



**NOMINATIONS,
VOTING AND ELECTION
GUIDE**

2011-2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS1
ELECTION OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE1
NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEETING2
SELECTING NOMINEES2
CRITERIA FOR SELECTING NOMINEES3
CONTACTING NOMINEES3
REPORTING4
DOs AND DON'Ts4
GUIDELINES FOR ELECTIONS5
 Check the Bylaws5
 Election Meeting5
VOTING7
 Types of Votes7
 Majority7
 Two-Thirds7
 Plurality7
VOTING RIGHTS OF OFFICERS7
VOTING PROCEDURE8
 General (unanimous) Consent.....8
 Abstaining.....8
VOTING METHODS8
CHOOSING THE METHOD OF VOTING9
YOU WANT A RE-VOTE9
SAMPLES10

**NOMINATIONS ARE IN ORDER...
WHERE LEADERSHIP BEGINS**

Serving on a nominating committee is an honor and a privilege. This committee is your PTA's most responsible, sensitive, and deliberative body. The decisions of the nominating committee will impact the future of your PTA. Please refer to Articles VI and VII of the Local PTA Bylaws.

THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

It is essential that committee members:

- Be chosen carefully to include both experienced, ongoing leaders, as well as newer members.
- Be elected on merit and ability – not on popularity. Keep personalities out of all meetings.
- Be aware of the importance of their assignment(s).
- Have knowledge of local PTA/council goals, purposes, and programs.
- Have knowledge of potential candidates' qualifications and abilities.
- Be able to give objective consideration to determine the best-qualified leaders for your PTA.
- Have courage to express ideas and to defend one's convictions.
- Use sound judgment and skill in evaluating possible nominees.
- Be tactful, have integrity and discretion, and be able to **keep all deliberations confidential**.

ELECTION OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The nominating committee is elected as stated in:

Article VI: Officer

****Section 8: Nominations**

a. There shall be a nominating committee composed of _____ (at least three and always an uneven number) who shall be elected at a regular general membership meeting, at least two months prior to the election of officers, as outlined in Article VI, Section 2.

NOTE: The ** indicates that this is a mandatory requirement of the New Jersey PTA.

Alternates are elected at the same time so they may be called to service if or when a member of the committee is unable to do so. Article VI, Section 8b

The alternates are to be notified at the same time as the regular membership as to when the committee is meeting.

The president is not a member of this committee and, therefore, does not attend its meeting(s) in any capacity. The president should ensure that the committee has copies of the most current bylaws, procedures, this guide, and the membership roster.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEETING

As soon as possible after the election of the nominating committee, the first member elected to the committee shall call the committee together, and the committee shall elect its own chair (Article VI, Section 8c).

The chair shall select a time and place for the meeting when all members can attend. The regular membership is notified of the time and place of the meeting.

The committee should be familiar with the duties of the offices to be filled before discussing any candidate. Study your bylaws and procedures. Article VII of the bylaws lists the Duties of Officers. Your bylaws or standing rules may also include requirements for candidates, such as years served on the board or years in membership.

Should a member of the committee find it necessary to resign before the committee has completed its work, the first alternate shall replace that person.

SELECTING NOMINEES

The committee's responsibility is to nominate the best-qualified candidate for each office.

Any PTA member may suggest the names of persons to be considered. However, the committee is not bound by such recommendations.

A presidential nominee should not be asked whom he/she would like for a running mate. This decision rests with the nominating committee. All nominees should be selected with the same care as the presidential nominee.

The committee should:

- Review the tenure of incumbent officers to determine their eligibility for another term in the same office or in another position. Try to avoid shuffling the officers.
- Think carefully about possible candidates: their qualifications, their ability to work well with others, and if they have sufficient time to do the job. Ask the president and other board members for input as to the performance of present board members.
- Consider the kind of leadership that will best achieve the aims and purposes of your PTA.
- **Nominate only one person to serve in an office.** The Not-For-Profit laws of the State of New Jersey prohibit more than one person serving in each office. **The National and State PTAs do not recognize co-officers.**
- **Avoid placing a past president into a vice-presidency.** This is a position in which one can learn about being president. Past presidents can give needed advice while holding other positions on the board.
- Develop a tentative slate of officers with possible alternates for each office to be filled. Unanimous consent is desirable, but only a majority is needed for someone to be a nominee.

