# PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION BY-LAWS

## Article I- Name

The name of the organization shall be the Harare International School Parent Teacher Organization (HIS PTO). The organization is represented by the PTO Executive Committee (PTO ExCom).

## Article II- Purpose

The purpose of the organization is to assist the Harare International School (HIS) and our students in reaching for excellence by promoting communication between home and school, building a sense of community at HIS, and enhancing the educational experience by supporting activities, events and projects.

## Article III- Members

**Section 1.** Any parent, guardian or other adult standing in *loco parentis* for a student at the school is a member and shall have voting rights. The director and any principal or teacher employed at the school is a member and have voting rights.

**Section 2.** Dues, if any, will be established by the PTO ExCom of the organization. If dues are charged, parents will be notified in advance.

## Article IV- PTO Executive Committee

**Section 1. Membership.** The PTO ExCom shall consist of the elected officers, a teacher representative, and standing committee chairs. Every member of the PTO ExCom shall have voting rights of equal value. Each year the PTO ExCom will extend an official invitation to the director to become an *ex-officio* member of the PTO ExCom.

**Section 2. Duties.** The duties of the PTO ExCom shall be to develop the annual goals and budget, coordinate PTO activities and events, review PTO policies and procedures, and report to the community on PTO finances and achievements. The PTO ExCom shall present the PTO's annual goals and budget to the community for approval by a vote at the May Open Meeting each year.

**Section 3. Meetings.** PTO ExCom meetings shall be held monthly, preferably on the same day and at the same time each month, to be determined by the ExCom. Special ExCom meetings may be called by any 2 ExCom members with at least 24 hours' notice.

**Section 4. Quorum.** Half the members of ExCom plus one constitutes a quorum.

## Article V- Elected Officers

**Section 1. Officers.** The officers shall be president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer.

**a. President :** The president shall preside over meetings of the organization and the PTO ExCom of the organization, serve as the primary contact for the director, represent the organization at meetings outside the organization, and coordinate the work of the ExCom so that the purpose of the organization is served.

**b. Vice-President :** The vice-president shall assist the president and carry out the president's duties in his or her absence or inability to serve.

**c. Secretary :** The secretary will keep records of the organization, prepare and circulate meeting agendas, take and circulate minutes at executive and open meetings, and support PTO correspondence. The secretary will also be responsible for communications to members by organizing submissions to the school newsletter and PTO website, for example. The secretary also keeps a copy of the minutes book, bylaws, rules, signed conflict of interest forms, membership list and any other necessary supplies, and brings them to meetings.

**d. Treasurer :** The treasurer shall receive all funds of the organization, keep an accurate record of receipts and expenditures, and pay out funds in accordance with the approval of the executive board of the organization. He or she will present a financial report of the PTO operational budget and PTO Hog Store account at every open meeting and when requested by the organization's executive board and make a written financial report of both the PTO operational budget and PTO Hog Store account at the end of the year.

**Section 2. Standing Committee Chairs.** The following committee chairs shall be elected by the organization:

- **Events**
- **Hospitality**
- **School Community Involvement**
- **Hog Shop**

**Section 3. Member Without Portfolio.** A member of the PTO ExCom without portfolio shall be a voting member who does not hold a specific, designated responsibility. They act as a flexible resource, filling in gaps and managing ad-hoc projects.

**Section 4. Nominations and Elections.** Elections will be held during May. A nominating committee with three members shall be formed by the President in February. The committee shall include at least one officer and is open to general members. Candidates for election may not participate in the nominating committee. At the May meeting, nominations may also be made from the floor. Voting shall be by voice vote if a slate is presented. If more than one person is running for an office, a ballot vote shall be taken.

**Section 5. Terms of Office.** The term of office for all officers is one year, from June to June. Officers may serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same office. Each person shall hold only one office at a time.

**Section 6. Vacancies.** If there is a vacancy in the office of the president, the vice-president will become the president. Any ExCom member may step forward to fill the position of vice-president or any other officer position should it become vacant. Should an ExCom member not fill the position, a nominating committee of three ExCom members will be formed by the president. The nominating committee will present a candidate at the next open meeting. At that meeting, nominations may also be made from the floor. Voting shall be by voice vote if one candidate is presented. If more than one person is running for an office, a ballot vote shall be taken.

**Section 7. Removal.** A member of the ExCom can be removed from office for failure to attend three consecutive executive meetings or failure to fulfill his/her duties. An ExCom member can be removed by a majority vote of the remaining ExCom members or by a ⅔ vote at a special Open Meeting.

## Article VI- Committees

**Section 1. Membership.** Committees shall consist of general and ExCom members of the organization. Elected committee chairs shall coordinate the committees' work.

**Section 2. Standing Committees.** The following committees shall be held by the organization:

1. **Hospitality.** The hospitality committee shall organize materials, information and activities for new families in the school community to help orient, integrate and welcome them into the community.
2. **Grade Representatives.** The grade reps committee shall work with the school to coordinate parent participation and volunteerism. PTO Grade Representatives are part of this committee and report to the PTO vice president.
3. **Events.** The events committee shall be made up of event coordinators and representatives from the grade reps committee, as well as general members. It shall submit to the ExCom of the organization a plan and budget per event. Event coordinators shall be responsible for the preparation and implementation of events and the management of their event team.

4. **Hog Shop.** The Hog Shop committee will consist of the Hog shop manager, who chairs the committee, and general members. This committee manages the finances of the shops, orders merchandise, staffs the shop, and provides a monthly sales report to the ExCom.
**Section 3. Additional Committees.** The ExCom of the organization may appoint additional committees and working groups as needed.

