

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2020 – 2021

Section 6

INTRODUCTION

The role of the PTA board of directors is to establish the framework within which everyone works. The board is a team of volunteers who are members of the PTA and who are elected to office or appointed to chair a committee. They work together to set goals for the unit and to establish methods to achieve those goals. Effective teamwork requires mutual respect, knowledge of your role and the role of others, compassion and commitment.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Your bylaws define the membership of your board and provide for its powers and duties. The board is generally composed of

- the elected officers (the executive committee),
- the committee chairs, and
- the principal or his representative, if the PTA is affiliated with a school.

Duties

Serving as a board member is a privilege accompanied by many responsibilities. A board member has status based on the position. However, this standing carries with it the expectation that the member will improve her leadership skills, will keep up with current information and will invest her time in the work of the PTA.

All members must uphold decisions made by the board. No matter what side you voted on, after the decision has been made, you must support that choice.

Additionally, boards

- Carry out such business as may be referred to it by the membership of the association.
- Create standing and special committees.
- Present a report at the general membership meetings.
- Select an auditor or an auditing committee to audit the treasurer's accounts.
- Approve payment of routine bills within the limits of the approved budget.
- Schedule board and association meetings.
- Conduct the business of the PTA between board meetings.
- Develop goals for the association for presentation to the board of directors and general membership for approval.

The board of directors does not have the authority to make or authorize expenditures that are not in the budget. All money spent must be voted on by the membership.

Just as for general membership meetings, minutes are kept for board meetings. The board minutes are not read at general membership meetings, but committee actions are reported.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The executive committee consists of the officers of the PTA. They help the president see that the goals of the unit are carried out.

Duties

- Transact business referred to it by the board.
- Act in emergencies between meetings of the board.
- Make a report of committee action items at each board meeting.

Just as for general membership meetings, minutes are kept for executive committee meetings. The committee minutes are not read at board meetings, but committee actions are reported.

Qualities of Effective Officers

- Have knowledge of and promote the Purposes and policies of the PTA.
- Perform all the duties of the office as outlined in the bylaws, standing rules and procedures.
- Cooperate with the school administrator and staff and with others with responsibility for children.
- Study the material distributed to local PTA units by the Louisiana and National PTAs.
- Become familiar with local, district, state and national bylaws.
- Attend district, state, and national leadership training and meetings.
- Make reports as required and file annual reports as part of the association's records.
- Answer correspondence promptly.
- Stay informed by reading the publications of the association.
- Transmit records, reports and other material to succeeding officers in a timely manner.
- Return to treasurer all funds pertaining to the office.
- Keep a procedure book to pass on to succeeding officers.
- Protect members' privacy by not allowing distribution of membership lists or other information to outside interests.

Duties of Officers

The duties of all officers are specified in your unit bylaws and standing rules. Refer to these documents for more specific information.

President

The president is elected to direct the affairs of the PTA in cooperation with the other members of the executive committee and board of directors. The duties and responsibilities of the president are covered in the president's section of this guide.

Vice Presidents

The vice presidents normally act as aides to the president. The president may delegate certain responsibilities (i.e. membership, legislation, programs) to them.

Because vice presidents may be asked to temporarily assume the duties of the president, they should understand the president's duties and responsibilities and be familiar with the work of the association. A vice president can act in place of the president only when empowered to do so by the president or, if the president is unable to do so, when empowered to act by the board of directors.

Vice presidents may:

- preside at meetings in the absence of the president or upon the president's inability to serve.
- assume the duties of the president in the event of the president's resignation until the position is filled in accordance with the bylaws.
- perform other duties that may be provided for in the bylaws or standing rules. These may include coordinating the work of the chairs, completing and submitting award applications or handling special projects.

Secretary

The secretary is responsible for keeping accurate records of the proceedings of the association and is also the custodian of the PTA records. The duties and responsibilities of the secretary are covered in the secretary's section of this guide.

Treasurer

The treasurer, as the authorized custodian of the PTA funds, receives and disburses all money as prescribed in the bylaws or authorized by action of the association. The duties and responsibilities of the treasurer are covered in the treasurer's section of this guide.

COMMITTEES

Committees are the working machinery of the PTA, planning and promoting its activities. Each committee consists of two or more people who have been appointed or elected on the basis of their qualifications for the committee's field of work. Each committee has a definite function and is at all times subject to the control and direction of the association.

