



CHARLES COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

**Parent Teacher Student Organization
(PTSO)**

Rules and Procedures

2024-2025

PURPOSE

The PTO/PTSO is to serve as an active, loyal, and supportive partner of the school and function as an extension of its programs, activities, and events, including assistance with planning, development, implementation, and evaluation as appropriate, within the district policies, rules, and procedures.

MISSION

To build a bridge between school and home.

OBJECTIVES

The PTO/PTSO will set specific objectives to support each school, each school year, consistent with the general objectives listed below. Exhaustive efforts will be made throughout the year to meet these expectations and accomplish the organization's objectives accordingly.

- To establish a home-school partnership that will bring about a spirit of cooperation in the education of our students.
- To offer volunteer support to the principal, the teachers, other staff and students.
- To support the vision and mission of the school community.
- To advocate for clear guidelines and reasonable expectations that follow Charles County Public Schools' (CCPS) policies and procedures, including but not limited to keeping children safe and implementing fair and sound policies and procedures.
- To help develop cooperative efforts between educators and the community to ensure a quality education is afforded to all students.
- To foster and support school and student activities that will promote pride and citizenship, through appropriate and approved fundraising efforts.

GOALS

Our goal is to supplement an effective partnership with the school administration, staff, families, students, and the larger school community for a successful educational experience.

Specific (simple, sensible, significant)

Measurable (meaningful, motivating)

Achievable (agreed, attainable)

Relevant (reasonable, realistic, and resourced, results-based)

Time-bound (time-based, time-limited, time/cost limited, timely, time-sensitive)

Evaluated (on track)

Reviewed (time to access)

ROLES

The PTO/PTSO's role in schools centers around students' receipt of a well-rounded educational experience from the non-instructional perspective. Their charge is supportive in nature designed to seal any connection gaps between the school and the home, through various communication modes, family activities and fundraising events.

- To provide and assist in opportunities for extracurricular activities that will augment students' educational experience as approved by the school administration.
- To act as a liaison between parents, school staff, and CCPS.
- To plan and implement procedures to provide better communication between parents, students, and the school staff.
- To work under the school's administration/leadership team's direction in offering recommendations and input regarding issues as requested by the general membership.

POLICIES

The primary focus of this group shall be educational in nature, having been established through dialogues of interest, conferences, committees, projects, and activities, and will be governed by relevant and reasonable policies and practices.

- The group is a member of the school's student activity funds and shall follow the policies and procedures specified by Charles County Public Schools.
- The group may not engage in, nor sponsor other groups or active student-centered agencies, such as 4-H Clubs or boys/girls scout organizations.
- The group shall remain free of any and all political involvement.
- The group will work under the direction of the school's principal and staff to support and enhance the educational and cultural environment in the school. However, it will in no way direct the programs of the administration and staff.
- Proceeds of funds received by the PTO/PTSO shall be deposited into the school's student activity account designated for this group and be distributed by approval of the principal considering the wishes of the general membership. In addition, all purchases and financial processes must be in accordance with the CCPS policy and approved by the school's principal.
- Proceeds of fundraising activities cannot be used for the personal benefit of a PTO/PTSO officer, school staff member, or general PTO/PTSO member.
- The group must receive approval from the principal when planning all functions.
- The use of the school facilities must be requested through the principal or principal designee.
- All items donated become the school's property and must be inventoried according to fixed asset and sensitive inventory rules, which can be accessed through the school's financial secretary. Donated items shall be approved by the school administration and meet the requirements of the district's policies. Once inventoried, donated items may not be taken from the premises and must be pre-approved by the PTO/PTSO for use by another group within the school.

- Financial donations not to exceed one-time amounts over \$500 are acceptable in accordance with CCPS policy.
- All financial expenditures and revenue practices shall be in accordance with the CCPS “Accounting Manual for Student Activity Funds” and “The Finance, Business and Technology Procedures for Activity Sponsors Student Activity Fund,” without exception.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the School PTO/PTSO shall be open to all parents, guardians, and students of School, as well as teachers and staff. Other persons interested in this organization’s objectives, such as business groups, mentors, etc., may approach the organization with ideas to discuss, review and consider, but will not be granted voting-membership rights.

Membership dues may be established by the current elected officers, not to exceed \$10.00 per year, per voting member.

OFFICERS

The officers shall consist of an elected president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer, who are collectively referred to as the Executive Board. A Teacher Liaison serves as a member of the Executive Board as well but is selected, not elected. Secondary schools will allow the participation of a Student PTO Member as well. The position of president is the only role that may be shared between two individuals, thus acting equally as co-presidents.

