



PTA President Job Description

Voting member of the Executive Committee

The president is chosen by the local PTA to direct the affairs of the association in cooperation with the other members of the board for a term of office specified in the local bylaws. The length of the President's term and specific prerequisite qualifications, such as previous service, must be established in the bylaws. The success of the administration will be measured by the participation and cooperation secured from all involved.

MAJOR DUTIES

1. As presiding officer:
 - a. Prepare self for job:
 - i. Be familiar with the work of the organization, local unit bylaws, and the materials available.
 - ii. Be familiar enough with parliamentary law to inform the association on proper procedure.
 - iii. Be tolerant of the opinions of others, recognizing them as a means of broadening judgment.
 - b. Carry out the will of the association. Leadership is power over problems, not power over people. Make preparations to meet anticipated problems.
 - c. Decide all parliamentary questions. The decisions, however, are subject to an appeal by any two members, the majority vote of the association deciding the question. The presiding officer may seek the opinion of the parliamentarian on any question of parliamentary procedure.
 - d. Establish a quorum at each meeting.
 - e. Have an agenda with all business outlined in proper order.
 - f. Always express appreciation for volunteers and presenters. Officially greet new members.
 - g. Ensures the unit/council follows PTA policies and procedures
2. As administrative officer
 - a. Represents the entire membership and carries out the wishes of the membership
 - b. Attends PTA Council, Regional and Arkansas PTA meetings/conferences and encourages officers and committee chairmen to attend also



- c. Study bylaws information and material secured from predecessor.
- d. Attend Officers' and Chairmen's Training.
- e. Distribute materials to appropriate officers and committee chairmen.
- f. Call upon each chairman to prepare a plan of work based on the needs of the school and community. These plans should be approved by the board before the first regular association meeting.
- g. Delegate to the vice president(s) certain administrative duties.
- h. Remind treasurer or Budget and Finance chairman to prepare a budget to be approved by the Board for presentation to the local association for adoption.
- i. Serve ex-officio on all committees, except the Nominating and Audit Committees.
- j. Appoint members of special committees, if the bylaws so provide.
- k. Call for required reports at specified times.
- l. Consult with officers and chairmen before each meeting to see that all details of meeting are ready for presentation.
- m. Attend all meetings called by the council or send duly elected alternate.
- n. Sign all orders and vouchers if specified in bylaws.
- o. Request Legislative Action chairman to keep the membership informed on state and federal legislation concerned with the welfare of children and youths.
- p. Communicate with the membership, officers and committees regularly
- q. Is familiar with the school district
- r. Supports public education and the health and welfare of all children
- s. Has the desire and time to serve
- t. Keeps the membership informed of National and State PTA activities
- u. Signs all contracts for the unit/council
- v. Ensures information is submitted to Arkansas PTA in a timely manner (membership dues, audit, officer lists, award applications, etc.)
- w. Ensures that the unit/council follows IRS 501(c)(3) policies
- x. Keep a procedure book for successor.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Attend meetings of local school board.
2. Set up regular conferences with superintendent and/or principal.
3. Cooperate with other youth-serving organizations in the community.
4. Organize PTA volunteers to help in school where needed and requested.
5. Be alert to problems and needs of community.
6. Be ready to speak on behalf of the PTA to administrators, teachers, civic groups, business leaders and parents.
7. Keep informed on legislation.

