

# FIRESIDE PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION BYLAWS

## Article I

### Definition of Group

#### Section 1: Name

The Fireside Parent Teacher Organization commonly referred to as PTO.

#### Section 2: Purpose

To promote the development of a partnership between home and school, focusing on the educational needs of children, families, and teachers while not forgetting the environment necessary for learning.

#### Section 3: Objectives

- A. To provide a forum and opportunities for parents and teachers to discuss and give input regarding concerns, needs, issues, or perceptions.
- B. To plan and organize volunteer opportunities for parents/guardians.
- C. To organize fundraising and social opportunities with the express purpose of supporting a wide variety of educational opportunities for the children of Fireside.
- D. To organize and communicate educational or informational opportunities for parents and teachers.

#### Section 4: Equal Opportunity

Fireside PTO believes that equal opportunity is important for the continuing success of our organization. In accordance with state, federal, and municipal laws, this non-profit intends to comply with these laws which preclude discrimination because of race, disability, color, creed, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, veteran status, or any other protected classification.

## Article II

### Structure

#### Section 1: Membership to the Fireside Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

Membership may consist of the parents or legal guardians of a child enrolled at Fireside Elementary, the faculty and staff of Fireside Elementary, and any person interested in the purpose and objectives of this organization.

#### Section 2: Meetings

- A. General PTO Meetings: There shall be monthly meetings September through May of the PTO provided requirements for a quorum are met (See Article IV, Section 4). The meeting times and places shall be determined by the Executive Board, with some consideration given to regularity and predictability, by the September PTO meeting and published in the school newsletter. The PTO meetings shall be informational, educational, and social in nature. Public notification (in the school newsletter) should be seven days prior to each meeting.
- B. Executive Board Meetings: There shall be monthly meetings August through June, of the Executive Board provided a quorum is met (See Article III, Section 5G). Meeting times and places shall be outlined for the school year at the August Executive Board meeting, announced at the September PTO meeting and published in the school newsletter. These meetings shall be of a business, planning and work-oriented nature. There shall be an Executive Board meeting in May of the newly elected officers of PTO and the outgoing officers of PTO to provide a smooth transition from year to year. The June meeting of the Executive Board shall be oriented towards organizing and planning of the upcoming year.
- C. Annual Meeting: A PTO meeting shall be held in May and recognized as the Annual Meeting. The purpose of this May meeting shall be to announce the newly elected PTO officers, receive annual committee reports, and any other business that may arise.
- D. Special Meetings: Special meetings for the PTO shall be called by the Co-chairperson(s) of the Executive Board or upon written request of (10) members of the PTO. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the written request. Notice of the special meeting shall be given at least three (3) working days in advance. The purpose of the special meeting shall be stated in said notice.
- E. Meeting times should be coordinated with and not conflict with the Committee for School Improvement (CSI).

## Article III

### Executive Board

#### Section 1: Board and Membership.

The Executive Board shall consist of the following officers: Co-chairperson (2); Secretary; Co-treasurers (2). The Board will also include the following: Members at Large (2); Principal; Committee Chairpersons; and a representative of the following groups: Faculty, Parent Council Representative, Committee for School Improvement (CSI). Any person may attend Executive Board meetings, but, only Executive Board members shall have voting privileges except the Principal, who votes when a majority is needed.

#### Section 2: Duties of the Executive Board

- A. Co-chairpersons – oversee the general operation of the organization; preside over meetings; serve as primary contact with the Principal, school, and community.
- B. Secretary – keeps minutes of meetings; posts minutes in an annual book and on the PTO bulletin board; provides notices and summaries of meetings for the school newsletter; maintains job and committee descriptions.
- C. Co-treasurers – receive all moneys for the organization; keep financial accounts of all moneys received and disbursed; write and sign checks; chair Finance Committee; provide monthly reports to the Executive Board; provide an annual report to the general membership at the Annual Meeting; file any necessary tax and legal documents.
- D. Committee Chairpersons, Representatives and Members at Large – attend meetings of the Executive Board; present reports to the Board on activities of their representative area; present proposals to the Board for approval of expenditures or activities; provide information to their representative populations about the activities and interests of PTO.
- E. Principal – attends meetings of PTO and Executive Board; serves as an advisor and a resource for school-related information; is a non-voting member except in case of a tie.

