outlined in the budget or unless you can afford to pay for the item if the association refuses to ratify it.
- In the motion to appeal from the decision of the chair, the appeal is the question before the assembly. The chair puts the question without leaving the chair and has the right to debate first and last if the appeal is debatable. The member appealing the decision is entitled to be the second to debate. Each member may speak only once on an appeal.
- A motion that has been laid on the table can be taken from the table during the meeting at which it was tabled (after at least one item of business has been transacted) or at the next meeting by any member.
- If the assembly wishes to adjourn before all business is completed, it must be adjourned by a motion.

# Eight Essential Steps of a Main Motion

---

## ACTION FROM THE FLOOR

1. **Obtaining the Floor:** Member rises and addresses the chair by saying: *“Mr. President”* or *“Mr. Chairman.”*

## ACTION BY THE CHAIR

2. **Assigning the Floor:** The chair recognizes the member by bowing to him or by speaking his name: *“Mr. Jones.”*

3. **Making the Motion:** The proper form for introducing a motion is: *“I move that...”*

4. **Seconding the Motion:** Member states: *“I second the motion.”* A second is necessary to avoid spending time considering a question that only one member favors.

5. **Stating the Motion:** The chair states: *“The motion has been made and seconded that... Is there discussion?”* Only after the motion is stated by the chair is it before the assembly.

6. **Discussion:** (debate) All statements must be addressed to the chair. Debate continues until no one wishes to speak or until someone moves to close debate.

7. **Putting the Question:** The chair states: *“The question is on the motion (state motion). Those in favor will say ‘aye.’ Those opposed will say ‘no.’”* (The negative vote is called for on all motions except courtesy motions.)

8. **Announcing the Vote:** The chair states either, *“The affirmative has it and we will...”* or *“The negative has it and the motion is lost.”* The chair always announces the vote.

## PARLIAMENTARY MOTIONS IN PRACTICE

To do this:	Say this:	Does this motion interrupt?	Do you need a second?	Is it debatable?	Can it be amended?	What vote is needed?
State a main motion	I move that ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority*
Adopt/accept a report	I move that the report be adopted.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend a pending motion	I move to amend by <i>(striking out, striking out and inserting or adding, or inserting or adding) ...</i>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend something previously adopted <i>(such as bylaws or budget)</i>	I move to amend by <i>(striking out, striking out and inserting or adding, or inserting or adding) ...</i>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Two-thirds
Substitute the entire motion	I move to amend by substituting the following ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Suspend a standing rule	I move to suspend the rule ...	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Postpone to a certain time	I move to postpone the ... until ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Request closer study/research	I move to refer the matter to the _____ committee.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Request for immediate information	I have a request for information. – or – A point of information,	Yes	No	No	No	No vote
Limit or extend debate	For this meeting, I move to limit debate to ___ minutes per member. – or – I move to extend debate by ___ minutes.	No	Yes	Maybe*	Yes	Yes
End debate	I move the previous question.	No	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds
Ballot vote	I call for a ballot vote.	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Verify voice vote	I call for a division. – or – Division!	Yes	No	No	No	No vote
Question the ruling of the chair	I appeal the decision of the chair.	<i>Yes (only if immediate)</i>	Yes	No	No	Majority in the negative
Question whether rules are being followed	Point of order. – or – I rise to a point of order.	Yes	No	No <i>(unless the chair allows the assembly to decide)</i>	No	No vote <i>(unless chair allows the majority of the assembly to decide)</i>

\*Refer to *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* for specific guidance.

