

Fort Couch Middle School
PTSO By-Laws

Upper St. Clair School District

Article I: Name

The name of this association is the **Fort Couch Middle School Parent Teacher Student Organization** located in Upper Saint Clair, Pennsylvania.

Article II: Purposes

Section 1. The Purposes of the **Fort Couch Middle School PTSO**, herein referred to as PTSO, are:

- a. To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, and community,
- b. To raise the standards of home life,
- c. To provide financial support in accordance with the budget approved by the organization,
- d. To bring into closer relation the home and the school, so that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth, and
- e. To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, and social education.

Section 2. The Purposes of this PTSO are promoted through advocacy and educational programs directed toward parents, teachers, and the general public; developed through, committees, projects, and programs; and governed and qualified by the basic policies set forth in Article III.

Section 3. The PTSO is organized exclusively for the charitable, scientific, literary or educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding Section of any future federal tax code (hereinafter "Internal Revenue Code").

Article III: Basic Policies

The following are basic policies of the PTSO:

- a. The PTSO shall be noncommercial, nonsectarian, and nonpartisan.
- b. The PTSO shall work with the schools and community to support quality education for all children and youth, and shall seek to support the decision-making process establishing school policy, recognizing that the legal responsibility to make decisions has been delegated by the people to boards of education, state education authorities, and local education authorities.
- c. The PTSO shall work to promote the health and welfare of children and youth, and shall seek to promote collaboration among parents, schools, and the community at large.
- d. No part of the net earnings of the PTSO shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, directors, trustees, officers, or other private persons except that the PTSO shall be

authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered, and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article II hereof.

- e. All members of the Executive Board and the general membership must understand that according to IRS rules, all funds spent by the organization must fall into a least one of the following categories:
 - Educational:** supplementing the educational instruction of students, such as: assemblies, field trips, and guest speakers.
 - Charitable:** providing this association's children with services or programs that they otherwise might not receive. This does not mean giving money to charities.
 - Operational:** covering normal expenditures such as postage, printing, and supplies. This category also covers the training of the officers.
- f. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the PTSO shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (i) by an entity exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or (ii) by an entity, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- g. Fort Couch PTSO shall acquire liability and bonding insurance coverage. This coverage shall be obtained in conjunction with the Pennsylvania PTSO from the insurance company that writes a master policy for the estate PTSO and its units.
- h. Upon the dissolution of the PTSO, after paying or adequately providing for the debts and obligations of the PTSO, the remaining assets shall be distributed to one or more nonprofit funds, foundations, or associations that have established their tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. In the event of dissolution of this PTSO, the remaining assets shall be distributed to Fort Couch Middle School.

Article IV: By-Laws

Section 1. This PTSO shall adopt such bylaws for the government of this PTSO as may be approved by a quorum of seven (7) members, in addition to any executive board members.

Section 2. This PTSO's bylaws shall be updated every three (3) years and shall be submitted to the Upper St. Clair Parent Teacher Council upon adoption.

Section 3. Amendments:

- a. These bylaws may be updated or amended at any general membership meeting of this PTSO by a quorum of seven (7) members, in addition to any executive board members, present and voting, provided that notice of the proposed amendment shall have been given at least twenty-eight (28) days prior to the meeting at which the amendment is voted upon.
- b. Amendments of by-laws shall be submitted to the Upper St. Clair Parent Teacher Council upon adoption.

Section 4. A signed copy of the bylaws shall be provided to all members of the Executive Board, as well as kept on file in the President and Secretary's books.

Article V: Voting

Section 1. Only members of this PTSO who have paid the Activity Fee for the current membership year may vote on the business of this PTSO.

Section 2. Current membership must be verified for voting privileges.

Section 3. The bylaws of this PTSO shall prohibit voting by proxy.

Article VI: Membership & Activity Fee

Section 1. Membership in this PTSO shall be made available without regard to race, color, creed, or national origin, under such rules and regulations.

Section 2. This PTSO shall conduct an annual enrollment of members, but may admit individuals to membership at any time during the current PTSO budget year.

Section 3. PTSO Activity Fee:

- a. Each member of this PTSO shall pay such annual Activity Fee to said PTSO as may be prescribed by the PTSO.
- b. The treasurer of this PTSO shall keep records of the member Activity Fees separate from records of the general funds of this PTSO.