- Keep **all deliberations of the nominating committee completely CONFIDENTIAL** and ensure that no information about the names of persons considered for office or those who declined to accept nominations are ever made public. It is unfair to the organization and to the member who accepts the nomination to discover that others received prior consideration.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTING NOMINEES

The nominating committee should carefully consider each potential nominee. The well being of the local PTA/council must be the priority. The criteria listed below should be considered and evaluated. The potential nominee:

- Must be a PTA card-holding member in good standing.
- Must be enthusiastic and supportive of the local PTA/council.
- Must believe in the Objects and purposes of PTA and believe that PTA is the best organization working for children and youth.
- Should have experience in PTA, though other organizational work may be considered.
- Should have knowledge of the organization and its role in the school and community.
- Can be relied upon to give PTA a satisfactory level of priority and commitment.
- Should have a good relationship with people.
- Must be fair and objective and able to subordinate personal interest to the interests and well being of the local PTA/council.
- Should have done a successful job carrying out past assigned responsibilities.

A member of the nominating committee may become a candidate for office without resigning from the committee. The member proposed for nomination should withdraw from the meeting while his/her qualifications are discussed and to allow for additional names to be submitted for consideration. The member may return to vote.

CONTACTING NOMINEES

Once a potential nominee has been agreed upon by the committee, contact should be made by the chair (unless delegated specifically to another committee member) during the committee meeting. The potential nominee is informed of the specific responsibilities of the office and gives a verbal consent to serve.

Written consent of each nominee must be obtained to place the name in nomination while the committee is in session, if possible. If this cannot be accomplished, the chair should inform the members of the committee of results of the contacts before writing the report.

It is rarely advisable to talk a reluctant candidate into accepting a nomination. The chair should advise nominees to attend the election meeting and the installation of officers.

REPORTING

The chair ensures that the names of those who have agreed to be nominees are published in accordance with the bylaws (Article VI, Sections 8d and 8f).

The committee's report may be presented to the executive board for information but does not need its approval before presenting the slate to the membership.

The chair presents the report (if unavailable, a member of the committee), written and signed by each member of the committee, at the time specified by the bylaws, but does not move its adoption or acceptance.

If the committee is unable to find a nominee for an office, it reports that fact at the meeting where the final report (the proposed slate of officers) is given. Nominations are then taken from the floor (nominees from the floor shall have given 5-20 days notice before the general membership meeting at which elections are to be held; notification must be in writing to the Local PTA President, Recording Secretary and Nominating Committee Chair. See Article V, Sec. 8g). **If the office is not filled at the election meeting, an election remains on the agenda at every succeeding meeting until the office is filled.**

Before voting takes place, the eligibility of all nominees from the floor should be checked by the chair of the nominating committee. This is to insure that dues are current for all nominees from the floor.

The nominating committee is automatically discharged when its report is presented to the membership. However, if a nominee withdraws before the election, the committee can be reactivated unless the bylaws state otherwise.

DOs AND DON'Ts

DO consider membership on a nominating committee an honor and a privilege, as well as a responsibility.

DO choose qualified people with skill, personality, enthusiasm, and time for the job.

DON'T select people because they expect to be asked or because they will be offended if not, or because they are your friends. Choose them because they are right for the job.

DO keep your deliberations confidential. No one needs to know he/she was not your final choice.

DON'T tell prospective candidates, "It's not a big job." The person accepting the position should know exactly what the job entails and be willing to serve.

DO consider new people so that your PTA grows and does not give the impression of being a "clique."

GUIDELINES FOR ELECTIONS

Check the Bylaws (Article VI, Sections 2, 8c, 8f & 8g) to determine the following:

1. When election meeting should be held;
2. How many days notice of the election meeting is required;
3. When nominating committee report is to be published (e.g., at previous meeting, in meeting notice, or the night of the meeting);
4. If additional nominations are called for at the election meeting. Some bylaws have additional stipulations (e.g., publishing names of all nominees).
5. Nominees from the floor shall have given _____ (see Article of Bylaws) days notice before the election meeting of their intent to run. Notification must be in writing to the Local PTA President, Recording Secretary and Nominating Committee Chair.