## Motions: Ranking and Requirements

RANKING MOTIONS	PRINCIPAL REQUIREMENTS						
The motions are listed in order of rank. When any one of these motions is immediately pending, those above it are in order and those below it are not in order.	Recognition	Second	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required	Reconsiderable	May Interrupt
<b>PRIVILEGED MOTIONS</b>							
13. Fix the time to which to adjourn	yes	yes	no	yes	majority	yes	no
12. Adjourn	yes	yes	no	no	majority	no	no
11. Recess	yes	yes	no	yes	majority	no	no
10. Raise a question of privilege	no	no	no	no	X	no	yes
9. Call for order of the day	no	no	no	no	X	no	yes
<b>SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS</b>							
8. Lay on the table	yes	yes	no	no	majority	no	no
7. Previous question (to close debate)	yes	yes	no	no	2/3 vote	yes*	no
6. Modify debate	yes	yes	no	yes	2/3 vote	yes	no
5. Postpone definitely	yes	yes	yes	yes	majority	yes	no
4. Commit or recommit	yes	yes	yes	yes	majority	yes*	no
3. Amend	yes	yes	yes*	yes*	majority	yes	no
2. Postpone indefinitely	yes	yes	yes	no	majority	+	no
1. MAIN MOTION	yes	yes	yes	yes	majority*	yes	no
<b>NON-RANKING MOTIONS</b>							
Whether these motions are in order depends upon the business already under consideration and what purpose they may serve when introduced.							
<b>INCIDENTAL MOTIONS</b>							
Appeal	no	yes	*	no	majority	yes	yes
Close nominations or the polls	yes	yes	no	yes	2/3 vote	no	no
Consider seriatim	yes	yes	no	yes	majority	no	no
Divide the question	yes	yes*	no	yes*	majority*	no	no*
Division of the assembly	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes
Object to consideration of a question	yes	no	no	no	2/3 vote	#	yes*
Parliamentary inquiry	no	no	no	no	chair	no	yes
Point of order	no	no	no	no	chair	no	yes
Reopen nominations or the polls	yes	yes	no	yes	majority	#	no
Suspend the rules*	yes	yes	no	no	2/3 vote*	no	no
Withdraw a motion	yes	no	no	no	majority	#	yes*
<b>MOTIONS THAT BRING A QUESTION AGAIN BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY</b>							
Reconsider	yes	yes	=	no	majority	no	no
Take from the table	yes	yes	no	no	majority	no	no

### KEY TO MARKINGS

\* See *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* for special rules.

X Usually no vote taken; chair rules.

+ Only an affirmative vote may be reconsidered.

# Only a negative vote may be recognized.

= Debatable when applied to a debatable motion.

## VOTING

Members may determine the outcome of a question by voting in one of these ways:

- Voice (viva voce) – This is a customary method for voting on motions that require a majority vote.
- Unanimous Consent (general consent) – This form of voting asks the members if there is any objection to the motion; if no one objects, the motion is adopted. If there is an objection, then the issue must be settled through the normal motion process.
- Show of Hands or Cards – Members raise their hands or voting cards to vote. This is used when a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote is needed.
- Standing or Rising Vote – Members stand to vote. This is used when a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote is needed. This is seldom used but is helpful when it is difficult to tell whether those in favor outnumber those against.
- Standing Counted Vote – Members stand to vote and remain standing until their vote is counted.
- Roll Call Vote – When each name is called during roll call, the vote is “Yea,” “Nay” or “Present” (if abstaining). The record of how each member voted is recorded in the minutes. This can be used when on an emergency phone vote as votes cannot be seen.
- Ballot Vote – This method can be requested by a member and is often used when when a confidential vote is desired (controversial issue). It is also necessary when there are two or more nominees for an elected position.

The privilege of voting is limited to members of the association who are present. The easiest method to verify voting members is to have a printed list of the current membership organized alphabetically by class/grade. Have everyone sign in and members receive a “voting card” (colored slip of paper) or a ballot if the need is known in advance. You can arrange for a voting members section if desired.

The president (or chair) appoints a tellers committee, including a chair and at least two (2) tellers, whose duties are to distribute, collect, and count the ballots. A nominee for an office cannot be involved in the election procedure as a teller. The tellers committee chair will present a “tellers committee report” with the outcome of the vote.

The teller’s committee report would state:

- the number of votes cast;
- number of ballots determined illegal (unable to read writing, more names on ballot than directed, names on ballot who have not been nominated, two or more ballots folded together);
- the number of votes cast for each person (or in the case of a Yes/No ballot, the number votes casts for each).

If it is a plurality vote, the outcome is the person(s) with the most votes (see example on bottom of page 28).

If it is majority or  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote, the number needed for the motion to pass would also be stated in the report.

