

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE PRESIDENT-ELECT FIVE YEAR REVISION PROCESS

Before you begin, you will need to do the following:

- Obtain a copy of your current unit bylaws.
- Obtain a copy of the November 2009 “Local Unit Bylaws.”
- Make copies of each for all members of your Bylaws committee.

There are three things that can ensure the success and ultimate approval of your bylaws revision: **read and follow these instructions, do not retype, and work only from the current edition of the Local Unit Bylaws (the November 2009.)**

Read through the November 2009 Local Unit Bylaws **with President-Elect** and become familiar with the required Articles and Sections, which are designated with the pound (#) symbol. If local unit bylaws are rejected, it is often because of conflicts between the required language (#) and the language that is not required. There have been amendments on the national or state level that impact sections once approved by the Virginia PTA but now conflict with state or National PTA bylaws (for example, all nominating committees must be elected, only one treasurer may be responsible for local PTA/PTSA funds and finances). Avoid these types of conflicts. **Read all # areas.**

Any amendments that have been approved by the Virginia PTA Bylaws Committee since your last 5 year review should be incorporated into the body of your bylaws with this revision and will already be incorporated in the November 2009 template.

We strongly suggest that you **do not retype but simply print the document template and fill in the blanks by hand.** If you decide to retype any portion of your bylaws, proofread very carefully. *Required (#) language must be verbatim in your bylaws, including those # items found within Articles VIII to Article XIX.* **If wording is altered in any # area, the Virginia PTA/PTSA Bylaws Committee must reject your bylaws.** We suggest that you have other members proofread your copy. Check also that the pound (#) symbols are not deleted or changed. They also must be included in your bylaws.

Once you have completed the revision process you will need to get the approval of your general membership. You MUST give the general membership at least thirty (30) days to review your bylaws and amendments before you can get them approved at a general membership meeting. After you have the general memberships’ approval please send the original with the cover sheet and a copy to the following address.

**VIRGINIA PTA
1027 WILMER AVENUE
RICHMOND, VA 23227-2419**

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PAGE 1, #ARTICLE I: NAME

Insert the full legal name of your unit using the first two lines of this Article followed by either **Parent-Teacher Association** or **Parent-Teacher-Student Association**.

On the third line, insert the name of the city or county in which your unit resides.

On the fourth line, after “local,” you would insert either PTA or PTSA.

EXAMPLE: The name of this association is the John Q. Public Elementary School Parent-Teacher Association (not the Public Elementary School) located in Any Town, Virginia. It is a local PTA organized under the authority of the

PAGE 1, #ARTICLE III: PURPOSES, SECTIONS 1 AND 2

On the first line of both sections, insert the name of your unit in the blanks. You may use the PTA or PTSA abbreviation here in lieu of Parent-Teacher (-Student) Association.

EXAMPLE: John Q. Public Elementary School PTA.

PAGE 2, #ARTICLE IV: BASIC POLICIES

On the first line, insert the name of your unit in the blank. You may use the PTA or PTSA abbreviation here in lieu of the Parent-Teacher (-Student) Association.

EXAMPLE: John Q. Public Elementary School PTA.

PAGE 6, ARTICLE VII: MEMBERSHIP AND DUES, #SECTION 9

With the adoption of the proposed bylaws amendment at the Virginia PTA Annual Convention, November 2003, local units are no longer **required** to list the total amount of dues in the bylaws. Article VII, #Section 9 gives the process to change the dues of a local unit without having to submit a bylaws amendment form to the Virginia PTA Bylaws Committee. **You may include the dues amount if your local unit wishes to have this in your Bylaws.**

PAGE 7, ARTICLE VIII: OFFICERS AND THEIR ELECTION, SECTION 3

Not more than one person may occupy each separate office. Note that the subsection on the president is a # section and cannot be changed. *Co-presidents are prohibited by the Virginia PTA. You may not circumvent your bylaws by placing co-presidents in your standing rules. Standing rules may not conflict with your bylaws.* Also, the office of president-elect should not be used to circumvent the prohibition on co-presidents, but can be

used effectively to share the workload and to train for the office of president. Associations with co-presidents are not considered “units in good standing” and may not participate in National or Virginia PTA programs or projects (Reflections, membership awards, grants, etc.). **Additionally, the office of treasurer is now required (#).** Local units, councils and districts may have only one treasurer who is responsible for the funds and finances of the PTA/PTSA. **Include the pound sign (#) preceding the office of president and the office of treasurer as shown.**