Election Meeting

1. The presiding officer asks for the nominating committee report. The chair of the nominating committee (or a member of the committee) presents the report: (A written copy is given to the president.)

“Madam/Mr. President

The nominating committee submits the following nominees:

For President: _____

For Vice President: _____

For Secretary: _____

For Treasurer: _____”

The report should be signed by the chair and the committee and should be dated.

The president then re-states all nominations.

The president calls for nominations from the floor:

“ _____ has been nominated by the committee for President. Are there any further nominations from the floor?”

(Pause to check the response of members)

“Seeing none, nominations for the office of President are closed.”

The president continues this process for each office. Nominations may be closed after each position, or as a whole, at the conclusion of the process, only if there is one nominee for each office.

Once nominations are closed, a 2/3 vote is required to re-open them. This process should only occur in an emergency situation.

Nominations do not require a second, but need the consent of the nominee in writing to be eligible. If coming from committee, the nominating committee should have procured these consents.

2. If there is only one nominee for each office, bylaws (Article VI, Section 3) provide for:
 - a. A voice vote: the presiding officer asks for all those in favor of the nominee to say aye, all opposed nay.
 - b. A vote by ballot: Determine the number of eligible voters by count. Ballots (pieces of paper can be used) must be distributed to members of the local PTA/council present and eligible to vote. Each person puts the name of the candidate(s) of his choice on the ballot and hands the ballot to a teller or puts it in a ballot box. All ballot voting is conducted at the general membership meeting only.
3. If there is more than one nominee for an office:
 - a. The president appoints tellers (at least two) to distribute ballots to members, collect the ballots, and count them. Membership cards should be shown or membership rosters used.
 - b. Dispense with those positions that have only one nominee. See 2a.
 - c. Take each position that has more than one nominee and follow 2b.

OR

Have ballots ready with all positions on them so that voters can write in a name for the nominee they prefer under the appropriate title.

4. The procedure for collecting ballots should be established before the election begins. Possible methods include:
 - a. Tellers give ballots to the members and collect them.
 - b. Tellers give ballots to the members, and the members give the ballots to the tellers, who then place them in a ballot box.
5. Members must be advised when and how ballots are to be collected.
 - a. The membership chair should have on hand a roster of members. Members should sign in and receive a ballot.
 - b. At least two people, designated by the president, should serve as election committee tellers to ensure that proper procedures are followed.
 - c. No candidate should be involved in the election procedure (as tellers, collecting ballots, counting votes).
 - d. In a contested election, each candidate may designate a person as an observer at the time ballots are counted. If a ballot box is used only during the general membership meeting, it must be supervised at all times.
 - e. The ballots are to be counted by the tellers and overseen by the appointed judge of elections (with two neutral people or one person acceptable to each nominee, if desired).
 - f. The tellers give the count to the presiding officer who announces the results and declares the new officers elected.
6. Ballots are not counted if:
 - a. The ballot is blank;
 - b. The name is unintelligible.

7. If ballots have been counted and no one candidate for a particular office receives a majority of the votes (half +1), a re-vote must be taken with all nominees for that position on the ballot until one candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, unless the bylaws provide for election by plurality vote, which means that the candidate with the largest number of votes is elected for the office.
8. A motion should be made designating a time to destroy the ballots.
9. The election report must be included in the minutes.

VOTING

Types of Votes

One very basic principle must always be observed. When determining the outcome of a vote, we are concerned only with votes cast, not the number of people present, since no one is required to vote.

Majority

This means more than half the votes cast. For example, if 19 votes were cast, a majority would be 10; if 20 votes were cast, a majority would be 11. It is commonly used in elections and on most motions.

