



**PRESIDENT'S
GUIDE**

2011-2013

The information in this guide has been compiled to help local PTA presidents carry out their responsibilities.

Take the time to read the guide to prepare for your position.

Read all of the materials that you have received, and please contact your county council president for assistance when needed.

Correct Usage Of PTA

PTA is a trademark and is registered in the U.S. Patent Office. We are protected by the correct usage of our trademark. **DO NOT USE HYPHENS, PERIODS, OR SMALL LETTERS.**

PTAs refers to more than one PTA

Example: Many **PTAs** entered the Reflections Program.

PTA's refers to one PTA - singular, possessive

Example: The Jamestown **PTA's** award program was a success.

PTAs' refers to more than one PTA - plural, possessive

Example: All the local **PTAs'** presidents from across the state attended the conference.

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PTA Services

As a local PTA president, you are the one who should be knowledgeable about the services provided by PTA. You should share your knowledge with your fellow officers and members.

The following information has been prepared to assist you in better understanding PTA services:

On ALL levels, PTA provides resources, leadership training, representation, and opportunities for participation.

Membership in the State and National PTA affords local PTAs a not-for-profit status, which entitles them to purchase tax-free materials for PTA purposes.

How the National PTA Serves the Local PTA

Resources

All presidents receive free of charge:

- **Quick Reference Guides** – Information about all phases of parent-teacher work. **Our Children** – National PTA's magazine focusing on issues to keep leaders abreast of current issues.
- Many other publications on specific subjects designed to help PTA board members.
- Publications can also be accessed on the National PTA website at www.pta.org.
- E-Learning, a computer-based training program available at www.pta.org
- E-Newsletter

Leadership

National PTA representatives conduct leadership training workshops at conferences and conventions.

Representation

- National PTA provides a voice in Washington representing PTA positions before Congress and government agencies.
- National PTA, through its annual resolutions, provides the PTA with a vehicle by which concerns that are national in scope can be addressed throughout the nation.
- National PTA represents you on many committees, commissions and boards of directors.
- State presidents serve on the all-volunteer National PTA Council of States providing an avenue for two-way communication between State PTAs and the National PTA.

Participation

As a local PTA of the National PTA, you may:

- Attend National Convention, elect officers, and vote on the adoption of PTA resolutions and bylaws.
- Participate in the National PTA Reflections Project.
- Apply for National PTA grants on specific issues.
- Participate in any of the National PTA projects for which kits are provided.

How New Jersey PTA Serves the Local PTA

Resources

All local PTA presidents receive free of charge:

- **New Jersey State PTA Handbook** – A guide prepared specifically for PTA leaders
- **New Jersey Parent-Teacher** – The official bulletin of New Jersey PTA, which focuses on the work of, and ideas for, PTAs and PTA people
- **NJPTA Website** – www.njpta.org – an excellent source of information on what's going on in NJPTA and a source for all NJPTA references, such as state handbooks and guidebooks and information on how to contact your state and county board members.
- **Publications** – Guides and brochures of specific topics and issues
- **Leadership Packets** – Special packets prepared for the leaders of local PTAs

E-Newsletter

- Mailings on timely issues
- Materials that are prepared to provide ready answers
- State PTA representatives who are available to answer questions and to provide guidance on specific subjects

Leadership

State PTA chairs and officers:

- Conduct leadership training workshops at state convention, regional meetings, and county meetings.
- Share their expertise with PTA leaders at all levels.
- Write articles for the *New Jersey Parent-Teacher*.

Representation

- New Jersey PTA provides a voice in Trenton representing PTA concerns before the State Legislature and government agencies.
- New Jersey PTA represents you on many state commissions, committees, and boards, a list of which is available on the NJPTA website.
- New Jersey PTA, through its annual resolutions process, provides a vehicle for input on its legislative policy and local concerns with state-wide implications to be addressed.
- Regional directors and county council presidents serving on the State Board of Directors bring county and local PTA concerns to the State PTA Board.
- Regional directors and county council presidents serving on the State Board bring information from the State PTA to each county and its locals.

Participation

As a local PTA member of the New Jersey PTA, you may:

- Attend NJPTA Convention, elect officers, and vote on the adoption of resolutions and bylaws.
- Attend PTA Legislative Day in Trenton, and meet with state legislators to further PTA's work on behalf of children and youth. This event is usually held in March or April.

- Attend leadership and advocacy training provided by NJPTA. This event is usually held in during the summer months.

Professional Assistance

- New Jersey PTA maintains an office in Mercerville to provide service to its local PTAs and councils.
- Local PTAs may purchase liability insurance and bonding coverage at NJPTA's group rate (see NJPTA Handbook – "Statement on Insurance").

How A County Council Serves the Local PTA

Resources

- Most counties publish a directory containing the names, addresses, emails and phone numbers of all county council board members.
- County council presidents are available to provide assistance when requested.
- County chairs are available to answer questions about specific topics and to provide resources.
- A county council newsletter is published to provide information about county conferences and other important information.

Leadership

County councils offer a variety of conferences and workshops for local PTAs to provide an opportunity for leadership training and a chance to explore the functions of PTA beyond the local level. These may include:

- Fall and Spring Council Meetings – Open to local PTA delegates and all local PTA members
- ABCs or School of Information – An overview on the ins and outs of your PTA with questions and answers, and other workshops

Representation

- County council presidents represent you on many committees and on the Board of Directors of NJPTA.
- County council presidents represent you at hearings of local and county government agencies and at state hearings, when necessary.

Participation

- At county council meetings, you elect county officers and vote on county bylaw changes.
- At county council meetings, you may submit nominations for region directors and other state board positions.

What Is A County Council President?

A county council president is:

- A direct link or liaison between the local PTA and NJPTA.
- An advisor to local PTAs.
- A resource person who will explain PTA structure, how it functions, and how members benefit by taking advantage of available services.
- A liaison who should attend at least one meeting each year of each of the local PTAs in his/her county - *Please call and invite them!*
- A person who encourages attendance at workshops and conferences.
- A person who encourages use of the county PTA board services.
- A person who encourages use of county PTA board chairs as resource people.
- A person who attends training programs throughout the year to improve his/her own expertise.
- A person who knows about PTA guides, fact sheets, and handbooks available to local PTAs.
- A facilitator who assists local PTAs with problem solving.

What Is A Local PTA President?

A local PTA president is a leader who:

- Knows that board members are working with, not for, him/her.
- Knows that board members are partners in the work and share in the successes.
- Builds leaders and helps board members to develop and grow.
- Recognizes that the more leaders an organization has, the stronger it is.
- Is a self-starter, creates plans, and sets them in motion.
- Has a sense of humor.
- Wants the best way, not his/her own way.
- Assigns jobs and lets people do them.
- Knows that doing it all himself/herself trains no one, involves no one, and makes everyone lose interest.
- Knows that his/her job is being sure that everyone's job is done and believes that confidence in board members gives them confidence in themselves.
- Has the courage to tackle difficult issues, making sure that the board has first voted to support their actions.
- Is supportive of board members' ideas and encourages them to carry them through.
- Checks with his/her county council president or region director if unsure of PTA policy.

P-R-E-S-I-D-E-N-T

- P* Preparedness – Plan your meetings. A written agenda is a necessity. Start meetings on time.
- R* Resourcefulness – Be ready to act in an emergency. Keep calm, objective, and never lose your sense of humor.
- E* Enthusiasm – Believe in your organization; be enthusiastic about it. Enthusiasm is contagious.
- S* Study – Thorough study of community issues, PTA publications and bylaws is essential to be a well-informed president.
- I* Interest – Your prime interest should be the welfare and education of children. Keep your attention on these goals.
- D* Democracy – All members should have a voice in decision making.
- E* Energy – Dedicate your energy to the tasks for which you are responsible. You will have a productive PTA year if you delegate authority so that many share in the work of the PTA.
- N* Neutrality – As president, be an impartial judge. Do not attempt to influence opinions from the chair. Avoid taking sides.
- T* Tact – Be considerate. Always remember that your members are giving their time and talents to the PTA. Give praise honestly and generously. Do not say, “You are out of order”, when you mean the motion or remarks are out of order.

