

Buffalo Parent Teacher Organization Constitution and Bylaws

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Mission

In order to facilitate student success within the Buffalo Public School District (BPSD) voices of all members of the community must be engaged through ongoing relationships. Thus, it is the mission of the Buffalo Parent Teacher Organization (BPTO) to initiate, support, advocate for and recognize positive projects, programs and accomplishments of the students, their families, and schools.

Article I – Buffalo Parent Teacher Organization

The name of the organization shall be the Buffalo Parent Teacher Organization (BPTO)

Article II – Purpose

The BPTO is organized for the purpose of supporting the education of children in Buffalo Public Schools by fostering relationships among parents, families, administrators, all school staff (employed and volunteer), and community members.

Article III – Members

Section 1

Any parent, guardian, or other adult standing as parent for a student at a school in Buffalo may be a member and shall have voting rights. Active community stakeholders, School and District administrators and all school staff (employed or volunteer) may be members and have voting rights.

Section 2

A member must have attended at least **three** previous BPTO meetings to be considered a member in good standing with voting rights.

Article IV – Officers and Elections

Section 1

Executive Board Officers – The officers shall be 4 Co-Chairs, Secretary, and Treasurer.

- a. **Co-Chairs** – Four (4) Co-Chairs shall rotate presiding over meetings of the organization and executive board, serve as the primary contacts for the School District Superintendent and School Board, represent the BPTO at meetings outside the organization, serve as an ex officio member of all committees, and coordinate the work of all the officers and committees so that the purpose of the organization is served.
- b. **Secretary** – The secretary shall keep all records of the organization, take and record minutes, prepare the agenda, handle correspondence, and send notices of meetings to the

membership. The secretary also keeps a copy of the minutes book, bylaws, rules, membership list, and any other necessary supplies, and brings them to meetings.

- c. **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. He or she will present a financial statement at every meeting and at other times of the year when requested by the executive board, and make a full report at the end of the year.

Section 2

Nominations and Elections – Nominations will be held at the second to last meeting of the school year (May). Following the May nominating meeting, a secure on-line vote will be taken with results tabulated prior to the June meeting. This will include all members in good standing. Paper voting can be made available upon request.

Section 3

Eligibility – Members are eligible for office if they have attended at least five membership and/or district stakeholder meetings in a given school year. Members will adhere to the Code of Ethics and the Code of Conduct if elected as follows:

Section 4

Code of ethics for elected officers of the Buffalo Parent Teacher Organization (BPTO)

1) PURPOSE

The purposes of this Code of Ethics are:

- a) To establish high standards of ethical conduct for executive officers of the Buffalo Parent Teacher Organization;
- b) To afford executive officers clear guidance to such standards;
- c) To promote public confidence in the integrity of governance and administration of the Buffalo Parent Teacher Organization, its committees and sub-committees;
- d) To establish clear standards and to prohibit acts incompatible with the public interest;
- e) To disclose interests that may influence or be perceived to influence the actions of executive officers;
- f) To facilitate consideration of potential problems before they arise;
- g) To minimize unwarranted suspicion;
- h) To enhance the accountability of the board to its members; and
- i) To provide for the fair and effective administration of this Code.

2) APPLICATION

This policy applies to every executive officer of the BPTO, and it shall take effect immediately.

3) CONSIDERATION OF OTHER LAWS AND REGULATIONS

The executive officers of the BPTO affirm their commitment to adhere to all applicable provisions of law regarding conflicts of interest. This policy does not supersede the requirements of any applicable law, regulation, or order.