It is extremely important to remember that an election is a democratic process calling for nominations from the floor. A local unit **cannot require that a certain individual be elected to an office.** For example, some units have requested that the principal be elected to the office of vice-president. This is unnecessary since the principal automatically serves on your executive board as defined in Article XI, Section 1. This also causes conflict with the section of your bylaws that determines the term of office. **Bylaws will be rejected if a local unit requires that a certain individual be elected to an office.**

Fill in the blank with the appropriate number of vice-presidents (though not required to be listed here, note that each vice-president should have his own designation, i.e., first vice-president, second vice-president, and so forth). Local units who use the office of Corresponding Secretary would insert that office in the section immediately following Recording Secretary as item 4. Treasurer would then be renumbered as item #5. **Please be sure to remember that all positions that you incorporate in your bylaws will need to have the duties listed in Article IX in the appropriate section. *The office of parliamentarian is never an elected office and should not appear in this article.***

If you are using the office of president-elect or considering adding the office of president-elect, please note the following and accommodate in the appropriate sections of your bylaws: The individual elected as president-elect is making a commitment to serve as president at the end of the current president’s term (usually a two-year commitment). Duties of the president-elect should be defined in your bylaws. In addition, you will need to specify how the nominating committee deals with this office and how a vacancy in the office of president (the president-elect would assume that office in case of a vacancy) is changed when there is a president-elect. **All bold print concerning the office of president-elect must be in the bylaws or the bylaws will be rejected.** For guidance in developing these sections, refer to the National PTA bylaws or contact the state bylaws chairman.

In Section 3, subsection b, ensure that the month entered in the blank here is the same month entered in Article XII: General Membership Meetings, Section 3. If the time of your election varies, it is permissible to list both months, e.g., **“May or June,” but not “May-June.”**

In Section 3, subsection c, fill in the first blank with the appropriate month making sure that it does not precede the month of the election noted in Section 3,b. This is usually the month of the last general membership meeting of the year. It is permissible, however, to have the same month as listed in Section 3,b. Fill in the second blank to indicate the term of office, usually one or two years.

PAGE 8, ARTICLE VIII: OFFICERS AND THEIR ELECTION, SECTION 4

National PTA now requires that all nominating committees be elected. Fill in the blank with the number of individuals on your committee being sure that it is an odd number (3, 5, etc.) and *no less than three*. Local units should include their general membership in the election of this important committee. As with the election of local unit officers, the association cannot require certain individuals (e.g., principal or vice-president) be elected to this committee. The language in the current Local Unit Bylaws for this area requires that the general membership elect all members of the nominating committee. Suggested language for having a portion of the members elected by the executive board would be:

EXAMPLE: There shall be a nominating committee composed of five (5) members who shall be elected by this PTA/PTSA. Two members shall be elected by the executive board from their body at a meeting at least two months prior to the election. The remaining three members shall be elected by the general membership at an association meeting at least two months prior to the election. The committee shall elect its own chairman.

PAGE 8, ARTICLE IX: DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Local units are encouraged to define the duties of their officers. Individuals should have knowledge of what duties are required of them before they agree to run for office. If your unit has a president-elect, that description of duties would fall as Section 2 (renumbering the remaining sections) following the duties of the president. **The duties of the vice-presidents also should be defined.**

EXAMPLE: Section 2, c. The first vice-president shall serve as programs chairman. The second vice-president shall serve as membership chairman. (Existing subsection c would then become subsection d.)

Note that there is a pound (#) sign in Section 3, subsection c. Maintaining a membership list is required by the Virginia PTA and should be a responsibility of your recording secretary who is in charge of keeping all historical records of your association.