Have people from all parts of your community represented on your board. Don't ask only your friends to serve on your PTA Board.

As President of the PTA, your responsibilities are numerous. First, and foremost, you are the voice of your PTA. When you speak, people see you as the PTA; keeping this in mind, you must be careful when speaking on issues that are outside the PTA. The PTA president's position is never intended to take away your rights to participate in the democratic process, but you must be careful to make known when your opinion is yours and NOT the PTA's. REMEMBER: when you speak on behalf of the PTA, the general membership has voted on what you will say. Be sure you are well versed on the positions a PTA may take and make sure your membership is informed. Keeping all this in mind, PTA needs leaders like you and looks forward to working with you on a County and State level. We are only a phone call or email away. GOOD-LUCK!

General Management Information

- Know and understand the structure of your local PTA board (stipulated in your local PTA bylaws).
- It is advisable for a person to hold only one position on a PTA board.
- When setting meeting dates, check district and school calendars to clear dates with the principal or superintendent.
- At executive committee/board meetings, only those listed as serving on the board may vote or make motions. Guests may speak with the approval of the president or the executive committee/board.
- The president never votes from the chair by voice vote. However, if vote is by ballot, the president does vote.
- Issues of a personal nature should be discussed privately with the administrator, rather than during a PTA meeting.
- Complaints to the PTA president about school personnel should be referred to the principal or the superintendent.
- Complaints regarding PTA matters can be handled by a committee.
- Committee plans for the year should be approved by the executive committee/board.
- When chairs meet with administrators or staff members in the name of their committee, it is advisable to have the president and/or a vice-president present.
When authorized to present the local PTA's position, present only the PTA's position, with the executive board or membership approval. Do not elaborate or present personal views.
Under IRS 501(c)(3), PTA supports issues, **not** candidates. Remember this at school board election time.
- If contacted by reporters, request the person's name, newspaper, and reason for the call. Be sure your answers are accurate and are in accordance with PTA policy, not your opinion.
- Flyers should have the name of the sponsoring group at the top (e.g., Name of the PTA, Committee, and contact information for the Committee Chair).
- Approval of the school principal or administrator must be acquired before publicizing PTA activities in the school.
- Membership lists, names, addresses, etc., and class lists are to be used strictly for PTA business. They are **not to be released** to other groups or used for any other purpose.
- Local PTAs should have their own tax-exempt number to use when making purchases for PTA. This number **cannot** be given to, or used by, other groups.
- Money spent by the local PTA must appear in its budget, which has been adopted by the general membership.
- Monies moved at executive board meetings should be recorded in the minutes.
- Care should be taken in the use of PTA funds. Items needed by the school should be requested through the school district budget and should not be provided by the PTA.
- PTA should not donate to, or raise funds for, other organizations. Exceptions for this should be given very careful consideration as a precedent and must have membership approval.
- Treasurer's books must be audited annually in accordance with Local PTA Bylaws Article VII, Section 5.g.
- Any local PTA dues increase requires a local PTA bylaws change.
- Local PTA bylaws are to be reviewed every three years and revised if necessary and must carry membership approval and state approval. Refer to Local PTA Bylaws Article XII, Section 2, and Article XVI, Section 1a, 1b, and 1c.
- Local PTA bylaws may not be suspended, even by a unanimous vote.
- **Co-presidents are not recognized by NJPTA.**

Reminders

- Use the proper forms for filing names and addresses of local PTA officers and for submitting dues to NJPTA. The names of local PTA officers **must** be reported **each year**.
- Use the assigned local PTA number when corresponding with the NJPTA office (found on your local PTA bylaws).
- Liability and bonding insurance information is available through the NJPTA office.
- The first dues payment is due in the NJPTA office by October 15th.
- Local PTAs will be billed for unreturned, unused, or voided cards that are not returned to the NJPTA office by June 1.
- A local PTA audit **must** be submitted to the NJPTA office annually.
- Local PTA bylaws **must** be reviewed and/or revised and approved by the NJPTA Bylaws Chair **every three years**.

How to Chair a Meeting

Be prepared. Write an agenda. (It can be a very brief list of areas to be covered, or it can be an extensive list, trusting nothing to memory.) Make a copy of the agenda, and give it to the recording secretary, who should sit next to the president at the meeting. The secretary can see what items have been omitted to bring them to the president's attention. At executive board meetings, provide copies of the agenda to all of the members.

The ability to lead group discussions is important. The ability to handle controversy during a meeting is sometimes a problem. These suggestions may prove helpful:

- In large gatherings, ask people who speak to identify themselves.
- Encourage everyone at the meeting to participate in the discussion.
- Be willing to entertain all points of view.
- If tempers flare, call a recess to cool things off. Make the most of areas of agreement between the parties involved.
- The leader should be a listener, rather than a talker. Give everyone's ideas precedence over your own.

Guidelines For Fairly, Smoothly, and Expeditiously-Conducted Meetings

Parliamentary law is an accepted set of rules by which deliberative assemblies arrive at the majority opinion of those present – accurately, impartially, and in the minimum amount of time. It should be observed at every meeting of the PTA. The law is designed to maintain order, to ensure justice and equality, to expedite business, and to enable an organization to accomplish the objectives for which it is formed.

Parliamentary Authority – Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised is the parliamentary authority adopted by the National PTA. It is essential that every president be familiar with its basic rules:

- Power of the organization is vested in its general members.
- All members have equal rights and privileges: to introduce business, participate in discussions, vote, etc.
- The presiding officer must be fair and impartial, versed in parliamentary procedure, tactful, and courteous.
- The vote of the majority decides, except where the basic rights of members are involved, in which case, a 2/3 vote is required.
- Every member is entitled to speak once on a debatable motion (unless the pending motion is non-debatable, or unless the body has voted to terminate the debate.)
- Only one main motion or question may be considered at a time. It must be disposed of in some fashion before another main motion may be entertained.
- The member who makes the motion is entitled to speak first, and may not speak against the motion.
- One who spoke on a motion may also speak on amendments and other motions that may be moved, since the question is in a different stage.
- Only one person may have the floor at a time.
- Debate should be confined to the merits of the pending motion.
- When speaking in debate, personalities should be avoided. The motion can be denounced or attacked, but never the person.
- Speakers must address their remarks to the chair.
- No one may speak a second time in debate so long as anyone desiring to speak has not already spoken on the question.
- A member has the right to know what the question is before the assembly at all times and what its effect would be.
- Care must be exercised to prevent abuse of such motions as point of order, point of personal privilege, or point of information.
- The use of general (unanimous) consent is a great time-saver in which everyone seems to be in agreement.
- If there is no quorum and action cannot wait until the next meeting, a vote can be taken and then ratified (voted on) at the next meeting. Otherwise, wait until there is a quorum before voting.
- Refer complex questions to committees for further information.
- Limit debate on the pending question (the number of speakers, the amount of time, or call the question), if necessary. This must be done prior to the motion coming to the floor.
- Be sure a motion is made before discussion starts on an issue. This is after someone brings up an issue that you feel will require action. As presiding officer, you can ask someone to make the issue into a motion.
- A procedural violation that is not objected to at the time of its commission does not invalidate the action taken. Silence implies consent or at least acquiescence.

Meeting Script – General Membership Meeting Agenda

The following is an agenda outline and chair's script for working the agenda.