Section 4. Local PTSO Membership:

- a. Upon payment of the Activity Fee, a person of Full Age shall become a member of this PTSO and shall be entitled to all privileges of membership, including holding office and voting.
- b. Full Age: Of the age of eighteen years or over, as set forth by the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, Title 15, Corporations and Unincorporated Associations.

Article VII: Officers

Section 1. The officers of this local PTSO shall consist of:

- a. One (1) president;
- b. Two (2) vice presidents, where the 2nd vice president is always the school principal;
- c. One (1) secretary;
- d. One (1) treasurer; and
- e. One (1) board advisor

Section 2. Officers shall be elected in the month of May.

Section 3. The vote shall be conducted by written ballot unless there is only one candidate for office, at which time a voice vote may be held. A majority vote shall be required for election.

Section 4. The following provisions shall govern the qualifications and eligibility of individuals

to be officers of the **Fort Couch Middle School PTSO**:

- a. Each officer shall be a member of this local PTSO.
- b. A person who has served in an office for more than one-half of a full term shall be deemed to have served a full term in such office.
- c. No person may serve in more than one elected position in this PTSO simultaneously.
- e. No officer may be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office other than the office of the treasurer, which cannot serve more than **one** consecutive term. (See Section 5 for more details.)
- f. To be eligible for the presidency a person must have served on the executive board of this PTSO for one year.

Section 5. Officers shall assume their official duties on the close of the meeting in May or June, at which time their term begins.

- a. The president, first vice-president, secretary and board advisor shall serve for a term of one year, or until their successors are elected.
- b. The treasurer shall serve a term of two years, or until their successor is elected. A candidate for treasurer may be considered for a **one** year term with prior approval from the executive board.

Section 6. A vacancy occurring in the office of president shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term by the first vice-president. A vacancy in any office other than the president shall be filled by a member elected by the executive board.

Section 7. The executive board will serve as a nominating committee for future board members.

- b. The executive board shall nominate an eligible person for each office to be filled and report its nominees to the general membership in March or April. Before the election takes place, the president shall call for nominations from the floor.
- c. Only those individuals who have met the qualifications as outlined in Article VII, Section 4 and who have signified their consent to serve if elected, shall be nominated for, or elected to, such office.

Article VIII: Duties of Officers

Section 1. The president shall:

- a. Preside at all meetings of this PTSO.
- b. Serve as an ex officio member of all committees.
- c. Coordinate the work of the officers and committees of this PTSO in order that the Purposes may be promoted.

- d. Send contact information (name, address, phone, email) for the incoming officers to the USC Parent Teacher Council.
- e. Serve as the Sharing & Caring committee chair for the Fort Couch Middle School PTSO.
- f. Perform other duties as may be provided for by these bylaws, prescribed by the parliamentary authority, or directed by the executive board.
- f. Have a current copy of this unit's bylaws available for membership review.

Section 2. The first vice-president shall:

- a. Act as aide to the president.
- b. Perform the duties of the president in the president's absence or inability to serve.
- c. Recruit committee chairpersons for the following school year.
- d. Secure volunteers for PTSO activities as directed by the executive board.
- e. Serve as Hospitality committee chairperson for Fort Couch Middle School PTSO.
- f. Serve a one (1) year term as President of the Fort Couch PTSO, and then one (1) year term as Board Advisor to the Fort Couch PTSO. Terms are to be served consecutively.

Section 3. The second vice-president is an ex-officio member of the executive board and shall be the principal of the school.

Section 4. The secretary shall:

- a. Record the minutes of all meetings of the PTSO.
- b. Publish the monthly financial report to the membership as part of the monthly minutes.
- c. Maintain a current copy of the bylaws and membership list.
- d. Present a written copy of the previous meeting's records at each meeting.
- e. Post online all general meeting records for the current school year, as well as the meeting records from the prior school year.
- f. Serve as the Digital Communication Coordinator for the Fort Couch Middle School PTSO as defined in the Fort Couch PTSO Committees document.

Section 5. The treasurer shall:

- a. Have custody of and maintain a full account of the funds of this PTSO.
- b. Submit Activity Fees as directed in Article VI Membership & Activity Fee Section 4 of these bylaws.
- c. Make disbursements as authorized by the executive board, or this PTSO in accordance with

the budget adopted by this PTSO.

