



NOMINATING COMMITTEE & ELECTIONS HANDBOOK

Abstract

This handbook provides detailed information on how to elect a nominating committee, how the nominating committee seeks and selects qualified nominees for PTA leadership, and how to elect PTA officers.

Audience

Nominating Committee Members, Presidents, Board Members

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1. Introduction

This handbook provides detailed information on how to elect a nominating committee, how the nominating committee seeks and selects qualified nominees for PTA leadership, and how to elect PTA officers. Election information includes step-by-step instructions for running an election, an election script, and instructions for recording the election in the official minutes.

2. Duties of the nominating committee

The charge of the nominating committee is to recognize and recruit the most qualified people available for elected PTA positions as defined by the local PTA or council standing rules. The members of the nominating committee have a tremendous influence on the future of the local PTA or council, making it the most important committee in PTA. Having qualified people step into leadership positions in a local PTA or council or at the state level will ensure success for many years into the future.

Members of the nominating committee must be elected by the members of the local PTA or council. Committee work includes holding confidential meetings, reviewing nominations, interviewing candidates, and searching for the best qualified candidates for leadership roles. The nominating committee is not charged with filling the non-elected positions on the PTA board of directors.

When their work is complete, this committee provides a written report to the membership that names qualified nominees for the elected positions on the PTA board of directors.

3. Nominating committee qualifications

The *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws* (Article 5, Local PTAs and Councils, Section 5A) require that the nominating committee shall consist of three members to be elected at a membership meeting at least 30 days preceding the election of officers. **No member may serve on this committee except as specified in the *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws*.** For local PTAs, the president and principal may not serve on the nominating committee and may have no part in its deliberations. For councils, the council president may not serve on the nominating committee, nor may any school or district administrator serve on the nominating committee within the district where he or she is employed.

Effective candidates for nominating committee:

- Are familiar with the needs and goals of the local PTA or council.
- Are enthusiastic about the mission, vision, and goals of the local PTA or council.

- Are willing to work and devote considerable time to furthering the purposes and programs of the local PTA or council.
- Possess tact, integrity, discretion, and the ability to hold their own counsel.
- Have the courage to express their ideas and defend their convictions.
- Demonstrate sound judgment and skill in evaluating potential nominees.
- Are capable of understanding and maintaining complete confidentiality.
- Should be elected on merit and ability – never on popularity.

Members of the nominating committee are eligible to become nominees for elected office. Thus, committee members cannot be deprived of the right to hold office by being elected to the nominating committee. No person may serve on this committee for more than two consecutive one-year terms. A candidate for the nominating committee must be a member of the local PTA (there is no specified length of time for being a member). For a council nominating committee, the candidate must be a member of a local PTA in the council for at least 30 days preceding his or her election.

4. Election of the nominating committee

Early election of the nominating committee is ideal so the committee can begin its work. Consider electing a nominating committee at the first membership meeting in the fall so committee members may keep their eyes open for candidates during the year. It is also helpful that this is often the best attended meeting of the year.

Advance preparation is critical for the meeting at which the nominating committee will be elected. Communicate extensively with members prior to the meeting about the importance of the nominating committee. PTAs may find it helpful to have this meeting at the same time as events that draw PTA members to school. Members may personally contact individuals they would like to nominate and ask them to attend the meeting. Members who are unable to attend the meeting may be nominated, so long as they accept their nomination in writing ahead of time. Nominations may remain open for several minutes – sometimes patiently waiting is enough to encourage someone to step up. If there are not three nominees, then the president closes nominations until the next membership meeting. A vote is not held until there are at least three nominees.

To conduct the election of the nominating committee, the local PTA or council president reads aloud or refers to the *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws*, Article 5, Section 5 A. The president then asks for nominations. Individuals may be nominated by others, or they may nominate themselves. Individuals should indicate whether they accept a nomination. Individuals who are not present at the meeting may be nominated if they have accepted their nomination in writing ahead of time. If only three individuals are nominated, the election may be by voice vote. If more than

three individuals are nominated, the election must be by ballot vote, and a teller's committee shall count the votes and report the results to the president. The three individuals with the greatest number of votes shall constitute the nominating committee. The secretary shall record the election process and results in the meeting minutes.