- Eligibility – Only members in good standing (who have paid their annual dues at least 14 calendar days prior to a PTO/PTSO meeting, if applicable) shall be eligible to serve in any officer position.
- Term of Service – Nominations shall take place by written ballot beginning in April; at the May meeting, general membership votes/elects new officers to a one-year term (July 1st through June 30th of the following year). An individual may only hold one officer’s position at a time and may not serve more than two consecutive years in the same officer position.
- Nominations are needed to elect officers.
- The officers are not appointed by the school principal but voted by the general membership. The principal may appoint officers as needed.
- Vacancies may be filled by a majority vote of the general membership or by voting members present at the next meeting after the vacancy occurs.
- In case of a tie during officer elections, the principal shall have the deciding vote.
- All officers shall act in the best interest of the PTO/PTSO and CCPS.
- No officer shall be compensated by the PTO/PTSO for his or her service.
- Each officer shall attend the Executive Board meetings and scheduled PTO/PTSO meetings.
- No officer shall secure any contract in the name of the PTO/PTSO without the approval to do so by the school’s principal and by a vote of the PTO/PTSO members. All contracts must be approved and signed by the school’s principal and CCPS, where applicable.

- An officer may be removed from office only upon the principal's recommendation and by a majority vote of the general membership.

***Note:** Parents, guardians and community members interested in contributing volunteer service in CCPS (before, during or after school, or on the weekends) must register accordingly and complete the CCPS background screening process prior to being permitted to participate. This is nonnegotiable and applies to PTO/PTSO Executive Officers/Board Members. To access the volunteer registration form and begin the background screening, please visit the school system's (ccboe.com) website: <https://www.ccboe.com/index.php/volunteers>. Upon being cleared, volunteer approval is good for one school year, meaning any approved volunteer from the previous school year must complete the process again for the upcoming school year. The application window for the new school year opens Aug. 1. In addition to the registration and background screening, all PTO/PTSO Executive Officers must complete all required training as a condition of assuming the role. Executive Officers who are CCPS staff are not required to complete the volunteer registration or background screening.

OFFICER DUTIES

Each PTO/PTSO officer will assume specific responsibilities related to the productive progress of the parent group and the overall betterment and support of the school.

President: Shall preside and facilitate all meetings of the group and the Executive Board; shall be a member of all committees except for the Nominations Committee; shall perform all other duties within the scope of the presidency as determined/required by the general membership; shall serve (or designate another officer to serve) on the county's PTO/PTSO Council.

- The PTO/PTSO Council consists of the PTO/PTSO president (or designee) from each school and typically meets at the central office six times a year (August, October, December, February, April, and June), as well as other times as deemed necessary by the Superintendent or designee; the PTO/PTSO council member shall report back to the PTO/PTSO general members regarding discussed topics/activities. The president reports directly to the school principal and the chain of command shall follow that direction.
- To ensure the integrity of the PTO/PTSO email account, the president must transfer the email address, login, and password information from the previously elected officers to the school principal and incoming elected officers by the end of each school year.

Vice-President: Shall act as an aide to the president; shall act on behalf of the president in his or her absence and shall serve as a liaison between all committees and the Executive Board.

Secretary: Shall record the minutes of all general and Executive Board meetings, read the previous meeting's minutes, tabulate, and record any votes called for, and be responsible for the distribution, posting and archiving of general meeting minutes as requested by the general membership.

Treasurer: Shall perform the following functions:

- Work with the school’s financial secretary and keep all necessary documentation regarding the group’s funds and report all account balances at each general meeting.
- Work in conjunction with the school’s financial secretary and be responsible for deposits, account activities and approved disbursement requests for funds; shall perform other financial duties as requested by consensus of the general membership and approved by the school principal.
- Ensure all financial expenditures and revenue practices shall be in accordance with CCPS “Accounting Manual for Student Activity Funds” and “The Finance, Business and Technology Procedures for Activity Sponsors-Student Activity Fund,” without exception.
- Monitor financial records throughout the year, ensuring sufficient funds are left in the account at the end of the year, to cover welcome back expenses for staff at the beginning of the following year (i.e., staff breakfast/lunch or welcome back gifts), including at a minimum the following amounts:

Elementary School	\$500 minimum
Middle School	\$1,000 minimum
High School	\$1,500 minimum

Teacher Liaison: Shall act as the official connecting entity executive between the Executive Board and the teachers at the school.