Note that the language in Section 4, subsection e is now pounded (#) and requires that only officers sign checks (“preferably the treasurer and the president”) as adopted by the voting delegates at the 2004 Virginia PTA Annual Convention. Only elected officers have fiduciary responsibility, and National and the Virginia PTA policy requires that officers sign checks and that there be **two signatures** on checks or vouchers. Please see National PTA “Money Matters Quick-Reference Guide” and the treasurer section of your Local Unit Resource Guide.

Section 4, item h is a pounded (#) subsection. An audit of the treasurer’s accounts is done to protect the treasurer. It is the only means of assuring everyone that the accounts are accurate, and it relieves the treasurer of responsibility except in the case of fraud.

PAGE 10, ARTICLE X: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The term “executive committee” has caused some confusion in many local units. *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* explains that the executive committee (generally the elected officers) is the smaller body of the executive board. As an example, the executive committee of the Virginia PTA consists of the elected officers, district director representatives and standing committee chair representatives. The Virginia PTA Board of Managers is similar to your executive board and is made up of the elected officers, district directors, assistant district directors, and standing committee chairmen.

This Article has been added to the Local Unit Bylaws because many local units utilize an executive committee and have requested assistance in defining its duties and composition. Use this format as your guide for recommended language. Some units define the body of the executive committee as only the elected officers. We suggest you also include your principal, if possible. Be sure the duties of the executive committee do not conflict with those of your executive board. In Section 4, insert the number of days’ notice required for the call of an executive committee meeting (because this is a smaller group, you may only need to give two or three days notice.)

If your unit does not use an executive committee, you would eliminate this Article and change the number of your Articles accordingly (Article X would be Executive Board, and so forth).

PAGE 10, ARTICLE XI: EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1 defines the makeup of your executive board. Standard language provides for the elected officers, the standing committee chairs, the principal, and a faculty representative. If your unit has appointed positions (as examples, school board representatives, Council delegates, or other liaison positions to other outside associations or organizations), they should be listed here, too, if you desire them to be members of your board and have a vote. **If your unit utilizes a parliamentarian, that position may be listed here as well, but a parliamentarian has the duty to maintain a position of impartiality, and, therefore, must forego his right to vote (*Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*).** For any appointed position, you must include, in the appropriate place, who has the responsibility for the appointment (president, executive committee, or executive board).

Review the duties of your executive board to be sure that there are no conflicts with the duties of the president, the association, or the executive committee. For example, you have under duties of the executive board the ability to “create standing and special committees” and under the executive committee “to appoint standing and special committee chairmen.” One body determines the committees needed and the other appoints the chairmen and members of the committees. The association (your general membership) should always have the ability to create standing and special committees when the majority of your membership decides there is a need.

With the adoption of the proposed bylaws amendment at the Virginia PTA Annual Convention, November 2008, the following was adopted: **ARTICLE XI. EXECUTIVE BOARD, Section 3., subsection #g.**, to obtain general membership approval for any changes to the adopted budget over \$300.00. *This is a pounded item and therefore can not be changed, altered, or deleted.*

In Section 4, insert the number of days' notice needed for special executive board meetings. This should be a reasonable number (about five days) so that the majority of your board members may attend. The number may be designated as an either/or, but not as a range. For example, you may require four or five days' notice, but not four-five days' notice.

If your unit has the immediate past president serving on your executive board and having specific duties that are necessary to be listed in the bylaws, a new section should be added under this Article to define those duties. **The immediate past president is no longer an elected officer but is serving by virtue of their past service.** Their duties are not appropriate to be listed under Article X: Duties of Officers.

PAGE 11, ARTICLE XII: GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

This Article applies only to meetings with your general membership. In Section 1, insert the number of meetings to be held in your fiscal year. Virginia PTA "Local Unit Standards" require that an elementary PTA hold at least seven (7) meetings a year. A secondary PTA/PTSA is required to hold at least five (5) meetings a year. At least five (5) days' notice is recommended. The same is true for days' notice in Section 2.

Section 3—This should be the same month(s) as inserted in Article VIII, Section 3, subsection b.