Example of minutes showing voice vote

President Susie Sample outlined *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws* Article 5, Section 5A, and asked for nominations. Rick Raring nominated Nancy Name. Nancy accepted. Jane Doh self-nominated. Sara Someone nominated Angelo Always. Angelo accepted. There were no other nominations and a voice vote was held. Nancy Name, Jane Doh and Angelo Always were unanimously elected to serve on the 2016-17 nominating committee by voice vote. President Sample verified that the nominating committee members are eligible to serve per the *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws*.

Example of minutes showing ballot vote

President Susie Sample outlined *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws* Article 5, Section 5A, and asked for nominations. Rick Raring nominated Nancy Name. Nancy accepted. Jane Doh self-nominated. Sara Someone nominated Angelo Always. Angelo accepted. May Eye self-nominated. A ballot vote was held with the following results: Nancy Name – 30 votes, Jane Doh – 20 votes, Angelo Always – 18 votes, May Eye – 16 votes. Nancy Name, Jane Doh and Angelo Always were elected to serve on the 2016-17 nominating committee. President Sample verified that the nominating committee members are eligible to serve per the *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws*.

5. Nominating committee orientation

Immediately after the election of the nominating committee, the PTA president should meet with the nominating committee and give the members this handbook as well as the PTA's or council's own nominating committee notebook. If a local PTA or council does not have a nominating committee notebook, the information still must be provided in order for the committee to do its work.

This meeting should address the following topics:

- The president must not be involved in the nominating committee process or selection of officers.
- The importance of the committee's ability to hold its own counsel and have honest discussions about individuals being considered for nomination.
- The importance of confidentiality and what confidentiality means.
- Develop a committee calendar and double-check relevant dates and deadlines.
 - Dates of PTA events for the year.
 - Dates of local PTA or council membership meetings.

- Date the nominating committee report is due to the local PTA or council members. (“The local PTA or council nominating committee shall submit to the members a signed report at least 15 days prior to the election stating the name of one or more candidates for each office to be elected. Additional nominations may be made from the floor with the consent of the nominee only when the election is held during a meeting.”) (*WSPTA Uniform Bylaws*, Article 5 Local PTAs and Councils, Section 5C.)
- Date of WSPTA convention – useful as a training resource for new officers.
- Officers must be elected prior to the end of the fiscal year to be in compliance with *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws*.
- The president and the nominating committee should review the nominating committee notebook, which should contain the following:
 - List of active PTA members. (Member rosters can be downloaded from the WSPTA membership database.)
 - A sample “Recommendation for Nomination” form. This form will be used by members to recommend candidates to the nominating committee. (A sample form is available on the WSPTA website under PTA Leader Resources.)
 - Contact information for appropriate council officers, the region director, and service delivery team members (these individuals may be resources for the nominating committee).
 - Copy of the local PTA’s or council’s standing rules.
 - Copy of the *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws*.
 - Job descriptions for elected positions.

Sample committee calendar

March 10	Nomination recommendation forms due to nominating committee.
April 1	Nominating committee report posted and sent to members.
April 16	Membership meeting where elections will be held.

6. Nominating committee meetings

After their election and their initial meeting with the president, the nominating committee should set a time and place for an initial meeting to establish a plan of work and begin considering PTA members as potential nominees. An early first meeting will help ensure that sufficient time is given to all recommendations and suggestions.

At its first meeting, the nominating committee should:

- Select the chair for the committee.
- Verify that all elected nominating committee members are able to serve and complete the work. If a member cannot continue for any reason, he or she must resign. The board of directors may appoint a replacement as specified in the *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws*.
- Set dates for meetings.
- Revise or build a “Recommendation for Nomination” form to be sent to the members with a due date. This document is available on the WSPTA website, under PTA Leader Resources.

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Recommendation for Nomination for _____ Officers
(insert PTA name here)

At the *(insert date)* membership meeting, *(name of PTA)* PTA/PTSA will be electing officers for the *(insert year)* PTA year. Nominees are being sought for the following positions:
(list elected board positions)

To be eligible for election to any of the above positions, candidates must have been a member of any PTA in the state of Washington for at least 15* days prior to being elected.

PLEASE PRINT
Recommendation for the office of: _____

Name _____ Phone _____
Email _____
Home Address _____

Qualifications for this office:
PTA/PTSA service and experience:
Community service/other activities:

Submitted by: Name _____ Phone _____
Individuals are welcome to recommend themselves. For information about a position or to request PTA job descriptions, please contact the nominating committee *(list committee names and contact information.)*

(Insert PTA name) Standing Rules:
The executive committee *(insert directly from your standing rules what it says about the executive committee)*

Deadline: *(insert date)*
Please send SEALED recommendations to the attention of *(insert directions for sending them to nominating committee)*

*Council candidates have a 30-day membership requirement.