The work and goals of your unit will determine the number and nature of the committees necessary. Refer to your bylaws and standing rules for specific information about committees and the selection of committee chairs.

Types of Committees

Standing – *Formed when the work in a certain area requires continuous service throughout the year or longer.*

Special – *Formed for a specific purpose. When the work is completed and its final report is accepted or adopted, this committee automatically ceases to exist.*

Standing Committees

Budget

The committee has the responsibility of developing a budget for the PTA. Members may be elected or appointed, according to the unit's bylaws. The treasurer acts as the chair.

The committee should study the previous year's budget and treasurer's reports to determine how well the budget met the unit's needs. Next, members should determine the projected financial requirements, taking into consideration the funds needed for programs, projects and leadership development. Using this information, the committee develops the annual budget. PTAs are not fundraising organizations, but rather are educational organizations. PTA's major emphasis should be on informing and educating members on issues related to children.

The treasurer must submit a budget to the general membership for approval. The committee may meet at various times during the year to determine if budget changes are necessary. Changes may only be made by amendment at a general membership meeting. It is recommended that notice of such pending action be given prior to the meeting date.

Bylaws Chair

The committee is responsible for making sure the bylaws are reviewed, revised, if necessary, and submitted to the Louisiana PTA secretary.

Cultural Arts/Reflections

The objectives of this committee are to emphasize the benefits of arts education and encourage participation in the Reflections, My Louisiana Essay and Safety Drawing programs.

Diversity

This committee helps identify and improve diversity membership participation within your PTA. Diversity means valuing differences and similarities in people through actions and accountability. These differences and similarities include age, ethnicity, language and culture, economic status, educational background, gender, geographic location, marital status, mental ability, national origin, organizational position and tenure, parental status, physical ability, political philosophy, race, religion, sexual orientation, and work experience.

What can PTA do to welcome, communicate effectively and engage families in meaningful ways that grow diverse PTA membership and leadership? Check out the **PTA Diversity & Inclusion Tool Kit** at <http://www.pta.org/members/content.cfm?ItemNumber=3023&navItemNumber=3578>.

Education

This committee's focus includes:

- enrichment – *identify and provide opportunities for students to enhance their knowledge, develop related learning skills and satisfy other education needs.*
- policy – *build understanding in the community of the issues that affect students' education and promote student achievement and school success.*

Health

The committee educates parents about the health needs of children and how to meet those needs, works to ensure adequate health services and ensures that children are taught to respect and care for themselves.

Hospitality

The purpose of the committee is to develop a spirit of friendliness among members and others who may attend meetings; to contribute to the pleasure and comfort of those present; to assist in discovering special talents and interests among members; and to foster a feeling of belonging among members.

Nominating

This is probably the most important committee as the candidates it nominates determine the course of the PTA in years to come. A unit's bylaws indicate when the committee is elected and the number of members who will serve. Any member of the unit except the president may be elected to the committee. However, it is in the best interest of the PTA to have committee members who are informed, active, interested and will consider the welfare of your unit above all else.

The committee should select the best qualified candidate possible for each office to be filled. Serving on this committee does not prevent a member from being chosen as a nominee.

Legislative

The legislative committee has three main responsibilities:

- to provide members with information about current legislative issues so they may effectively participate in local, state and national government;
- to present to legislators at all levels the PTA position on proposed laws that affect the education, health and well-being of children; and
- to work with other groups with similar interests.

Refer to the advocacy section of this guide for more information.

Male Engagement

Consider making male engagement a focus of your PTA. Create a male engagement committee or chairmanship on your board and engage one or more of the **MORE Alliance** partners in programming at your school or home. This year more than one million men across America will visit schools through programs of **the National PTA® MORE Alliance** (Men Organized to Raise

Engagement). These programs underscore the importance of fathers and father figures in the success of our children. The **MORE Alliance** offers ready-to-use programs that will help you quickly add relevancy, membership and capacity to your PTA.

Membership

The goal of the membership committee is to build an informed and participating membership. The membership committee is responsible for the year-long membership campaign that includes seeking out and involving people who may not have considered joining the PTA. Refer to the membership section of this guide for more information.

Parent Engagement

The committee helps strengthen, support and sustain the involvement of parents in the lives of their children.

Program

This committee is charged with planning programs that are relevant to the school community. In addition to speakers, programs could include activities, workshops and performances.

Public Relations

The committee works toward creating public awareness, understanding, recognition and support of PTA goals and programs. The degree to which the community is made aware of the PTA and its work for children depends upon how effectively this committee works.

