

PTA UNIT IN GOOD STANDING

Member → Local Unit PTA → Council PTA → State PTA → National PTA

Unit in Good Standing Criteria

- Adheres to the Purposes and basic policies of the PTA;
- Remits national and state dues to the state PTA by dates required;
- Has bylaws approved every three years according to the procedures of the state PTA;
- Submits a copy of the unit's fiscal year-end report to the state PTA by December 1st of each year;
- Submits a copy of the unit's annual financial review to the state PTA by December 1st of each year;
- Submits a copy of the required IRS tax form to the state PTA by December 1st of each year;
- Submits the names and addresses of officers to the state PTA by March 31st of each year; and
- Meets other criteria as may be prescribed by the state PTA.

Missouri PTA maintains IRS group exemption status for all PTA/PTAs in Missouri who are recognized as being "in good standing" with Missouri PTA. Local PTA units must be deemed to be "in good standing" in order to fully participate in the programs and benefits offered by the association. A PTA unit is "in good standing" if it:

If a local PTA becomes "not in good standing," as soon as it has fulfilled the necessary requirements, it is again considered "in good standing".

If your unit is affiliated with a council, please check for additional requirements that may be prescribed by the council PTA in order to fully participate in programs and services offered by the council.

If a PTA is not in good standing, neither the unit nor the students attending the PTAs school are eligible to receive awards (this includes but is not limited to membership awards and Missouri PTA Reflections program).

By virtue of being part of National and the state PTA, the IRS grants a local unit PTA non-profit (501(c)(3)) status. This requires PTAs to be non-partisan, non-sectarian, and non-commercial. PTAs cannot endorse political candidates or parties. PTAs are not religious nor do they endorse products, services, or companies.

THE SUCCESSFUL PTA UNIT MEETING

Successful meetings require planning. PTA members are more likely to become involved and attend more regularly if the meetings are run efficiently. A smooth running meeting is a well-planned meeting.

The executive board should hold a summer planning meeting to set its goals, agree upon programs, set calendar dates for board/unit meetings according to bylaws, and should become familiar with procedures for all chairmen. The program committee should be prepared to present a plan for each program, as well as have a set of programs developed as a backup in case of cancellation of an originally planned program.

PTA meetings should be managed in a manner that allows the business of the organization and a meaningful program to be completed in a timely manner. One hour is a good time frame to use when planning unit meetings. Business, Education and Entertainment (if chosen) may all be included for a well-planned meeting. The BEE approach is a good tool.

An agenda should be prepared so the meeting will proceed smoothly. Copies of the agenda should be made for everyone. This will allow the attendees to be prepared ahead of time for the business to be covered. Printed minutes and treasurer's reports save time and provide members with a permanent copy of this information.

CONDUCTING THE MEETING

PTA members will be much more supportive of PTA and its programs and services, if they are made to feel welcome when they attend PTA functions. This welcome could come from a hospitality committee, one or two officers or chairmen, or from student PTSA delegates.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

Meetings should begin on time, the agenda should be followed and remain within the allotted time as closely as possible.

When a motion is made be sure to:

- Wait for a second to the motion, unless it comes from a committee.
- Repeat the motion to the assembly.
- Open discussion by asking if the maker wishes to speak to the motion.
- Allow for others to speak to the motion.
- Call for the vote.
- Announce the vote result—motion adopted or motion defeated.

Keep the meeting to the point. It is better to appoint a committee to gather information and report at the next meeting than to engage in a lengthy discussion during the meeting. Committee work should be done in committee instead of at the board or general meeting. Appointing a committee and assuring the members that their concerns will be covered in the next meeting will be a better use of everyone's time. Remember to put the committee report on the agenda for the next meeting!

The presiding officer is responsible for conducting the meeting at a brisk pace and for ensuring that members are adequately informed. This requires a balance between following the agenda and being sensitive to member's rights to participate in the business of the association. Introduce officers, the principal, and teachers at the first meeting.

Be familiar with parliamentary procedure (see Parliamentary Procedures in this section), and keep a current copy of

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 11th Edition on hand.

SAMPLE AGENDA – ORDER OF BUSINESS

- Call to order
- Inspirational Thought
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Minutes
- Report of the Treasurer
- Reading of Correspondence
- Report of the Executive Committee
- Report of Standing Committees
- Report of Special Committees
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Program
- Announcements
- Adjournment

The president should not make motions or speak to influence a vote during a general meeting unless, in rare instances, he gives up the Chair to the vice president who presides until the pending business has been acted upon.

PROTOCOL FOR GUEST SPEAKERS

Protocol, as defined by Webster's dictionary, means, "Relates to a person's rank in speaking, to their location at a table or in a receiving line, and recognition and introduction." The following examples of proper protocol should be used as a guideline by presidents and a program chairman when preparing a PTA program or event.

PRELIMINARY CONTACT

When you invite a speaker, you should furnish details on:

- the date, time and place of meeting;
- the location of and directions to the meeting place;
- type of group and approximate attendance;
- subject topic and time limit of presentation;
- financial arrangements, if any;
- freedom to invite other guests (or not).

FOLLOW UP

If the invitation is accepted, furnish further details:

- confirmation of date, time, location and directions;
- determine audio/visual needs, if any;
- discuss the agenda of the meeting and time for program to begin;
- plan for question/answer time;
- confirm title and biographical sketch of speaker for introduction purposes;
- convey enthusiasm and gratitude for the speaker's participation.