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Recommendation for Nomination form

The nominating committee shall:

- Promptly notify all submitters that their recommendations have been received.
- Notify all committee members of all meetings.
- Meet to consider potential nominees when all committee members have been notified of the meeting.
- Review and verify qualifications of all recommended individuals submitted by the deadline established by the nominating committee.

- Hold honest discussions to determine the most qualified and capable nominee(s).
- Keep all discussion about potential nominees completely confidential to the committee.
- Seek other potential qualified and capable nominee(s) whose names have not been submitted to the committee.
- Contact potential nominee(s), only after agreed upon by the committee, to determine if they are willing to serve.
- Notify nominees in advance when to expect a call from the committee, if telephone interviews will be conducted.
- Be prepared to give potential nominee(s) a fair statement of what is expected of the position and the amount of time involved.
- Request résumés or additional information from potential nominees(s), if needed. Keep the committee’s discussions strictly confidential. No information, including the reasons for accepting or rejecting a recommendation, should ever leave the committee meeting.
- Nominating committee members will publically uphold the decisions of the nominating committee.
- Committee members must agree to announce only the names of the nominees, not the conversation around those choices or the names that were considered but not submitted for nomination.

7. Selecting nominees for office

The committee’s major responsibility is to nominate the best qualified candidate(s) for each office. This necessitates giving careful consideration, both as an individual and as a committee, to the requirements and scope of the offices to be filled as well as to the qualifications and abilities needed to fill them, and to match these requirements to the qualifications of the candidates.

The committee should ask for recommendations from PTA board members and from the PTA members and consider the vision and mission of the association as well. If it is likely that students will be transferring in from another school (e.g., elementary school students moving up to middle school or consolidation of schools), be sure to reach out to the PTAs in those schools as well.

Regardless of the number of times someone is recommended, that individual must be evaluated equally and by the same criteria as all other possible nominees. The committee is not required to select nominees only from the recommendations it receives. The committee is obligated to seek out all people who would best serve the local PTA or council in a particular office.

Secure a copy of the current membership list so due consideration may be given to all qualified members.

A presidential nominee should not be asked whom he or she would like on the board of directors. This decision rests with the nominating committee. Nominees for vice president, secretary, or treasurer should be selected with the same care as a presidential nominee.

Article 5, Section 6 of the *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws* outlines eligibility requirements for a nominee for a local PTA or council office. The current *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws* can be downloaded from the Washington State PTA website.

The potential nominee:

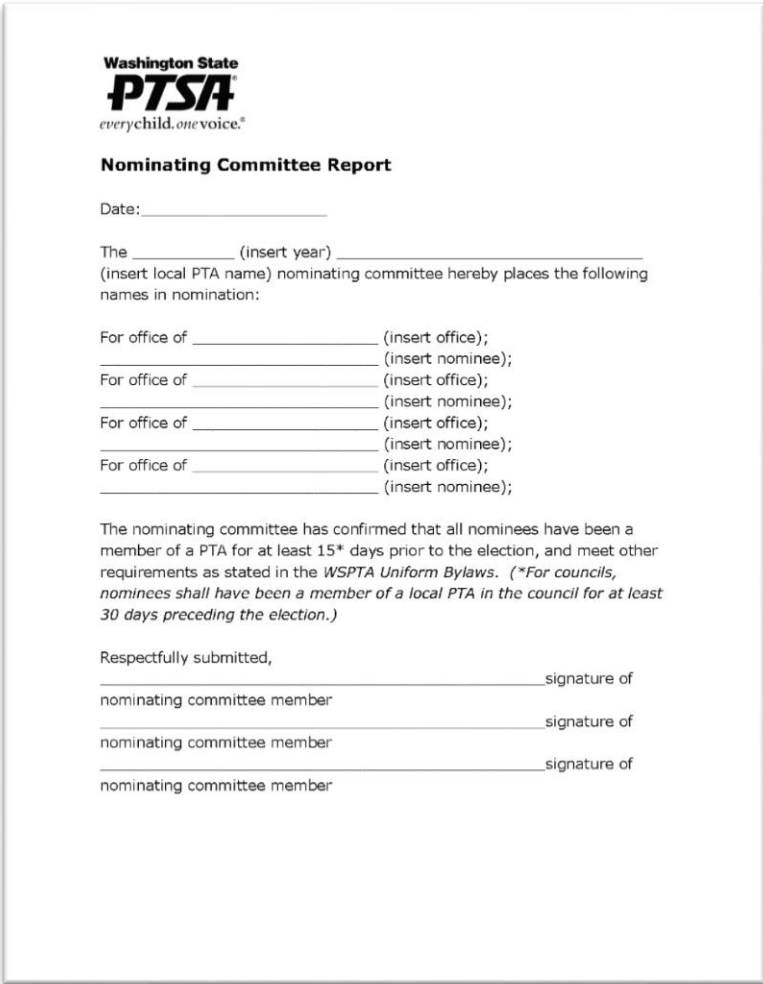
- Must be a PTA member (though not necessarily a member of the pertinent PTA) 15 days preceding the election for local PTAs, and 30 days preceding the election for council offices; it is the responsibility of the nominating committee to confirm this.
- Must be willing to attend required PTA training for the position to which he or she will be elected.
- Must be enthusiastic and supportive of the local PTA or council.
- Must believe in the purposes of PTA and believe that PTA is the best association for working for children and youth.
- Should have previous experience in PTA, though other association work may also be considered.
- Should have knowledge of the PTA association and its role in the school and community.
- Should be relied upon to give PTA a satisfactory level of priority and commitment.
- Should have good relationships with people.
- Must be fair and objective and able to subordinate personal interests to the interests and well-being of the local PTA or council.
- Should have vision and be innovative.
- Must be at least 18 years old to be elected as a PTA officer.

