



PTA President

Helpful material for a successful PTA Presidency

Sample Meeting Agenda

Keys to a Successful PTA Meeting

Planning Effective Meetings

Advantage of Ethics

The 3 Ds: Distribute, Delegate, Draft

Delegating Responsibilities

A Bill of Rights for Members



Sample Meeting Agenda

The regular meeting ordinarily covers the following features in the following order:

1. Call to order
2. Opening Exercises:
 - a. Meditation
 - b. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Reading and approval of the Minutes
4. Correspondence
5. Report of the Treasurer
6. Reports
 - a. Officers
 - b. Standing Committees
 - c. Special Committees
7. Special Orders
8. Unfinished Business
9. New Business
10. Announcement
11. Program (if any)
12. Further Business
13. Adjournment



Keys to a Successful PTA Meeting

For PTAs to be successful communication links between the school and home, PTA meetings need to mirror supportive and inclusive communication practices. These practices can be applied to any type of parent-led meeting.

Make it Easier for Everyone to Attend

- Plan meetings outside of school, such as at local community rooms, community centers or other central locations to enable more parents to attend.
- Send invitations by phone or mail.
- Offer materials presented at the meetings in relevant languages for parents. If you have only one other major language represented at your school besides English, consider doing meetings in both languages (it takes more time, but everyone feels equally included).

Make Meetings Held at School More Inviting

- Form a carpool network to assist parents who do not have transportation. If the school administration can permit the school bus to be used, then arrange group pick-ups and drop-offs in communities where many parents do not have transportation.
- Consider holding a morning meeting and an evening meeting so parents can attend the one more convenient for them. Work with other local schools to stagger PTA meeting times for parents with children in different schools
- Advertise the PTA at school. At the first meeting of the year, provide an explanation of what a PTA is, introduce all local officers and lead volunteers, and display materials explaining all child-related programs.
- Offer refreshments or low-cost meals at evening meetings. Provide child care at all meetings, and at evening meetings provide child care in the form of homework assistance in the library.

Make Meetings More Interesting

- Plan agenda topics based on issues for parents and current needs of their children. Do a survey that asks parents what critical issues they are facing and want discussed at meetings and what needs must be met to attend meetings.
- Schedule dynamic speakers for meetings, then advertise them.
- Use PTA meetings to conduct discussion groups on education topics such as school funding, testing and assessment, legislation and its effects on school programs, and so forth.
- Encourage people to participate in school board meetings.
- Set ground rules for communication and follow them.
- Recognize outstanding students in all areas of school activities.



Planning Effective Meetings

Plan the Meeting:

- Survey the membership to determine interests
- Organize a planning committee to develop the program
- Check PTA bylaws for business required to be taken care of during certain months (audit approval, nominating committee election, election of officers, etc.)
- Check school calendar for holidays and other special events
- Consider alternative meeting schedules to suit the membership
- Submit facility use permit for the site
- Set timeline for speaker contacts and committee assignments

Before the Meeting:

- Send out announcements early
- Identify leaders who can encourage others to attend
- Assemble your tools – gavel, *Robert's Rules of Order*, bylaws, etc.
- Prepare a written agenda. Send it to your officers for input before meeting.
- Remind those who are expected to give reports at the meeting
- Consult with the principal
- Arrange for greeters at the door
- Be prepared for emergencies with an alternate plan

ALWAYS START THE MEETING ON TIME.

After the Meeting:

- Evaluate the program to determine if it met the goals



Advantages of Ethics

Trust

Trust is foundational in order to win the loyalty and support of those you are trying to lead. Trust must not only be established but also must be maintained. Key characteristics necessary to generate and sustain trust:

- Consistency
- Dependability
- Integrity

Respect

- Treat all people with respect, assuring that no person is discriminated against, exploited or demeaned as a result of their gender, race, ethnicity, or any other improper factor
- Avoid any conduct that could be reasonably construed as abusive, retaliatory or likely to discourage candor and complete truth
- Recognize the dignity of others and affirm the diversity of their gifts

Responsibility

- Live up to our responsibilities to all our stakeholders by making decisions that need to be made when they need to be made in a way that safeguards the reputation and advances the long term interests of the public and the organization
- Be accountable for the choices and decisions we make

"Being accountable is a ledge of promises made and promises kept." - David Niedert

- Ensure that excellence is pursued and that there is a commitment to do ones best.

Fairness

- Strive to be fair in all of our dealings with the public, the schools we represent, our communities, and elected and appointed leaders of the organization.