Two-Thirds

This means 2/3 of the votes cast. If 30 votes are cast, a two-thirds vote is 20; if 31 votes are cast, a 2/3 vote is 21. To determine if you have a 2/3 vote, double the number of “no” votes, and if it adds up to less than the number of “yes” votes, the motion is carried. If it adds up to more than the number of “yes” votes, the motion is defeated. It is used only in the case of certain motions, such as to close debate, which takes away certain rights of a person or gives another person additional rights. These motions are listed in Robert’s Rules of Order.

Plurality

This is the largest number of votes to be given any candidate in which three or more choices are possible. Election by plurality is possible only where the bylaws so authorize. Three people are running for office. Candidate A receives 15 votes, candidate B receives 14 votes, and candidate C receives 13 votes. On a plurality bases, candidate A is elected.

VOTING RIGHTS OF OFFICERS

All PTA officers have the same voting privileges as other members. However, except in small boards or committees (as distinguished from an assembly), the presiding officer should protect his impartiality by voting only:

1. When the vote is by secret ballot;
2. When his/her vote will change the outcome: Break a tie, thus passing a motion; make a tie, thus defeating a motion; or cast a deciding vote in the case of a motion requiring a 2/3 vote. This is an option of the presiding officer, not a requirement. An effective presiding officer casts the deciding vote only when it is considered for the good of the PTA.

VOTING PROCEDURE

General (unanimous) Consent

This is a useful shortcut in voting, permitting the assembly to take action without going through the process of a regular vote. It is an excellent time saver and should be used wherever there seems to be a general agreement amongst the members. For example, *“If there is no objection, the minutes stand approved as read.”* After a slight pause, if there are no objections, the presiding officer merely states, *“They stand approved as read.”* Should one or more persons say, *“I object.”* then the motion must be put to a regular vote.

Abstaining

An abstention is not a vote and, therefore, is not counted. No member should vote on a question in which he/she has a direct personal interest. For example, if a motion proposes that the PTA enter into a contract with a firm of which a PTA member is an officer and would derive a profit from such a contract, the member should abstain from voting on the motion.

VOTING METHODS

Acclamation or Voice (Viva Voce) – “Aye” – “No”

By Rising – Best method used in verifying an inconclusive voice vote, where a close vote is anticipated, or in voting on motions requiring a two-thirds vote.

Show of Hands – An alternate method that can be used in place of a rising vote in a very small assembly.

Ballot – Used when secrecy of the members’ votes is desired, such as in elections. When counting the ballots, if two or more completed ballots are folded together, they are recorded as illegal votes.

Roll Call – Members respond when their names are called.

NOTE: PTA does not provide for absentee voting, voting by mail, or proxy votes.
--

CHOOSING THE METHOD OF VOTING

It is the privilege of the presiding officer to choose the method by which a vote will be taken. This choice is usually made on the basis of the size of the group, the nature of the motion being voted on, and the anticipated closeness of the vote. However, any member has the right to suggest the method to be used by using the motion "Motion on voting". It requires a second, is non-debatable, and is passed by a simple majority vote.

PTA bylaws call for the election of officers to be by ballot unless there is but one nominee for said office.

YOU WANT A RE-VOTE

When a member doubts the result of a voice vote or a vote by a show of hands, he/she can **call for division**, thereby requiring the vote to be taken again by rising. In a very small meeting where all present can clearly see one another, inconclusive voice vote may be re-taken by merely requesting a show of hands. Normally, the presiding officer will take a count on a re-vote, inviting the person who called for division to also count. However, he/she is not required to count unless someone makes a motion to that effect. Such a motion requires a second, is not debatable, and requires a majority vote.

SAMPLE BALLOT

President

Mark "X" Fold Once

Jim Block.....	_____
Eleanor Jones.....	_____
Rita Smith.....	_____
_____.....	_____
_____.....	_____

SAMPLE TALLY SHEET

President

Jim Block	_____	9
Eleanor Jones	_____	25
Rita Smith	_____	10
John Doe (ineligible)	_____	0

SAMPLE TELLER'S REPORT

President

Eligible to vote	_____	47
Number of votes cast	_____	47
Necessary for election	_____	24
Eleanor Jones received	_____	25
Rita Smith received	_____	10
Jim Block received	_____	9
Illegal votes		
John Doe (ineligible)	_____	3

Teller's signatures _____