8. Nominating committee report

The nominating committee shall submit to the members a dated and signed report at least 15 days prior to the election stating the name of one or more candidates for each office to be elected. Additional nominations may be made from the floor with the consent of the nominee only when election is held during a meeting. (*WSPTA Uniform Bylaws*, Article 5, Local PTAs and Councils, Section 5C.)

The written report must be dated and signed by all nominating committee members. Following is a sample of a nominating committee report. This document is also available on the WSPTA website, under PTA Leader Resources.

The report is read to the PTA members by the nominating committee chair just prior to the election. The nominating committee has no role in conducting the election. The nominating committee is automatically discharged from service after the officers are declared elected.



The image shows a sample form for a Nominating Committee Report. At the top left is the Washington State PTSA logo with the tagline 'everychild.one voice.' Below the logo is the title 'Nominating Committee Report'. The form contains several fields for completion: a date field, a field for the year, a field for the local PTA name, and four fields for nominating members, each with sub-fields for office and nominee. A paragraph of text explains the requirements for nominees. At the bottom, there are three signature lines for nominating committee members.

Sample Nominating Committee Report

9. Conducting local PTA or council elections

Prior to the meeting at which the election will be held, a local PTA or council should prepare and have on hand a list of current members, membership forms, and ballots for voting (if needed).

All members of the PTA, including those who join a PTA upon arrival at a meeting during which an election will be held, shall be allowed to vote at that meeting. No one may run for office unless he or she has been a PTA member for at least 15

days (for a local PTA) or 30 days (for a council); although an individual who is a current member of another local PTA may run for office at a local PTA at which he or she is not a member. If elected, these individuals must join that PTA in order to serve as an officer of that PTA.

If voting by ballot, it is critical that no one leave the meeting until the voting results are read. If an election is contested, it may be necessary to vote again if no one candidate receives a majority.

The standing rules of the local PTA or council may provide that voting for officers or nominating committee positions be by mail or electronic transmission if the name of each candidate is contained in the notice of meeting. (*WSPTA Uniform Bylaws*, Article 5, Local PTAs and Councils, Section 4).

Example of election minutes showing no additional nominations

WSPTA Uniform Bylaws Article 5, Section 6 was read by Secretary Nick Neatly. Jane Doh, chair of nominating committee, read aloud the report of the committee and announced that all candidates meet the requirements of the WSPTA Uniform Bylaws:

*President – Abby Anyone
Vice president – Kip Khartoum
Secretary – Sara Self
Treasurer – Don Demonstrate*

The signed report was handed to President Susie Sample and the committee was thanked for its work. President Sample re-read the proposed slate of officers. President Sample asked for nominations from the floor for president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer, in turn. There were no additional nominations and the president declared the nominations closed. The nominees were declared elected in accordance with WSPTA Bylaws Article 5 Section 6B.

