

GUIDELINES FOR BYLAWS

Bylaws are a necessary part of a PTA/PTSA unit. They contain the structure of the unit and the specific rules and regulations for conducting its business and governing its affairs effectively. They **must be reviewed and updated every five (5) years** according to Pennsylvania PTA Bylaws to be a “unit in good standing”. The bylaws must be updated using **the most current bylaws model that is only available by contacting your Council Bylaws Chair or the PA PTA office**. This entire bylaws process can take 3 months or more to complete, so please start early!

These Guidelines contain the procedures for this process and should be read completely and thoroughly prior to beginning the bylaws revision process.

Remember that bylaws are not flexible and it is a lengthy process to change them (for good reason). My recommendation is that you provide the basic information in this document as required by PA PTA. If you would like to provide specific instructions on the operation of your unit, use your standing rules for that purpose. Standing rules can be changed and approved by your membership within most cases in one month. If you need assistance on determining what should be in each document, I can help you with that.

If you need further assistance, please contact Mt. Lebanon Council PTA Bylaws Chair, Jodi Kubit, at kubits@verizon.net or 412-638-9723.

ITEMS PROCEEDED BY

These are items required by the National PTA and/or the Pennsylvania PTA and must be included in the unit’s bylaws and **cannot be deleted or changed in any way**. They are specific areas that have been approved by either the Pennsylvania or National PTA.

- # Before an Article title affects the entire article.
- # Before a section affects the entire section.
- # Before a sub-section affects only the subsection.

Other sections may be changed to meet the needs of your PTA – however, nothing may be in conflict with other areas of the bylaws, the bylaws of the National PTA, the Pennsylvania PTA or your Council PTA. Keep in mind that bylaws should never be changed to meet the needs of an individual. **Note: Changes are NOT IN EFFECT until they bear the Council chairman’s signature and the state chairman’s signature & date of state approval. Units must continue to follow the current bylaws until that approval is complete.**

REVISING BYLAWS WITH NO CHANGES from the current bylaws

1. Attain a copy of the latest blank model of Local Unit Bylaws (this is a Microsoft Word document.) Insert the same info from the current local unit bylaws into current bylaws model. **Be sure to refer to the “Tips on Using Computer To Fill In Bylaws Model” at the end of this document.** Note: copies of all state approved bylaws can be obtained from the Council Bylaws Chair if you cannot locate yours.
2. Advertise to the membership (**at least 30 days prior**) the date of the regular meeting when the vote will take place **to renew the bylaws with no changes**. Newsletters are a great way to get the word out.

3. Vote on the bylaws – 2/3 of the members in attendance need to vote in favor.
4. Have the local unit president & secretary fill out & sign/date the signature page. Fill in the name for the local bylaws chair with contact info if applicable. The date should be the date of meeting when approved by the membership.
5. Send, **one complete copy of the updated bylaws with handwritten signatures (on the signature/approval page) & date WITH a copy of the minutes of the meeting when the bylaws were approved by the members** by e-mail to the council bylaws chairman. The council chair will review the bylaws, then sign/date them, and then forward them to the state office or state chair for final approval. If all is in order, the state chair will sign/date and forward them to the state office and the state office will mail 1 (one) completed copy back to you. **The bylaws go into effect once they are signed, dated, and returned to the local unit/council president.**
6. **Upon receipt of signed copy from the state chair, send a copy of the signature page to the Council Bylaws chair for filing.**
7. Maintain 1 copy of older bylaws for permanent records. All other older paper copies & any copies of the updated bylaws that do not have the state approval should be recalled & destroyed.

NOTE: Bylaws must be received by the state office &/or the state bylaws & policies chair within 90 days of the date that they were approved by the general membership of the local unit.

UPDATING BYLAWS WITH CHANGES

Follow the same steps as above with the addition of these steps after step one.

- For any significant changes to the language or your bylaws, include in the advertisement to your members the specific article and section **exactly** how it currently reads **and** the way it is being proposed to read. Include a rationale as to **why** the change is being made.
- Also, prior to advertising the newly revised bylaws, send a copy (by email) to the Council Bylaws chair for review so that they may alert you to any changes that may be sent back as unapproved by the state office.

TIPS ON USING COMPUTER TO FILL IN BYLAWS MODEL

Since the bylaws model is a WORD document, it is possible to enter all information using a computer. Be sure to the following:

- Use **BOLD & underline** font for ALL inserted information so it can be easily located.
- If the PTA name is long, it can be abbreviated, but the full name and abbreviation in () must appear on the first page in Article I – NAME (abbreviation).
- Be careful when deleting or backspacing. Important information can be accidentally omitted. Never re-type the document! Be sure that the Signature/Approval Page is the final page with all info on that page.
- I have listed on the next page the sections that you should have to complete.

Sections to Complete in Model Bylaws

Page 1:

Name, County, Region in header
Name and Town in Article I
Name in Article II, Section 1

Page 2

Name in Article III, Section 1
Name in Article III, Section 2

Page 3

Nothing

Page 4

Nothing

Page 5

Article VIII, Section 1, 2, 4

Page 6

Article VIII, Section 4d, 4e, 4f, 5, 6, 7, 7b

Page 7

Article IX, Section 2b, Section 3a, you may also add other officers to this section and re-number/re-letter accordingly. This can extend into page 8

Page 8

Article X, Section 1, 3, 4h, 7

Page 9

Article XI, Section 2, 3, 4
Article XII, Section 1, 2, 3, 4
Article XIII – Council Membership is already completed by Council Bylaws Chair – no changes necessary.

Page 10

Article XV

Page 11

Nothing

Page 12

Header (name, county, region)