## Article VII- Open Meetings

**Section 1. Regular Open Meetings.** The regular meetings of the organization shall be on the first Thursday of each month during the school year, unless otherwise agreed upon at least one month before the meeting. The secretary will send an agenda and minutes of the prior meeting to all members at least three days before the meeting. The March open Meeting will be used as a working meeting to draft the annual goals and budget with maximum participation from the organization. Each year the ExCom will extend an official invitation to the director and a school board representative to attend every open meeting.
**Section 2. Special Open Meetings.** Special meetings may be called by the president, any two members of the ExCom, or five general members submitting a written request to the secretary. Notification of the special meeting shall be sent to the members at least a week prior to the meeting.
**Section 3. Quorum at Open Meetings.** The quorum shall be 5% of the organization.
**Section 4. Voting.** Resolutions presented to the organization shall pass by a majority vote of those present, presuming a quorum.

## Article VII- Finances

**Section 1. Fiscal Year.** The PTO fiscal year will follow the school's fiscal year which is July 1 – June 30.

**Section 2. Annual Budget.** A general PTO annual budget shall be drafted one month into the new academic year and approved by a majority vote of those present at the October General Open Meeting. Annual budget projections will be based on the financial record of the previous year and plans for the year.

**Section 3. Amendments.** Amendments to the approved annual budget must be approved by the ExCom. Any amendment above $1,500 must be approved by a vote at a General Open Meeting.

**Section 4. Events and Activities Budgets.** Before funds are released to an activity or event coordinator, he or she will submit a detailed budget to the president and treasurer for approval. Approval may be given by email. Events coordinators shall keep an accurate record of receipts, expenditures and earnings and submit a final report on the event's finances to the Treasurer within two weeks of the event.

**Section 5. Banking.** All funds shall be kept in a bank account in the name of the Harare International School PTO. Two authorized signatures shall be required on each withdrawal request or check. These will be the president or treasurer.

**Section 6. Contracts & Purchases.** Authority to sign contracts is limited to the president or the president's designee. Purchases of $500 or more should be made after the collection and consideration of at least three quotes.

**Section 7. Reporting.** The treasurer shall keep accurate records of any disbursements, income, and bank account information. Any requests for funds by PTO members should be made in writing to the treasurer. All financial reporting shall be kept in an excel file balance sheet. The treasurer shall reconcile the account(s) monthly and provide a written report on financial activity for the month and balances at both ExCom and open meetings.

**Section 8. Audit.** The treasurer shall prepare a financial statement by May 30 (within 30 days of the end of the Fiscal Year ending June 30), and the PTO shall arrange for an independent review of its financial records.

**Section 9. Ending Balance.** The organization shall leave a minimum of $3,000 in the treasury at the end of the fiscal year.

**Section 10. Dissolution.** Upon the dissolution of the organization, any remaining funds should be used to pay off any outstanding debts, and with the membership's approval, spent for the benefit of the school.

## Article IX- Standing Rules

Standing rules refer to rules adopted by the organization which specify actions taken by the group or the function of its members. These are in addition to the bylaws. The standing rules may be approved by the ExCom of the organization, and the secretary shall keep a record of the standing rules for future reference.

## Article X- Bylaw Amendments

These bylaws may be amended at any regular or special open meeting provided that notice of the vote and copies of the proposed amendments have been sent to all members at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Amendments to the bylaws will be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present, assuming a quorum.

## Article XI- Conflict of Interest

**Section 1. Avoiding Conflicts of Interest.** ExCom members shall not exercise power for their own, for family or for close friendship, personal benefit or publicity. Members must avoid conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility: no self-dealing or any conduct of private business or personal services between any ExCom and the school. Members must always disclose their involvements with other organizations, with vendors, or any other associations that might produce a conflict.

**Section 2. Annual Statements.** Every ExCom member shall annually sign a statement which affirms that they have received a copy of the conflict of interest policy; have read and understood the policy; and will comply with the policy during their tenure on the PTO executive board (see Annex A).

***These bylaws were amended on 29 May 2026.***

## Conflict of Interest Policy and Policy Form

**Section 1. Purpose.** The purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to protect this organization's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of a PTO member or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction.

**Section 2. Definitions.**

1. **Interested Person.** Any elected officer or coordinator, who has a direct or indirect financial interest as defined below, is an interested person.
2. **Financial Interest.** A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

a. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the organization has a transaction or arrangement;
b. A compensation arrangement with the organization or with any entity or individual with which the organization has a transaction or arrangement; or
c. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the organization is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.
A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under Section 3b, a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the ExCom of the organization decides that a conflict of interest exists.

**Section 3. Procedures.**
1. **Duty To Disclose**. In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person will disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the ExCom should he or she be requested by the president. (See Disclosure Form.)

2. **Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists.** After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after discussion between the ExCom of the organization and the interested person, the remaining committee shall decide whether a conflict of interest exists.

3. **Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest.**

a. An interested person may make a presentation at the organization's ExCom meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
b. The president of the organization's ExCom shall appoint an impartial person to investigate alternatives to the proposed arrangement to determine whether the organization can obtain a more advantageous arrangement from a person that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
c. If a more advantageous arrangement is not reasonably possible, the organization's ExCom shall determine by a majority vote (of the disinterested members) whether the arrangement is in the organization's best interest.

## Signature

I

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have read and understood the conflict of interest policy and agree to comply with the policy during my tenure with PTO.

Signed: Date:

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