MEETING TIME

To ensure the comfort of your speaker:

- check the readiness of the facilities, podium, lighting and audio/visual equipment;
- assign a member to meet the speaker and help with their needs;
- introduce the speaker to the principal, board members and others;
- observe the same courtesies extended to a guest in your home.

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER

- Correctly pronounce the speaker's name and title;
- keep introductions short; include only the accomplishments relevant to the chosen topic;
- persons known to the assembly are presented; persons not known to the assembly are introduced;
- avoid such clichés as "without further ado" or "I give you."

AFTER THE SPEAKER IS FINISHED

- Extend a few words of appreciation;
- tactfully control the question and answer session;
- write a thank you note to the speaker and send as soon as possible.

BANQUET SEATING

- Presiding officer sits at the center of the head table or to the right of the podium;
- guest of honor is seated to the right of the presiding officer;
- program chairman is seated to the left of the presiding officer;
- other guests, officers and program participants are seated alternately, according to rank.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

“Where there is no law, but every man does what is right in his own eyes, there is the least of real liberty.” Henry M. Robert

For over 137 years *Robert’s Rules of Order* has been recognized as the guide to smooth, orderly and fairly conducted meetings. All PTA bylaws state "the current edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the National PTA and its constituent organization in all cases in which they are not in conflict with these bylaws..."

It is not necessary to memorize all of the rules; however, it is helpful to know the basics and to have a copy of *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised* (11th Edition) on hand as a reference. In the following sections, page numbers in *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised* (11th Edition) are noted (RONR pg...) for more in depth information on the topic.

PRESIDING THROUGH THE AGENDA

Before the meeting takes place, the president should contact the officers and committee chairmen, prior to preparing the agenda, to determine if they will be presenting a report, at the meeting. The president should prepare ahead of time, to present a report as well. After each of the officers and committee chairmen have presented their reports, the president should then ask, “*Are there other committees that wish to report?*”

With a quorum present, one rap of the gavel is used to call the meeting to order. In the appropriate order the presiding officer should announce each part of the order of business unless the assembly wishes to change the order in some way. (RONR pg. 351-353)

MOTIONS

A member wishing to make a motion must first obtain the floor by addressing the Chair and then wait to be recognized by the presiding officer. The member makes a motion: *"I move to..."* or *"I move that..."* Another member must second the motion (if a motion comes from committee, then a second is not needed) before discussion and before a vote may be taken. (RONR pg. 32-57) After discussion, the Chair restates the motion in the form of a question and puts it to a vote: *"All those in favor say 'Aye,' those opposed say 'No.'"* A rising vote may be used by having members stand. The majority of motions made are usually main motions.

TYPES OF MOTIONS

Main Motion: (RONR Chap.5, p 100) Brings business before the assembly. It can only be made while no other motion is pending.

Subsidiary Motion: (RONR Chap 6, p.126) This motion assists the assembly in treating or disposing of a main motion and sometimes other motions. Example:

- Motion to Amend is used to change or perfect the motion under consideration.
- Motion to Refer or Commit is used to request that a motion be investigated.
- Postpone Indefinitely is used to decline to take a position on the main motion.
- Postpone Definitely is used to put off action on a motion.
- Previous Question is used to immediately close debate and bring an immediate vote on the question.

Privileged Motion: (RONR Chap. 7, p.219) Deals with special matters of immediate importance not relating to the pending business. Example:

- Motion to Recess is used to provide an intermission.
- Motion to Adjourn is used to close a meeting.
- Question of Privilege is used to make a request relating to the rights and privileges of the members.

Incidental Motion: (RONR Chap. 8, p. 247) This motion is related to the parliamentary situation in such a way that it must be decided before business can proceed. Example:

- Point of Order is used when a member thinks the rules have been violated.
- Division of the Assembly is used when a result of voice or show of hands vote is close. This will require a vote to be taken again by standing.

DEBATE

(RONR pg. 385-399)

Members are entitled to speak once to a question, sometimes more if there is no objection. Courtesy should be maintained at all times. Members' motives are not attacked or questioned and using members' names should be avoided. All remarks should be made through the Chair, not to another member. The maker of the motion has the privilege of beginning and closing debate.

The presiding officer must remain neutral during debate. The Chair may ask the next person in the designated order outlined in the bylaws to preside at a meeting while they leave the Chair to

debate and may not return to the Chair until the pending question is decided. However, this does not pertain to board meetings, or committee meetings, at which the Chair may offer points of information from the Chair.

PARLIAMENTARIAN

(RONR pg. 465-467)

“The Parliamentarian is a consultant, commonly a professional, who advises the president and other officers, committees, and members on matters of parliamentary procedure.” The parliamentarian's role during a meeting is purely an advisory and consultative one—since parliamentary law gives to the chair alone the power to rule on questions of order or to answer parliamentary inquiries.

“A small local organization should rarely require the services of a parliamentarian, unless it undertakes a general revision of its bylaws.”

Appointment of the Parliamentarian—If a parliamentarian is needed by an organization, the president should be free to appoint one in whom they have confidence.