#### Section 3: Qualifications, Elections, and Terms of Office

- A. Qualifications: All Board members and the Fundraising and Volunteer Chairpersons are elected each year. These positions shall be filled by parents or legal guardians of a Fireside Elementary student or a teacher or staff member at this school. The Principal may not serve as an officer. Representatives of CSI and faculty shall be designated by their respective groups. The Parent Council Representative and Members at Large shall be elected at the September PTO meeting.
- B. Term of Office and Limits: The term of all board members shall be for fifteen (15) months. The term shall run from May through August of the following year. The outgoing Board members will function in an advisory capacity between May and August. A Board member may run for re-election for the same office for a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms.
- C. Board Nominations: Members shall nominate themselves or be nominated by another person with the nominee's consent for a Board position. Nominations must be presented in writing to an Executive Board member or verbally at the PTO meeting in February. A slate of Board nominees will be presented at the PTO meeting in March and published in the school newsletter after that meeting. If a full slate of officers is not received for nomination purposes, the deadline may be extended for all nominees to a date set by the Executive Board.
- D. Elections and Voting: Elections will be held in the first week of April. Elections will be by written secret ballot. Each parent and staff member at Fireside shall have one vote. Where Co-chairperson/treasurers positions exist, the two individuals with the most votes shall be the two individuals who fill the positions. Ballots will be counted by the Executive Board and announced at the Annual Meeting in May and published in the first school newsletter after that meeting. The current officers will chair the May PTO meeting. Newly elected officers will attend and be introduced at this meeting.

#### Section 4: Removal from Office, Vacancies and Newly Created Positions.

- A. An officer may be removed from office by a 2/3 vote of the general membership.
- B. Vacancies and newly created positions to the Board will be filled by appointment with consensus of the Board to serve the remainder of the current term.
- C. An Executive Board member with three (3) unexcused absences may be removed from the Board by a 2/3 vote of the Board.

### **Article III (cont'd)**

#### **Section 5: Authority and Decision Making of the Executive Board.**

- A. The Executive Board may adopt such rules and regulations for the conduct of their meetings and the management of the organization, as they deem proper, not inconsistent with these bylaws.
- B. The Executive Board shall have general management control of the business operations of the PTO.
- C. The Executive Board should set agendas for itself and the PTO meetings. Agendas for said meetings should be published at least one week prior to the scheduled meetings and posted in the hallway.
- D. The Executive Board shall make decisions regarding proposals from committees related to expenditures, fundraising, events and opportunities (as outlined in Article IV, Sections 3 & 4).
- E. The Executive Board should consider and represent the opinion of the majority of the parent/teacher populations when making decisions. If there is uncertainty about the opinions of parents/teachers, options to be considered are, but not limited to, surveys, formal and informal, telephone networking or special meetings as described in Article II, Section 2D. The Executive Board should seek information from the parent/teacher population on decisions, and in matters related to expenditures outside of the budget in excess of \$500.
- F. A quorum for the Executive Board shall consist of three (3) members.
- G. Each member of the Executive Board shall have a single vote.
- H. Executive Board decisions shall be by consensus of those members present whenever possible. In the absence of consensus, any action may be passed by majority of those members present and voting.