4) REQUIREMENTS

- a) The Executive Board shall exercise good and sound judgment on behalf of the membership, and shall pursue a course of conduct which will maintain public trust and confidence in the BPTO. In no event shall an executive board member:
 - i) Treat any person more favorably than it is the custom and practice to treat the general public.
 - ii) Use his/her official position to secure unwarranted privileges or exemptions for self or others.
 - iii) Allow any person to improperly influence his/her performance.
 - iv) Have a romantic, sexual or other unprofessional relationship with any student of the District even if the relationship is consensual.
- b) An executive board member shall not, in his/her official position or office, take or fail to take any action in a manner which may result in a personal financial benefit (other than services or benefits generally available to residents of the City) for any of the following persons:
 - i) The officer;
 - ii) His/her outsider employer or business;
 - iii) A customer, client or business associate; and
 - iv) No executive board member shall allow any matter, concern or interest, personal, financial or otherwise, to influence or interfere with the performance of his or her duties as officer. Should such a matter, concern or interest arise, the officer shall bring the matter to the attention of the executive board to seek ways to reduce or eliminate the influence or interference.
- c) Executive board members shall disclose to at least two disinterested executive board member as soon as possible, known or suspected conflicts of interest or other violations of this policy.
- d) In no event shall an executive board member, either directly or indirectly, solicit any gift or accept or receive any gift having a value of \$75.00 or more under the circumstances in which it could reasonably be inferred that the gift was intended to influence him/her in the performance of his/her official duties or was intended as a reward for any official

action on his/her part. If a board member received a gift having a value of \$75.00 or more, it must be returned.

- e) No board member shall disclose confidential information acquired by them in the course of their official duties to further their personal interests or the interests of anyone in his/her family.
- f) An officer or employee shall promptly recues himself/herself from acting, formally or informally, on a matter before the Board, when acting on the matter or failing to act on the matter may financially benefit the officer, his/ her relatives, business interests or other interests not aligned with the mission of the BPTO and its ongoing work with the Buffalo Public Schools.

Section 5

Buffalo Parent Teacher Organization Executive Board Member Code of Conduct

As a member of the BPTO executive board, I will strive to improve public education through communication with and for students and their families, and to that end I will:

- a) Remember always that my first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of the students attending Buffalo Public Schools;
- b) Attend all Executive Board meetings and Membership meetings insofar as possible, and become informed concerning the issues to be considered at those meetings;
- c) Work with other board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that may arise during vigorous debate and points at issue;
- d) Base decisions and votes upon all available facts in each situation and upon honest conviction, separate from partisan bias of any kind;
- e) Work with board members to establish effective policies and delegate appropriate responsibilities to subcommittees;
- f) Abide by the final majority of the executive board;
- g) Abide by the BPTO Code of Ethics;
- h) Encourage the free expression of opinion by all board members, and seek productive communication among all Buffalo Public School stakeholders and stakeholder groups;
- i) Maintain familiarity with educational and District issues through study and participation in forums that provide necessary information, such as BPS District committees, meetings, and forums, as well as state and national groups that promote public education and parent, family, community, and student advocacy;

- j) Avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest, and refrain from using my position for personal or partisan gain;
- k) Refrain from disclosing any confidential information I may acquire in the course of official executive board duties.

Section 6

Terms of Office – Officers are elected for two years. Each person elected shall hold only one office at a time. For 2017 election cycle, co-chair seats will be staggered by holding elections for the two veteran seats only, allowing the two novice seats to remain in office for an additional year. Following the initial structural year's election, two co-chair seats will be contested each year. All other offices are two year commitments.

Section 7

Vacancies – If there is a vacancy in any office, members will fill the vacancy through an election at the next regular meeting.

Section 8

Removal from Office – Officers can be removed from office with cause (see code of conduct Article IV, section 3) by a two-thirds vote of those present (assuming a quorum) at a regular meeting where previous notice has been given. If an elected official misses three regularly scheduled executive board and/or membership meetings, a warning letter will be issued explaining the importance of regular dedicated attendance. Additional unexcused absences will lead to an automatic removal from office with notification via official letter, thereby creating a board vacancy (see Article IV, section 5).

Article V – Meetings

Section 1

Regular Meetings – The regular meeting of the organization shall be on a Saturday of each month during the school year at 9:00 a.m., or at a time and place determined by the executive board at least one month before the meeting. The annual meeting will be held at the last meeting of the school year (June). The annual meeting is for receiving reports, electing officers, and conducting other business that should arise. The Executive Board will notify the members of the meetings.