- Shall attend meetings, consume material, engage in dialogue, and relay information to teachers and accordingly.
- Shall present ideas and concerns from the teachers’ perspective and make special requests on their behalf when applicable.

PTO/PTSO Representative Liaison:

- Shall create a platform for PTO/PTSO leaders to collaborate to share ideas, questions, concerns, combined efforts, and support.
- Acts as a go-between for the PTO/PTSO leadership and the CCPS DCEE.
- Shall share information, tools, and resources available to the PTO/PTSO committees to build a bridge between school, home and community.
- Shall mediate with the PTO or PTSO Executive Board, principals, administrators, and liaisons to provide successful guidance on the execution of communication, activities, and fundraisers throughout the school year based upon the Charles County Public School PTO|PTSO Rules and Procedures Guidelines.
- Shall communicate and collaborate with the Charles County Public Schools Department of Community Engagement and Equity (CCPS DCEE) to provide an overview of available resources, tools, and available support available at the district level.
- Shall strive to encourage the use of community resources and tools to strengthen partnerships with local businesses, organizations, and nonprofit organizations.

- Shall strategize ways to create a platform for resources and tools available to all 40 PTOs and PTSOs to create S.M.A.R.T.E.R. goals and objectives to be the nucleus of information for families and our community.

Student Representative: Shall attend all general meetings (where applicable) acting in an advisory capacity and shall serve as a liaison between the general membership and the students of the School.

All Officers: Shall follow the following duties:

- Must perform their duties in accordance with these [PTO/PTSO] rules and procedures and adhere to the policies, procedures, and rules of CCPS.
- Shall be mindful of their role in always representing the school and school system, even beyond their volunteer time with their affiliate school.
- Use good judgment as it relates to social media etiquette, being responsible and selective about posting, responding, tagging, tweeting, liking, commenting, etc. on social media platforms, thereby avoiding associating the school/school system with unnecessary negative attention.

***Note:** As a part of the annual transition of the leadership process, the official group email address login and password information must be transferred from the outgoing PTO/PTSO leadership to the newly elected leadership group, on or around July 1.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board of _____ School PTO/PTSO shall consist of the elected officers, the principal, and a staff advisor/representative. The duties of the Executive Board shall be:

- To work with the school's principal and financial secretary in establishing the PTO/PTSO's annual budget. The school administration shall have the final approval of any recommendations.
- To transact any necessary business on behalf of the general membership in the interval between regular meetings.
- To oversee the workings of subcommittees and special projects.
- To present reports on committee work at general membership meetings.
- To recommend payment of any bills not connected with the operating expenses or welfare work of the PTO/PTSO.
- To meet prior to each regular (general membership) PTO/PTSO meeting, a majority of the Executive Board members must be present in order to constitute a quorum.
- Special meetings of the Executive Board may be called (between regular intervals) by the president or by a majority of the committee members with the school principal's approval.
- To meet at a minimum, five times a year to discuss educational issues which affect the building and to make recommendations concerning such items as school budget, physical plant, class size, purchase of new equipment, new programs, safety, etc., to include any

other areas that impact the school experience for children. Whenever possible, teachers are welcomed and encouraged to participate.

GENERAL MEETINGS

In accordance with these PTO/PTSO Guidelines:

- At a minimum, regular membership meetings shall be held at least four times a year but are encouraged to be held once per month beginning in September.
- Meetings shall be held during designated weeks of the month, assigned by grade level accordingly:
 - **Elementary School** Meetings = first week of the month
 - **Middle School** = second week of the month
 - **High School** = third week of the month
 - **Emergency or rescheduled meetings** = fourth week of the month with a pre-approval from the Office of School Administration