Presidential Facts

1. It is advisable that a person holds only one position on a PTA board.
2. Wear PTA pins (president, life membership, etc.) to PTA meetings.
3. When setting meeting dates for the year, check with the principal to avoid conflicts.
4. At board meetings, guests must be granted a courtesy seat, may not make motions or vote and may speak only with the approval of the President or executive board.
5. Committee plans should be approved by the board.
6. It is not advisable for the President to vote by voice or a show of hands. However, if a vote is by ballot, there is no reason a President should not vote.
7. When wanting to speak to a motion, the President should relinquish the chair to the Vice President/President-Elect and not return to the chair until the vote has been taken on the motion.
8. Issues of a personal nature, i.e. your child's teacher, a Board member's problem, complaints, etc. should be discussed with the administration privately, not during a PTA meeting. Do not be tempted to use your position for your personal advantage.
9. PTA can support or oppose issues, not candidates. Internal Revenue Service mandates that a not for profit association be prohibited from campaigning for candidates.
10. If contacted by the media, take time to be sure your answers are accurate and reflect the PTA policy, not only your opinion.
11. The Principal should be consulted before publicizing PTA activities in the school.
12. Membership lists and class lists are to be used strictly for PTA business. They are not to be released to other groups. Call Arkansas PTA if you have any questions.
13. Money spent by the unit/council must either appear in the budget or be approved by the unit/council membership.
14. PTA does not donate to or raise funds for other groups or clubs.
15. The Treasurer's books must be audited yearly and a copy of the audit report sent to the Arkansas PTA state office.
16. A dues increase requires a bylaws change. National and State dues increase become automatic changes in a unit's/council's bylaws.
17. Bylaws are to be reviewed and updated every three years and then submitted to Arkansas PTA for approval.
18. National and State PTA do not recognize Co-Presidents. The office of President is allowed one vote, not one for each Co-President.
19. People who no longer have children in the school can continue to be part of the PTA membership. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc. are also encouraged to participate. PTA is inclusive, not exclusive.
20. If you are going to be out, let your President-Elect/Vice President and board members know ahead of time.

How to Chair a Meeting

Good meetings don't just happen. They are the result of good planning.

- Write an agenda (either a brief list of topics or an extensive, more detailed list)
- Make a copy of the agenda for the secretary and the Vice President who should sit next to the presiding officer to act as assistants. Copies can be made for all in attendance.
- Stand when presiding, except when someone is reporting. A President has better control of a meeting when standing. If the meeting is small (10 or less), it is acceptable to sit.

Sample Agenda

ORDER OF BUSINESS

CALL TO ORDER – President rises, raps the gavel once, calling the meeting to order.

The meeting will come to order.

OPENING CEREMONY (optional)

Pledge, inspirational thoughts, etc.

ESTABLISHING A QUORUM – Refer to Bylaws

Roll call or *We have a proper number of members present to conduct a business meeting.*

READING OF MINUTES – The Secretary stands to read the minutes. If the minutes have been mailed or distributed, reading is not necessary.

The Secretary will read the minutes of the previous meeting. Or you have received the minutes.

Presiding officer asks for corrections to the minutes.

Are there any corrections to the minutes? If there are no (further) corrections, the minutes stand approved as read (corrected).

TREASURER'S REPORT – No motion needed for adoption unless the report is audited.

We will have the Treasurer's Report.

Are there any questions? If not, the report will be filed for audit.

CORRESPONDENCE – If requiring no action is read by the Secretary. It may be summarized unless someone requests that the entire letter be read. Letters requiring action are left for the chairmen's report or new business.

Is there any correspondence?

BOARD REPORT – A brief report-not minutes, but business transacted if no action is necessary

The Secretary will report for the Board.



by the Unit. Recommendations (if any) should be voted on by the membership.

STANDING REPORTS – Contact chairmen beforehand who are making reports. Reports should be brief. No motion for adoption is needed unless recommendations for action are made. Motions are usually made by the chairmen and need no second since it is a committee report.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES – Reports can be progress or final. Special committees are automatically dissolved when their work is done and a final report if filed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Minutes of the previous meeting will show if any business was postponed. Secretary prepares a list of items pending for the President to address.

NEW BUSINESS – Chair or member may present new matters for consideration. A motion is necessary before discussion if a vote is necessary.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – date of next meeting

PROGRAM – May also be given after adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT – A motion is NOT necessary. Tap gavel once.

