

WELLINGTON LANDINGS COMMUNITY MIDDLE SCHOOL
PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION

ORGANIZATION AND BY-LAWS

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Wellington Landings Community Middle School Parent-Teacher Organization is to encourage parent and public involvement in Wellington Landings Community Middle School to support the children who attend, and those charged with their education, both within the school and the community and to develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages of physical, mental and social education.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE:

Membership:

Membership is open to anyone who believes in the mission statement above. The parent teacher organization is committed to being inclusive in it's efforts to represent and assist all who nurture and educate children. It not only welcomes but actively seeks membership from the widest diversity of cultures, races, ethnicities, creeds, and economic and educational status. The parent teacher organization is a self-governing unit providing parents, teachers and community members the opportunity to unite to improve children's lives by addressing health, education and social concerns.

NOT-FOR-PROFIT:

The parent teacher organization of Wellington Landings Community School is non-commercial. The parent teacher organization may accept and acknowledge contributions from commercial concerns or foundations on a no-obligation basis. When a program or project is developed jointly with a business or foundation, or with it's funds, the PTO should have final approval of all important aspects of the endeavor. No event should be approved unless it is clearly intended to be and was initially conceived as furthering the objectives of the parent teacher organization.

GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND OPERATION:

The officers of the parent teacher organization, which shall be elected pursuant to the By-Laws, are President, Vice President(s), Secretary /Finances. Similar officer and chair positions may be established as necessary performing in their leadership capacities the following:

- ◆ perform the duties of the office or committee chair as outlined in the By-Laws or standing rules
- ◆ make reports promptly, as required
- ◆ answer correspondence promptly and keep complete correspondence files
- ◆ return to the Treasurer without delay, all funds pertaining to their office or position as chair

As a general rule, a position may only be filled by one person. This however maybe amended by a majority vote of any quorum present. In the same vein, ordinarily a person shall not serve in more than one position at the same time.

Committees plan to promote the activities of the parent teacher organization. A committee consists of one or more people elected or appointed on the basis of qualifications for the committee assignment. The purpose of the committee is subject to the control and direction of the parent teacher organization.

Ordinarily there are two types of committees - standing and special. A standing committee performs a continuing function, usually named in the By-Laws, and remains in existence permanently, or for the life of the assembly that created it. The members serve for a term that corresponds with that of the officers unless otherwise stated in the By-Laws.

A special committee is appointed as the need arises. When it has carried out its specified task and gives its final report to the assembly, or is discharged, it automatically ceases to exist. The size, location, focus and membership composition of the parent teacher organization will help determine what committees will be useful. Suggested committees consist of: budget and finance, events/activities, membership, program planning and public relations.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS:

The election of officers is one of the most important duties of the parent/teacher organization. Officers should be chosen for their abilities and their willingness to serve. The By-Laws should define the method of nomination or election that best suits the need of membership. The By-Laws should state when the committee is elected and by whom. The committee members may be elected or volunteer, not selected, and should have knowledge of and know the membership. The president does not appoint the nominating committee; nor is it appropriate for the president to exert any influence on its selection of nominees. The chair of the committee is selected according to the provisions of the By-Laws.

It is the responsibility of the nominating committee to recognize and seek qualified nominees for the elected leadership, i.e. the executive committee of the PTO. The members of the committee, therefore, have a tremendous influence on the future of the organization and should themselves be carefully elected.

The committee should have a copy of the By-Laws and a membership list at its meeting. Community members themselves may be nominated for office. They should be excused from the room while their nomination is being considered and may return to vote. Discussion of nominees is confidential and voting should be by ballot. The committee chair, or designee, shall contact nominees and inform them of the duties the office involves. The consent of the nominee to serve if elected should be obtained. The report of the committee is signed by all members who concur.

The committee selects one nominee for each office to be filled, depending on provisions of the By-Laws. The committee report is presented to the membership at the time stated in the By-Laws.

After the nominating committee reports, additional nominations from the floor may be made. These do not require a second and can only be made by a voting member. Unless the By-Laws prohibit, eligible members may run for more than one office, but if elected to more than one must choose one on which they will serve. If a member elected to two positions is absent, the association decides by majority vote which office the nominee will fill and then votes again to fill the other office. The nominating committee is automatically discharged when its report is presented to the membership. However, if the nominee withdraws prior to the election, the committee must seek another candidate.