- d. Have checks signed by two officers (the treasurer and the president or board advisor); Checks written from the General Account require two (2) signatures of members of the Executive Board. The account shall have three (3) authorized signers: President, Treasurer, and one other elected member. The monthly bank statements shall be reviewed and initialed by a member of the Executive Board who does not have authorization to sign checks, such as the Vice President or Secretary. There may not be pre-signing of checks. A check must have the date and payee on it before it is signed.
- e. All reimbursement request forms submitted by PTSO members should be signed by the Treasurer.
- f. All reimbursement request forms submitted by the Treasurer for reimbursement of their own expenses should be signed by the President or Vice President.
- g. All monies must be counted by two (2) committee members and turned over to the Treasurer or other Executive Board member upon completion of an event. If an event or committee collects funds over several days or weeks, deposits should be scheduled with the Treasurer in advance. No cash should be held in any chairperson's home. Chairpersons must complete the deposit form and sign it. Deposit forms are available on the Fort Couch PTSO website. The monies should be secured by giving directly to the Treasurer. If that is not possible, then the monies should be placed in a sealed envelope and left in the safe at the school. The chairperson(s) must notify the Treasurer that the deposit has been put in the safe. In the event of large cash deposits, two committee or Executive Board members should be present when cash is taken to the safe, as well as when money needs to be retrieved from the safe. When such money is removed from the safe, it must be recounted and verified by two people.
- h. All expenses for reimbursement should be submitted within two (2) weeks following the conclusion of the event. All expenses must be submitted for reimbursement in the school year in which they occurred and at least two weeks prior to the last day of school. For year-end events, expenses are due no later than June 15. Original receipts must accompany expenses for reimbursement.
- i. Any individual who has given a check to the PTSO, which is subsequently returned to the organization by reason of insufficient funds, shall be responsible for paying the full amount of the funds owed or forfeit all related goods or services. In addition, that individual will also be asked to reimburse the organization for the amount of the return check fee that is charged to the organization. The Treasurer will maintain thorough records of all transactions and communications related to returned checks and related fees.
- j. Provide a written financial statement to the executive board at each meeting.
- k. The Treasurer shall present a list of receipts and disbursements for the prior month at each monthly PTSO meeting.
- l. Have the accounts examined annually by an auditor. The auditor will be hired by the executive board.
- m. Report the findings of the annual audit in writing to the executive board and present an annual report of the financial condition of this PTSO to the membership.

- n. Present all audit reports to the general membership for adoption at the first general membership meeting held after the completion of the report.
- o. Open to inspection such books of account and records, at all reasonable times, by an officer of this PTSO.
- p. Annually renew the Certificate of Liability Insurance prior to the expiration date of the policy.
- q. In accordance with articles of incorporation, notify the Pennsylvania Department of State, Bureau of Incorporation, when there is a change of officers.
- r. Coordinate with the auditor to ensure the filing with the appropriate state office each year upon completion, an updated list of incorporated officers, a copy of the Form 990N, 990, or 990EZ as required per IRS regulations and any other documents required to remain in compliance with IRS or state regulations.
- s. Forward a signed copy of the audit report to the USC Parent Teacher Council immediately following their adoption by the general membership and will notify, in writing, to USC PTC that they have submitted the required forms by October 15 of each calendar year. If a unit is requesting an extension on any filing, they will provide that information to USC PTC.
- t. Fort Couch's PTSO's books shall be closed as of June 30th and an audit performed of the Treasury of this organization shall be conducted by July 31st of each year, or another date as approved by the Executive Board. The outgoing Treasurer shall turn over all books and records to the incoming Treasurer within ten (10) days after the completion of the audit. The Treasurer must file required IRS documentation, including Form 990N, 990, or 990EZ, by November 15 of each year. USC PTC must be notified in writing upon completion of filing.

Section 6. The board advisor shall:

- a. Act as parliamentarian as needed.
- b. Serve as by-law chairperson for this PTSO.
- c. Serve as the High School Liaison for the Fort Couch Middle School PTSO.

Section 7. All officers shall perform other duties as may be provided for in these bylaws, prescribed by the parliamentary authority, or directed by the president, or the executive board.

Article IX: Executive Board

Section 1. The business of the **Fort Couch Middle School PTSO** shall be managed by the executive board in the intervals between PTSO general membership meetings.

Section 2. Each executive board member shall be a member of this local PTSO.

Section 3. The members of the executive board shall be elected officers and the principal who shall serve as the second vice-president.