Call To Order

The president raps gavel once and calls the meeting to order on time. *"The meeting will please come to order."*

Opening Ceremony (optional)

Invocation, PTA prayer, inspirational excerpt, pledge, etc.

Reading and Approval Of Minutes

The secretary reads the minutes. *"The secretary will read the minutes of the previous meeting."*

The president asks for corrections to minutes. *"Are there any corrections or additions to the minutes?"*

(No motion or vote is needed) *"If there are no (further) corrections, the minutes stand approved as read (or corrected)."*

Treasurer's Report

No motion is needed for adoption of the treasurer's report, unless it is an audit report. The treasurer reads the report. The president asks for questions. *"We will have the treasurer's report. Are there any questions?" "If not, the report will be filed for audit."*

Correspondence

Correspondence is summarized (unless it is brief or someone requests that the entire letter be read). Correspondence that requires no action is read by the secretary. Letters requiring action are left for the chair's report or for new business. The president asks the corresponding secretary to read the correspondence. *"Is there any correspondence?"*

Committee Reports

Minutes from an Executive Committee/Board do not need to be read in their entirety, just a brief report of business transacted may be read. *"We shall now hear the executive committee/board report by the secretary." "You have heard the recommendations of the executive committee/board. What is your pleasure?" (Stop for motion.)*

Standing Committees

Chairs of standing committees making reports should be contacted before the meeting. These reports should be brief. No motion is needed for adoption of reports unless recommendations for the association call for action. Motion to adopt is usually made by the committee chair. It needs no second since it is a committee report.

“We will hear the report of the _____ Committee given by the chair.” “Are there any questions or discussions in regard to the committee report? If not, the report will be filed.” (Express appreciation for work.) “_____ Committee moves that the association _____.”
(Follow steps of a motion.)

Special Committees

Report(s) can be in progress or final report(s). (Special committees are automatically dissolved when their work is done and the final report is filed.) If action is necessary, the committee chair should make a motion.

“We shall have the report of the _____ special committee chair.” “Are there any questions?”

Unfinished Business

Minutes of the previous meeting will show if any business was postponed. The secretary prepares a list of items pending.

“Is there any unfinished business?”

New Business

Chair or members may bring new matters of business before the association for consideration. A motion is necessary before discussion and vote.

“New business is now in order. Is there any new business?”

Announcements

Date of next meeting(s).

“Are there any announcements?”

Program

The president introduces the program chair who presents the program and thanks participants. If it is felt that no action will be necessary from the association, the meeting may be adjourned before the program section.

Adjournment

No motion is necessary for adjournment. The meeting may be adjourned by general consent.

“If there is no further business (pause), the meeting will stand adjourned. (With one tap of the gavel.)”

Chairing a Tough Meeting

PTA is facing more and more issues about which people have very strong feelings. Since we are a grassroots organization, the stress of conducting meetings involved with these issues is especially acute for our local leaders. We hope these ideas will help you.

Preparing for the Meeting

Consider having a meeting of your officers or committee members and pre-plan the meeting that you think will be explosive. Do not pre-plan to silence anyone, but allow maximum participation.

- Look at the issues as objectively and as impersonally as possible.
- Check PTA sources for existing positions and methods of action. This includes the National PTA's Annual Resources for PTAs and the NJPTA State Handbook. This issue may not require any action. Know beforehand.
- The more current the issue, the more important it is to check with county sources for recent information. Call your county council president or appropriate chair for advice or assistance. If desired, invite them to your meeting.
- Prepare an agenda for the meeting: List specific items that you think can be managed in the time you have available. Set a time frame for the meeting. If you expect a lot of people, set limits on how long each person may speak. Have a committee prepare information relevant to the issue to report to the group before the discussion begins. Have a clear understanding with all concerned that this is what will be dealt with at this meeting. If necessary, use a flip chart or blackboard to show the agenda.

Ready or Not – Here's the Meeting Hour!!!

Use Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised to your advantage. Section 46 explains the function of the presiding officer, and Section 60 covers the disciplinary action that applies to a disorderly meeting.

- Conduct the meeting as formally as possible. See "How to Chair a Meeting."
- Be sure that, as presiding officer, the meeting is conducted impartially and fairly. If you have strong feelings regarding the issue that could mar your neutrality, you may have your vice-president chair the meeting so that you can become a participant.
- If the group is willing, if your pre-planning committee sees a need, special rules for this meeting can be agreed upon at the onset, such as a number of times a person may speak to any one item, or the time limits for all speakers.
- If such rules have not been adopted, the chair can ask the group to do so during the debate. If the chair senses that the group would like the meeting expedited, he/she can say, "*The chair will entertain a motion to set time limits.*" (take a recess, etc.). Also, the chair does not have to recognize a speaker who may be dominating the floor in favor of others who may not have spoken.
- If the group continues to disagree, it might be advisable to appoint a committee to look into the issues. Don't hesitate to ask for a motion to refer to committee. Those who have expressed strong feelings on the issue should be appointed to the committee.
- Call the issue "out of order" if the speaker departs from the agenda, enters into personal comments not related to the subject at hand, interrupts another speaker, or in any way becomes abusive of any member's rights. Preserve the right of an individual to speak only as long as he does not abridge the rights of others.
- Check the local PTA bylaws for any limitations or obligations concerning your PTA activities.

Whatever happens, keep your perspective by maintaining neutrality and your sense of humor. If you do this, you can resolve the meeting peacefully and constructively. No rules can take the place of tact and common sense on the part of the chair.

A Practical Parliamentary Guide (A Simple Table of Most Frequently Used Motions)

Motion	Second ?	Debatable ?	Amendable ?	Vote Required	Reconsiderable ?
Adjourn	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Amend a Pending Motion	Yes	Yes, if motion to be amended is debatable	Yes	Majority	Yes
Appeal Decision of Chair	Yes	No	No	Majority	Yes
Close Nominations	Yes	No	Yes	2/3	No
Debate Limit or Extend	Yes	No	Yes	2/3	Yes
Division of Assembly	No	No	No	Any member	No
Main Motion	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Point of Order	No	No	No	Ruled on by chair	No
Postpone to a Definite Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Previous Question	Yes	No	No	2/3	Yes
Question of Privilege	No	No	No	Ruled on by chair	
Recess	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
Reconsider	Yes	Yes, if motion to which applied is debatable	No	Majority	No
Refer (Commit)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	If committee has not begun consideration of question
Rescind	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority with notice 2/3 without notice	Yes
Suspension of Rules	Yes	No	No	2/3	No
Table	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Take from Table	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Withdrawal of Motion	No	No	No	Majority	On negative vote only

1. A tie vote is a lost vote.
2. Hasty action may be corrected by use of the motion to reconsider:
 - a. This motion may be made only by the one who voted on the prevailing side.
3. To stop debate and force the vote, a member should obtain the floor and say, "I move the previous question." This requires a second and a 2/3 vote.

President's Planning Guide

July - August

- Study and become familiar with bylaws, procedures, and PTA policy. Read the President's Guide, NJPTA Handbook, and the National PTA's Annual Resources for PTAs.
- Make certain that all materials have been turned over to new officers and chairs.
- Prepare the budget and programs for the next school year with the appropriate committees. Review plans of work of committees.
- Plan for membership drive – meet with the principal and staff members to discuss goals and plans for the year.
- Watch mailings for special workshop(s) that may be held during the summer or at convention. Plan to attend.
- Membership cards are received by the local PTA president who counts the cards to verify that the number received is the same amount reported on the mailing label of the package. The membership chair submits the Membership Card Verification Report to the NJ PTA office.
- Check your local PTA bylaws. They must be reviewed and/or revised every three years.
- Have the executive committee meeting to create standing chairs.

