

True leadership isn't about leading followers; it's really about building new leaders.

Responsibilities of a leader:

- * Listen
- * Participate
- * Allow others to participate
- * Be enthusiastic
- * Develop a team spirit
- * Be positive
- * Be a problem solver
- * Treat all people fairly
- * Reward efforts

"With strong leadership, PTA will have the competent, committed people necessary to be effective advocates for children and youth."

2.3.1 Executive Board

The executive board meets monthly as specified in the bylaws. The executive board should meet no less than two weeks prior to each association meeting so that members receive advance written notice according to the bylaws of all recommendations to be considered at the association meeting. None of its acts shall conflict with action taken by the association.

Unit bylaws specify members of the executive board and may include:

- officers of the association;
- chairmen of standing committees;
- school principal or representative(s);
- faculty representatives; and/or
- student representative(s).

A unit with a small membership may reduce the number of members on its executive board by following California State PTA procedures for amending the bylaws. While each association is required to include certain positions in the bylaws, the district PTA leadership can provide assistance by making recommendations regarding the positions so that the executive board reflects the needs of the particular PTA.

Executive board meetings and minutes are confidential and attendance is limited to those individuals specifically listed in the bylaws. The president may grant a courtesy seat to a guest for the purpose of bringing information to be shared with the group. Guests do not participate in discussion or voting and should leave the meeting after the information is relayed.

A summary of actions taken by the executive board must be reported to the association at the next association meeting and usually requires further approval or ratification by the association. Actions requiring association approval are stated in the bylaws.

2.3.2 Conflict of Interest Policy

2.3.2a DEFINITIONS

Conflict of Interest (also Conflict) means a conflict, or the appearance of a conflict, between the private interests and official responsibilities of a person in a position of trust. Persons in a position of trust include staff members, officers, and members of the board of a unit, council or district of the California State PTA. Board means the executive board or executive committee. Officer means an officer of the board of directors, executive board or executive committee. Staff member means a person who receives all or part of her or his income from the payroll of any unit, council or district as well as the California State PTA. Members of the board include any officer or chairman of the executive board or executive committee. Supporter means corporations, foundations, individuals, 501(c)(3) nonprofits, and other organizations which contribute to the California State PTA.

2.3.2b POLICY AND PRACTICES

In accordance with the *California State PTA Bylaws, Article IV, Section 6*: A PTA member shall not serve as a voting board member of a constituent organization at the local, council, district PTA, region, state or national level while serving as a paid employee of, or under contract to, that constituent organization.

Related Party Provision. For purposes of this provision, the term "interest" shall include personal interest, Interest as director, officer, member, stockholder, shareholder, partner, manager, trustee or beneficiary of any concern and having an immediate family member related by blood or marriage or member of the same household who holds such an interest in any concern. The term "concern" shall mean any corporation, association, trust, partnership, limited liability entity, firm, person or other entity other than the organization. No officer or board member of the association shall be disqualified from holding any office in the association by reason of being related to any person that has any interest in any concern. An officer or member of the board of the association shall not be disqualified because they are a related party from dealing, either as a vendor, purchaser or otherwise, or contracting or entering into any other transaction

with the association or with any entity of which the association is an affiliate. No transaction of the association shall be voidable by reason of the fact that any officer or member of the board of the association is related to a person that has an interest in the supporter with which such transaction is entered into, provided:

- a. The interest of such officer or member of the board is fully disclosed to the executive board.
- b. Such transaction is duly approved by the board of directors not so interested or connected as being in the best interests of the association.
- c. Payments to the related party of the interested officer or the member of the board are reasonable and do

not exceed fair market value that shall be determined by a three bid process.

- d. No officer or member of the board may vote or lobby on the matter or be counted in determining the existence of a quorum at the meeting at which such transaction may be authorized.
- e. Every officer and member of the board shall complete the annual questionnaire at the beginning of each fiscal year. This document shall be maintained as provided in the document retention policy.

Following full disclosure of a possible conflict of interest, the executive board shall determine whether a conflict of interest exists and if there is a conflict, the

Board shall vote to authorize or reject the transaction or take any other action deemed necessary to address the conflict and protect the PTA's best interests. Both votes shall be by a majority vote without counting the vote of any interested board member.

An interested member of the board, officer, or staff member shall not participate in any discussion or debate of the board, or of any committee or subcommittee, in which the subject of discussion is a contract, transaction, or situation in which there may be a perceived or actual conflict of interest. However, they may be present to provide clarifying information in such a discussion or debate unless objected to by any present member of the board.

Anyone in a position to make decisions about spending the PTA's resources (i.e., transactions such as purchases and contracts) – who also stands to benefit from that decision – has a duty to disclose that conflict as soon as it arises or when it becomes apparent; he or she should not participate in any final decisions.

