The HCCPTA Step-By-Step Guide to Holding Elections

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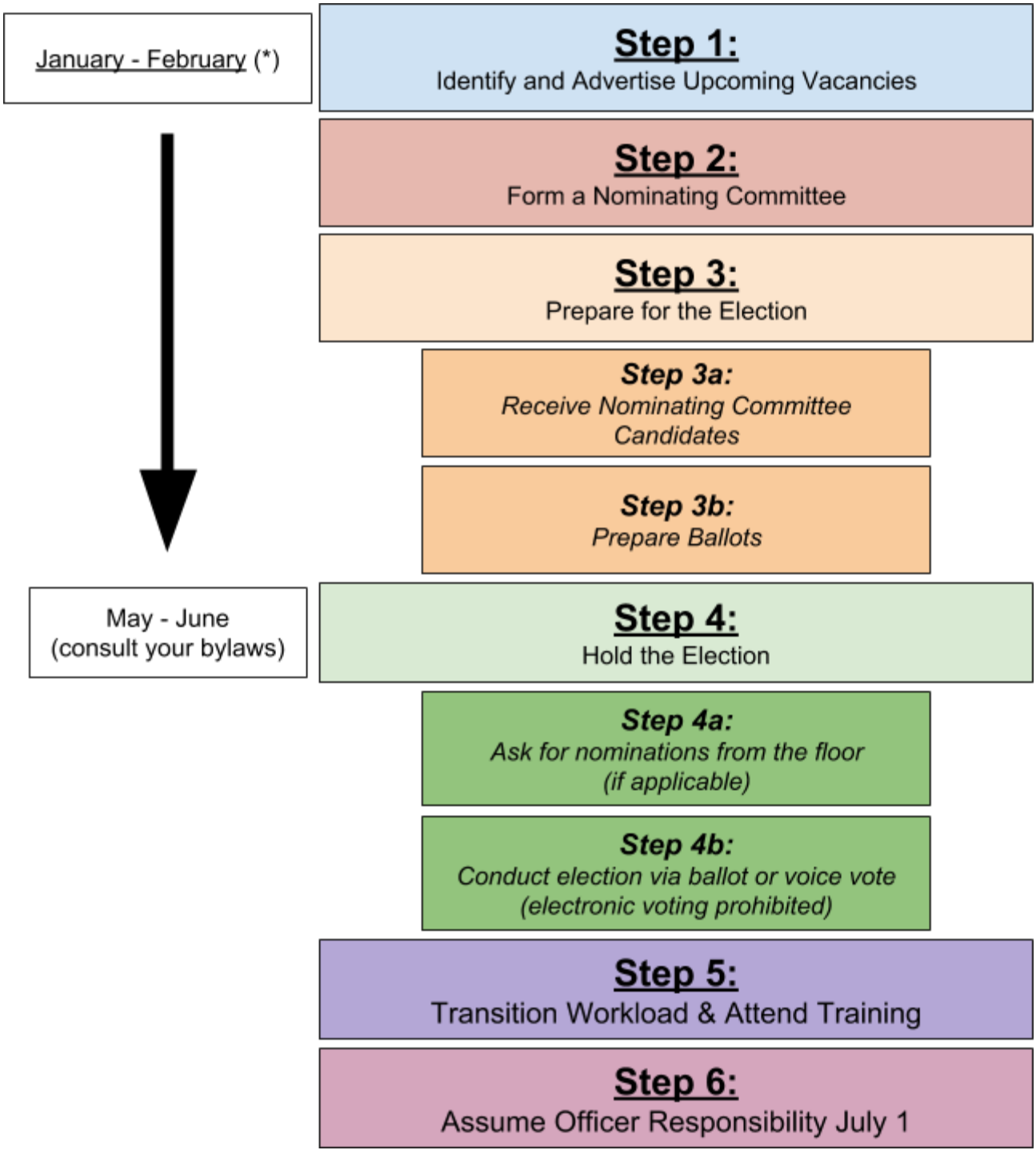
The 6-Step Election Process (Overview)



(*) See following pages for additional details on navigating through the election process.

The PTA/PTSA Election Process

This guide is meant to help you with your upcoming local PTA/PTSA election and to give you an overview of the timelines, bylaws, and the process leading up to the actual election. The HCCPTA is always available for questions and support. If you have questions, please email: 1vp@hccpta.org or 2ndvp@hccpta.org.

Elections Timelines

Preparing for the election should be occurring at the beginning of the calendar year. As a Board, it is important to assess the current vacancies within your PTA, the number of terms a person has served, and which positions will be up for election at the end of the school year. The table below provides an overview of when the election process should begin. Keep in mind, the process will vary slightly by PTA/PTSA since the bylaws for each organization are unique.