Example of a majority ballot vote report: Total votes cast 100, votes necessary for approval 51, illegal votes 2, votes in favor 62, votes against 36. (The ineligible number plus those in favor and those against must equal total number of votes cast.) The chair will repeat the report and state the outcome which in this case is that the motion passes.

Example of a  $\frac{2}{3}$  ballot vote report: Total votes cast 100, votes necessary for approval 67, illegal votes 2, votes in favor 62, votes against 36. (The ineligible number plus those in favor and those against must equal total number of votes cast.) The chair will repeat the report and state the outcome which in this case is that the motion fails.

The president (or chair) repeats the report of the tellers committee and declares the outcome of the vote

(person elected, motion passes/fails).

**All these numbers must be recorded in the minutes.**

Following the announcement of the outcome of the vote, the chair of the tellers committee (or another member) moves that the ballots be destroyed to avoid storing them beyond the election. This would require a second and a majority vote.

PTA, per the bylaws, does not allow proxy voting. Members must be attendance at the meeting to vote. No one can vote for another member.

Different types of motions require different types of approval in order to pass. Refer to the chart “Motions: Ranking and Requirements” in this publication for the type of vote required. In general, a larger number of votes are necessary if a member’s rights may be limited by the decision. For example, a motion to end debate (previous question) may mean that a member does not have the opportunity to speak. This motion requires a two-thirds vote to pass.

**Majority Vote** – Requires more than one half of the votes cast. For example, if 30 votes were cast, you would need 16 in favor for the vote to carry.

Majority Votes are used to approve or adopt new business items. An example would be the first time the new budget is presented for the year, it is adopted by majority vote.

**Two-Thirds Vote** – Requires at least two-thirds of the votes cast for the vote to carry.

Two-Thirds Votes are used to approve changes to items after they are adopted. An example would be amending the budget which requires a two-thirds vote.

**Tie Vote** – This vote results in neither a majority nor a two-thirds vote, so it is a lost vote. In cases of an election, the vote would be taken again. In the case of a motion, the motion fails when the vote is a tie.

**Plurality Vote** - Per the bylaws, the nominating committee is elected may by plurality. This means that the candidates who receive the most votes (not necessarily a majority) are the winners. This requires a ballot vote. (see procedures above)

#### Plurality Vote Example

Three nominating committee members are required per the bylaws and one alternate. Five members are nominated for the committee and members are instructed to vote for three members.

The votes are counted:

- Member A- 28 votes
- Member B- 8 votes
- Member C- 35 votes
- Member D- 16 votes
- Member E - 12 votes

The elected nominating committee members are: C, A, and D with E being the alternate. If there is a tie, a revote is in order. The full tellers report, including number of votes, is recorded in the minutes.

# Nominating Committee Support

The parliamentarian will be called upon during both the election of the Nominating Committee and of the Officers to read to the membership the appropriate section of the bylaws, informing them of the appropriate procedures.

The president may not serve on this committee but all other executive board members are eligible including the parliamentarian.

A packet prepared for the newly elected committee by the parliamentarian can provide the nominating committee with the necessary tools to complete their work.

The packet should include:

- Current bylaws and standing rules with the sections for elected officers and their duties noted
- Sample nominating committee report
- Confidentiality form
- Guidelines for the Nominating Committee

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE TIPS**

- The members always nominate and elect the committee members and alternates. Appointment is not an option.
- Nominate individuals to be committee members and alternates who will represent the social, geographic and ethnic makeup of the association. The PTA's future is determined by the leadership qualities and people skills of the individuals selected by the Nominating Committee.
- Confirm that only members of that specific PTA are nominated to serve on the committee, and they agree to the nomination.
- Provide all members, with the exception of the president, with an opportunity to nominate or to be nominated for the committee. No one automatically serves as a committee member or alternate because of their position or title. The school principal does not serve on the committee unless elected to do so.

# Guidelines for Nominating Committee

A PTA can be no more effective than its leadership. The Nominating Committee is a special committee that holds the key to a successful PTA. The committee is responsible for presenting the best qualified nominees for office.

## SELECTING A CHAIR

The committee members meet immediately following the election meeting to elect the committee chair.