You have heard the recommendations of the Board. What is your pleasure?

We will hear the report of the _____ committee given by _____.

(Express thanks for work)

The _____ Committee moves that the PTA _____ . Is there any discussion?

(Follow the steps of a motion)

We will have a report of the _____ special committee.

Are there any questions or discussion? If not, the report will be filed for audit.

DO NOT ASK FOR UNFINISHED BUSINESS!

New business is now in order. Is there any new business?

Are there any announcements?

Program Chairman _____ will introduce the program. (Thank participants)

If there is no further business, the meeting will stand adjourned.

Chairing a Tough Meeting

PTAs are facing more and more issues about which people have very strong feelings. Since we are a grass roots association, the stress of conducting meetings involving such issues can be acute for local volunteer leaders. We hope these ideas will assist you.

Preparing for the Meeting

Consider having a meeting of officers and/or committee members to plan the meeting. Don't plan to silence anyone. Allow all points of view to be expressed. If the leadership stays calm, others will more likely remain calm.

1. Look at the issues as objectively and impersonally as possible.
2. Check PTA sources for existing positions and methods of action. This includes National and State PTA Handbooks and other publications. The issue may not require any action. Be sure beforehand.
3. The more current issue, the more important it is to check with the school district sources and State PTA for recent information. If desired, invite the Region Vice President or Field Representative to attend the meeting.
4. Prepare an agenda
 - o List specific items that can be managed in the time available.
 - o Present a clear message to all concerned what issues will be covered. If necessary, use a flip chart or blackboard to show the agenda.
 - o Have a committee prepare information relevant to the issue to report to the group before the discussion begins.
5. Use **Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised** to your advantage. See the sections on the presiding officer and on disciplinary procedures...
 - o Conduct the meeting as formally as possible.
 - o If the President has strong feelings that could affect neutrality, the President may have the Vice President chair the meeting so the President may participate in the discussion.
 - o Set specific rules beforehand, such as the number of times a person may speak and a time limit for all speakers. The President does not have to recognize a speaker who may be trying to dominate the meeting. He or she can announce beforehand that everyone will be called upon once before someone is allowed to speak again.
 - o if the group continues to disagree, it might be advisable to appoint a committee to look into the issue. Don't hesitate to ask for a motion to refer to committee. Those who have strong feelings should be appointed to the committee.
 - o Call the issue out of order if the speaker departs from the agenda, enters into personal comments or comments not related to the subject, interrupts another speaker or in any way becomes abusive of members' rights.
 - o Check Unit Bylaws for any limitations or obligations concerning PTA activities.

CONTROVERSY POINTERS

1. Only members may propose action or vote.
2. Encourage everyone to participate.
3. Don't criticize those who speak.

4. Prevent disagreement and antagonism.
5. If tempers flare, intervene or call a recess to cool down.

THE LEADER IS A LISTENER RATHER THAN A TALKER!

In Times of Controversy

WITHIN THE UNIT

Leaders and members often call regional PTA leaders when a controversy arises. Most problems are the result of a breakdown in human relations. Units should understand that regional leaders are trained to check with everyone involved so that all viewpoints are understood.

Votes taken during times of conflict should be taken by ballot. Once a majority has made a decision, members must cooperate and support that decision.

TEACHER'S NEGOTIATIONS

PTA is often approached during teacher negotiations. It is the PTA's role to remain *neutral* during this period and to try to bring the decision makers together. Sometimes that could mean providing a neutral forum for public discussions if agreed upon by both sides.

STRIKES

Use good sense. Listen to both sides. Don't be harassed into taking sides. Remain *neutral*. ***PTA does not provide classroom help during a work stoppage!***

Urge both sides to negotiate. If acceptable to both sides, have a PTA representative be an observer at negotiation meetings. The PTA observer must NOT report about the negotiations unless the statement has been approved by all parties.