January	February-March	April	May
Consider which positions will be vacant and/or up for election at the end of the school year	Establish nominating committee; seek potential officer candidates	Officer nomination slate announced by Nominating Committee	Elections during your PTA general membership meeting

Bylaws Overview

The MOST important thing that PTA/PTSA officers and its board members can do is read and understand the bylaws (especially when preparing to hold an election)! The Bylaws are a compilation of operating processes and procedures. All the "rules" are contained within this document.

Key Bylaws References for "Elections"

Article IV, Section 2: Establishes training requirements for all PTA/PTSA units

Article VI, Section 1: Each officer shall be a member of the PTA.

Article VI Section 2, Subsection a: Identifies total officer positions

Article VI, Section 2, Subsection b: Establishes when elections take place.

Article VI, Section 2, Subsection d: Establishes term lengths and whether elections fall on odd or even years.

Article VI, Section 3, Subsection a: Identifies Nominating Committee composition.

Understanding Term Lengths and Limits

Article VI Section 2 of the bylaws will tell you the length of a term (one or two years) and the number of consecutive terms allowed for the same position. Here in Harford County maximum length of consecutive service in a single PTA position varies from 1-4 years.

- An election still needs to occur at the end of every term even if the current person is willing to continue in the position. *(All PTA members are eligible to run regardless of a sitting officer's willingness to continue in the same position.)*
- All terms begin on July 1 and end on June 30th of the appropriate term. A transition should take place between the outgoing and incoming Officers to transfer over all binders and information in a timely fashion. Incoming and outgoing officers are encouraged to meet to discuss specifics of the job, activities and budget.

Election Best Practices

Nominations and Vacancies

Your PTA/PTSA's general membership needs to be aware of impending nominations and vacancies within your Board of Directors, but especially in the PTA/PTSA elected leadership. This can be done at your PTA/PTSA meetings and publicized over email and social media, when applicable. Be sure to advertise:

1. Which positions need to be filled
2. Who to contact if someone is interested in getting more information or putting their name up for consideration

The Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee will elect its Chairperson and the Chairperson will be tasked with making known the report of the Committee to the membership. The Nominating Committee:

1. Should have at least 3 members. An odd number of members is best.
2. Cannot include the President
3. Need to be members of your PTA/PTSA and familiar with the bylaws
4. Is in charge of getting the job descriptions to potential nominees and to talk to them about the commitment and expectations of each of the Officers positions that need

to be filled. Keep in mind all Units must have a President, Secretary and a Treasurer to be a viable nonprofit organization so finding candidates for those positions is vital.

Conducting the Election

1. Ballots should be created and used during an election when there is more than one candidate for a position.
2. Voice voting or visual voting (raising of hands) can be used if there is only one candidate per position
3. Electronic and/or phone conferencing voting is prohibited. Absentee voting is prohibited.
4. All individuals running for a position (and all voting) must be a current member of that unit. A roster of the membership should be on hand to verify a person's membership status.
5. If ballots are used then it is best to have two to three people count and verify the results and keep a tally of the votes in case of a tie or a discrepancy. It is also ideal for results to be counted in the same room whenever possible. The results should be handed to the President who will then announce the results to the membership. If all voters agree, ballots should be discarded/shredded.

Nominations from the floor

1. All positions will be open to the floor for anyone who wants to run.
2. Sample President script: "We have one nominee for the position of *(insert position here)*. Is there anyone here from the floor who would also like to run for the position of *(insert position here)*?"

   Then, the President will say: "Seeing and hearing none, this position is now closed," or "(insert name here) is now added as a candidate for this position, this position is now closed."
3. Steps 1 and 2 need to take place for each vacant position. After that, the actual election can be held.