Section 2

Special Meetings – Special meetings may be called by any two members of the executive board. Previous notice of the special meeting shall be sent to the members at least 72 hours prior to the meeting, electronically or by phone.

Section 3

Quorum – The quorum shall be half plus 1 of the average member attendance of the previous year.

Article VI – Executive Board

Section 1

Membership – The Executive Board shall consist of the officers, standing committee chairs (appointed by the officers), and the Superintendent of Buffalo Public Schools and/or the Superintendent’s designee.

Section 2

Duties – The duties of the Executive Board shall be to transact business between meetings, both in person and electronically, in preparation for the general meeting, create standing rules and policies, create standing and temporary committees, prepare and submit a budget to the membership, approve routine bills, and prepare reports and recommendations to the membership.

Section 3

Meetings – Meetings shall be held about one (1) week prior to a membership meeting, time and place to be determined by the board, to plan and prepare for the upcoming membership meeting. Special meetings may be called by any two board members, with 24 hours’ notice.

Section 4

Quorum – Half the number of executive board members plus one constitutes a quorum.

Article VII – Committees

Section 1

Membership – Committees may consist of members and executive board members, with the co-chairs acting as an ex officio member of all committees.

***Section 2** (*Amended on December 9, 2014*)

Standing Committees – The following committees shall be held by the organization:

- Membership Committee
- Communications & Community/District Relations Committee
- Education Policy Committee
- Fundraising, Budget, & Auditing Committee
- Family, School, & Community Events Committee

Section 3

Additional Committees – The executive board may appoint additional committees as needed.

Article VIII – Finances

Section 1 – A tentative budget shall be drafted in the fall for each school year (October) and approved by a majority vote of the members present.

Section 2 – The treasurer shall keep accurate records of any disbursements, income, and bank account information.

Section 3 – The board shall approve all expenses of the organization.

Approved: 2/8/14
*Amended 12/9/14
Revised & Approved 2/11/17

Section 4 – Two authorized signatures shall be required on each check over the amount of \$200. Authorized signers shall be the co-chairs, treasurer, and secretary.

Section 5 – The treasurer shall prepare a financial statement at the end of the year, to be reviewed by the Executive Board.

Section 6 – Upon the dissolution of the organization, any remaining funds should be used to pay any outstanding bills and, with the membership’s approval, spent for the benefit of the students and families of the district (see Article XI).

Section 7 – The fiscal year shall coordinate with the school year.

Article IX – Parliamentary Authority

Robert’s Rules of Order shall govern meetings when they are not in conflict with the organization’s bylaws.

Article X – Standing Rules

Standing rules may be approved by the Executive Board, and the secretary shall keep a record of the standing rules for future reference.

Article XI – Dissolution

The organization may be dissolved with previous notice (14 calendar days) with a majority of the executive board present and a quorum of members in good standing.

Article XII – Amendments

These bylaws may be amended at any regular or special meeting, providing that previous notice was given in writing at the prior meeting and then sent to all members of the organization by the secretary. Notice may be given by postal mail, e-mail, or fax. Amendments will be approved by two-thirds vote of those present, assuming a quorum.

Approved: 2/8/14
*Amended 12/9/14
Revised & Approved 2/11/17

**Buffalo Parent Teacher Organization
Constitution and Bylaws
Amendment
December 9, 2014**

Article VII – Committees – Section 2

Currently reads:

Standing Committees – The following committees shall be held by the organization:
Fundraising, Hospitality, Membership, Communications, Arts and Enrichment, Family Events,
and Auditing.

Amended on December 9, 2014:

Standing Committees – The following committees shall be held by the organization:

- Membership Committee
- Communications & Community/District Relations
- Education Policy Committee
- Fundraising, Budget, & Auditing Committee
- Family, School, & Community Events Committee