Caring

- Consistently demonstrate that we care about the well-being of all people affected by our actions
- Care for others as well as outcomes

Citizenship

- Constantly strive to be good citizens ourselves by obeying laws and regulations and by protecting the environment



Advantages of Ethics

1. **Competitive Edge** – people prefer to work with those they can trust.
2. **Credibility** – people believe you.
3. **Efficiency** – trust making decision making faster and more economical
4. **Morale** – people feel better about their work and themselves
5. **Loyalty** – internal and external
6. **Personal Satisfaction** – self-respect, affection of others



The 3 Ds

Distribute

- Distribute materials from National PTA and Kansas PTA
- Materials, after review, note in top corner to whom it should be given.
- Board meetings, orientation and conference schedules.

Delegate

- It's the ideal way to develop new talent.
- To their individual strengths and weaknesses as appropriate,
- Tasks that are meaningful.
- What people can or would like to do.
- The responsibility for results, along with authority and decision-making power to accomplish them,

Draft

- By matching tasks to individual's interests and talents.
- By dividing tasks into manageable parts.
- By forming coalitions when tasks involve the larger community.
- A letter to recognize accomplishments and express appreciation for all they have done.

Spread the Workload – Avoid the Leader Burn-Out!



Delegating Responsibilities

Spread the Workload – Avoid Leader Burn-Out

- ✓ Make them feel welcome.
- ✓ Make them feel a vital part of the PTA.
- ✓ Make them feel needed – assure them of their importance to the success.
- ✓ Give your members a challenging responsibility.
- ✓ Match personal skills with the job to be accomplished.
- ✓ Let them know what the job entails and when it needs to be completed.
- ✓ Let them be responsible for their responsibilities.
- ✓ Give them guidelines – let *them* do the work.
- ✓ Give them publications relating to their responsibilities.
- ✓ Work with them – but be available for guidance.
- ✓ Share ideas – but don't dictate.
- ✓ Let all members have their say and express their view points.
- ✓ BE POSITIVE – reduce negative thinking.
- ✓ Praise them for a job well done – GIVE THEM THE CREDIT.
- ✓ Thank them for their efforts.
- ✓ Encourage them to move into other PTA positions & other levels of PTA.

A Bill of Rights for Members

Provided by Bryan Leipper

Since the member has an investment in the success of the organization, the member shall not be denied these rights.

- 1.The right to be informed about every meeting's purpose, date, time, and place.
- 2.The right to have meetings to start on time.
- 3.The right to learn the agenda before the meeting starts.
- 4.The right to raise questions about any item on the agenda and propose changes before the agenda is approved.
- 5.The right to see and hear what's going on and be heard when speaking.
- 6.The right to understand the meaning of every proposed action and its related options.
- 7.The right to have all the facts, alternatives, and consequences presented openly and the opportunity to discuss every item before voting.
- 8.The right to participate in the process of selecting officers, representatives, and those who chair committees.
- 9.The right to full and free discussion of every item presented for a group decision.
- 10.The right to have all the information available to any other member or officer.

(The Bill of Rights was excerpted from *Lead On!* 1982 Leslie Griffin Lawson, Franklyn D. Donant, and John D. Lawson)

Perhaps the 'golden rule' of these rights is the right to not be surprised. You, as an association leader, need to make sure that members have no reasonable excuse for being surprised. Keep in mind, though, that the discovery there is no reasonable excuse is something the member should discover and not something anyone should point out to him or her. The way to avoid surprises is to have structure and routine supported and reinforced by communication and consistency.

For example, starting late rewards the stragglers, punishes those who arrive on time, and creates an atmosphere of uncertainty from the outset. If it becomes a habit to start late, the meeting announcement becomes a matter of confusion rather than clarification. Such discrepancies can be a subtle group identification mechanism using who knows what hidden information to define the group - not a good situation if whole group cohesion is the real goal.

Communications need to be timely, frequent, and varied. Many bylaws require that action items be established at a meeting prior to their discussion and decision. This allows the agenda to be distributed with the meeting notices. An association's meeting agenda should follow a common pattern and the topics to be decided should have sufficient preparation so that the decisions to be made are clearly understood before the final action.

Excerpted from *The Dear Association Leader*, a weekly e-mail bulletin providing quick tips, issue updates, and other information and ideas for the Association Leader. Highlights are provided of lessons learned from others' successes and not so successful efforts. To subscribe, e-mail a request to leaders@leipper.org

Found in the Energize website library at: <http://www.energizeinc.com/art.html>.



[Home: <http://www.energizeinc.com>]

Energize, Inc., 5450 Wissahickon Ave., Philadelphia PA 19144
Phone: 215-438-8342, Fax: 215-438-0434