August - September – Membership Enrollment Month

- Start your membership campaign.
- Set dates for executive board and general membership meetings, if not already completed.
- Present the proposed budget to the executive board for its approval to present to the membership for adoption at the first general membership meeting.
- Chairs report on their plans for the year. The executive board must approve the plans of work before the work is undertaken.
- Share "Reflections" information with the appropriate persons in your school.
- Vote to send delegates to the County Council Fall Meeting.
- All executive board members must be members of the local PTA.

September – October – General Membership Meeting

- Membership dues are collected.
- The treasurer presents the budget to the general membership for adoption.
- The auditing committee presents the annual audit to the general membership for approval. Complete and submit the Annual Audit Report form to the NJPTA office. Remember to keep a copy for your records. (Refer to local PTA bylaws Article IX, Section 1e.)

October

- Continue membership enrollment. The treasurer must send the first dues payment, and a completed Dues Payment Schedule Form, to the NJPTA office **by** October 15th to be in good standing.
- Attend County Council Fall Meeting.
- Check your local PTA bylaws to see when the nominating committee should be formed.
- Review resolutions and other convention information with your executive board to give your delegates a sense of direction for convention. (Resolutions should be presented to the general membership.)

November

- Continue membership enrollment.
- Celebrate American Education Week. (work with your Principal and staff)

December

- Continue membership enrollment.
- Make plans for Founders Day observance in February.

January

- Continue membership enrollment.
- Finalize plans for Founders Day.
- Vote to send delegates to the New Jersey State Convention.
- Send registrations for the state convention.

February

- Continue membership enrollment.
- Celebrate Founders Day, February 17th.
- Check your local PTA bylaws to see when nominating committee must report.
- Select representatives to attend Legislative Day in Trenton.
- Celebrate “Bring Your Family to School Week.”

March

- Remind members of upcoming school board elections. Remember, PTA cannot support candidates.
- Hold meetings to discuss the proposed school budgets.
- Plan an open forum for your members to meet and hear the candidates for school board elections. Remember, all candidates must be invited.

March – April – General Membership Meetings

- Be sure that your PTA is represented at the state convention. (Decide now what conferences each of you will attend).
- After convention, have the delegate(s) report to your members. Include a report in your newsletter.
- If applicable, have your nominating committee report, and hold elections.
- Appoint an auditor or auditing committee, in accordance with your local PTA bylaws.
- Consider proposing a resolution at state convention.
- Celebrate Earth Week.

May

- Have the treasurer’s books audited.(if the treasurer is remaining for a second year) (See June)
- Attend Spring County Council Meeting.
- Any dues that have not been previously submitted to the NJPTA office must be submitted **by** June 1 to be in good standing.
- All unused/unsold (or voided) membership cards must be returned to the NJPTA office with the

completed Enrollment Breakdown and Unused Membership Cards Report **by June 1st** to be in good standing. Return cards and report “certified” mail to ensure proper credit to your PTA account.

May – June – General Membership Meeting

- Hold the annual meeting in accordance with your local PTA bylaws.
- Have officers and chairs give annual reports.
- Elect Officers
- Hold installation of officers.

June

- Hold a meeting of newly elected officers to appoint standing chairs (Executive Committee Meeting).
- Hold a joint meeting of the old and new executive board. Pass along all materials and files to the new people.
- Inform the new members of their duties and responsibilities, and assign a work schedule so that plans can be approved at a later meeting.
- Consider ordering publications for new chairs and officers.
- Set a July or August planning meeting date to review the work completed over the summer.
- Mail your Annual Report of New PTA Officers form to the NJPTA office. **This form is required by June 30th, even if you do not change officers, and it is required to receive State and National mailings, including membership cards for the upcoming school year.**
- Check on the liability and bonding insurance of your PTA for the upcoming year.
- Complete and return any awards applications that may be due to the state office.
- Have the treasurer’s books audited with change of treasurer’s and/or President

Duties of Executive Board Members

The executive board shall consist of the officers of the association, the chairs of standing committees, and the principal of the school (or a representative appointed by him/her. Refer to local PTA bylaws Article VIII, Section 1

All executive board members shall:

- Read NJPTA guide books and NPTA Annual Resources pertaining to their position.
- Attend all local PTA meetings.
- Attend County and State PTA workshops and conferences that pertain to their work.
- Notify the president when they are unable to attend a meeting.
- Keep a record of expenses, and submit bills to the treasurer.
- Be prepared to report at the executive board and general membership meetings when necessary
- Study the files of their predecessors.
- Keep records and procedure books of their work to be turned over to their successor following the transfer of duties, including all materials that pertain to their position.
- Perform additional duties as assigned to them.

The president, as presiding officer, shall:

- Preside at all meetings of the association, the executive board, and the executive committee at which he/she is present.
- Call the meeting to order, and proceed with the business of the meeting.
- Preserve order throughout the meeting, and establish a climate in which members feel comfortable in participating.
- Follow the standard order of business using a prepared agenda.
- Refer to himself/herself impersonally as “the chair.”
- Clearly state motions after they have been seconded and before allowing discussion.
- Maintain a fair and impartial position at all times.
- Refrain from entering the discussion while presiding.
- Avoid personal bias when giving information to the group.
- Recognize members who have not spoken to the question in preference to those who have.
- Decide all parliamentary questions, subject to an appeal by any two members with a majority vote (half plus one of those present) deciding the question. Seek the opinion of the official parliamentarian if available.
- Put the question to a vote, and declare the results.
- Vote only when voting is by ballot. In other cases, vote only to create or break a tie.

The president, as administrative officer, shall:

- Become familiar with PTA materials, including bylaws and standing rules.
- Confer with the executive committee in making plans for the PTA.
- Appoint chairs of standing and special committees in accordance with the bylaws.
- Call on chairs to report on their activities.
- Delegate certain administrative duties to each vice-president and other members of the board, in accordance with the bylaws and standing rules.
- Serve ex-officio on all committees, except the nominating and auditing committees. (May attend all meetings involving the PTA, except the nominating committee.)
- Call for required reports.
- Represent the PTA at county council meetings and at the NJPTA convention, or elect/appoint an alternative.
- Sign orders, vouchers, and checks, as specified in the PTA bylaws. Refer to Local PTA Bylaws, Article VII, Section 5.d.
Distribute materials or mail materials to appropriate board members.
- Call board members before meetings to ensure that their reports are ready to be presented at meetings.
- Have the duplicate copy of the bylaws with him/her at every meeting.

The vice-president(s) shall:

- Act as aide(s) to the president and fulfill duties assigned by the president in accordance with the bylaws and standing rules.
- Preside at meetings, and assume the duties of the president in the absence of the president
- Represent the president upon request.
- Check the bylaws or standing rules for specific assignments, if any.
- Not be ex-officio of any committee in the absence of the president’s resignation.
- Assume the president’s duties in the event of the president’s resignation (until the position is filled in accordance with the bylaws).

The recording secretary shall:

- Take minutes at all meetings of the executive committee, executive board, and general membership.
- Ensure that minutes are presented for approval at the following meeting of the appropriate group.
- Assist the president in preparing an agenda.
- Bring the following items to each meeting:
 - Official Copy of approved bylaws, procedures, and standing rules
 - List of members
 - Agenda
 - Minutes of the previous meeting, including the treasurer's report
 - List of unfinished business
 - List of all committees, their chairs, and members
- Keep a record of the board members' attendance at the meeting.
- Submit to the state office and county council president the names and addresses of officers at the conclusion of the annual meeting or election meeting.
- Act as custodian of all records, except those specifically assigned to others.
- Call the meetings to order in the absence of the president and vice-president(s).

The corresponding secretary shall:

- Conduct PTA correspondence under the direction of the president, the executive board, and the general membership.
- Read letters received by the PTA at meetings. Summarizing is permissible and uses less meeting time.
- Send notice of executive committee or executive board meetings *If there is only one secretary, the duties for both recording and corresponding secretary are assigned to the one person. (See Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary Guide for more details.)

The treasurer shall:

- Be the authorized custodian of the funds of the association and one of the signatures on the checks written from the PTA account(s).
- Study carefully all references to dues and finances in the local, state, and national bylaws.
- Keep an accurate and detailed account of all monies received and distributed as permanent records.
- Receive all monies for all accounts – local, state and national dues, etc.
- Deposit all monies in a bank approved by the executive board or the association.
- Sign and pay by check all bills authorized by the president, executive committee/board, or the general membership.
- Give receipts for money received. **Bonding insurance will not pay out if receipts are not given.**
- Include the following information in the report at executive committee/board meetings and general membership meetings:
 - Beginning balance of the general funds and any special funds
 - Receipts and disbursements
 - Balance on hand of the general funds and any special funds

- Keep the record of the national and state portions of membership dues separate from the record of the general funds of the PTA.
- Forward to the NJPTA office, when due (see Article VII, Section 5.d. of the local bylaws), the state and national portions of membership dues. Dues must be submitted with a completed Dues Payment Schedule form, issued by the NJPTA office.
- Work with the membership chair and the secretary to keep an accurate list of PTA members.
- Preserve all vouchers, receipts, bank statements, and canceled checks, and submit all of these to the auditor or auditing committee.
- Ensure that the books are audited annually in accordance with the bylaws.
- Deliver to the auditor(s) or the auditing committee the checkbook, bank statements, treasurer's books, paid bills, canceled checks, vouchers, budget, and minutes of the association meetings.

The historian shall:

- Be elected or appointed, as determined by the local bylaws.
- Keep a permanent record book of all information and publicity of interest to the organization, including the following:
 - Name of association, date, and place of organization
 - Names of original organizers with photographs, if possible
 - All notices sent out by the PTA/council
 - List of all officers, chairs, committee members, and special committees
 - Copy of each newsletter distributed
 - Photos and copies of committee reports
 - Bylaws
- Pass the historian's books on to the successor, or ensure that the books are kept in the school library for safe keeping.

County council delegates shall:

- Attend all council meetings, and give a written report to the local PTA.
- Bring concerns of the PTA to the council.
- Participate in county council programs when asked or when assigned.

Standing committee chairs shall:

- Meet with the committee to discuss plans for the year.
- Present plans of work to the executive board for approval.
- Report to the executive board when necessary.
- Attend meetings that pertain to chairmanship.
- Become informed on chairmanship and the needs of the area.
- Hold committee meetings when necessary.
- Encourage committee members to share in the planning, performing, and evaluating of the work of the committee.
- Prepare a year-end report, and pass it on to the successor.
- Contact county PTA counterparts when necessary.

The principal shall:

- Be an advisor on school and district policy.
- Help to coordinate PTA functions with school functions.

Immediate past presidents shall:

- Serve in an advisory capacity but not interfere with the new president's methods.
- Give advice based upon experience, but not impose philosophy on the new administration.
- Act in a helpful manner.
- Assume an active role on the board (if bylaws permit) at the request of the new president.

New executive boards shall:

- Hold an organization meeting to accomplish the following: Set dates for executive board and general membership meetings. (The president should be prepared with tentative dates to suggest.) Plan programs with the appropriate people, such as the parental involvement chair, program chair, ways and means chair, principal, etc.

Please refer to individual Guides and other leadership materials, such as the NJPTA Handbook or the National PTA's Resources for PTAs, for additional details.

Bylaws

The bylaws of your local PTA provide specific rules for governing your PTA. **Bylaws may not be suspended, even by a unanimous vote.** All local PTA bylaws **must** be in the current Local Bylaws Booklet format published by the NJPTA. The issue date is located on the front cover of the booklet. Your PTA **must** review, re-approve and re-submit your bylaws to NJPTA for approval **every three years**. The general membership of your PTA must vote on the bylaws before they are submitted to NJPTA, and the general membership approval date must be noted on the front cover of the bylaws booklets. Bylaws are to be completed in quadruple form; that is, four, original bylaw booklets must be completed. Photocopies of bylaws will not be approved by the county or the state. Contact the NJPTA office to obtain blank bylaw booklets for completion.

One of the four original (approved) bylaw booklets is retained on file by the NJPTA office. A second booklet is retained by your county bylaw and procedures chair, and two (2) booklets are retained by your local PTA. The booklet stamped "Official Copy" should be retained by the recording secretary with the PTA's official records. The second booklet (stamped "duplicate") should be retained by the president.

Changes to the base booklet (during years the by-laws are NOT up for review) should be indicated and identified with an asterisk (*) next to the changed article. The changes should be placed in the back of the booklet with the Article, Section, and page number clearly indicated. Remember, articles identified with (**) are requirements of NJPTA. These Articles/Sections **may not be changed and must be included in your bylaws.**

Although bylaws are revised on a three-year cycle, they may be amended at any time in accordance with Article XVI, Section 1.a. and 1.b. of your bylaws. Changes should be submitted on the amendment form provided by the NJPTA office, and four (4) forms should be submitted as outlined.

Officers and Executive Board Members should have a current copy of the Local PTA's bylaws. Bylaws should be available at meetings and may be reviewed by any PTA member upon request.

Standing Rules

Standing rules are the rules an organization uses to administer its affairs under the provisions of its bylaws. A well-organized and efficient PTA should have a written set of procedures for putting its bylaws into effect. Standing rules are more flexible than bylaws and may be changed at any executive board meeting by a majority vote and without previous notice.

Developing procedures is not a difficult task. Here are some simple steps to follow:

- A committee of at least three (3) people, including the chair, should be appointed to prepare the procedures.
- The committee should include experienced and knowledgeable members of the PTA.
- If there is a bylaws chair, this assignment could fall within that chairmanship. Otherwise, a past president would be an excellent choice to chair the committee.
- Using the bylaws as an outline, the committee should consider each article and formulate instructions for applying the article. Local PTA functions may also be outlined in the standing rules.
- There should be complete job descriptions for each officer and chair.
- It is in standing rules, not bylaws, that items such as the specific responsibilities of vice-presidents should appear. Standing rules do not have to go to the general membership for approval.
- After the committee has finalized the procedures, they are presented to the executive board for approval by a majority vote (half plus one of those present). **NOTE:** A quorum, as established in local PTA bylaws, must be present.
- After approval, standing rules should be copied and made available to each board member.
- Standing rules can be amended at any executive board meeting with a majority (half plus one of those present).

The standing rules serve as a guide and become the most valuable tool for the orientation of new board members. Well-written standing rules ensure the orderly transfer of duties from one administration to the next.

See the Procedures for Preparing Standing Rules Guide for more comprehensive ideas.

Budget

What is a Budget?

- A budget is a guide. It is a simple statement that shows a plan for obtaining funds and for apportionment of those funds.
- A budget is planned on the basis of the regular work of the PTA.
- A budget should be ready for presentation to the membership by the first meeting of the new school year.
- A budget, as adopted, serves as a financial guide for the year.
- PTAs are advised to set their annual dues at the minimal amount needed to support effective programs.

Who Prepares the Budget?

- A budget committee prepares a budget to meet the needs of a PTA's yearly activities.
- The committee may include the treasurer, past treasurer, the ways and means chair, past president, and president.
- Check the bylaws for the formation and duties of the committee.

How is the Budget Prepared?

To successfully prepare the budget:

- Consider the amount of money on hand.
- Refer to the previous year's receipts and expenditures, and determine the budget accordingly.
- Review the current budget to determine if there are ongoing expenses (awards, scholarships) that should be included.
- Consider the cost of new programs and projects, but do not commit a future board for long-term projects. Be sure to consider increased costs of postage, supplies, etc.
- Compare past budgets.
- Provide sufficient funds to function during the summer and until dues are collected.
- Based upon past records, the committee might suggest previously successful fundraisers.
- Include money for anticipated expenses for committees, conferences, conventions, workshops, subscriptions, publications, and insignia.

Who Approves (Adopts) the Budget?

- A local PTA budget is presented to the executive board for approval and is submitted to the general membership for adoption.
- After the budget is adopted, bills within the budgeted amounts can be paid by the treasurer, as authorized by the executive board. All monies moved must be recorded in the minutes.
- Any expenditures not provided for in the adopted budget must be presented to the general membership for approval.

How Can the Budget be Changed?

When there is additional income, expenses, or changes in an allocated expenditure, the budget may be amended by the general membership.

What About Special Projects?

If additional funds are required for a PTA's special project, money may be raised by:

- Contribution of members
- Fundraising projects or events. This money is specifically earmarked for that special project or event.

Use of PTA Funds

PTA is an educational, NOT a fundraising organization. PTAs raise only those funds that are necessary to meet the needs of the year's activities as planned by the PTA in its budget.

The public often expects the PTA to provide school conveniences that should be purchased with public funds. Even PTA members, themselves, sometimes think that material aid to the school is a function of a PTA. Accordingly, they spend their time and energies in raising money for school equipment and facilities when meeting these needs should be a public responsibility.

Before approving proposals for material aid to the school or community, the PTA should determine if the proposed equipment or service is actually a public responsibility. PTAs sometimes initiate and operate new services until their value has been demonstrated and public agencies take them over. In emergencies, PTAs may provide for the pressing needs of children while they work to arouse the public to its obligations. Such action would need the full sanction of school authorities.

PTA funds should ALWAYS be used for PTA work. PTA does not raise money for PTA activities and then allow that money to be diverted into other channels (e.g., donations to other organizations or individuals). This is a matter of ethics and should be scrupulously observed.

Every PTA has its own program of child welfare, home-school cooperation, and community improvement. This program is so important and so comprehensive that all funds should be used for its advancement.

The usual functions for which money must be budgeted by the PTA to carry on the year's activities are as follows:

- **Administration:** Necessary expenses of the officers of the association, record books, postage, telephone, stationery, duplicating and office supplies.
- **Committee Activities and Programs:** Speakers' expenses, media rentals, telephone expenses, etc. Remember, parent education is our most important business.
- **PTA Newsletter**
- **Publications and Education Materials:** Subscriptions, such as National PTA's Our Children, and the New Jersey Parent-Teacher bulletin.
- **Leadership Training:** Participation in county council, NJPTA, and National PTA workshops, conferences, and conventions by payment of delegates' expenses.
- **Contributions:** New Jersey State PTA Founders Day programs and the NJ PTA Building and Site Fund are greatly appreciated.
- **Hospitality:** A time to meet members, exchange ideas, and generate a feeling of belonging while working toward the same cause.
- **Special Projects:** Only projects approved by the executive board and membership.

NJPTA Position Statement on Fundraising

While the official mission of the PTA bears no mention of fundraising, funds are needed to carry out the local PTA's yearly activities as listed in their budgets.

PTAs should begin each year with specific goals in mind before determining the dollar amount needed from a fundraising event.

Once a fundraising project has been thoroughly considered, it must be presented to the members at a general membership meeting for a vote to approve the event.

Children and Youth should not be exploited.

Children and Youth should not sell or go door-to-door for PTA.

Children and Youth should not be used to collect money for PTA.

Children and Youth should not be offered prize incentives, which have been known to cause needless competition among students and encourage inappropriate, unsafe selling tactics.

A PTA's Real Working Capital lies in its Members, not its Treasury.

The 3 to 1 Rule

When planning the year's activities, PTAs should use the 3 to 1 Rule: There should be at least 3 non-fundraising projects to every 1 fundraising project.

PTA funds should always be used for PTA work. It is not appropriate to raise money for PTA activities and then donate it to another organization.

PTAs should provide service, not material items, to the school. The purchase of materials and equipment for the school is the responsibility of the Board of Education.

Appropriate uses for PTA funds and suggested fundraising activities are provided in the New Jersey PTA State Handbook under "Disposition of PTA Assets."

Some Appropriate Uses for PTA Funds	
<u>On a Local Level</u> Speakers Mailings Newsletter Scholarships Safety Programs Health Programs Cultural Programs Project Graduation Library Enrichment Parenting Workshops	<u>On a State and National Level</u> Our Children Magazine Subscriptions Leadership Training NJP-T Bulletin Subscriptions Summer Leadership Conference Day at the Legislature Legislative Advocacy Training Conventions (State & National) County Council Meetings and Events
Suggested Fundraising Activities	
Plant Sale Book Fair Pizza Sale Art Auction Walk-a-thon Dinner Dance Pot Luck Dinner Application for Grants	Skate Night Flea Market Theatre Trip Fashion Show Silent Auction Bowling Night International Festival Staff a Checkroom Teacher-Parent Sports Event

Handling PTA Money

- PTA bylaws indicate that the treasurer is the authorized custodian of the PTA funds. During the year, other people (membership and ways and means chair) receive money. These funds belong to the association and, as such, are to be promptly turned over to the treasurer.
- Establish procedures for handling all incoming and outgoing monies. **Procedures** make your life easier.
- The treasurer should:
 - Issue a receipt for monies received
 - Properly record the transactions
 - Promptly deposit all funds into the PTA account
 - Make arrangements to use the bank's night depository, if necessary.
- **Pay all bills by check.** PTA checks must carry two signatures. See Article VII, Section 5.d. of the local PTA bylaws.
- Careful and complete records are essential. If the treasurer does not know how to keep records, contact your county treasurer for assistance. If your PTA has never kept records in the past, **START NOW.** It makes good sense and protects the entire board from complaints in the future. Arrange for an audit committee or a professional auditor to audit the books at the end of the year, or any time a treasurer or president resigns.
- At large fundraisers, periodically collect and count the money. Two people should always work together and count money in each other's presence. Immediately deposit the money into the bank. If late at night, use a night deposit bag.
- At the conclusion of a fundraiser, it makes good sense to have only three people (treasurer, president, and chair) help to count (and account for) monies received. There is no better way to wrap up a project than to get together while it is fresh in your mind and commit to paper the shared ideas about how things went, what changes and recommendations can be offered and, at the same time, to count currency.
- The **ways and means chair or event chair** should always make a financial report to the PTA executive board after an event, detailing the expenses and income and indicating the profit. It takes time and effort, but it is wise to remember that the money belongs to the PTA, and the chair is accountable for it.
- The ways and means chair or event chair report of monies should agree with the treasurer's deposit of funds. Bills should not be paid from cash received, but a PTA check should be issued by the treasurer upon receipt of an itemized bill. This shows the complete record of a specific PTA activity and provides information that may be needed for tax purposes.
- It is a good practice to keep your general membership informed. Let them know how profits have been used. Tell your membership what you are doing and why.
- **RECORDS:** Keep meticulous and complete records of all fundraisers. Only then can you be protected if a question arises. It also helps next year's chair, if indeed, the PTA repeats an event.

Audit of The Treasurer's Records

The treasurer's books must be audited annually. Appointing an auditing committee is a requirement in the local PTA bylaws, Article VII, Section 5.g. and 5.h.