Room Representatives

Room reps serve as a liaison for the classroom and provide a personal contact between the PTA, parents, students and teachers. They provide the link that promotes the fourth Purpose of PTA – to bring into closer relation the home and the school that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth. The room representative coordinator represents the group on the board of directors.

Teacher Appreciation

Teacher Appreciation Week -- the first full week in May – honors the dedicated men and women who lend their passion and skills to educating our children. The committee focuses attention and recognizes all of the ways teachers contribute to the lives of children.

Ways and Means

Although fundraising should not be the primary focus of a PTA, it is necessary to secure resources for PTA programs. This committee should develop their plan of work based on the unit's goals. Fundraising events should reflect the PTA's high principals and have educational, social or recreational value.

BOARD ORIENTATION

The first meeting of the board of directors should be an orientation for both new and returning members. The orientation includes:

Welcome and introduction of members

General overview of a good, functioning board

Board specifics

- number of meetings members are expected to attend and the procedure to follow if they will be absent
- dates and locations of meetings
- the importance of keeping a procedure book

PTA Basics (Don't assume that everyone knows.)

- structure of PTA
- policies and procedures
- bylaws and standing rules

Procedures for reporting (Who reports what and to whom.)

- written, oral or both
- when due and what should be included
- recommendations to the membership and board
- newsletter responsibilities

Role and responsibilities of board members

- working with administrators (principals, superintendents) and others with responsibility for children
- attendance at workshops and conventions
- response to memos, letters and phone calls
- participation at board meetings, including homework, discussion, listening, voting and abiding by and supporting decisions

Resources available at:

Local District PTA

Louisiana PTA Resource Guide

Louisiana PTA Office

Louisiana PTA Conventions and Trainings

Louisiana PTA Board of Directors

District and State PTA Websites

National PTA website www.pta.org

National PTA E-Learning www.pta.org

SETTING GOALS

Goals give direction, establish priorities and determine how to accomplish and evaluate a task. Goals tell the who, what, when, where, and how.

Goals should

- **be specific**
- **be measurable**
- **be attainable/reasonable**
- **have an established timeline**

There are two types of goals to consider. Both are important and necessary.

- Administrative goals deal with the running of the organization. Establishing a goal to increase your membership by 10% is an example of an administrative goal.
- Program goals deal with the issues that are important to your community. Organizing a bicycle safety day is an example of a program goal.

Prior to adopting your goals, it is wise to work with the principal and teachers. It is also a good idea to survey your community to determine what their concerns are. If there is no need for a program and no support, no matter how good it may seem, it will not succeed.

After setting your goals, develop a plan of work and a master calendar of the year's activities. See the PTA Basics section of this guide for a sample plan of work.

HOW BOARDS SUCCEED...

A CHECKLIST

Boards succeed when members have a good understanding of the organization and of their role. The nominating committee should provide an accurate interpretation of responsibilities to potential nominees. The president should provide an orientation for all officers at the beginning of each term of office.

Boards succeed when they have a well-planned orientation for new and old members. Experienced board members need an annual update on the organization's work and accomplishments. New board members need to be introduced to the procedures of the board. All board members need to reflect on future plans in a positive atmosphere.

Boards succeed when they are neither too small nor too large. It is hard to conceive of a board getting the job done if it is simply too small and equally difficult to picture a successful board weighed down with too many members.

Boards succeed when they have established standing committees. Standing committees should have an approved plan of work and should operate throughout the school year.

Boards succeed when they have a long-range plan. A year-long plan of action is helpful in providing an overall view of where the association is going. It insures the continuity of programs and projects undertaken by the PTA.

Boards succeed because they have a process for self-evaluation. At least once a year the board should review and evaluate the goals, accomplishments and problems of each committee and officer. This annual process should be tied to the long-range planning process. The review should form the basis for the annual report.

Boards succeed when they have provisions for eliminating nonproductive members. The nominating committee should evaluate the participation and interest of board members and make appropriate recommendations for reelection. Between elections, organizations should have a process in place to deal with nonproductive members.

Boards succeed when they have a planned rotation. Rotation prevents the ingrown possessiveness that sometimes occurs on self-perpetuating boards. New members bring new ideas and promote growth of the organization.

Boards are successful because of an effective nominating committee. The decisions made by the nominating committee largely determine who will lead the group ahead. This committee should be well organized, have a time schedule, and planned working procedure.