## **Article IV**

### **Operating Procedures**

#### **Section 1: Operating Agreements**

- A. Meetings shall follow the published agenda except by general consent. Deferred items and agenda items not addressed due to time considerations will have precedence on the agenda for the following month.
- B. Minutes from each PTO meeting will be posted and made available for review following each meeting. Minutes shall be presented for approval at each meeting for the prior meeting. Those present shall be listed on the minutes.
- C. All meetings will start and end on time. Time may be extended, by majority approval, in order to reach closure, not for depth on discussion.
- D. All discussions should be encouraging, up-front and honest, recognizing that differences exist.

#### **Section 2: Motions**

- A. A proposal that PTO take certain action must be presented as a motion by a PTO member.
- B. Another PTO member must second a motion.
- C. A motion that has been made is subject to one or more of the following actions by PTO:
  - i. Amendment – alteration of the originally stated proposal.
  - ii. Approval – voted acceptance of the motion by a majority of members present.
  - iii. Call to Question – a request by a member that discussion cease and voting begins.
  - iv. Debate – discussion of the merits of the proposal.
  - v. Defeat – voted denial of the motion by a majority of the members present.
  - vi. Deferment – motion tabled until future date.
  - vii. Withdrawal – requests that debate cease and a vote not be taken.

#### **Section 3: Voting**

- A. The Co-chairpersons will present for vote any motion that is in order when debate on the proposal has ended, or a PTO member has called the motion to question.
- B. All PTO members present at any PTO meetings may vote.
- C. Voting at any PTO meeting shall be by a show of “Thumbs Up” or “Thumbs Down.”
- D. A motion will be passed or defected by a majority vote of members present.
- E. Voting on proposals for actions by PTO may be deferred to the following month, by general consent, if the action is determined to be extensive in nature or time commitment, or controversial.

#### **Section 4: Quorum**

- A. At any PTO meeting, three Executive Board members and three general members shall constitute a quorum. Quorum requirements for Executive Board shall be three (3) Board members.
- B. If quorum requirements are not met at a PTO meeting, a special meeting may be called according to Article II, Section 2D, at which a decision will be made by a majority vote of members present.

#### **Section 5: Parliamentary Authority**

Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern this organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not in conflict with these bylaws.

## **Article V**

### **Finance**

#### **Section 1: 501(c)(3) Status**

- A. The PTO shall be a non-profit organization. PTO is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific 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 corresponding section of any future federal tax code.
- B. No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the organization 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 the purpose clause hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these bylaws, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.
- C. Upon the dissolution of the organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

#### **Section 2: Funding**

- A. Funds earned through PTO activities shall be used to fund educational projects and activities for Fireside Elementary pupils, staff and faculty. Projects seeking funding by PTO, except as outlined in Article V, Section 2D; will require approval by a majority vote of members present.
- B. The Principal, Teacher Representatives, and the teachers on the Finance committee shall act as liaisons, between the PTO and the faculty and staff of Fireside Elementary, provide PTO with periodic reports on programs and projects, as well as general information, and assist faculty and staff with presentation of budget and funding requests to PTO.
- C. Funding requests for the upcoming year shall be presented to the Co-treasurers prior to the Executive Board meeting in April using the appropriate forms. The budget shall be presented to the Executive Board prior to the September PTO meeting and voted on at the September PTO meeting. After PTO's budget has been approved, requests for over \$500 should be presented the Finance Committee for availability of funds and a potential recommendation before presentation to PTO. The requester or the Finance Committee can make presentations. Voting for items exceeding \$500 will be deferred to the PTO meeting the following month.
- D. After the budget has been approved, a Co-treasurer may disperse funds for non-budgeted items up to \$100 with the approval of the PTO Co-chairpersons without calling a meeting. Amounts from over \$100 to \$500 will be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board. Funding for these approvals will come from and not exceed the budget's miscellaneous expenditure. Amounts over \$500 will be approved at a regular PTO meeting. Notification of meetings shall be according to Article II, Section 2 A, B, or D. Reconsideration for denial of any request for funds can be presented at the PTO meeting.
- E. In April, the PTO Co-chairpersons shall project the PTO's revenues and expenses for the coming year and share this information with the Finance Committee for forecasting purposes.
- F. The PTO fund shall have a balance of at least \$500 at the completion of the school year. These funds represent "seed money," for the forthcoming school year.
- G. The PTO shall have available an emergency fund of \$300 total, in addition to the \$500 "seed money," in the event that all other funding has been exhausted.
- H. An audit shall be completed by the Finance Committee before the last PTO meeting in May.
- I. The deadline for spending allocated funds shall be determined by the Executive Board with a recommendation from the Finance Committee.