Duties of the Parliamentarian

The president, knowing in advance the business to come before the assembly, should confer with the parliamentarian before the meeting opens, and during recesses, in order to anticipate any problems that may arise and to avoid, as much as possible, frequent consultation during the meeting. During a meeting, the work of the parliamentarian should be limited to giving advice to the chair, and when requested, to any other member. It is also the duty of the parliamentarian, as inconspicuously as possible, to call the attention of the chair to any error in the proceedings that may affect the substantive right of any member or may otherwise do harm.

A member of an assembly who acts as its parliamentarian has the same duty as the presiding officer to maintain a position of impartiality, and therefore does not make motions, participate in debate, or vote on any question except in the case of a ballot vote. He does not cast a deciding vote, even if his vote would affect the result, since that would interfere with the chair's prerogative of doing so. If a member feels that he cannot properly forgo these rights in order to serve as parliamentarian, he should not accept that position. Unlike the presiding officer, the parliamentarian cannot temporarily relinquish their position in order to exercise such rights on a particular motion.

PARLIAMENTARIAN QUICK REFERENCE

- ALL MEMBERS have equal rights, privileges and obligations. Partiality is shown to none. The majority decides. EVERY member has the right to debate or discuss each proposal presented, so long as courtesy is observed. Members should understand the effect of any proposed action before a vote is taken.
- When presiding, one refers to them self as “The Chair” or “Your Chairman,” not “I.”
- In the absence of the president, the first vice president serves as chairman. If no vice president is in attendance, the secretary calls the meeting to order and directs an election of a chairman *pro tem*.
- The president is a member ex officio of all committees, except the nominating committee, and as such is notified, can attend, participate and vote in such committee meetings. The president is not counted in determining the presence of a quorum of the committee. (The president is the only ex officio not included in a quorum count.)
- The Chair rules on parliamentary questions. A parliamentarian serves only as an adviser.
- Begin on time, in fairness to those who have arrived on time. Assign someone to monitor and inform you when a quorum is present. Use a typed agenda. It is helpful to provide copies to all meeting participants. Unfinished business should be stated as such, NOT as “Old” business. The presiding officer should announce each order of business as it appears on the agenda.
- Minutes should be concise, providing an account ONLY of business conducted and action taken, not individual discussions that took place.
- Motions are expressed as a clear, concise, affirmative statement, containing only one (1) main idea. Only one (1) main motion may be on the floor at any one time. The maker of the motion should state: “I move to...” or “I move that...” NOT “I motion that...” and if he chooses to speak to the motion, he should be allowed to begin the discussion.
- There should be no discussion until the motion has been seconded, stated by the Chair, and opened to discussion. Everyone who wishes to speak should have an opportunity before anyone is allowed to speak for a second time.
- A motion may be changed or withdrawn by the maker before the Chair has stated the motion. After the Chair has stated the motion, it belongs to the assembly and all changes or withdrawals require a motion and a vote. Once the Chair has stated a main motion it must be adopted or rejected by a vote or dispatched in some other official way, e.g., referred to a committee, postponed, tabled, etc., before another subject may be introduced.
- If a motion has been made and no second is forthcoming, the Chair may ask, “Is there a second?” If this does not elicit a second, the Chair says, “Since there was no second, the question is not before the assembly.” and continues to the next item of business (this is not recorded in the minutes). REMEMBER not all motions require a second.
- A motion presented by a committee needs no second, since a committee is more than one person.
- Written copies of long motions should be in the hands of the presiding officer beforehand. It is advisable to provide a copy to the secretary, and if there is a parliamentarian, a copy should be provided to him as well.
- Amendments are secondary motions, requiring a second and are open to discussion, unless the main motion to which they are affixed has other regulations. A motion may be amended by adding words at the end, by insertion between words, by striking words and

inserting different words, or by substitution. The amendment is voted on before a vote is taken on the motion in its entirety.

- Routine questions will arise that the assembly can be expected to agree upon. The Chair may handle these by general consent, saying, *"If there is no objection, we shall..."* The Chair should pause to give members an opportunity to object, and then proceed by saying, *"Hearing no objection, we shall..."* Should a member be opposed to the action, he/she should say, *"I object."* At this time the Chair says, *"An objection has been raised."* He/she will proceed with the steps for handling a motion and taking a vote.
- When someone "moves the previous question" or calls for the "question," the motion is to close debate. The Chair then takes a vote to stop discussion. A two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote is required for passage. If passed, the debate is closed and a vote is taken immediately on the pending question.
- The usual method of voting on motions is by voice or by a show of hands. If the outcome of the vote is close and the Chair is unclear of the results, the Chair may declare itself in doubt as to the outcome and direct the vote to be repeated using an alternate method. Usually by having voters rise to the question.
- If a member feels that the presiding officer is incorrect in stating the outcome of the vote on the motion, he/she should speak up at once and call out, *"Division"* or say, *"Mr. Chairman, I call for division."* The Chair is then obligated to take a rising vote. If the outcome is still in doubt, the Chair will take a rising counted vote.
- A motion to reconsider may only be made by a member who voted on the prevailing side and normally can only be made at the meeting during which the original vote took place, or on the next succeeding day of the same session.
- A motion to rescind a motion previously adopted requires two-thirds (2/3) vote to carry, if prior notice of intent to rescind has not been given. If previous notice has been given, only a majority vote is necessary for the motion to carry. There are no time limitations on motions to rescind action taken earlier.
- The report of the nominating committee is presented to the Chair, who will reread the slate and then ask if there are any further nominations from the floor for each office. It is NOT "accepted" by a motion of the committee or anyone else. A copy of the report is filed with the secretary.
- A nomination is not a motion; therefore it need not be seconded.
- KNOW YOUR BYLAWS AND STANDING RULES.
- Use *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (11th Edition) as a reference guide.

