

All changes to current bylaws are highlighted for ease of reference

Please send any questions or comments to info@somervillenjpto.com

PROPOSED CHANGES TO

BY-LAWS OF

SOMERVILLE Pre-K to 8 PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION

ARTICLE 1

NAME

The name of this organization shall be "The Somerville Pre-K to 8 Parent-Teacher Organization", hereinafter ("PTO").

ARTICLE 2

MISSION

Section 2.1 To provide the best possible education for all our children, by encouraging the community to provide the maximum feasible support for, and involvement with, our schools.

Section 2.2 To foster good relationships between teachers, staff, parents/guardians, students, and administrators, by providing varied

opportunities for positive interaction.

Section 2.3 To enhance the educational and cultural growth of the children, by sponsoring activities and programs, and by raising funds to be appropriated and distributed on a documented request basis.

Section 2.4 To strive to communicate with every student's family to promote a network of assistance and outreach.

ARTICLE 3

BASIC POLICIES

Section 3.1 The PTO is organized exclusively for educational purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Section 3.2

The PTO shall be noncommercial, nonsectarian, and nonpartisan.

Section 3.3 The name of the PTO shall not be used in any connection with a commercial concern or with any partisan interest without prior approval by the Executive Board. No one may present himself/herself as representing the PTO, without prior approval by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE 4

MEMBERSHIP

Section 4.1 Membership shall be open to all parents, guardians, teachers, and other staff of the Somerville School System, grades Pre K-8.

Section 4.2 Annual dues shall be paid by all members, as set forth by the Executive Committee. Dues shall not be changed except by vote at a General Meeting of the PTO.

ARTICLE 5

OFFICERS

Section 5.1 Any officer position can be shared in which case it shall be up to the

parties involved to divide up the duties of that office as they see fit. If only one party to a shared office is in attendance at a meeting, that party shall have full authority to act on the behalf of the office at that meeting.

Section 5.2 President. The President shall prepare an agenda for and preside at all Executive Committee Meetings and General Meetings of the PTO. The President shall coordinate all activities of the PTO and may sit as an advisor on any PTO Committee.

Section 5.3 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. The Vice President shall be responsible for **obtaining any and all** permits, and forms **pertaining to** for events both in and out of the school for PTO activities, including police, and firefighter needs or other external resources,

Section 5.4 Secretary. The Secretary shall record the discussions/activities of each General Meeting, making minutes available for review and approval at the next General Meeting. The Secretary shall maintain the attendance sheets from each General Meeting to determine the official list of eligible voters. The Secretary (in the absence of a Membership Director) shall maintain a database list of current (paid) members **for the purpose of publishing to publish** a PTO Membership Directory if required by the Executive Board.

Section 5.5 Communications Coordinator. The Communications Coordinator shall be responsible for copying and distributing, via reasonable means outlined by the principals, all forms of communications (notices of meetings and sponsored events, membership forms, minute summaries, telephone directories, etc.) approved by the Executive Board. The Communications Coordinator shall coordinate the PTO Website and social media.

Section 5.6 Treasurer. The Treasurer shall cause all monies to be deposited in the name and to the credit of the PTO, in such financial institutions as shall be selected by the PTO. The Treasurer shall be responsible for keeping and maintaining accurate financial records and shall present a financial report at each General Meeting. The Treasurer shall coordinate all audits **pertaining to** of the PTO accounts prior to June 30th, if requested by the Executive Board.

Section 5.7 Membership Director. The Membership Director shall maintain a database of current (paid) members **for the purpose of publishing to publish** an annual PTO Membership Directory. In the absence of the Secretary, the

Membership Director shall maintain the attendance sheets from each General Meeting to determine the official list of eligible voters.

ARTICLE 6

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 6.1 The officers of the PTO shall constitute the Executive Board of the PTO.

Section 6.2 The Executive Board Meetings shall be held when deemed necessary by the President. The Executive Board shall meet once per month from June through May. **Executive Board meetings shall be open to any interested member of the PTO.**

Section 6.3 Only the members of the Executive Board shall vote at the Executive Board Meetings. All decisions shall be reached by a majority vote of Executive Board Members present.

The President's vote will break a tie.

Section 6.4 The Executive Committee Board shall appoint all Chairpersons and the Chairpersons shall be responsible for forming their **own** committees.

Section 6.5 Money collected at an event shall be turned over to an Officer Executive Board Member at the end of the event.

Section 6.6 Committee Chairpersons must present their plans to the Executive Committee Board at either a General Meeting or Executive Committee Board Meeting prior to their event.

Section 6.7 All remaining merchandise/supplies from an event, already paid for, shall be turned over to an Officer Executive Board Member or their prearranged designated representative at the conclusion of the event.