The PTA Audit

- The local PTA/council bylaws indicate the procedure for selecting the individuals, or may indicate that a professional firm be retained, to conduct the audit.
- The audit may be completed by elected officers (other than those who sign the checks), members of the executive board, a committee, or a professional firm.
- The report of the audit committee or professional auditors shall be presented to the membership for adoption at the annual meeting in accordance with local bylaws.

- The audit of the treasurer's books does not necessarily coincide with the fiscal year, and in most cases, it does not.
- Additional audits can be done at any time, as in the case of resignation of the treasurer or president.
- Books should be audited before a new treasurer assumes his/her responsibilities.

The Purpose of an Audit

- Protects the treasurer and assures everyone that the accounts are accurate.
- Certifies to the accuracy of the books and records of the financial officers.
- Assures the membership that the organization's resources/funds are being managed in a businesslike manner within the regulations established for their use.
- Follows financial transactions through records to ensure that receipts have been properly accounted for and expenditures have been made as authorized in the minutes and in conformity with local PTA bylaws, procedures, and budget limitations.

Preparation for an Audit

Financial records should be put in order for the auditing process shortly before the end of the term of office. The outgoing treasurer cannot pay bills after the books are closed for the audit. Upon assuming office, the incoming treasurer may pay bills and deposit funds in the PTA bank account before the audit is completed. The signature names for checks must be changed at the bank. The audit should be completed as quickly as possible. The treasurer shall deliver the following items to the auditors:

- A copy of the last audit report
- Checkbook and canceled checks
- Bank statements and deposit receipts
- Treasurer's book and ledger
- Itemized statements and receipts of bills paid
- Vouchers
- Copies of board, executive committee, and organization minutes, which would include an adopted budget, as well as any amendments that were approved during the year
- Current local PTA bylaws and standing rules
- Any other information requested by the auditor

Membership Cards

Membership cards for your local PTA are provided by the NJPTA office and are sent to each local PTA president before the start of each school year. The cards represent the membership year of October 1st to September 30th of the next year.

The president counts the cards to verify that the number received the amount indicated on the mailing label of the package. The membership chair completes the Verification Report and submits it to the NJPTA office, noting any discrepancies. If the Verification Report is not filed within two (2) weeks of receiving your membership cards, your PTA will be responsible for the payment of any shortage of cards that was not reported within that time frame. Any lost or unaccounted cards are payable at the prevailing membership dues rate.

The president should turn over the membership cards to the membership chair, who should number them for accountability. The expiration date to be written on the membership cards **should** read from date of issue or through September 30 of the next school year.

When enrolling members, each member **must** be issued an individual card. Cards **may not** be made out "Mr. and Mrs." (one card = one vote). Membership cards issued by your PTA cover membership in the

local PTA, NJPTA, and National PTA.

If a mistake is made on a card, the card should be voided and returned to NJPTA at the end of the year for credit. **Do not destroy or discard cards.** Remember, your PTA is responsible for payment for any cards not returned to the NJPTA office at the end of the year.

In accordance with the local PTA bylaws, dues payments (with a completed Dues Payment Schedule form) must be received at the NJPTA office by the 15th of each month starting with October 15th. June 1st, is the deadline for submitting the final report (Enrollment Breakdown and Unused Membership Cards Report) and for returning all unused and voided cards.

Membership Lists

Your PTA membership list is the property of your PTA and **cannot** be released to any outside agencies, interests, or organizations.

The membership list should be available at all general membership meetings of your PTA, and only those individuals whose names appear on the list are eligible to vote at the meetings or serve as officers or members of the executive board. The membership chair and the Recording Secretary will have the updated lists.

A copy of the membership list should be given to the nominating committee when it begins its deliberations so that the list can serve to verify that nominees are members of the PTA, in accordance with the local PTA bylaws.

Contents of the Minutes

- Kind of meeting – executive committee, executive board, general membership, or special.
- Name of group.
- Date, time, and place of the meeting (if not always the same).
- Name of the officer who calls the meeting to order.
- Members in attendance (at executive committee, executive board, or general membership meetings).
- Whether minutes of previous meeting were approved as read or mailed, or as corrected, or whether reading them was dispensed with and why (only if members have copies). Corrections and approval of minutes are usually handled by general (unanimous) consent.
- Minutes of a special meeting are approved at the next general meeting. A special meeting does not approve minutes.
- Treasurer's report.
- Correspondence.
- Reports of officers, the executive committee, standing, and special committees.
- A separate paragraph for each subject matter.
- Minutes should contain mainly a record of what was done, not what was said, and should never reflect the secretary's opinion.
- Exact wording of all motions or recommendations made and seconded.
Record the name of the member who made the motion but not the one who seconded the motion.
The results of the vote – whether carried or lost.
Motions that have been withdrawn do not appear in minutes.
- All points of order and appeals, whether sustained or not, together with reasons given by the chair for his or her ruling.

- When a count is taken or a vote is by ballot, the number of votes on each side is recorded.
- Program topic, type of presentation, names of participants, important points covered.
- Further business – announcements – good of the order.
- Time of adjournment.
- Should be signed by the secretary and dated. Do not use “Respectfully submitted”. This is an outdated practice.
- When minutes are approved, the word “approved” with the secretary’s initials and date should be written below them.

Nominating Committee

The nominating committee is PTA’s most responsible and sensitive deliberative body. It is essential that the committee be carefully chosen to include experienced, ongoing leaders, as well as newer members.

After the committee is elected in accordance with the local PTA bylaws, the president should ensure that the committee has copies of the bylaws, procedures, and guidelines. Although the president is not a member of this committee and does attend its meetings, it is the president’s responsibility to instruct the committee as to its responsibilities and the ethics of the committee’s work.

The following guidelines should be considered:

- The chair is elected according to the local PTA bylaws (Article VI, Section 8.c.).
- The chair selects a time and place for the meeting, making every effort to hold it when all members can attend, and notifies all members of the meeting.
- Committee members should familiarize themselves with the duties of the offices to be filled before discussing any candidates.
- Should a member of the committee find it necessary to resign before the committee has completed its work, the member need not be replaced unless the local PTA bylaws or procedures make provisions for such replacement.
- Candidates should be considered solely for their abilities and willingness to serve. They should not be chosen for popularity, a feeling of an “obligation” to ask them, or because they “expect” to be asked.
- The president, the executive board, or any member may suggest the names of persons to be considered. The committee is not bound in any way by such recommendations.
- Nominate only one person to serve in an office.
- The committee should develop a tentative slate of officers with possible alternates for each office to be filled. Unanimous consent is desirable, but only a majority (half plus one) is needed for someone to be a nominee.
- All deliberations of the committee must remain completely confidential, and no information about the names of persons considered for office or those who declined to accept nominations should be made public.
- Any committee member may become a candidate for office without resigning from the committee.
- Potential nominees should be contacted by the chair only when agreed upon by the committee and informed of the specific responsibilities of the office.
- The chair sees that the names of those who have agreed to be nominees are announced in accordance with the local PTA bylaws (Article VI, Section 8.d.).
- 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, written and signed by each member of the committee, at the time specified by the local PTA bylaws but does not move its adoption (Article VI, Section 8.f.).
- If the committee is unable to find a nominee for an office, it reports that fact at the meeting in which the final report (the proposed slate of officers) is given. Nominations are then taken from the floor. 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.
- The nominating committee is automatically discharged when its report is presented to the membership. However, if a nominee withdraws before the elections, the committee can be reactivated, unless the local PTA bylaws state otherwise.
- For further details, refer to the New Jersey PTA Nominations, Voting and Election Guide.
- Local PTA bylaws should be checked to determine when the election meeting should be held, how many days notice of the election meeting is necessary, when the nominating committee report is to be announced, and if additional nominations are called for at the election meeting (Article VI, Section 2; Article VI, Section 8.d. and 8.f.).