Example of election minutes showing additional nominations

WSPTA Uniform Bylaws Article 5, Section 6 was read by Secretary Nick Neatly. Jane Doh, chair of nominating committee, read aloud the report of the committee and announced that all candidates meet the requirements of the WSPTA Uniform Bylaws:

*President – Abby Anyone
Vice president – Kip Khartoum
Secretary – Sara Self
Treasurer – Don Demonstrate*

The signed report was handed to President Susie Sample and the committee was thanked for its work. President Sample re-read the proposed slate of officers. President Sample asked for nominations from the floor for president, vice

president, secretary, and treasurer, in turn. Sven Somebody was nominated for the position of treasurer. He accepted the nomination. President Sample verified that Sven Somebody met the requirements of the WSPTA Uniform Bylaws. With no further nominees, the president declared the nominations closed. The nominees for president, vice president, and secretary were declared elected in accordance with WSPTA Bylaws Article 5 Section 6B. Doris Doright, Emily Engaged, and Tom Terrific served as the teller's committee and a ballot election was held for treasurer. The results of the election were Don Demonstrate: 32 votes; Sven Somebody: 12 votes. Don Demonstrate was elected treasurer.

The secretary should record the results of the election and should preserve the ballots cast for each office until it is apparent the results will not be challenged, so that if the election is questioned, the vote may be verified by a recount.

Note: *When officers are elected they must be entered into the WSPTA online membership database as soon as possible. They will receive information from the WSPTA state office to help them get started.*

10. Sample election script

Note: *This is sample wording; individual situations may vary. This example assumes that electronic voting has not been authorized.*

PRESIDENT: "The next business before the PTA is the election of officers. The secretary will please read the section of the *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws* pertaining to the election of officers." (The secretary would then read Article 5, Section 6 from the *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws: Officers and their election – local PTA and council*). "In accordance with the *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws*, we will proceed with the election of officers."

PRESIDENT: "We will now hear the report of the nominating committee."

CHAIR of the NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

The nominating committee places in nomination the following: (this section can be altered to fit each local PTA's or council's elected officers)

For president: _____

For vice president: _____

For secretary: _____

For treasurer: _____

The chair then hands the written report to the president and retires to her or his seat. The report from the nominating committee should be signed by all committee members.

PRESIDENT: "The nominating committee has named the following persons as candidates for offices of the PTA/council for the coming year." The president then repeats the nominating committee report.

For president: _____

For vice president: _____

For secretary: _____

For treasurer: _____."

Even if there are multiple names, no name, or one name put forward by the nominating committee, each position then must accept nominations from the floor.

The following script is repeated for each elected position.

" _____'s name has been placed in nomination for the office of president. Are there further nominations from the floor?" (always allow plenty of time.)

Note: *Individuals do not have to be present to be nominated from the floor. However, they must give their permission to be nominated. If, after waiting a reasonable time, no other nomination is forthcoming, the president may close nominations by a general consent motion, in the following manner:*

PRESIDENT: "Hearing no further nominations for president, if there are no objections, the chair will declare the nominations for president closed." (Pause) "Hearing no objection, the nominations for president are closed."

This procedure is followed for each office in sequence in which the nominations were made.

Candidates should be introduced and names listed on a flip chart or other visual aid. The vote is then taken. The *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws* provide that local PTA and council officers shall be elected by ballot vote prior to the end of the fiscal year for a term of one year and until their successors are elected. A majority vote is necessary to elect. If only one candidate is nominated for an office, the candidate shall be declared elected.

Note: *Under Washington State law, to be elected a candidate must receive a majority of all eligible voters who are present. If no one candidate receives a majority of all eligible voters present, even if they receive a majority of votes cast for a particular position, then a run-off election should be conducted, limited to the two candidates who received the most votes in the initial election.*

A teller’s committee is appointed by the president to count ballot votes. The teller’s committee should be named in the minutes. They prepare a signed report as follows:

For president:

- Ms. B. received26
- Mr. A. received 12
- Ms. C. received 2

Signed: _____

This process is followed for each office with more than one candidate. Every name for which a vote has been cast must be reported, with the one receiving the largest vote for each office being stated first. The tellers never announce who is elected. Their report is given to the president who makes the announcement.

The president declares who is elected as follows.

PRESIDENT: “The officers you have elected for the _____ PTA for 20____ to 20____ are:

- President: _____,
- Vice president: _____,
- Secretary: _____,
- Treasurer: _____.”