BYLAWS CHAIRMAN

The Bylaws Chairman is responsible for both the bylaws and the standing rules.

The Bylaws Chairman may be an officer, or may be an appointed chairman, depending upon any definition outlined in the PTA unit's bylaws. The chairman should have a copy of the bylaws and the standing rules (if the PTA has standing rules) available at every board and general membership meeting. The chairman should be familiar with the content of both documents and be able to look up information as needed. Board members should have copies and are encouraged to become familiar with the documents. Bylaws copies should also be available to the general membership for their information. The Bylaws Chairman should direct the work of the bylaws committee.

Bylaws Chairman

- Responsible for both the bylaws and standing rules
- May be an elected officer or an appointed chairman
- Directs the work of the bylaws committee.

Bylaws and Standing Rules in a nutshell

- Bylaws are legal documents.
- Bylaws contain specific rules and regulations that define the PTA unit.
- Must be kept up to date at least every three (3) years.
- Must be approved by the general membership and Missouri PTA.
- Standing rules list the procedures used in a PTA.
- Differ from bylaws in that they address only the needs of the local PTA.
- Standing rules are more flexible than bylaws.
- Standing rules are a good place to list miscellaneous instructions for various chairmen.

Bylaws are legal documents that contain specific rules and regulations that define each PTA's structure and the policies of that PTA. Bylaws contain portions that are in common with all other PTA's (as marked with # symbols) and portions that are unique to the local PTA. Bylaws are a reference that must be kept up to date, at least every three (3) years. The approval process of bylaws requires that the general membership of the local PTA and the Missouri PTA approve bylaws and amendments before they are in effect. All PTA's must have bylaws and they must be state approved at least every three (3) years.

Standing rules list procedures used in a PTA that may change from time to time. Standing rules differ from bylaws in that they address only the needs of the local PTA. They are more flexible than bylaws and are at the discretion of the PTA. They may be adopted, amended, suspended for a meeting, or rescinded by a vote of the membership they address. Standing rules are a good place to list miscellaneous instructions for various chairmen. PTA units or boards use standing rules only if they desire them. Standing rule amendments can be changed when needed, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the board without notice or by a majority vote with previous

notice.

Amendments are the structured way to change documents. Amendments present the current wording of the document, the proposed wording, and a rationale. Bylaws amendments require

previous notice and a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the general membership to approve, and then require state approval.

A **bylaws committee** should be appointed each year to review the content of the bylaws, for both required and optional content. PTA units are required to submit to Missouri PTA a set of bylaws for approval every three years. Any required portions, as denoted by the # symbol, must be included verbatim. The remaining articles and sections may be written in accordance with the local PTA needs. When changes to the bylaws are needed, the amendment process should be followed. The *Suggested Bylaws for Units/Councils* (available on both CD and as a downloadable electronic file) should be used as reference, **not** as a fill-in-the-blanks form. More detailed procedures are included in the “*Procedures for Bylaws Review*” in the “Procedures and Bylaws” section of this *Tool Kit*.

PROCEDURES FOR BYLAWS REVIEW

BYLAWS MUST BE REVIEWED EVERY THREE YEARS. Your bylaws due date is three (3) years from your last approval date, as stated on the last page of text of your current bylaws. Missouri PTA will send a reminder letter to the unit president about six (6) months ahead of the due date. Ordering information for replacement bylaws can be found on the Order Form located in the Tool Kit. Units with expired bylaws will not be eligible for Reflections, Membership Awards, Parent Involvement Awards, Unit/Council Awards, etc.

Form a bylaws committee. The Bylaws Chairman may already be the duty of an officer, or may be appointed by the board. The committee should be formed in time to allow for committee meetings, and if amendments are needed, time for due notice and general membership approval at a regular meeting.

Compare the unit bylaws with the most current *Suggested Bylaws for Units/Councils*. The current bylaws should be on file with your PTA secretary or bylaws chairman; or a replacement copy can be ordered from Missouri PTA. *The Suggested Bylaws for Units/Councils* are available from Missouri PTA via email or CD and they can be found on the Missouri PTA website www.mopta.org in the "PTA Members Section" under the "Tools" tab (username and password are the same as provided by National PTA upon activation of your PTA membership card).

Automatic amendments are any required portions of the bylaws indicated with a number symbol (#) in the *Suggested Bylaws*. Carefully compare with your bylaws for accuracy. These sections must be verbatim, including any # symbols. These amendments are automatic and do not require any action by the general membership. Inform the general membership that these updates have been included.

Amendments: Much of the content of the *Suggested Bylaws* does not carry symbols (#) and these sections are not required, but are merely suggested. Any changes that you make to your current bylaws in these areas are amendments and will require a vote of the general membership, even if you follow the *Suggested Bylaws* wording. Approval by the general

membership should be as prescribed in your bylaws, including previous notice and a vote at a regular meeting. (See *Bylaws Amendments* in this section.)