## MEETING

- Schedule the date, time and location for the committee meetings based on the availability of all committee members. Allow sufficient time to study and discuss possible candidates.
- Alternates do not attend meetings unless they are called to fill an original committee member's place. When the committee meets with an alternate serving, the alternate signs the confidentiality agreement and becomes a permanent member of the committee.
- Conduct the meetings only with a quorum (a majority of the committee members) present.
- Only committee members can attend the meetings. The committee may invite a consultant, such as the school principal, to advise the committee, but that individual must leave prior to discussion.
- Distribute a confidentiality agreement and secure the signatures of all committee members before any discussion takes place.
- Treat all discussion of the committee as strictly confidential. Reveal no names of anyone under discussion until the committee report is released according to established procedures.
- Understand that more than one meeting may be required.
- Review all sections of the bylaws relating to the duties of the Nominating committee including the month of the election meeting. The nominating committee report is published seven days prior to the election meeting.

## SELECTION OF NOMINEES

- Review all sections of the bylaws and standing rules relating to officer and executive board member duties
- Solicit suggestions for nominees from the membership, current executive board members and staff.
- Give careful consideration to qualifications of candidates, choosing the best person for each position. Individuals currently serving in a position are not automatically allowed to repeat in that position.
- Ask a committee member who is being considered for a position to leave the room during the discussion regarding his or her qualifications. That committee member can be present for the discussion of other candidates for that office and may vote.
- Contact prospective candidates during the committee meeting explaining the duties as outlined in the bylaws, standing rules and as reported by the current executive board members. If you are unsure about a position, ask the Parliamentarian for clarification or the person currently serving in the position.
- Prospective candidates for officer positions should be somewhat knowledgeable about PTA, be willing to attend training, have enthusiasm for the PTA vision, mission and purposes, and be willing to commit the time necessary for the position.
- Allow time for a candidate to consider the position before asking for his or her decision.
- Treat all candidates in a fair and consistent manner.
- Select one nominee for each officer position, and be prepared to state qualifications of nominees. In the event the committee cannot secure a nominee for a position, it remains "open" and the president calls for nominations for that position from the floor at the election meeting.
- Make committee decisions by ballot and majority vote.
- Reconvene the committee if a slated candidate withdraws between the publicizing of the committee report and the election meeting.



## **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE**

- Prepare a written report signed by all committee members who agree with the report.
- Publicize the report via regular publicity channels at least seven days before the election meeting.
- Present the report to the executive board for information only. The committee chair may present the report to the current PTA president, as a courtesy, prior to presentation to the executive board.
- Present the report at the election meeting. The committee chair usually reads the report.
- Pass the report to the president, who reads the report, opens the floor for nominations and conducts the elections.
- Pre-arrange for a member to make the motion to destroy ballot votes (if the election is by ballot).

## **ELECTION PROCESS**

- The Nominating Committee is dissolved once the report is read.
- Only a member who has not signed the report can nominate from the floor.
- If no Nominating Committee is elected, the election may be conducted at the appropriate meeting with all nominations coming from the floor. If the election is not conducted within the school year, then a representative from the Council or Texas PTA (Field Service Representative) conducts the meeting.

\_\_\_\_\_ PTA  
**Nominating Committee**  
**Confidentiality Agreement**

I hereby acknowledge by my signature below that any information either presented or discussed during the meetings of the \_\_\_\_\_ PTA Nominating Committee will not be divulged by me outside the meetings or with any individual not a member of this committee.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that a violation of this agreement shall result in my removal from the committee.

**Signature:**  
**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Example of a Nominating Committee's Report**

The ABC PTA Nominating Committee submits the following nominees for the year \_\_\_\_\_:

**President** \_\_\_\_\_

**Vice president** \_\_\_\_\_

**Secretary** \_\_\_\_\_

**Treasurer** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other Officer Positions as named in the bylaws ...**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_, Chair      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The report should be signed by all committee members who agree with the report

# Keeping Records

Compiling and maintaining a complete record your activities can be a huge help to those PTA Leaders who follow behind you. Passing along important information to your successor shouldn't be viewed as micromanaging the future – quite the opposite! New Leaders that have access to previous PTA practices can more easily adjust or make needed changes.

## How to Compile Your Records

Ask yourself, "If I knew nothing about the job, could I do it with this information?" Depending on your position, you may need hard copy materials at your fingertips. If so, using a loose-leaf folder or binder with tabbed dividers may be needed, while other positions could easily keep their records electronically via a shared or USB drive.

## SUGGESTED CONTENTS

### BYLAWS/STANDING RULES

- A current, date-stamped copy of the PTA Bylaws and Standing Rules. It's suggested that a member of the executive board request a copy each year (after August 1) from Texas PTA and distribute it to all executive board members. Visit [www.txpta.org/bylaws](http://www.txpta.org/bylaws) for more information.

### ROSTERS

- Current roster of executive board members with their contact information
- Current roster of PTA members
- Contact information for Texas PTA Field Service Representative, Council PTAs (if applicable), Texas PTA board members with comparable responsibilities, the Texas PTA State Office
- Resources, and related agencies and organizations in the community relevant to your position

### ITEMS RELATED TO YOUR POSITION (as applicable)

- Description and responsibilities of your position
- Current Texas PTA BASICS Resource Guide(s) relevant to your position
- Plan of Work approved by the executive board
- Reports prepared for meetings (executive board, membership and committee)
- Financial records including approved budgets, expense reports with copies of your receipts, or a copy of any deposit forms that you may have signed
- Promotional material, newsletter articles, evaluations, etc.
- Awards applications submitted to Council, Texas, or National PTA
- Summary of your term including recommendations for the following year

### PTA MEETINGS

- Agendas and approved minutes from each meeting
- Financial reports
- Relevant committee reports
- Information on upcoming events and programs sponsored by PTA at all levels
- Record of volunteer hours to be reported to the volunteer coordinator (if applicable)

# Resources

Texas PTA is committed to providing our volunteer leaders across the state with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in their role within PTA. Access to quality educational resources is a key component in supporting this success, as well as continuing to build strong Local and Council PTAs.

## TRAINING

**FOUNDATIONS** Leader Orientation has two components that must be completed. There is a \$10 course fee payable with the first component, and this fee is reimbursable by your PTA.

*Welcome to PTA* is a high-level orientation to PTAs that can only be taken online via the Texas PTA website at [www.txpta.org/training](http://www.txpta.org/training).

*Serving on a Local Board* is the nuts and bolts of leading your PTA. This portion of the course is taken in person and is provided by Field Service Representatives or Council PTAs (if applicable).

**BASICS** contain detailed information to support PTA Leaders in their specific board position. Every executive board member is strongly encouraged to attend a BASICS course for their own position, as well as any other related positions.

BASICS include a workshop and companion Resource Guide, along with other supporting resources. These training sessions are available on-demand via the Texas PTA website. Visit us online at [www.txpta.org/training](http://www.txpta.org/training) to register for free! Field Service Representatives and Council PTAs may also offer these courses as in-person training.

PTA Leaders can access the Resource Guides via the Texas PTA website or online store. Visit [www.txpta.org/local-pta-leaders](http://www.txpta.org/local-pta-leaders) to download free PDFs or [www.txpta.org/shop](http://www.txpta.org/shop) to purchase hard copies.

**SPOTLIGHTS** offer a short, in-depth review of some of the specific yet important topics and recurring PTA functions such as Bylaws and Standing Rules, Financial Reconciliations, Conducting a Meeting, and Nominations and Elections.

These training sessions are also available on-demand via the Texas PTA website at no charge. Visit [www.txpta.org/training](http://www.txpta.org/training) to get started today!

## NEWSLETTERS AND ALERTS

Texas PTA provides content-specific newsletters based on your PTA position. Please be certain you have submitted your own information to let Texas PTA know you are serving as a PTA Leader each year. Registering as a Local PTA Leader will help ensure you receive these important updates! Visit [www.txpta.org/officer-intake](http://www.txpta.org/officer-intake) to access the form.



 Texas PTA

 txstatepta

 texas\_pta

**THIS ITEM IS FOR PTA USE ONLY.**