If other persons are nominated from the floor, their names are added to the list for the election. When time has been allowed, the chair may close the nominations. When all nominees have been offered for all offices, nominations may be closed by a motion and a two-thirds vote, or by the chair. It is usually best to allow the presiding officer to close nomination if no one wishes to make additional ones. Nominations may be reopened by a motion and a majority vote, and all provided no votes have yet been cast.

A majority of the votes cast is necessary to elect an officer. It may be necessary to vote several times if a majority is not reached. A plurality (largest number of votes given to any candidate when there are three or more choices) never elects unless provided for in the By-Laws. Suggested wording in the By-Laws to eliminate additional balloting is as follows: "Elections shall be by ballot. when there is but one nominee for an office, election for that office may be by voice vote."

MEETING AND MINUTES:

Types of Meetings:

The By-Laws specify scheduled meetings of the organization. Types of meetings are as follows: Regular meeting/periodic business meetings. Special meeting/separate session called for a specific purpose. Adjourned meeting/continuation of a session of the immediately preceding regular or special meeting.

Minutes:

Minutes should contain record of all action taken by the group, including the exact wording of every motion, the name of the member who introduced the motion and the actions taken on the motion. The secretary or chair should request the maker of a motion to put it in writing if the motion is longer involved. The minutes should be as brief as possible and should be reported in the order in which business is presented at the meeting. The minutes should be maintained in an official minutes book and numbered consecutively.

Minutes of the previous meeting are read or distributed for approval at the opening of each meeting.

Suggested Outline for Minutes:

- ◆ Kind of meeting.
- ◆ Date, place and hour of meeting.
- ◆ The names of the president and secretary present, or in their absence the names of the people who are alternates.

- ◆ The attendance count to establish a quorum.
- ◆ Statement concerning the minutes of the previous meeting, whether they were read and approved as submitted, or read and approved as corrected.
- ◆ Committee reports.
- ◆ Old business.
- ◆ New business.
- ◆ Hour of adjournment.

BY-LAWS

The By-Laws form the legally binding document that governs the organization.

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of the organization is Wellington Landing Community Middle School Parent Teacher Organization. It is also commonly known, and will be referred to in these By-Laws, as the Gator PTO.

ARTICLE II

BASIC POLICIES

The following are the basic policies of the PTO:

1. The organization shall be non-commercial, non-sectarian and non-partisan.
2. The name of the organization or the name of any of the members in their official capacity shall not be used to endorse or promote a commercial concern or in connection with any partisan interest or for any purpose not appropriately related to promotion of the objects of the organization.
3. The organization shall work with the school to provide quality education for all children and youth and shall seek to participate in the decision making process establishing school policy recognizing, however, that the legal responsibility to make decisions has been delegated by the people to Boards of Education, State Education authorities and Local Education authorities.
4. No part of the net earnings of the organizations shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, directors, 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 herein.
5. Upon the dissolution of this organization, after paying or adequately providing for the debts and obligations of the organization, the remaining assets shall be distributed to Wellington Landings Community Middle School.

ARTICLE III
MEMBERS AND DUES

Membership shall be made available without regard to race, color, creed or national origin under such rules and regulations not in conflict with the provisions of the By-Laws contained herein, to any individual who subscribes to the objectives and basic policies of the PTO. The PTO shall conduct an annual enrollment of members but may admit persons to membership at any time. Each member of the PTO shall pay such annual dues as may be prescribed by the organization.

ARTICLE IV
OFFICERS AND TENURE

The Executive Committee of the PTO will be the President, Vice President, Secretary/Finances, and Principal. Similar Officer and Chair positions may be established as necessary. The term of office for President, Vice President, Secretary/Finances shall be for two years.

President: The President is elected by PTO executive board members to direct the affairs of the PTO in cooperation with the other members of the executive board for a term of office as specified in the By-Laws. As presiding Officer, the President does the following:

- ◆ Determines the agenda in cooperation with the Secretary/Finances.
- ◆ Calls the meeting to order at a designated time and, if a quorum is present, proceeds with the business.
- ◆ Maintains a fair and impartial position at all times and encourages members to participate.
- ◆ Takes no part in any discussion while presiding, but can offer information to clarify items on the agenda, acts as a facilitator, refrains from expressing a personal opinion on questions before the house, and avoids personal bias on giving information to the Organization.
- ◆ States each motion clearly after it has been seconded before allowing discussion.
- ◆ Declares the result of every vote taken.
- ◆ Calls upon the Vice President to preside when wishing to speak to a motion or to leave the Chair. The President then has all the privileges of a member, addressing the office or temporarily presiding in the same manner as any other member, and returning to the Chair only after a vote has been announced.
- ◆ May vote when voting is by ballot. In other cases, may cast a vote to create or break a tie if the results are in the best interest of the PTO.
- ◆ Recognizes a member who has not previously spoken to the question in preference to one who already has spoken.
- ◆ Serves ex-officio on all committees, the exception to this is the nominated committee; the President should not seek to influence the nominating process in any way.