***Note:** For this purpose, the first week of the month must begin on a Monday, even if the school is closed.

- Meetings may be held virtually when live participation is not an option.
 - When holding virtual meetings, efforts should be made to schedule and invite members in good standing to fully participate through a CCPS-approved virtual platform (e.g., WebEx, Zoom, Microsoft TEAMS), while other interested parties are welcomed to observe via the school's website.
 - Each school has a Public Relations Liaison who is asked to work closely with the PTO/PTSO group to ensure all communication efforts are exhausted, with regard to promoting the school, its brand, and any events and activities supported thereby.
 - The Public Relations Liaison will assist the PTO/PTSO officers with having general meetings live streamed via the school's website, or video/audio recorded for maximum consumption and participation, even by non-present members.
 - Recordings of the meetings should be made available/posted on the school's social media platforms and website shortly after each meeting.
 - Nominations for new officers for the upcoming school year shall begin in April; voting and elections shall commence in May (nominations may occur virtually, if necessary, organized by the current PTO/PTSO Executive Board).
 - Officer transition should occur in June and the group may plan/set its meeting schedule for the upcoming year if prepared to do so (elections may occur virtually, if necessary, organized by the current PTO/PTSO Executive Board).
 - The Executive Board may call emergency meetings with three days' notice. Notices of all meetings will be sent home either with students (i.e., flyers, etc.) or via electronic messages, to reach the maximum number of families.

- PTO/PTSO meetings will deal with general interest issues concerning a significant number of parents and shall not address singular complaints best handled by an individual parent and the appropriate staff member.
- The Executive Board shall encourage parents with individual concerns to approach school staff and/or the administration.

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

- The Board of Education of Charles County encourages the use of all available media and communications to keep the goals, programs, achievements and needs of the schools before the public, and to keep the public informed of publicly held meetings of the Board. The Board also recognizes that social media is beneficial for community engagement.
- The Board defines social media as any on-line technologies where people share information, opinions, experiences, and perspectives. Examples include, but are not limited to, the school system’s Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram platforms. These platforms are intended to create a limited public forum where members of the community can learn about and participate in discussions about any item posted by the school system, or any school system-related topic.
- Constructive public conversations are encouraged within comments, messages, retweets, and other user communications (“public comments”). The school system retains the right to review public comments on all its social media platforms and, although the school system does not discriminate based on viewpoint, it may remove public comments and restrict access to users for violating these guidelines.
- Public comments may be removed or blocked by the Superintendent of Charles County Public Schools, the school system’s Director of Communications, or designee if the public comments contain, constitute, or link to:
 - Malicious or harmful software.
 - Advertisements, promotions, or solicitations of a commercial product or service.
 - Confidential, personally identifying, or private information.
 - Personnel matters concerning individual employees.
 - Profanity, nudity, indecency, or obscenity.
 - Targeting of individuals or groups protected by the Board’s nondiscrimination policy.
 - Threats of violence or to public safety.
 - Criminal or illegal activity or behavior.
 - Copyrighted materials.
 - Disruptively repetitive content.
 - Pending appeals filed with the school system.
 - Matters that are unrelated to the school system or any posting by the school system.
- The Superintendent, Director of Communications, or designee may temporarily or permanently restrict access to individuals who repeatedly violate these guidelines. To contest the restriction of access to a social-media platform, the user must submit to the

Office of Communications at smackey@ccboe.com a written statement providing grounds for reinstatement. Requests shall be responded to on a reasonably timely basis, and access shall be restored if it is determined that the grounds for reinstatement are sufficient.

- Individuals may contact the Office of Communications at smackey@ccboe.com at any time to identify public comments or other conduct in violation of these guidelines.
- The school system monitors its social media platforms but is not responsible for content generated by users on these platforms. The school system retains the authority to entirely turn off the public's ability to post any public comments at any time. A public comment is the opinion of the commentator only. Publication of a public comment does not necessarily imply endorsement of, or agreement by, the Board or the school system. Public comments and content should be understood to be entirely public, and users should not post any public comments that they consider, or would like to keep, confidential. Public comments shall not constitute legal notification of the school system.

SUPERINTENDENT RULE 1111

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) recognizes that students, parents, and other stakeholders use differing methods of communication, and strives to reach as many of our community as possible. Social media is one of those methods.

Social media is defined as on-line technologies such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat, as well as all electronic communications, including but not limited to texting, emailing, instant messaging, group messaging and chat rooms. CCPS allows the use of social media and other technologies as avenues to communicate school system messages, encourage social media visitors to visit the CCPS website, and create opportunities for two-way dialogue.

EMPLOYEE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Approved social media sites may be used to facilitate communication among employees, groups of students and members of the school community to further the instructional program. Employees are expected to conduct all social media communications in accordance with Board policies, guidelines in the Employee Handbook, and directions from their supervisors, as they would in any professional situation. Social media accounts used by employees of CCPS shall be approved annually by the school principal. The approval process will include the sharing of log in and password information. Social media accounts established by schools and affiliated clubs are property of CCPS. Except as provided in this Rule, CCPS prohibits communications between students and staff through social media.