The final draft will be a new document that should be prepared and proofread carefully. Once prepared, and voted on by the general membership if necessary, the bylaws must be sent in for state approval.

**Email a copy of the bylaws with the cover form as an attachment,
as Word Documents (.doc) to office@mopta.org**

OR

**Send two hard copies of the bylaws with the Bylaws Cover Form to
Missouri PTA
2101 Burlington Street
Columbia, MO 65202-1945**

Approval of your bylaws will be made by the State Procedure and Bylaws Chairman. Once approved, you will receive a copy back with the new approval date. An approved copy should be kept by the secretary and copies distributed to the officers and chairmen of the board and to interested members. Please remember to make the necessary corrections to your saved bylaws if your bylaws have been approved with corrections.

BYLAWS REMINDERS FOR SPECIFIC ARTICLES

(Also see the Step-by-step Instructions document)

National and State PTA Bylaws (Articles II, III, IV and XIV) -- All required articles and sections, with # symbols, **MUST** be included **VERBATIM**, including lettering and numbering, and the # symbol. Carefully compare these portions to the most current copy of the *Suggested Bylaws for Units/Councils*. Order the free CD or request an electronic file from Missouri PTA to ensure you have all recent updates.

Membership and Dues (Article V)--When stating "...pay annual dues of \$____," be sure your stated amount is a total of the national portion, the Missouri portion and any local dues. As an alternate you may state "...pay annual dues of a total of the national portion, the state portion and \$____ local dues." Or the bylaws may state as set by the board at the first meeting of the year.

Officers (Article VI)—Only one (1) person should be elected to serve as president. The position provides for only one vote. Materials will be sent to the president from National PTA and Missouri PTA. National PTA does not approve of co-officers but there is not a National PTA bylaw stating that units/councils may not have co-officers.

The section on the nominating committee in Article VI states that the nominating committee is composed of a specific (not a range) number, such as "three (3)"; an odd number is best. All of the members of the nominating committee must be elected.

Elections of officers must take place by March 31 (Article VI, Sections 2 and 4), but the assumption of duties may be delayed until the close of the school year.

Duties of Officers (Article VI) -- Consider this article carefully and list the basic duties of each officer individually (i.e., vice presidents, secretaries, historians, etc.) **Make sure you have duties listed for EACH elected officer listed in Article VI Section 3.**

If more than one (1) vice president is elected, they should be designated by number (1st VP, 2nd VP) **with duties listed for each.** If there is a recording secretary and a corresponding secretary, and they are both elected officers, both should be listed in the bylaws and each of their duties defined.

The treasurer's duties include five (5) required sections in unit bylaws and five (5) required sections in council bylaws (see current copy of *Suggested Bylaws for Units/Councils*); and contains a section that requires an annual financial review, either by an auditor, reviewer or a financial review committee. This is for the protection of the treasurer and it assures the members of the accuracy of the accounts. This report of the auditor, reviewer or financial review committee is adopted by a majority vote of the membership. If it is required that two people sign checks and/or vouchers, then those two people should be designated by position (Article VII, Section 4.) For example if the second signer is the president, this should be stated.

Executive Board (Article VIII)--The board generally consists of the elected officers, the chairmen of standing committees, the principal and any others (such as teacher representatives, community liaisons, etc.) that have a position on the board. The bylaws may or may not list all the standing committees.

Do not confuse the term 'executive committee' with 'executive board' (or 'board'). An executive committee usually consists of only the elected officers.

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (11th Edition) states that a quorum (the minimum number necessary to conduct business) be set to reflect the number of members who could reasonably be expected to attend a business meeting. The quorum should be stated as a whole number (i.e., 5 members). If the quorum is not specifically defined, a majority is considered a quorum for a board meeting.

Executive Committee The executive committee usually consists of the elected officers only. If a PTA includes an article on executive committee it generally follows the article on the executive board. Included in this article should be: who is on the executive committee, duties of the executive committee, when meetings will be held, quorum, special meetings called by and how many days' notice, etc.

Committees (Article IX) List standing committees or state that the executive board will create standing committees as it deems necessary to promote and carry out the Purposes of this local unit. Standing committees are those committees that function all school year.

Meetings (Article X) The term ‘regular’ meetings refer to the general membership (unit) meetings, and include all persons who have purchased a membership for the current year. Special meetings can be called only if so specified in the bylaws. The quorum for meetings should be a specific number such as ten (10) or twenty (20). This number should be more than the quorum for a board meeting. A majority of the members is not acceptable.

Council Membership (Article XI)—It is recommended that a PTA unit’s bylaws have an article on council membership if the unit holds membership in a council PTA. If your unit is not attached to a council, delete this article and renumber the remaining articles.

Missouri PTA Convention (Article XII)—State how your unit will decide who attends convention, for example, “the president and vice president,” or the delegates shall be “elected” or “appointed” be specific. There are two (2) required sections that need to be included verbatim.

Fiscal Year (Article XIII) Make sure that the fiscal year stated in the bylaws is for the time period of a full calendar year, e.g., “Begin July 1 and end the following June 30.” Any approved changes to the fiscal year must be reported to the IRS.

Amendments (Article XV) Has 3 required sections on how to make amendments to your bylaws. Be sure to include number of day’s prior notice in #Section 1.

Index Check to see that your Articles and page numbers match.