A copy of this policy shall be given to all members of the board, officers, and staff members upon commencement of such person's relationship with the PTA or at the official adoption of this policy. Each board member, officer, and staff member shall sign and date the policy at the beginning of his or her term of service or employment and each year thereafter. Failure to sign does not nullify the policy.

Each member of the board, officer, and staff member shall annually sign a statement which affirms such person (see Conflict/Whistleblower Form, Forms, Chapter 9):

- a. Has received a copy of this conflict of interest policy,
- b. Has read and understands the policy,
- c. Has agreed to comply with the policy, and
- d. Understands that the PTA is a constituent organization of the California State PTA as a nonprofit corporation and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax exempt purposes.

2.3.3 Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a widely used problem-solving tool. It encourages participants to use their imaginations and be creative. It helps elicit many solutions to any given problem or task. When the membership buys into the decision of the group and participates in the decision-making process, a successful PTA year is more likely.

A good brainstorming session should last 15-20 minutes. Have plenty of large paper, marking pens, and masking tape on hand. Divide into small groups — no more than 11 to a group. One person should serve as recorder.

The brainstorming “task” or “problem” should be listed at the top of the paper for each small group. Based on the Purposes of the PTA, list the goals and objectives for (unit, council, and district PTA) for the coming year.

2.3.3a RULES

Everyone participates—including the president.

Participants throw out their ideas to accomplish the task or goal.

Recorder lists all ideas.

Do not discuss. Do not pre-judge.

Repetition is okay.

Encourage participation by all members.

Enjoy silences. It means everyone is thinking.

2.3.3b CONSENSUS

After the group has generated a list of ideas, reorganize those ideas that are similar or related. Have the group go over the list, applying critical and careful judgments to arrive at the group goal. Is the goal feasible and within available resources? Does it fit within the Purposes and basic policies of the PTA?

To help arrive at consensus, the members indicate their top three choices: 3 points for 1st choice; 2 points for 2nd choice; 1 point for 3rd choice. Tally points for each category. The idea with the most points becomes the group's choice.

Remember, achievement of a goal (a desired outcome to be achieved) often requires the completion of several objectives (Develop an Action Plan 7.4.3; Forms, Chapter 9).

2.3.4 Goal Setting

Setting goals for an organization provides a road map that gives a target to strive for, plans for needed change, and something to look back on and measure. Goals allow a PTA to stay focused and on track, especially during conflict or challenges.

Short-range goals: Can be accomplished now (starting today and within two weeks).

- Recognizes and respects differences of perspective and style among the individual board members;
- Acts with dignity and understands the implications of demeanor and behavior;
- Honors the confidentiality of board discussions;
- Is open to new ideas and suggestions;
- Is familiar with the bylaws in respect to the individual position as well as the organization as a whole;
- Understands that authority rests with the board as a whole and not with individuals;
- Understands that the basis for all authority rests with the membership;
- Participates in opportunities for training;
- Commits the time and energy necessary to be an informed and effective leader;
- Assists those with less experience;
- Understands the distinctions between PTA and the school staff and refrains from performing functions that are the responsibility of the school district;
- Values, supports and advocates for public education;
- Represents the PTA only when authorized to do so.

The PTA Executive Board

The members of the PTA executive board work together as a governance team which assumes collective responsibility for building unity and creating a positive climate during term of office.

To operate effectively, the executive board

- Develops a unity of purpose by involving parents/guardians, students, staff and community;
- Communicates a common vision;
- Operates with trust and integrity;
- Remains responsive to input from the school community;
- Governs in a professional manner, treating everyone with civility and respect;
- Fulfills requirements set within bylaws and standing rules;
- Takes collective responsibility for the board’s performance;
- Proposes for adoption by the membership a fiscally responsible budget based on the organization’s vision and goals;
- Monitors the fiscal health of the association regularly;
- Ensures that safe and appropriate activities are provided to implement the goals;

- Provides community leadership on issues that affect children and youth;
- Works collaboratively with other groups and agencies that share the same concerns on issues that affect children and youth;
- Encourages individual board members to attend available training opportunities;
- Serves as a communication link between the home, school and community;
- Evaluates the activities and direction of the board on a regular basis.

2.3.10a PROCEDURES FOR ADOPTION OF PROFESSIONAL GOVERNANCE STANDARDS

The California State PTA has adopted the Professional Governance Standards and encourages all unit, council, and district PTA executive boards to review and adopt the standards at the beginning of their term as an integral part of their team building and orientation process; however adoption of the standards can take place at any time. The *Toolkit* includes the brochure entitled Professional Governance Standards (Forms 9), which includes a form that a PTA may complete upon adoption by a vote of the PTA board. The brochure can also be downloaded at www.capta.org/sections/basics/downloads/ProfGovStanBrochure.pdf

The PTA shall submit the form in the brochure to the California State PTA office after adoption and include the total number of board members and the expiration date of their term.