Section 4. Duties of the executive board shall be to:

- a. Transact any business presented to, or required of, this local PTSO as requested by its membership.
- b. Create special committees as needed and appoint a chairperson for each special committee.
- c. Approve plans of work of the committees.
- d. Present a report at the regular general meeting of this PTSO.
- e. Select an auditor to audit the treasurer's accounts.
- f. Approve payment of routine bills within the limits of the approved budget.
- g. Establish a Sharing & Caring expense budget amount annually, which will be funded by the annual PTSO fundraisers in the amount equal to the approved budget. In any given year that fundraisers are not able to fully fund the Sharing & Caring expense, the board would have to approve use of additional PTSO funds or decrease the amount of the approved expense budget. In any given year that the fundraisers exceed the Sharing & Caring expense budget, the remaining fundraisers monies may be used at the discretion of the PTSO board.
- h. The Executive Board should meet in March to nominate a new slate of officers.
- i. The slate of new officers shall be presented at the April PTSO meeting. The vote by the general membership shall take place at the May PTSO meeting. Installation of new officers will be held at the May PTSO meeting.
- j. The Executive Board members shall meet to prepare a proposed budget to be presented at the March or April PTSO meeting. The proposed budget shall be voted on at the May PTSO meeting.

Section 5. If any member of the executive board shall at any time cease to meet the qualifications or fulfill the duties of the position as listed in the bylaws, that person shall be removed from the position by a motion adopted first by the Executive Board and then by the General Membership. The vote shall be by a majority.

Section 6. The Fort Couch PTSO executive board will meet once per month at a day, time and location chosen by the president. Any executive board member may call additional meetings at his / her discretion.

Section 7. Special meetings of the executive board may be called by the president or when requested by a majority of the executive board members upon three (3) days' written notice to each member of the board.

Section 8. At all meetings of the executive board, a majority of the members of the board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Section 9. Upon the expiration of the term of office or when individuals cease to hold the position, all records, books, and other materials pertaining to the position shall be turned over to the

president within ten (10) days.

Section 10. The Executive Board, with a majority, may approve expenditures up to One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) without the general membership approval for items not included in the budget or for the line items exceeding the budget

Article X: Committees

Section 1. The executive board shall vote to create committees as needed and appoint chairpersons for each committee.

Section 2. A list of current committees shall be defined by the “Fort Couch PTSO Committees” document which shall be posted to the PTSO webpage and maintained in the President and Secretary’s books. All committees are active annually.

Section 3. Only members of this PTSO shall be eligible to serve as chairpersons. The term of office of each committee chairperson shall be one (1) year or until the selection of a successor.

Section 4. No chairperson may be eligible to serve more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same chairmanship without approval of the executive board.

Section 5. Each committee chair shall present a plan of work to the executive board for approval. No committee work shall be undertaken without the consent of an executive board member.

Section 6. The President shall ensure each new committee chairperson receives the corresponding procedure documents in a timely manner.

Section 7. A PTSO representative must remain at any PTSO sponsored function until completion of the function and all children have left the premises.

Article XI: General Membership Meetings

Section 1. At least three (3) general membership meetings of this PTSO shall be held during the school year. Dates of meetings shall be determined by the executive board and announced at the first general membership meeting of the year. Three (3) days’ notice shall be given to the membership of a change of date.

- a. Fort Couch PTSO meetings are generally held on the third Tuesday of each month, beginning at 9:30 am.
- b. There is no formal December PTSO meeting of the general membership

Section 2. Special meetings of this PTSO may be called by the president or by the majority of the executive board on three (3) days’ notice having been given.

Section 3. The annual meeting shall be held in May at which time the budget and slate of officers for the upcoming year shall be presented to the membership for a vote.

Section 4. A quorum of seven (7) members in addition to any executive board members is required for voting on official business in any meeting of this PTSO.

- a. If necessary, for the of approval of general meeting minutes when a seven member quorum is not present, a majority of the executive board may approve the minutes.
- b. With executive board approval, electronic voting may be used when appropriate. Electronic voting would open prior to and close at the time of in-person voting, and then all electronic and in-person votes would be tallied together as a sum for voting results. Electronic voting would require membership according to the same articles of these bylaws as in-person voting.

Section 5. All PTSO meetings will be held to a reasonable length of time.

Article XII: USC PTC Membership

Section 1. This PTSO shall be represented in executive board and general meetings of the **Upper Saint Clair Parent Teacher Council** (USC PTC) by the president or appointed alternate.

- a. All representatives to the Upper Saint Clair PTC must be members of this PTSO.
- b. Alternates shall be selected by the executive board.