THINK YOU ARE FINISHED? Before sending your bylaws to the state office, please check to make sure you have your unit’s name in the title and in all spaces that request your unit’s name. If you are amending any non-required portions of your bylaws, be sure to follow the amendment rules detailed in your bylaws. Delete any instructional notes. Use a bylaws cover form.

If you have any questions regarding your bylaws, ask your council, Regional Director, or State Bylaws Chairman for answers.

AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

Bylaws amendments are the means to change bylaws that have been previously adopted. Bylaws may be amended by adding words at the end of a phrase, by insertion between words, by striking words and inserting different words, or by substitution. Such amendments are offered in the form of motions; require previous notice and general membership approval. Amendments become effective after approval by Missouri PTA.

Previous notice is required to amend bylaws. Previous notice gives members a chance to consider the amendment(s) before voting. The length of the previous notice will be listed in your bylaws article “Amendments” (usually the last article.) Some bylaws require notice be given at the ‘previous meeting’ and others will require a time frame such as ‘30 days.’ At the time of previous notice the proposed amendment(s) should be offered in their entirety (in writing) but

discussion, further amendment and voting are usually delayed until the general membership meeting.

Proposed amendments should be offered so that members will understand the current wording, what changes are to be made and the rationale. The amendments can be in the form of adding words to the end, inserting words, striking out words and inserting others, or by substitution. If more than one change is needed in a sentence it is best to strike the entire phrase and insert the complete new phrase. The use of a written description followed by an illustration using ‘columns’ or ‘tables’ along with editorial marks will help clarify the proposal (see examples). A **second** is required unless the proposal comes from the bylaws committee.

Amendments to the proposed amendment can be made at the general membership meeting. If the amendments are many or complex, having written copies or some method for members to follow along is recommended (such as the use of a projector.) The presiding officer should ask for the proposed amendment to be read, and then call for discussion. Further amendments (called secondary amendments) to the proposed amendments can be made at that time, if made within the scope of the original amendment. Each secondary amendment requires a second and each must be voted upon individually before a vote is taken on the finalized amendment.

Approval of bylaw amendments requires previous notice and a 2/3 vote at a general membership meeting. A quorum (as defined in the article on “Meetings”) must be in attendance. Of those members in attendance who choose to vote, 2/3 must vote in favor for the amendment to be adopted. Those members in attendance who choose to abstain are not counted in the vote.

Missouri PTA must make final approval of amendments before they become effective. Submit an **Amendments Cover Form** and **one electronic copy or two hard copies of each page** of the bylaws where the amendments are located, with the amendments already typed in. If there are many amendments, you may send a complete set of bylaws. Once approved, a copy with the approval will be returned to you.

SAMPLE AMENDMENTS AND SAMPLE STYLES OF ILLUSTRATION

To add words at the end:

Article VII, Section 2b Amend by adding “and will serve as council delegate.”	
Current wording:	Proposed wording:
The first vice president shall chair the fall carnival and the spring dance.	The first vice president shall chair the fall carnival and the spring dance <u>and will serve as council delegate.</u>
Rationale: The duties of the first vice president have been increased.	

To strike out words:

Article VI, Section 2b Amend by striking “and spring dance.”	
Current wording:	Proposed wording:

The first vice president shall chair the fall carnival and the spring dance.	The first vice president shall chair the fall carnival.
Rationale: The spring dance has been discontinued.	

To substitute a new section due to more than one change at once:

Article VII, Section 2b Amend by striking section b and inserting a new section b.	
Current wording:	Proposed wording:
The first vice president shall chair the <u>fall</u> carnival and the spring dance.	The first vice president shall chair the carnival and spring dance.
Rationale: The assignment of duties and time of the carnival should be flexible depending upon circumstances.	

To strike words and insert new words:

Article V, Section 7 Amend by striking "3.75" inserting "4.25"	
Current wording:	Proposed wording:
Each membership shall pay annual dues of <u>\$3.75</u> . The amount include the national portion and the the state portion.	Each member shall pay annual dues of <u>\$4.25</u> . The amount includes the national portion and the state portion.
Rationale: This will allow our collection of the same local portion of dues after the state portion of the dues increases \$1 as of 7-1-2004.	

To substitute a new section due to a revision:

Article V, Section 7 Amend by striking the first sentence and insert a new section.	
Current wording:	Proposed wording:
Each member shall pay annual dues of \$4.25. The amount includes the national portion and the state portion.	Each adult member shall pay dues in the sum of the national portion, plus the state portion, plus \$1.00 local dues rounded up to nearest whole dollar. Each student member shall pay annual dues in the sum of the national portion plus the state portion.
Rationale: The use of a calculated dues amount will relieve the PTA of having to amend the bylaws each time there is an increase in the state or nation portions of the dues. To encourage student memberships, the minimum of dues will be collected.	

THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The nominating committee is the most responsible and sensitive deliberate body of any PTA. It should be undertaken with great care. Check your PTA's bylaws in the article entitled "*Officers*" for details.