Mid-Year Resignations

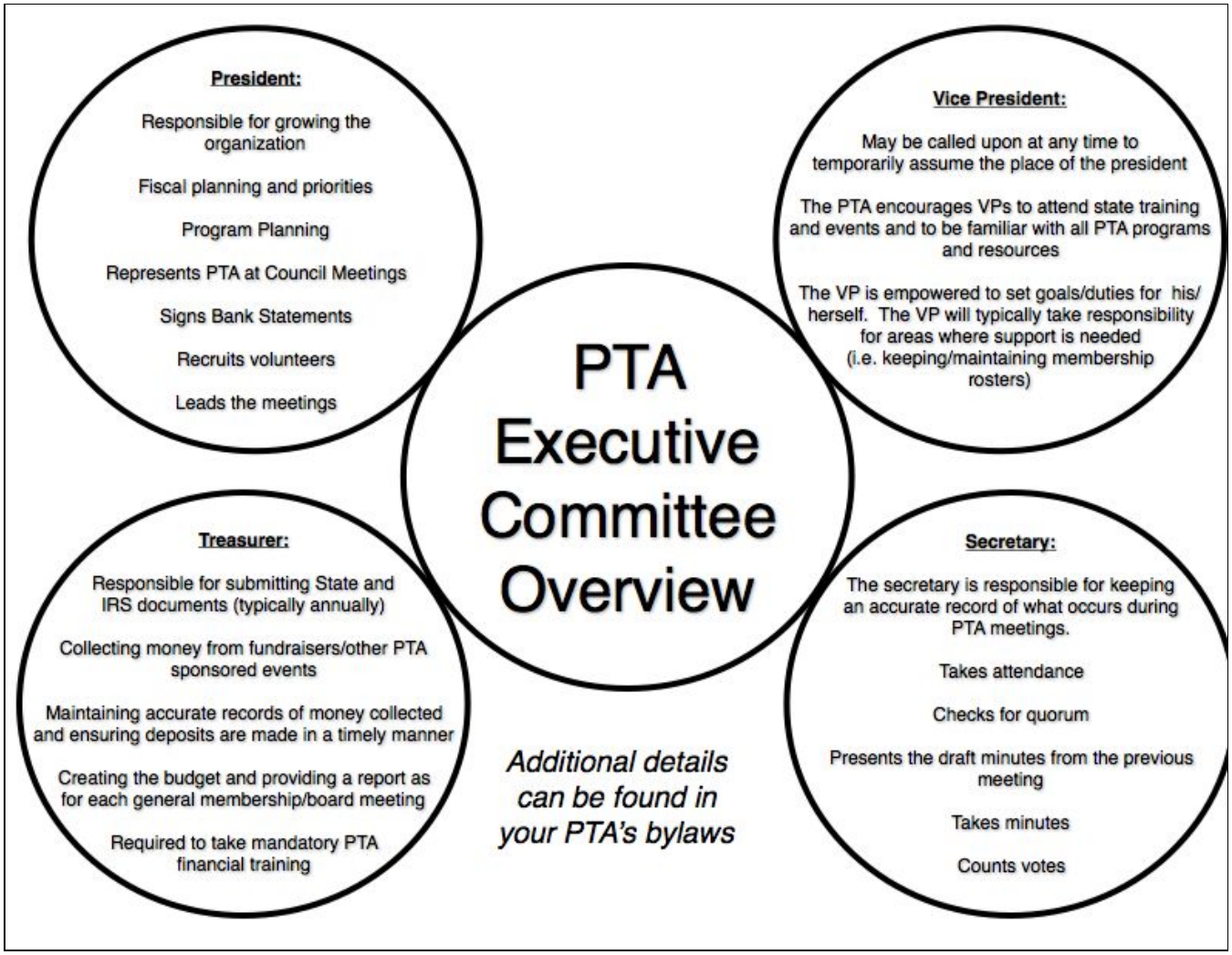
While not optimal, an officer or committee chair can resign at any time. The PTA/PTSA executive committee (aka: elected officers) cannot just appoint a person to be an officer. Upon an officer resignation, the remaining members of the board should:

1. Let the general membership know that there is - or will be - a vacancy for this position. This should occur within 15 days after the resignation.

2. Let the general membership know that interested individuals can apply to become a candidate.
3. With the exception of President, officer vacancies that occur outside of the standard election window, can be filled via majority vote of the Board of Directors.
4. In the event that the President has resigned:
    a. The vacancy must be filled by a special election UNLESS the 1st Vice President is willing to step into the role of President.
    b. If the 1st VP chooses to assume the President role, the unit would need to announce that the 1st VP has stepped into the Presidency.
    c. The former 1st VP position will be vacant and your unit would need to reference the "Announce all nominations and vacancies to the general membership" section, above.
    d. If the 1st VP is not willing to step into the President role, this vacancy must be advertised to and inevitably filled by the general membership via a special election.

Stay Trained!

All new and returning Officers should attend HCCPTA Training that is provided in May or August/September. There is a mandatory financial module that is required by MDPTA each term for all treasures and one other Board Member of each unit that needs to be completed within the first 6 months of being elected. HCCPTA offers the module at its trainings.

If you have any questions or need help with your elections, please contact us: 1vp@hccpta.org or 2vp@hccpta.org. We will gladly walk you through the process—it isn't as complicated as it sounds!

Officer Roles and Responsibilities