Upon receipt of the form completed and signed by the president, a certificate will be mailed to the PTA president by the California State PTA office. A letter of acknowledgement will be mailed to the PTA administrator.

Wallet cards for the number of board members noted on the form will be enclosed with the letter to the PTA president. The wallet card serves as an acknowledgement and reminder of the PTA board’s and individual board member’s commitment to adhere to the Professional Governance Standards.

2.3.11 Whistleblower Policy

This **Whistleblower Policy** of the California State PTA: (1) encourages directors, officers, staff and volunteers to come forward with credible information on illegal practices or serious violations of adopted policies of the association; (2) specifies that the association will protect the person from retaliation; and (3) identifies where such information can be reported.

1. Encouragement of reporting. The association encourages complaints, reports or inquiries about illegal practices or serious violations of the association’s policies, including illegal or improper conduct by the association itself, by its leadership, or by others on its behalf. Appropriate subjects to raise under this policy would include financial improprieties, accounting or

audit matters, ethical violations, or other similar illegal or improper practices or policies. Other subjects on which the association has existing complaint mechanisms should be addressed under those mechanisms, such as raising matters of alleged discrimination or harassment via the association's management or Executive Director. This policy is not intended to provide a means of appeal from outcomes in those other mechanisms.

2. Protection from Retaliation. The association prohibits retaliation by or on behalf of the association against employees or volunteers for making good faith complaints, reports or inquiries under this policy or for participating in a review or investigation under this policy. This protection extends to those whose allegations are made in good faith but prove to be mistaken. The association reserves the right to discipline persons who make bad faith, knowingly false, or vexatious complaints, reports or inquiries or who otherwise abuse this policy.

Where to report. Complaints, reports or inquiries may be made under this policy on a confidential or anonymous basis. They should describe in detail the specific facts demonstrating the basis of the complaints, reports or inquiries. They should be directed to the association president and the council/district PTA president; if the president is implicated in the complaint, report or inquiry, it should be directed to the only to the council/district PTA president. The association or council/district will conduct a prompt, discreet, and objective review or investigation. Officers, volunteers, and staff must recognize that the association may be unable to fully evaluate a vague or general complaint, report, or inquiry that is made anonymously.

2.3.12 Recommended Officers and Chairmen

All PTAs are required to have a president, secretary, and treasurer. Other officers may vary at the unit, council, and district PTA levels. All officers are listed in the bylaws. The president, as an effective leader, will see that officers receive their respective job guidelines promptly.

2.3.12a RECOMMENDED OFFICERS

Vice President(s)
Financial Secretary
Corresponding Secretary
Historian
Auditor
Parliamentarian

2.3.12b JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR OFFICERS AND CHAIRMEN

The president should provide the officers and chairmen with their respective job descriptions as soon as possible.

Basic job descriptions for all elected and appointed officers are included in PTA bylaws.

In addition, Officer and Chairman Job Descriptions found in the *California State PTA Toolkit*, Job Descriptions, Chapter 10, have been developed by the California State PTA for use by unit, council and district PTAs. These guidelines are meant to assist officers and chairmen in their duties throughout the term of office. The list includes the required president, secretary, and treasurer officer Job Descriptions and numerous others.

The job descriptions typically are distributed to members of the board-elect following election and are used with the updated procedure books forwarded by the outgoing officers and chairmen. PTAs are encouraged to develop job descriptions and procedure books for all PTA positions to provide continuity and sound leadership practices.

2.3.13 President

Serving as president of a PTA includes the responsibility to lead that PTA toward specific goals chosen by its members. The goals must be consistent with the Purposes and basic policies of the PTA. The president is the presiding officer and the official representative of the association.

Throughout the year, mailings will be sent from the California State PTA and National PTA that contain important material to assist the unit. Distribute and discuss these materials with the appropriate officers, chairmen and membership when appropriate.

PTA presidents should encourage and model legislative advocacy.

For PTA training, counseling, or information, contact the council or district PTA president.

All written materials produced by PTA (e.g., newsletters, fliers, website postings, and print or electronic notices) are to be cleared with the PTA president and school principal before publishing. The principal is responsible for the accuracy of school information and compliance with the State Education Code and school district policy. The PTA president is responsible for the accuracy of PTA information and compliance with PTA policies.

Prior to Taking Office

To ensure a successful term of office, certain responsibilities begin as soon as new officers are elected.

The president-elect should confer with the school principal.

Call meetings as necessary of the board-elect (elected officers and principal) soon after election to ratify appointed officers, fill any vacant offices, and make plans for the coming year. After appointed officers are ratified, they become part of the board-elect.

Hold brainstorming session(s) with the board-elect to establish unit goals. Review unit bylaws, past unit activities, become familiar with National PTA and California State PTA goals, set realistic goals, and prioritize projects. Evaluate current chairman positions and decide