ARTICLE 7

STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 7.1 The members of each committee shall serve for a term of one year, commencing on July 1. All committee chairs shall be appointed by the President, with the majority approval of the Executive Board, and shall be subject to removal

by the Executive Board. **Board** Committee membership shall be open to all interested members, at the discretion of the Chair and **Executive Board Liaison**. Each Committee shall **have an Executive Board Liaison and will** report to the President and the Executive Board. **Each Committee member shall follow the Committee By-Laws and Best Practices.**

Section 7.2 Each Standing Committee shall be responsible for the performance of the duties and functions delegated to it by the Executive Board or the President. **Standing Committees may include the Fundraising Committee, Latino Family Advisory Board (LFAB), Playground Committee, Diversity Committee, and Book Fair Committee.**

Section 7.3 Each Event Committee shall be responsible for the coordination of a PTO event. This may include publicizing the event, collecting money, organizing volunteers, ordering food and/or supplies, and running/overseeing the event. Event Committees may include the Trunk or Treat Committee, Holiday Shop Committee, Day of Service Committee, Valentine Gram Committee, and Teacher Appreciation Committee.

Section 7.4 Special (ad hoc) committees may be appointed by the President with the concurrence of the Executive Board for such special tasks as circumstances warrant.

ARTICLE 8

~~**DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEES The duties of the standing committees will be the responsibility of the chairperson with the support of the Executive Board.**~~

ARTICLE 9

VOTING

Section 9.1 At the first two General Meetings of the school year, all PTO members who have paid their dues are eligible to vote.

Section 9.2 At any subsequent General Meetings, all PTO members who have paid their dues and who have been present at least one (1) two (2) prior General Meetings that school year shall be eligible to vote. Members must be present to

vote.

Section 9.3 In the event of an election, there must be a minimum of ten (10) members, exclusive of the Executive Board, present. All votes shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of eligible voters present.

Section 9.4 The attendance sign-in sheet shall constitute the official attendance records for voting eligibility. At the conclusion of each General Meeting, the attendance sheets will be marked and **be** signed by two (2) members of the Executive Board to verify attendance.

Section 9.5 In the event of a tie vote, there will be a revote. If the vote is still not decided, the majority of the Executive Board will be the deciding vote.

Section 9.6 All votes shall require a two-third (2/3) majority of eligible voters present for expenditures equal to or exceeding \$2500.

ARTICLE 10

NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Section 10.1 Officers shall be elected at **the** General Meeting prior to the end of the term.

Section 10.2 Any member in good standing of the PTO shall be eligible to hold office. No one shall be elected without his/her prior consent. Any member nominated for an Executive Board position must have been present for a minimum of two (2) General Meetings during the current school year.

Section 10.3 A slate of candidates to fill positions on the Executive Board shall be presented by the President **at** no later than April 30th. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor at the meeting prior to April 30th.

Section 10.4 All election votes will be taken by ballot. All ballots shall be tallied publicly by the Secretary. All ballots shall be held by the Secretary for thirty (30) days.

Section 10.5 In the event of a mid-year vacancy in any of the elected offices, notification shall be made to the general membership to solicit interested nominees. The Executive Board shall nominate and vote a majority to fill the position. If the position is not filled, the duties of that position will be distributed

among the Executive Board at the discretion of the President.

Section 10.6 Officers shall assume their official duties on July 1 and shall serve for a term of one (1) year or until their successors are elected.

Section 10.7 If there is a vacancy in the office of president, the vice president will become the president. A new vice president will be elected at the next regularly scheduled meeting. If there is a vacancy in any other office, members will fill the vacancy through an election at the next regular meeting.

ARTICLE 11

MEETINGS

Section 11.1 The PTO shall hold at least four (4) General Meetings as outlined at the first General Meeting of the new school year. The General Meetings shall be open to the public and all PTO members are encouraged to attend.

Section 11.2 All meeting dates, times, and locations shall be set by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE 12

USE OF FUNDS

Section 12.1 The PTO shall function as a non-profit organization as a 501(c)(3).

Section 12.2 The Executive Board can vote on total expenditures up to \$500 between general meetings without general membership approval. These expenditures shall be presented at the next General Meeting.

Section 12.3 All or any portion of remaining funds not spent by June 30' shall be carried over for the following school year.

Section 12.4 Upon dissolution of the PTO, any funds left in the Treasury, and any supplies or other materials owned by the PTO, shall be used solely for the benefit of the Somerville Public Schools, Grades Pre-K to 8.

Section 12.5 The members of the PTO shall not be liable for the debts of the PTO.

Section 12.6 Any funds request over \$500 must be submitted 3 weeks prior to the

next general meeting. The Executive Board must vote to approve any funds request over \$500 with a two-thirds approval to bring to general membership for final approval.