- ◆ Calls for required reports at specific times with specified procedures.

Vice President: May be called upon at any time to temporarily assume the place of the President. The Vice President does the following:

- ◆ Presides at meetings in the absence of the President or upon the President's inability to serve.
- ◆ Assumes the duties of the President in the event of a President's resignation until the position is filled in accordance with the By-Laws.
- ◆ Acts as an aide to the President and assumes responsibility for duties assigned by the President.
- ◆ Performs any other specific duties that may be provided for in the By-Laws.
- ◆ Represents the President upon request.

Secretary/Finances: Duties of the Secretary/Finances include the following:

- Treasurer*
- ◆ Keeps an accurate and detailed account in the Secretary's permanent book, supplied by the WLCMS bookkeeper, of all money received and transferred to the school.
 - ◆ Submits a financial statement at a regular meeting of the PTO, including total balance on hand at the beginning of the period covered by the report including the amounts credited to the the PTO account and the total balance on hand, after PTO expenditures, as of the date of the report.
 - ◆ All money is received by the WLCMS bookkeeper and credited to a school account designated for the Gator PTO. Checks for PTO expenses are signed by the Principal of WLCMS and by those designated employees of the school district. Disbursement of PTO funds is approved at monthly PTO meetings by the PTO executive board.

Secretary/Finances: The secretary is also responsible for keeping accurate records of the PTO and does the following:

- Secretary*
- ◆ Maintains an accurate record of PTO memberships as received from the membership chair or committee.
 - ◆ Records all business transacted at each meeting of the Association as well as meetings of the Executive Board and presents the minutes for approval at the next meeting.
 - ◆ Has on hand for reference a copy of the unit By-Laws and standing rules, the agenda, minutes of previous meetings including Treasurer's reports, a list of committees, including names and members of committees and a list of membership.
 - ◆ In consultation with, and at the request of the President, may prepare in advance of each meeting a complete agenda showing the order in which business should come before the group.
 - ◆ Reads or distributes printed copies of minutes of any previous meeting.

- ◆ Calls the meeting to order in the absence of the President and Vice President.
- ◆ Acts as custodian of all records, except those specifically assigned to others, and promptly delivers all records to successor.
- ◆ In the absence of a corresponding Secretary, conducts the correspondence of the PTO.

ARTICLE V DEFINITION OF GATOR PTO BOARD

The Gator PTO board is a formal body consisting of the Executive Committee: President, Vice-President, Secretary/Finances and Principal. The remainder of the Executive board is comprised of a volunteer coordinator, business partnership coordinator, assistant-principal/PTO liaison, one teacher rep and all current standing committee chairs. Each of these positions on the Executive board have a vote, with the exception of the President, which can vote in the case of a ballot vote, or to cast a vote to break a tie vote. All standing committees shall have one (1) vote each.

ARTICLE VI MEETINGS

The Executive Committee will meet with the executive board members the third week of the month, evenings, from September through May.) Committees will meet as needed. A quorum, as defined in these By-Laws, must be present at any meeting prior to the PTO executive board taking any official action.

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES

Committees are formed to carry out the business of the PTO in specific areas as designated by the Organization. Committees may be constituted in several configurations.

Voting body - the PTO executive board is the formal body which is responsible for voting upon and implementing the decisions of the Organization. All votes will require a quorum if formal action is to be taken. A quorum is a majority (50% plus 1) of the PTO executive board, present at the monthly meeting, with each standing committee having one (1) vote each.

Standing Committees - Standing committees may be created for long term, ongoing functions and are expected to schedule meetings as needed. The standing committees' focus on specific issues are determined by the Executive committee. Each standing committee may have one or more committee chairs.

Ad Hoc Committees - These committees are formed to deal with specific, short term concerns that are not appropriately assigned to standing committees.