At the Election Meeting

- The presiding officer asks for the nominating committee report.
- After the report is given, the presiding officers ask for additional nominations for all positions, or for each office one at a time.
- If there is only one nominee for each office, local PTA bylaws may provide for a voice vote (Article VI, Section 3).
- If there is more than one nominee for some offices:
The president appoints tellers (at least two) who will distribute ballots to the members, collect them, and then count them. Membership cards should be shown or membership lists used. Your local PTA bylaws may provide for a voice vote for the elective ballot for those positions that have only one nominee. Voting is then done for those positions that have more than one nominee; OR

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

- **The procedure for collecting ballots should be established before the election begins.**
- Members should be advised when and how ballots are to be collected.
- Ballots are not counted if they are blank, if the name is illegible, or if the nominee is not a member.
- If ballots have been counted and no one candidate for a particular office receives a majority (half plus one) of the votes, a re-vote must be taken. The re-vote must have all nominees for that position on the ballot until one candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, unless the local PTA bylaws provide for election by plurality vote, which means that the candidate with the largest number of votes wins.
- A motion should be made designating a time to destroy the ballots either at the end of the meeting or one month after the meeting.

For further details, refer to the New Jersey PTA Nominations, Voting and Election Guide.

Committees and How They Work

Most organizations are too large and their meetings too brief to do more than plan for work to be done, lay out general policies for doing it, and make final decisions. The work itself must be delegated to committees. Even in small organizations and on Boards, it is advisable to divide the work among smaller groups that act as subcommittees.

Unfortunately, many committees are misused. Too often, they become burial grounds for unpleasant issues, a method of rewarding members, or a device for giving everybody something to do. Occasionally, they are even used to placate chronic troublemakers. However, properly used, committees serve a very important and useful function. No committee should be appointed unless it is needed. Members who have no real work soon recognize this fact and lose interest in the organization.

In board or committee meetings, where there are no more than approximately a dozen members present, some of the formality that is necessary in a large assembly would hinder business. The rules governing small meetings are different from the rules that govern larger groups.

Forming a Committee

Types

Standing Committees

- The method of selection is specified in local PTA bylaws (Article X, Section 2)
- The term of office is one year (Article X, Section 2)
- Handle routine duties that need to be carried out on a routine basis.

Special Committees (ad hoc)

- Selected to do a particular job
- Go out of existence when the job is completed
- The method of selection is specified in local PTA bylaws (Article X, Section 4).

Requirements to be Specified (located in standing rules)

- Number of committee members (usually odd number)
- Method of choosing members
- Statement of assignment
- Date report is due.

Advantages of Committees

Size: A small number of people can meet more often, deliberate more efficiently, and work more rapidly than a large group.

Informal Procedure:

- Chairs can enter into discussion without raising or leaving the chair, and they can make motions and vote on all questions. Members are not required to obtain the floor before making motions and speaking, and they can speak as often and for as long as they wish.
- Questions may be raised while discussion continues.
- Informal discussion is permitted while no motion is pending.
- A vote may be taken without a formal motion being introduced

Fewer Distractions: Committees can work more quietly and efficiently.

Possible Hearings: Better use can be made of experts and consultants.

Privacy: Delicate, troublesome, and embarrassing questions can be handled without undue publicity.

Chair's Procedure Book

As president, you should encourage all officers and chairs to maintain a procedure book. A procedure book serves as a permanent record of activities and ensures an ongoing PTA program of work. It should contain material and information needed for the officer's or the chair's job. The book is passed on to his/her successor when leaving the position. A loose-leaf binder makes it easy to add or remove material to keep the contents up-to-date.

Contents of the Procedure Book

- Chair's name, address, email address and phone number, and the year of the chairmanship
- Name, address, and phone number of committee members with their county and state counterparts. Approved Plan of Work, to include:
 - Goals
 - Areas of interest
 - Possible projects and/or programs
- Budget allocated to chairmanship
- Reports of predecessors, including evaluations and recommendations
- Reports of committee meetings and any other meetings attended
- Topic of each meeting or event, including:
 - Kind of meeting or event (speaker, film, panel discussion, etc.)
 - People contacted, dates, etc
 - Expenses for each meeting or event
 - Evaluation of each meeting
- Copies of the following:
 - Letters, flyers, written articles
 - Publicity, press clippings
- Other items, such as:
 - Bylaws (local, county, and state)
 - NJPTA Handbook and NPTA Annual Resources for PTA
 - Standing rules of local PTA
 - Job description
 - Local and county newsletters
 - State and National publications for area of concentration
 - Pamphlets or other pertinent literature for area of concentration.
- Year-end report, which includes:
 - Activities
 - Expenses
 - Evaluation of year's activities
 - Recommendation for future years

The Image of PTA Is In Your Newsletter

A newsletter is the vital link between the home and school. It should bring members into contact with all levels of PTA; local, county, state, and national. It reflects the character of your PTA. If it is appealing and exciting, people will want to be a part of your PTA. It can give active members pride in their PTA, invite new members into action, and attract members to meetings.

Q. What is the purpose of a PTA Newsletter?

A. The purpose of a newsletter is to inform. Articles must be objective and within stated PTA policy. Remember that your paper is read by people who may know little about PTA. Only correct, first-hand information should be used. Check your facts and figures. Proofreading is important, and accuracy is essential. Do not have Board of Education members writing articles for your newsletter, as this is a form of campaigning. Have the superintendent of schools or the principal write the articles.

Q. Who is responsible?

A. A PTA newsletter is the responsibility of the PTA. It is important that you check with your administrator concerning school policy in regard to the paper. It is a courtesy to show the newsletter to the principal before printing or distributing.

Q. What is the job of the editor?

A. The editor should present information in an interesting manner and should attempt to set a tone that makes the newsletter a good representation of PTA. It is the editor who assumes responsibility for the appearance of the newsletter, makes editorial changes and, with the president, decides what to print.

Q. How can the president help?

A. The president is responsible for the PTA image. The president and the editor must work together to ensure a successful newsletter. The president should encourage and direct the editor. Together, they determine which articles to include and check the final copy before printing.

Q. What belongs in a newsletter?

A. **President's Message.** Opportunity to educate readers on some aspect of PTA objectives, aims, or goals; traditional use for greetings, invitations, words of thanks; special projects; special services offered by the PTA; special pilot programs sponsored by the PTA; importance of being a PTA member.

Principal's Message. Full cooperation with administration is absolutely essential to the success of PTA, with freedom to use the space in whatever way he or she chooses.

PTA Information. Enough information about PTA programs to supply incentive for attending meetings, complete enough to leave no questions about location, time, babysitting, etc. Information about services that PTA provides to the school.

Committee Reports. Only those truly current and of general interest. Stress should be put upon dissemination of parent education in such areas as school community relations, legislation, cooperation with home and school, etc.

Information from PTA Sources. Relevant articles can be taken or condensed from county, state, or national mailings, pamphlets, New Jersey Parent-Teacher, county bulletins, National PTA Our Children, etc. These sources are all reproducible.

Calendar of Events. Upcoming PTA dates, as well as those of general interest, such as school board meetings, elections, etc.

School Information. Notices that the school would like published; educational or informative data on teaching, curriculum, etc.; report of school board meetings; articles from staff members, such as teachers, nurses, librarians, and specialists.

Q. What about Letters to the Editor?

A. This depends on the policy of your particular newsletter. If letters to the editor are used, all sides of a controversial matter should be presented in the same issue, if possible. If a response comes later, print it in the next issue. Personal references must be excluded. The editor and the PTA president choose if a letter is or is not printed.

Remember

**Anything received in a PTA publication can be reprinted, giving credit to the source.
Other sources may require permission to be reprinted.**