- PTAs should not be involved in the decisions of parents as to whether children should be sent to school.
- Avoid the appearance of supporting or opposing either side. PTA does not picket!
- Stay away from staff picket lines. Do not talk to people on the picket line. Don't jeer or cheer.
- Publicize your neutrality and the reason for it.

"PTA must work with both sides after the strike."

DEMONSTRATIONS

PTAs should refrain from boycotting, picketing, or any other form of demonstrations. The Unit leadership should also see that children are not used in demonstrations. PTA's thrust should be research and recommendations to the groups and parties involved.

Going Out With Class

The time to begin preparing for a smooth transition to your successor is at the ***beginning*** of the term by sharing responsibility, delegating authority, and including others in planning. Give others the chance to practice the skills necessary to lead the PTA. At the same time, you clearly signal that you recognize the need to move on when your term ends.

Saying this is easy would be an incorrect statement. The hard part comes when you have to say thank you and goodbye to dedicated volunteers. The health of the PTA depends upon recruiting new leaders and moving them up the ladder.

To provide a planned rotation so that the same people do not serve year after year:

- Include in every officer's job description the responsibility to groom a successor.
- Openly discuss the need for new people.
- Encourage talented leaders to move onto the Council and State level by nominating them for office.

Once the nominating committee has done its job and a successor is elected, you will need to be patient, to offer advice and assistance sparingly, to avoid criticizing the new regime, and bolster the new officer's confidence. You can ease the transition when you fully accept the fact that the need to move on is clearly a matter of giving others the opportunity for leadership and not a reflection of your abilities.

QUIT TRYING TO RUN THINGS WHEN YOUR TIME IN OFFICE IS OVER!

Good Presiding Manners

1. Stands when calling the meeting to order, when asking for and when accepting a motion, and when making announcements.
2. States the motion when calling for a discussion and when putting the motion to a vote. After the vote has been taken, the President restates the motion and announces the result of the vote.
3. May vote in the following three circumstances:
 - a. In the event of a tie vote
 - b. A secret ballot vote (as in elections)
 - c. A roll call vote
4. Never uses the pronoun I, but refers to self as the chair.
5. May not express an opinion while presiding, but can assist in expediting business by suggesting various ways of disposing of a matter before the assembly
 - a. "Would you care to have this matter investigated by a committee?"

- b. "Would you like to postpone this matter until the next meeting?"
- c. "Does anyone have anything new to add to the discussion?" (If getting repetitious)
- 6. Makes sure the discussion is centered on the motion before the assembly.
- 7. Does not ask for a negative vote on a complementary motion, such as a vote of thanks, unless a member demands it.
- 8. When wishing the group to take action, the President may say, "What is your pleasure?"
- 9. To expedite routine matters, the President may say, "If there is no objection, *such and such* will be done." Should there be an objection, the matter must be put to a vote and the majority should decide the issue.

Parliamentary DOs and DON'Ts

Do have a written agenda.	Don't "wing it".
Do make sure a quorum is present.	Don't "go with the flow".
Do insist that members follow the rules of debate.	Don't take part in the Debate (Chair).
Do present, call on, or introduce.	Don't turn the meeting over.
Do maintain impartiality.	Don't use office for personal gain.
Do say, "The motion is out of order."	Don't say, "You are out of order."
Do control self in order to control others.	Don't strike the gavel harder than necessary or lose your cool.

Practical Parliamentary Information

- ✓ A **tie vote** is a lost vote. The president may vote to break a tie or to create a tie, thus causing the vote to be lost if it is in the best interest of the group. This may be beneficial when the group is not united behind a cause.
- ✓ Hasty action may be corrected by the use of the **motion to reconsider**. This may be made only by someone who voted on the prevailing side.
- ✓ To **stop debate** and force a vote, a member should obtain the floor and say "I move the previous question." A 2/3's vote is required to stop debate. If the vote to stop debate passes, then the vote on the main motion or the amended motion being debated is in order.