THE COMMITTEE

- The nominating committee is ELECTED as listed in the PTA bylaws, usually by the general membership and usually at least one month before elections.
- The committee members should include a spread of experienced and newer members selected on the basis of their merit and ability, their knowledge of the PTA goals, purposes and programs, and their ability to keep deliberations confidential.
- The number of members is very specific, and **no one** (not even the principal) is automatically on the committee. The bylaws may specify that some members must be from the PTA board, or a member of the teaching staff, or some other category. The bylaws may also list a non-voting adviser to the committee; such an adviser is not counted in the committee quorum and does not vote within the committee.
- The president is not on the committee ex officio, but should see that the committee has copies of the bylaws, membership lists, realistic descriptions of the duties of each office, and a nominating committee procedure guide.
- The chairman is either appointed by the president or elected from the committee; again check your bylaws for specifics. The committee should meet briefly upon election to exchange names, phone numbers and appoint one (1) member to coordinate the first meeting.
- If a member of the committee resigns before the work is completed, they are not replaced unless the bylaws provide for this.
- The meetings of the nominating committee are closed to all others, and all deliberations, except the final report, are considered **confidential**.

THE SELECTION OF CANDIDATES

- The nominating committee is assigned the task of finding the best possible candidate to recommend for each of the offices to be filled. Such recommendations are based on objective evaluation of the needs of the PTA.
- The committee should have copies of the bylaws, membership list, a realistic description of the duties of each office, and a nominating committee procedure guide.
- The committee reviews the bylaws for the offices to be filled, any qualifications to be met and term limits.
- The list of current officers who have not exceeded their term limits is reviewed. When the bylaws state that officers may serve more than one term, re-election to a second term of office is not automatic. Such people may be asked to serve again **if** their work has been satisfactory and their skills are not needed elsewhere.
- The committee may accept recommendations from any number of sources, such as from current officers, members, principal, etc. The committee should be careful not to make any

promises to any potential candidate, but should acknowledge that the recommendations will simply be considered.

- The committee should review all possible candidates for all positions, including new members. Candidates should be objectively considered based upon their experience, qualifications, ability to work with others, and sufficient time to do the job. The committee should **not** start by asking each other “What office do you want?” They should **not** select people due to friendships or to avoid hurt feelings.
- The deliberations of the committee are **completely confidential**, so committee members should be able to speak freely regarding their concerns. Members of the committee may be considered for office, and while that person is being discussed, they should step out of the room.
- The committee should decide their list of nominees by voting among themselves, and the use of written ballots is highly recommended.
- The committee should obtain the consent of each potential candidate **after** the committee has agreed upon the candidate. When asking someone to accept a nomination **do not** downplay the responsibilities of the job.

NO NOMINEES

- If a nominee for an office cannot be found, the committee must continue to function until a suitable candidate is found or until the election.
- If a candidate withdraws prior to the election, the nominating committee must resume its search for an appropriate candidate.
- If a person is elected to office and later withdraws, the filling of the office is handled as listed on the bylaws for any vacancy in office, usually by the officers of the board.

THE REPORT

- The report of the nominating committee lists one (1) candidate for each office, in writing, and is signed by the members of the committee.
- If a suitable candidate for any office cannot be found, that office should be listed as “open”. If a suitable candidate is found prior to the election a revised report is issued.
- The bylaws specify if the report is to be published before the election or if it's presented at the time of the election.
- At the time of the election additional nominations may be made from the floor.

THE ELECTION

- The list of candidates must be voted upon by the general membership in March or before. (Check your bylaws or a specific month.) **An election must be held.**
- If additional nominees are made from the floor, the nominating committee should be prepared to present information in support of their nominees; including qualification, availability, ability to work with others, etc.
- The names of those elected must be submitted to the Missouri PTA office no later than March 31st.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

PTA unit and council bylaws determine when the election meeting must be held, how many days' notice of the election meeting is necessary, when the nominating committee report is to be announced, and when nominations from the floor may be made. All PTA elections must be held by March 31.

Using proper parliamentary procedure is important when conducting the election of officers.

At the election meeting, the presiding officer asks for the nominating committee report. After the report is given, the presiding officer asks for additional nominations for each office. (NOTE: See "*Nominating Committee*" in this section of this *Tool Kit*.)

If there is only one (1) nominee for each office, the bylaws may provide for a voice vote. If any office has more than one nominee, a ballot vote is required for that office. The presiding officer may proceed with a voice vote for the election of the non-contested offices. The presiding officer can then take each position that has more than one nominee and proceed with the ballot vote. The presiding officer should be sure that ballots are ready and that the ballots list all candidates and their position so that voters will easily be able to vote. There may also be a line for any write-in candidates for each position.

The procedure for collecting ballots should be established before the election begins. Members should be advised when, how, and by whom ballots will be collected. The president appoints at least two (2) but, preferably four (4) tellers to collect and count ballots. Blank ballots are not counted. Ballots are illegal if they are illegible, or contain the name of a nominee who is not a unit PTA member. Make sure you have a current membership list available.

Unless another method is stated in the bylaws or previously agreed upon, a majority of the votes cast is necessary to elect an officer. If ballots have been counted and no one (1) candidate for a particular office receives a majority of the votes, a second vote must be taken with all nominees for that position on the ballot.

THE ELECTION MEETING

- The president may retain the Chair and conduct the election, even if he or she is a candidate for a pending office.
- Nominations for office are not motions and do NOT require a second.
- At the appropriate place in the agenda, the president announces,

"The next order of business is the election of officers."