Section 12.7 Reimbursement forms must be submitted within 30 days or within 30 days of the event. Reimbursement forms must be completely filled out, please include receipts.

ARTICLE 13

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Section 13.1 The purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to protect this tax-exempt organization's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of a member of the organization nor might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

Section 13.2 Duty to Disclose: In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the members with governing board delegated powers who are considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

Section 13.3 Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest: An interested person may make a presentation at the Executive Board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest. The chairperson of the Executive Board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest. After exercising due diligence, the Executive Board or committee shall determine whether the organization can obtain, with reasonable efforts, a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest the Executive Board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or

arrangement is in the organization's best interest, for its **own** benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination, it shall make its decision whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

ARTICLE 14

BY-LAWS

Section 14.1 Copies of the By-Laws shall be made available to all interested parties **and each member of the** via the website **or upon request**.

Section 14.2 Whenever deemed necessary, the Executive Board shall appoint a By-Laws Committee to review the PTO By-Laws and recommend any amendments and/or revisions.

Section 14.3 Notice of proposed amendments and/or revisions shall be given at least one meeting prior to voting, a quorum is required.

Section 14.4 Amendments and/or revisions to the By-Laws shall be adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the eligible voters present.

Section 14.5 By-Laws shall be reviewed and approved by the general membership every 3 years.

ARTICLE 15

Dissolution Clause

~~Section 15.1 Upon dissolution of the organization, the executive committee shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of the liabilities of the organization, dispose of the remaining assets of the organization exclusively for one or more exempt purposes, within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future Federal Tax Code), or shall distribute the same to the Federal Government, or to a state or local government for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by order of Superior Court of New Jersey in the judicial district where the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purpose or to such organizations organized and operated exclusively for such purposes as said court shall determine.~~

In the event of dissolution of the PTO, any General funds remaining shall be donated to Van Derveer Elementary School and Somerville Middle School,

allocated proportionate according to student enrollment. If playground funds remain, those monies will be donated to Van Derveer Elementary School.

Proposed, September, 1995

Proposed Revisions, November, 1995

Approved, January, 1996

Proposed Revisions, April, 2000

Approved, May, 2000

Proposed Revisions, April 2006

Approved, April, 2006

Approved, March 2008

Approved October 2012

Proposed Revisions October 2022

Addendum

Committee Policies and Best Practices

Please review the important information below regarding communication requests, help with recruiting volunteers, and your committee's budget.

1) Committee Formation:

-Committees do not function as separate groups but are part of the organization and must operate within the framework of PTO bylaws, policies, and procedures.

-Committee membership shall be open to all interested PTO members, at the discretion of the Chair and Executive Board Liaison. Committee members shall serve a term of one year or until the event has concluded.

-All projects and activities must be approved by the executive board in advance.

2) Publicity/Communication to the Community:

- All forms of communication should go through your Board Liaison. If you would like a communication sent out via email, school messenger, or on the website, please reach out to your board liaison in advance. For email and the website, please send the communication to your liaison 3 days before. For School Messenger, please send it the Tuesday before the Friday you want it published. - You must provide a finished copy for all forms of communications (for emails, this includes a subject line), exactly as you would like it to appear. In addition to a finished copy, please provide all images you would like included. If you need any help or have emergency communication, please contact your liaison.

- Please look ahead and plan out your communications so we do not inundate parents with multiple messages in one day. You even can send your request months in advance and the board will make sure it is sent out or published on the right day.

3) SignUp Genius: This is the online tool we will be using to create and manage volunteer lists for all activities.

- SignUp Genius requests should be directed to your board liaison 7 days before

you need it sent out. Please be sure to provide a precise list of what volunteers you need, how many, when, where and a list of duties required. Please indicate if you want the request to go to a specific grade or class or the community at large.

4) Budget:

- Each committee will be given a budget to work with for their event, which has already been voted on and approved by the board and general membership.

- Please get approval from your Board Liaison before spending any money. If you need additional funds please contact your board liaison who will, in turn, present the request to the board for a vote. You must provide a detailed budget listing all items or groups of items you have purchased and all items still needed, including estimated cost. The board cannot vote on a request absent specific information.

-Please be aware that the PTO has many supplies including lawn signs, cash boxes, coffee urns, a popcorn machine, indoor signage, and decorations for various events. Check with your Board Liaison to see if what we already have can be reused or repurposed for your event or program.

- Please refer to the website for forms and remember reimbursement forms must be submitted within 30 days or within 30 days of the event. Reimbursement forms must be completely filled out in order to be reimbursed.

Thank you for all of your work!

Somerville NJ Prek-8 PTO Executive Board

Proposed October 2022