Section 4—National PTA requires that constituent association bylaws contain a quorum. The quorum should be set to approximate the number of people you can reasonably expect to attend any meeting, except in bad weather or other extremely unfavorable conditions. **We require that the quorum for a general membership meeting should be no smaller than ten (10) (most local units use either twenty-five (25) or thirty (30) as their quorum). Bylaws submitted with a quorum less than ten (10) will automatically be changed to that required minimum.** The term "members present" is no longer being accepted as the definition of a quorum since that could mean as few as one individual. **Bylaws will be rejected with quorums specified as "members present or with a percentage."**

Section 5 describes methods for taking a vote on a motion before the body. Please note that acceptable methods differ, depending upon the nature of the motion. In any case where the results of a vote are unclear or questionable, the chair should call for a counted vote, and the results should be included in the minutes of the meeting. Voting in your PTA/PTSA is limited to current members. Membership may be verified by a check-in procedure using your PTA's membership list or by a show of membership cards upon entrance.

PAGE 11, ARTICLE XIII: COMMITTEES

This Article addresses two types of committees: **standing** and **special**. A standing committee is one that performs a continuing function and remains in existence; a special committee is one that is appointed as the need arises to carry out a specified task, at the completion of which it automatically ceases to exist.

Section 3 - We recommend that the term of office for your appointed committee chairmen be the same as that for your elected officers.

PAGE 12, ARTICLE XIV: COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Only local units holding membership in a council should include this Article. If you are not a member of a council or a council does not exist in your county or city, delete this Article and renumber the following Articles accordingly (Article XIV would be District Membership, and so forth.)

Section 1, subsection a—insert the name of the council in the first blank. The second blank in Section 1 represents the number of delegates to the council **not including your president and principal. The number of your unit’s delegates must reflect the requirements as stated in the bylaws of your council.** If you are unsure how many delegates you are required to have, consult your council president. The number of council delegates permitted will automatically be corrected during the bylaws approval process if it conflicts with the council bylaws.

Section 1, subsection b—insert the process used to select your delegates in the first blank (insert either “appointed” **or** “elected”—most delegates are appointed) and in the second blank insert the month they are appointed **or** elected (generally when standing committee chairmen are appointed).

Section 1, subsection c—insert the name of the council in the first blank and the length of term delegates serve in the second blank (usually the same as standing committee chairs). If you are unsure how long the term delegates serve, consult your council president. The term length will automatically be corrected during the bylaws approval process if it conflicts with the council bylaws.

Section 2—insert the name of the council. The language in this section has changed so that a unit no longer must insert the amount of council dues, thus making it unnecessary to amend unit bylaws whenever council dues may change. Local units come under the bylaws of their council in defining membership and dues.

PAGE 13, #ARTICLE XV: DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - Fill in the blank with the name of your district (a district is a subdivision of the state as designated by the Virginia PTA). If you do not know the name of your district, call the state office at (804) 264-1234 or 1-866-4vakids to obtain that information.

PAGE 13, #ARTICLE XVI: FISCAL YEAR

Fill in the first blank with the beginning and the second blank with the ending date of your fiscal year. The Virginia PTA and the IRS require that your fiscal year end on the last day of a calendar month. It should cover an entire year. Be sure the dates are numbers, not ordinals (July 1 not July 1st, June 30 not June 30th.)

EXAMPLE: The fiscal year of this PTA/PTSA shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30.

COVER SHEET

Insert the complete name of your unit on line one and the city/county and state on line two. The date of the general membership meeting where the bylaws revision was approved must be entered on line three. Obtain the required signatures of the president and secretary. If these signatures are missing, the State PTA Office will return your bylaws immediately, as they cannot even be reviewed until these signatures are present. The bylaws chairman also should sign. **It is important to give both AM and PM numbers, and, if available, e-mail address, for the local unit president. If there is a question during the review, the state Bylaws Committee member must contact the president (the official spokesman for the association) for clarification. If we cannot contact the president, bylaws will have to be rejected.**

Once you have completed the above steps you will need to get the approval of your general membership. You **MUST** give the general membership at least thirty (30) days to review your bylaws and amendments before you can get them approved at a general membership meeting. After you have the general memberships' approval please send the original with the cover sheet and a copy to the following address.

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