

Basic Training for Every PTA Member: Bylaws!!

MCCPTA Training

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Basic Training for Every PTA Member: Bylaws!!

BYLAWS

- ▣ Define governance structure
- ▣ Approved by local PTA
- ▣ Members are the final decision makers
- ▣ All board members must be familiar with bylaws
- ▣ All members must have access to bylaws

Why does your PTA need bylaws?

- **For your school community**
 - **Creates transparency – all members know the basic rules**
 - **Assures smooth transition – explains how to nominate and elect officers**
 - **Assures accountability – provides the ground rules for decision making and managing money**

- **For the Montgomery County and Maryland PTAs**
 - **Creates the same ground rules for all PTAs**
 - **Allows flexibility for local PTAs to include their priorities**
 - **Requirement to maintain status as a PTA**

- **For the IRS**
 - **Tax laws require non-profit corporations to have bylaws**

Bylaws Basics

- Board members **MUST** know and follow bylaws
- Don't wait for an emergency to consult bylaws
- When in doubt, refer to Roberts Rules of Order
- PTAs must update their Bylaws every three years
 - Can update earlier, if needed
 - Consider questions, concerns, situations that have come up that may suggest a need to change Bylaws
 - Keep level of detail similar to MD PTA bylaws template
 - Create standing rules if more details are desired
 - Membership must approve bylaws, even if there are no changes

Local PTA bylaws update process

- ▣ General process (see Article XVII)
 - ▣ Board of Directors appoint Bylaws Committee
 - ▣ Committee presents revisions to Board of Directors for approval
 - ▣ Draft is provided to general membership 30 days prior to vote
 - ▣ General membership votes – 2/3 majority required
 - ▣ New bylaws take effect immediately
 - ▣ Send to Maryland PTA office for MDPTA bylaws committee approval

Local PTA bylaws – must submit final bylaws on printed booklet template

- ▣ Request printed booklet from Maryland PTA.
- ▣ email: office@mdpta.org
- ▣ The printed booklet must be hand-edited and submitted via postal mail (with 2 copies).
 - ▣ This seems archaic, but it is the easiest way for the MDPTA bylaws committee to review and approve changes for all Maryland PTAs.
- ▣ Most recent version is July 2017 (check for most recent version when you are ready to update)

Local PTA bylaws – download electronic version

- ▣ Maryland PTA provides an electronic ‘draft’ file of the printed booklet
 - ▣ Go to <http://www.mdpta.org>
 - ▣ Select Membership tab on the left
 - ▣ Scroll to bottom, click on Members Only section
- Enter login information:
 - LOGIN: Diversity
 - PASSWORD: means..
- ▣ Use this electronic file to mark up your DRAFT language, and when the general membership has approved the changes, make the approved changes to the printed booklet.

Local PTA bylaws – must comply with MCCPTA bylaws

- ▣ Make the following revisions to the MDPTA template
- ▣ Article V, section 5. Paying dues to MCCPTA
 - ▣ Add “as well as county council” after the words, “National PTA”
- ▣ Article XIII, Section 1.a.
 - ▣ Cross out the words, “the principal or alternate” in the bylaws
 - ▣ 2 delegates are required for MCCPTA (even if you can’t find 2 people to fill the positions)
 - ▣ This section should read: “The Association shall be represented in meetings of the Montgomery County Council of Parent Teacher Associations by the president or alternate and by two (2) delegates or their alternates...”

Local PTA bylaws update process

- When you make changes, start from scratch (the template) – MDPTA will not review changes from your past to your new bylaws
- Make sure PTA understands what the proposed changes are
- Local PTA CAN NOT delete or change hashmarked text (more details on next slide)
- Distributing the draft bylaws for discussion can be done thru email and listserve, as well as through printed newsletters.
- PTAs often scan their approved bylaws and post on PTA website
- Standing rules can be established to provide more detailed procedures that improve the management of your local PTA.

Hashmarked text guidelines

- # hashmark in the template means that MDPTA requires ALL PTAs to abide by the language (note, requirements with the blank space do need to be filled in)
- # text is not subject to being voted on and is required wording to be practiced by local PTAs
- # for article – article and all sections must stand
- # for section – section must stand, but other sections without # can be changed in the article
- # for subsection – must keep the wording of that subsection
- # with a blank space in it – must fill in the blank space

Bylaws checklist – important issues

- ❑ # hashmark means that MDPTA requires ALL PTAs to abide by the article. Text can not be changed or deleted.
- ❑ Fill in all the blanks, even those where there is a #. Additional wording or explanations can be added on a separate sheet of paper
- ❑ List titles for each vice-president (if more than 1)
- ❑ Co-presidents are not allowed PTA can officially only recognize them as president and a vice-president-or president elect-who supports the president.
- ❑ Long text additions, such as description of duties for multiple vice presidents, can be attached to the template. Within the template, indicate there is an attachment.

Local PTA bylaws update process

- ▣ How and where to submit
 - ▣ Make copy or scan bylaws as approved by local membership and keep it somewhere safe
 - ▣ Send minutes from meeting, the hand-filled (!) complete original and 2 copies to MDPTA at
5 Central Ave.
Glen Burnie, MD 20161
 - ▣ If approved by MDPTA, signed copy is returned to you. Scan, store, and distribute to membership.
 - ▣ If not approved, follow instructions to go through bylaws review again.

For help

- ▣ If you want someone to look at your bylaws
- ▣ If you want to understand why your local PTA bylaws were not approved or were rejected
- ▣ If MDPTA does not get back to you
- ▣ If MDPTA says they don't have your bylaws on file
- ▣ Contact :
 - ▣ MCCPTA bylaws chair (kschoolar@gmail.com)
 - ▣ Your cluster coordinator(s)