11. Frequently asked questions

- Q:** What if a person who wants to serve in an office is not nominated by the nominating committee?
- A:** Every qualified person has the right to be nominated from the floor in the event she or he wants to run for an office and is not on the nominating committee’s slate of candidates. This is a protection which assures that if any member feels the nominating committee ignored the best qualified candidate for a position, that person can still be nominated and run for office. The choice of who is elected rests, as always, with the members. In order to run for election for a local PTA, a candidate must be a PTA member for 15 days prior to the elections, although he or she need not be a member of the PTA holding the election until he or she takes office. To run for election as a council officer, candidates shall have been a member of a local PTA board of directors or council board of directors for at least one term, and shall have been a member of a local PTA in the council for at least 30 days preceding election.

Q: What if the nominating committee is unable to find a candidate for a position?

A: The nominating committee should submit its nominating committee report on time with that position left blank. It is better to find a qualified nominee rather than submit the name of someone unable to fulfill the duties of the position. When the election of officers is being held the president will solicit nominations from the floor as occurs with all of the positions. If there is still no one to fill the position, the executive committee or board of directors (refer to the local PTA's or council's standing rules) has the authority to appoint someone to the position until the next membership meeting, when he or she may be voted in.

11.1 Qualifications of nominees

Q: One of the children of the individual who has been nominated for office was just convicted of armed robbery. Should that nominee be asked to step aside so someone else can be nominated?

A: No. The crimes of one individual are not the crimes of another. The crimes of the child are not the crimes of the parent.

Q: If a member of the nominating committee has knowledge of theft by a nominee — should they share that information with the committee? (For example, they were in Scouts together and the person running for office was convicted of embezzlement of Scout funds.)

A: Absolutely. The committee needs this information to determine the best qualified candidates for the PTA. However, if there are only suspicions of theft or if there was no conviction, then it would not be appropriate to share this information.

11.2 Principal's role

Q: The principal wants to run for PTA president because he wants the PTA to raise funds to buy school supplies and other things. What can be done?

A: Interference in the corporate affairs of a private, nonprofit association is serious. However, any member has the right to run for an office. If this individual is the wrong person for the office and may damage the association, the members will need to elect a better qualified candidate. If the principal is using his position to intimidate members, then contact your region director or the WSPTA office for assistance. It may also be a conflict of interest for the principal to be elected president of the PTA.

11.3 Timeline for nominating committee

Q: When is the nominating committee elected?

A: Best practice is for the nominating committee to be elected at the first membership meeting in the fall. If that doesn't happen, it can be elected at any subsequent membership meeting.

11.4 Nominating committee members allowed nomination for office

Q: Can you be a nominee for office if you are on the nominating committee?

A: Yes. Being a member of the nominating committee does not preclude an individual from consideration as a nominee for office. However, individuals being considered for a position should be excused from any discussion regarding that position, and the remaining nominating committee members will decide whose name to put forward. The fact that a member of the nominating committee did not participate in the discussion of one or more positions should be included in the nominating committee report.

11.5 Nominee's PTA membership requirements

Q: How many days does a candidate for office need to be a PTA member before being selected for nomination by the nominating committee?

A: The *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws* does not specify how many days candidates must be a member before being selected for nomination by the nominating committee.

11.6 Electronic voting

Q: For what purposes can electronic voting be used?

A: Electronic voting can only be used to elect the nominating committee and officers, and then only if specifically authorized in the local PTA's or council's standing rules.

Q: What is the recommended way to conduct an election using electronic voting?

A: Suggested guidelines about different ways to handle electronic voting are available on the WSPTA website under PTA Leader Resources.

11.7 Co-officer positions

Q: Can the nominating committee put forward two people together that they feel will be great co-officers?

A: No. The nominating committee must communicate their wishes to the two candidates and receive verification from the candidates that they would like to be put forward by the nominating committee as co-officers.

Note: *In order to have co-officers it must be addressed in the local PTA's or council's standing rules.*

11.8 Non-elected positions

Q: May the nominating committee fill non-elected positions on the board of directors or other committee chair positions?

A: No. The nominating committee is only charged with finding qualified candidates for the elected board positions as defined by the local PTA's or council's standing rules. It is not unusual for candidates to mention that they are happy to take other non-elected board or chairperson positions. The nominating committee may not make any promises or appointments of non-elected board positions or committee chairs. These chair positions are filled in accordance with a local PTA or council's standing rules.

While all records of the nominating committee should be destroyed after the committee is discharged, it is okay for the committee to provide a list of individuals who may be interested in other positions. The committee should not comment on any of the deliberations about or communication with these individuals or share why they were not recommended for elected office.