- The secretary is asked to read the sections of the bylaws pertaining to the election of officers. This information may be highlighted so that the secretary reads only the information necessary.
- The president calls upon the nominating committee chairman to give the report of the nominating committee. The chairman gives a copy of the report to the president.
- The president asks for further nominations from the floor for each office beginning with the office of president. The following dialogue may be used,

"_____ has been nominated for the office of president. Are there further nominations for the office of president?" (Pause)

- If no other nominations are forthcoming, the president may then announce,
“Hearing none, the Chair declares the nominations for the office of president closed.”
 The president then proceeds in the same manner for each of the remaining offices.
- If the bylaws provide for a voice vote when there is only one nominee for an office, the president says,
“The bylaws state that where there is but one nominee for an office the ballot may be dispensed with and the election held by voice. Is there any objection to this procedure?”(Pause)

“Hearing none, the following are presented for election: Those in favor of _____ for president say ‘Aye.’” (Pause)

“Those opposed say ‘No.’” (pause) *“The ayes have it and _____ has been elected president.”*
- This may be done immediately after nominations have been closed for that office and before moving on to further nominations for other offices.

If there are further nominations, proceed as follows:

- When more than one (1) person is nominated for any office, the election for that office is by ballot. The members are advised as to when and how ballots are to be collected. Often a ballot election can be conducted during the course of the meeting, with regular business resuming after the tellers retire to count the ballots and results announced later on the agenda.
- When additional nominations are received, they are named by the president before nominations are closed. The qualifications of each nominee may then be presented by the chairman of the nominating committee or by the nominee themselves (or their spokesperson.) The president announces,
“_____ and _____ have been nominated for the office of _____. Does anyone wish to speak to the candidates’ qualifications?”
- The president appoints at least two (2) or more tellers, (depending upon the size of the assembly gathered for the meeting), one of whom serves as chairman. Candidates may *not* serve as tellers.
- For a ballot vote, the president may ask the members entitled to vote to rise and count off to determine the number eligible,
“All those members who wish to participate in the election please rise and count off.”
- The secretary and chairman of the tellers record the number. In case there is a question as to the eligibility of an individual to take part in the voting, the secretary should be prepared with the most current list of association members (or council delegates, for council elections.)
- When instructed to do so by the president, the tellers distribute the ballots,
“Will the tellers come forward and distribute the ballots.”
- The members are instructed, by the president, how to properly complete their ballots,

Declaring the winner:

- The president ensures that all ballots have been collected.
- The count takes place on site while the meeting continues.
- When the counting of the vote is completed, the chairman of the tellers gives the teller's report and gives a copy to the president.
- The president then announces the results of the election to the membership, "_____, having received a majority of the votes cast, is elected to the office of ____."
- If no member receives a majority of the votes, the election must be repeated. If previous approval for a plurality or preferential vote has been established the alternate method of establishing a winner may be used.
- The sealed ballots are retained by the secretary until those elected have assumed their duties (at least four (4) weeks.)

Voting Terms

- **Majority:** more than half the votes cast.
- **Two-Thirds:** 2/3 of the votes cast
- **General (unanimous) Consent:** used when the assembly seems to be in general agreement
- **Abstaining:** Not a vote
- **Voice or Acclamation:** "Aye", "No"
- **By Rising:** Voters stand to cast vote.
- **Show of Hands:** Alternative to a rising vote.
- **Ballot:** Used when secrecy is desired.
- **Roll Call:** Members respond to name being called.
- **Plurality:** Used only when previously agreed upon.
- **Preferential:** Votes are cast with a 1st choice, 2nd choice, etc.
- **Division:** when a member is unsure of the results of a voice vote.

VOTING TERMS AND METHODS

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

Majority: More than half the votes cast. For example, if 19 votes are cast, a majority is 10; if 20 votes are cast, a majority is 11. Majority vote is commonly used in elections and most motions.

Two-Thirds: 2/3 of the votes cast. For example, if 30 votes are cast, 2/3 is 20; if 31 votes are cast, 2/3 is 21. Motions that require a two-thirds vote include bylaws approval and amendment and others as listed in *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 11th Edition*.

General (Unanimous) Consent: A useful shortcut in voting, permitting the assembly to take action without going through the process of a regular vote. It should be used whenever there seems to be a general agreement among the members. For example, "*If there are no objections, the minutes stand approved as read.*" After a slight pause, and if there are no objections, the presiding officer says, "*They stand approved as read.*"

Should one or more persons object, then the motion must be put to a regular vote.

Abstaining: An abstention is not a vote and therefore is not counted.

Voice or Acclamation (viva voce): “Aye” – “No”

By Rising: Best method for verifying an inconclusive voice vote, where a close vote is anticipated, or in voting on motions requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

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

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

Roll Call: Members respond when their names are called.

Plurality Vote: Valid in an election of three or more where one candidate receives the most votes but not a majority; used only when previously agreed upon.

Preferential Vote: Votes are cast as 1st choice, 2nd choice, and 3rd choice, and lowest count lost votes are recast according to their second choice until a majority is achieved. Refer to *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised* (11th Edition) for procedural information. Used only when previously agreed upon.

The presiding officer may choose the method by which to vote, usually based upon the size of the group, the nature of the motion and the anticipated closeness of the vote, unless otherwise directed by the bylaws or if the assembly votes on the “motion on voting” to determine which method the group will use.

Division: When a member doubts the result of the voice vote or a vote by a show of hands, a member 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, an inconclusive voice vote may be retaken 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 the division to also count. However, he 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.