Section 2. This PTSO shall pay annual membership dues to the council by December 1 unless otherwise specified by PTC prior to the last general membership meeting of each school year. Failure to pay this fee will result in this PTSO's elimination from PTC events, programs or services such as, but not limited to, the USC Family Directory, Arts in USC, Welcome Dinner, Spelling Bee, Partners in Education (PIE) and Gifted and Talented Education (GATE).

Article XIII: Digital Communication

Section 1. All PTSO usage of digital means of communication including email, webpages, social media and text messaging shall be done according to PTSO procedures, with required approvals, with respect to School District policies, and in a responsible manner.

Section 2. The President shall approve all digital communication prior to being distributed from the PTSO in an effort to create one single "voice" for the organization.

Section 3. Email:

- a. E-Alerts emails will be sent from the PTSO to subscribers by the Digital Communication Coordinator with approval by the President.
- b. Fort Couch Middle School email system will be used to send emails to the entire Fort Couch community as appropriate and with approval by the President and Principal.
- c. Fort Couch Newsletters will be sent via the Fort Couch Middle School Headlines section of the school website and will direct recipients to the webpage on a predetermined schedule as approved by the executive board and Principal.

- d. Personal email will primarily be used by executive board to communicate with one another, by the Treasurer to communicate on official business, and by committee chairs to communicate with the President. Executive board communication with specific committees should go through the President, unless otherwise expressly determined by the President. Official PTSO business shall be conducted via email as needed for documentation purposes.

Section 4. Webpages:

- a. The PTSO section of the Fort Couch Middle School website will be the primary website for posting all PTSO related information. The website will be maintained by the PTSO Digital Communication Coordinator, and all content will be approved by the President prior to posting.
- b. When appropriate, and with approval from the President and Principal, the Fort Couch Middle School website may be used to post PTSO related information or announcements.

Section 5. Social Media:

- a. The Fort Couch PTSO Facebook page is the official presence of the organization on social media. All postings shall be approved by the President and managed by the Digital Communication Coordinator.
- b. Official postings on the Fort Couch PTSO Facebook page should be written in the “voice” of the PTSO.
- c. The PTSO Facebook account shall not post messages to pages or groups outside of the USCSD.
- d. Executive Board members and Committee chairs shall only post official organization business with approval from the President. Personal messages by executive board members and committee chairs should be written in a personal “voice”.

Section 6. Text Messaging:

- a. Personal and group text messaging may be used by executive board members to communicate with one another, as well as by the President and Treasurer to communicate with committee chairs as needed. Official PTSO business shall not be conducted via text messaging.
- b. Text messaging shall not be used as a primary method of regular communication with membership or individual members on specific topics, for documentation reasons.

Section 7. The PTSO will work in conjunction with the District and PTC communications specialist to mutually promote and support digital communication related to District, PTC and PTSO activities and communication.

Article XIV: Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of this PTSO shall begin on July 1 and end on the following June 30.

The fiscal year of this PTSO shall be the same as its accounting year and shall be in accordance with Fort Couch Middle School PTSO Bylaws 11 of 13 Approved May 28, 2019

the information provided on the SS-4 form currently filed with the IRS.

Article XV: Dissolution & Withdrawal of Charter

A PTSO considering dissolution must:

- a. Upon decision to recommend dissolution of the unit, present the resolution to the members at the next general meeting for their information.
- b. Announce that a vote on the dissolution will be taken at the next general meeting. A two-thirds majority vote is required to dissolve a local unit.
- c. Require each person voting to dissolve be a member of this local PTSO for at least 90 days.
- d. Arrange for the proper disposal of PTSO funds and property according to the provisions of these bylaws and applicable law, including those of the State of Pennsylvania and the Internal Revenue Service.
- e. Provide for the dissolution to take effect within the timeframe required by applicable law and transfer all PTSO books and records to the USC PTC.

Article XVI: Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern this PTSO and in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not in conflict with these bylaws or the articles of incorporation.

REVISED February 26, 2019

SIGNATURE/APPROVAL PAGE

Bylaws of the Fort Couch Middle School PTO

Approved by the general membership at its meeting on _____.
Date of Approval

Attached is a copy of the minutes for the meeting when the bylaws were approved by the general membership.

President's Signature

President's Name – Printed

Secretary's Signature

Secretary's Name – Printed

Reviewed by USC Parent Teacher Council Bylaws Chairperson

Council Bylaws Chairperson's Signature Date Reviewed

Council Bylaws Chairperson's Name – Printed