## Article VI

### Committees

#### Section 1: Membership

Committees shall be comprised of a chairperson(s) and as many other members as are interested in participating. A teacher or staff member on the committee as either the contact person or committee member would be desirable. Committee members may volunteer or be invited by the Executive Board.

#### Section 2: Chairpersons

A committee chairperson may volunteer or be elected by committee members. In the event that the position is not filled in this manner, the Executive Board may appoint a chairperson and shall not be limited to parents. The committee chairperson(s) shall provide to the Board information regarding the committee's progress. The chairperson shall also provide to the Volunteer Committee and Social Committee Chairperson(s) a list of persons participating on the committee or assisting with the project or event. In April, the chairperson(s) shall project the committee revenues and expenses of the upcoming year and share this with the Finance Committee for forecasting purposes. Special committees shall be appointed by the chairperson(s) of the PTO or the Executive Board.

#### Section 3: Funding

Funding for committees shall be made according to the guidelines set forth in Article V, Section 2.

**Section 4: Standing Committees and Definitions.** Committee activities shall not be limited to the defined purposes set forth below, but those definitions should be used as a guideline for direction.

- A. Programs Committee – Plan and organize programs focusing on the school community. The Parent Council Representative shall chair this committee.
- B. Safety Committee – Organize crossing guards and identify, discuss and problem solve safety issues.
- C. Communication Committee – Produce a bi-weekly school newsletter, publicize school events (newsletter and newspaper), produce directory, solicit parent's opinions (survey, telephoning), and possibly collect items regarding Fireside for use in a scrapbook and keep scrapbook up-to-date.
- D. Fundraising Committee – Research, organize and execute school fundraising endeavors. A presentation of suggested fundraising endeavors for the upcoming year shall be made and voted on at the May PTO meeting,. An additional presentation for informational purposes will be made at the September PTO meeting. Additional fundraising may be evaluated and voted on throughout the year. Membership of this committee shall consist of, but not be limited to, persons in charge of different fundraising activities/projects. This committee shall be accountable for moneys collected/received (creating a paper trail). These accounts will be verified with the Co-treasurers and/or Finance Committee.
- E. Volunteer Committee – Plans and organizes social events. Procurement of volunteers for school-related activities and projects. This procurement may occur at, but not limited to, "Meet the Teacher" activities, "Back to School" nights, PTO meetings, the school newsletter and a volunteer survey.
- F. Finance Committee – Handles finances as outlined in Article III, Section 2C. Generally, this includes, but is not limited to projection of revenues and expenses, collection of funding request, record keeping monitoring checking and savings accounts, and audits. Co-treasurers are automatically the Co-chairpersons of this committee.
- G. Computer Support Committee – Will be the responsibility of the faculty with parent support. Moneys designated by PTO as funds for this committee will be spent in part or in whole for materials needed by the student body. The faculty will determine how the money will be spent.
- H. Library Support Committee – Will be the responsibility of the school librarian with parent support. The support might include assessments of library needs, research and selection of appropriate materials, books, publications, and equipment. Help plan and organize the "Book Fair" in the fall.

## Article VII

### Amendments

These bylaws can be amended, repealed or changed in whole or in part by a majority vote of the members present at a PTO meeting, provided written notice of the intent to amend bylaws has been published in the school newsletter or otherwise provided to the school/parent population at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting.