

**Montgomery County Council
of
Parent Teacher Associations
(MCCPTA)**

**SECRETARIES
GUIDEBOOK**

2009-2010

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**Hours of Operation – 10 am – 2 p.m. Monday – Friday (School Year)
10 am – 12 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday (Summer)**

www.mccpta.net

MCCPTA GUIDEBOOK FOR PTA SECRETARIES

If your PTA has one secretary, instead of two secretaries designated as recording and corresponding, the duties outlined below would be combined.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

The Corresponding Secretary assumes the following responsibilities:

1. Keeps files of all correspondence and circulates a current correspondence file at executive board meetings, so members will be up-to-date on communications affecting the PTA.
2. Regularly checks the designated PTA mailbox in the school and makes sure the mail received there is distributed appropriately. Works with the president to keep the mail flowing.
3. Prepares letters for the PTA as necessary. Such correspondence should be signed by the PTA president. For example, PTAs function only with successful volunteers so thanking them helps keep the PTA functioning well. Therefore, the corresponding secretary should write thank-you notes and letters. Greeting cards and sympathy notes on behalf of the PTA are also sometimes necessary.
4. Acts as recording secretary if that person is absent. Thus the corresponding secretary must also know all of the duties of the recording secretary such as the preparation of minutes.
5. In May or June, after the elections, forward the names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses to the MCCPTA office at: **2096 Gaither Road, Suite 204, Rockville, Maryland 20850**. In addition, this information may be faxed, or you can fill out the Blue Book Information Request form online (www.mccpta.net). This information is extremely important because without it the new leaders will not receive mailings from MCCPTA, Maryland PTA, and National PTA - including membership cards - in a timely fashion.
6. At the start of your term, obtain from the previous corresponding secretary the files and records that they have kept. . PTA materials and records are the property of the PTA.
7. At the end of the term of office, passes the files and records on to their successor promptly in order to assure a smooth transition. PTA materials and records are the property of the PTA.

RECORDING SECRETARY

The Recording Secretary assumes the following responsibilities.

1. Preparing and distributing the minutes of meetings. (See the section below for details on the meeting minutes.)
2. Acting as custodian of the records, including membership lists.
3. Serving as an aide to the president by helping to keep meetings on track. The secretary should also have available for reference a copy of the PTA bylaws, the minutes of previous meetings, up-to-date membership lists. In the absence of a parliamentarian, the recording secretary may serve in that role and have a copy of Roberts Rule of Order available. Encourage the presiding officer to use parliamentary procedure to conduct business at all meetings.
4. Assisting the president in the preparation of an agenda for all meetings (see sample attached). Remind the president of all action items that need to be dealt with, and schedule appropriate committee reports. You will need to be familiar with the timelines for the organization, such as the election of the nominating committee, the bylaws committee, etc., and be certain that those items are placed on the agenda at the proper time.
5. Obtaining the files and records that they have kept, from the previous recording secretary at the start of the term of office. PTA materials and records are the property of the PTA.
6. Passing on the files and records on to the next recording secretary promptly at the end of the term of office in order to assure a smooth transition. PTA materials and records are the property of the PTA.

MEETING MINUTES

Keeping the minutes is an important responsibility of the recording secretary. PTA leaders and members will regularly need to review this record of actions. If there is ever a question about the specifics of actions approved by the group, the minutes are the record that is used.

A loose-leaf notebook is usually the best record book for the secretary. Each set of minutes with the attachments can be kept in the notebook for easy reference. Books of minutes should be kept for the historical record of the PTA.

The minutes will need to be made available in some fashion. Hard copies of the minutes can be made available before the meeting by publishing them in a newsletter or posting them on a bulletin board at the school. In addition, electronic copies of the minutes can be made available by including them in an email or posting them on the school website. Prior to approving the minutes, they should either be read aloud or distributed to all attendees.

Minutes should include a record of both actions voted on and at least the substance of discussion. Do not write a verbatim account or include individual comments. Note that it is not necessary for every officer and committee chairman to report at every meeting; oral reports should be made by those who have actions to propose or imminent activities to announce. Written reports should always be attached to the minutes

Usually, the minutes should include the following:

1. Name of the PTA, date and hour of meeting, and place of meeting, if subject to change.
2. Who presided—usually the president.
3. That the presiding officer determined the presence of a quorum (by visible count if there is any doubt.) Use a sign-in sheet and include a list of attendees in the minutes.
4. Indicate if the minutes of the previous meeting were distributed or published. Notation of their approval and any corrections made should be included in the current minutes.
5. Committee Reports. Encourage committee chairmen to provide written reports when the reports are lengthy and to formally move any required action or any recommendation of the committee as a part of their report. Written reports should then be attached to the minutes.
6. A record of all motions made and whether they passed or failed. The names of those who made the motions should also be noted. The names of those seconding the motions need not be recorded. Provide motion slips for members at all meetings so that motions can be made, written out and signed by the maker for inclusion in the minutes. This alleviates future contesting of the interpretation of motions that come before the body. Be prepared to verbally repeat the wording of the motion under consideration following discussion and prior to the vote, so that all participating will understand the motion.
7. A record of all votes taken. If a voice vote is taken, only the outcome needs to be recorded. If the vote is taken by division and count, roll call, or written ballot, the specific tally should be recorded.
8. A brief description of the program, if there was one.
9. Announcements.
10. The hour of adjournment.

The minutes should be completed as soon as possible after the meeting to ensure an accurate account. The longer you wait to complete them, the more likely you will be to forget or omit specific information. Many PTAs post their minutes on their web site and place a brief summary of the minutes in their newsletters. PTAs may also want to note upcoming meeting agenda items in their newsletters.

SAMPLE AGENDA

Pleasant Ridge PTA Meeting

Date _____

CALL TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Read or acted upon as distributed.

TREASURER'S REPORT: after discussion, this report is filed for audit, not approved.

OFFICER'S REPORTS:

- President
- 1st Vice President
- 2nd Vice President
- Corresponding Secretary: (Circulate correspondence file)
- MCCPTA Delegate

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Cluster Liaison/Rep
- Membership
- Human Relations
- Parent Involvement
- Cultural Arts
- Ways and Means
- Gifted and Talented/Special Needs/ ESOL
- Newsletter
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Guidance Advisory

Note: Officer and Committee reports may be made in writing and attached to the minutes.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

SAMPLE MINUTES

Pleasant Ridge PTA Executive Board, August 23, 2004

The Executive Board of the Pleasant Ridge PTA met on August 23, 2004, at the Pleasant Ridge Elementary School. The president called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. Those in attendance were . (list names). Following the inspiration, Pledge of Allegiance, and Objects of PTA, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved as distributed with no corrections. The agenda (attached) was approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Copies of the treasurer's report were distributed and, following questions, the report was filed for audit. The treasurer, Kelly Long, advised the Board that she will be submitting written copies of her reports at each meeting. Bills should be given to her, with one of the voucher forms, as soon as they are received so that prompt payment can be made. She had met with the IRS auditor to go over the Form 990 for nonprofit organizations, since the PTA had been unwittingly caught short last year and since the PTA's total receipts were in the \$40,000 range. It will definitely be necessary to file a 990 this year. Copies of the proposed PTA budget (attached) were distributed and reviewed by the board. Ms. Long said that the budget, developed by the Budget and Finance Committee, reflects the goals set in June which emphasize communication, parent involvement, and advocacy. The treasurer moved that the proposed budget be sent to the PTA membership for approval at Back to School Night. Coming from a committee, no second was needed. The motion was approved by voice vote.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT. Sue James reported on her activities since the last meeting. She was pleased to see four of the other officers attending the training sessions at the Maryland PTA Summer Conference. It was a very good conference and everyone learned some very useful information.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT. Arthur reported that the Science Coordinator from the school system's Department of Academic Skills has agreed to present the new math curriculum at the general meeting in October since this is a topic that parents want to get more information on. Dr. Smith will demonstrate the interactive technology components of the curriculum.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY. The corresponding secretary pointed out the letter from the PTA to the Superintendent supporting the school's request for an instructional assistant for the second grade because of increased enrollment and a projected class size of 37 students. The response from the Superintendent has not yet been received.

MCCPTA DELEGATE. Henry Johnson reported that the delegate assembly in September will deal with substance abuse prevention. MCCPTA workshops are scheduled for officers and some committees on Saturday, October 12 at Carver Educational Services Center in Rockville from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Henry encouraged anyone interested to attend.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT. Ms. Adams indicated that the last of the painting in the hallways had been completed, and the school is ready to open on time. She expressed her appreciation to the board for their support in getting the maintenance department to do the painting. She also wanted members to know that she had had a phone conversation with the director who said that there is a strong possibility that Pleasant Ridge will receive an additional instructional assistant;

we should know by the end of the week. She shared the School Improvement Plan with the executive board outlining the instructional goals and objectives for the school year. The School Improvement Team had six parents serving in various areas. Since improving math scores is one of the goals, she was pleased to see that the PTA will be reviewing the new math curriculum at the October PTA meeting. Back-to-School Night will be held on September 20, beginning at 7:30 p.m. She will meet with Sue to coordinate plans for the evening.

WAYS AND MEANS: Andrea Jennings reported that since the PTA's gross income was about \$40,000 last year it will be necessary for the treasurer to file a Form 990 with the IRS. The goal of the PTA this year is to complete the purchase of a sound system and audio-visual equipment for the all purpose room; this will be done in October through the school system purchasing process. Maryland law allows PTAs to make purchases for their schools using the school sales tax exempt number. This will complete this initiative, and any balance of funds will be put toward some of our outreach programs as the Executive Board had requested. She and her committee members will be coordinating these efforts with the Human Relations and Parent Involvement Committees, and they will report specific recommendations to the executive board in October or November. Ms. Jennings moved that the PTA complete the purchase of the equipment for \$4,000 to be purchased through the school system in October. The motion was seconded and approved.

BYLAWS COMMITTEE. John Evans was approved as the Bylaws Committee chairman and will be forming a committee to conduct the regular three-year bylaws review as required by Maryland PTA. Anyone wishing to serve on this committee should contact John. The committee will report on their initial review to the executive board in November.

GUIDANCE COMMITTEE. Mr. Harding, the PTA representative to the school guidance advisory committee reported on the conflict resolution initiative that is being planned for students this year. It is hoped that this initiative will decrease confrontation and strengthen the appropriate behavior skills of our students. Parents will receive a packet of information from the counselor on Back-to-School Night. Alice Hayes moved to invite the counselor to the next executive board meeting to review the initiative and help us find ways the PTA and parents can support the initiative. The motion was seconded and approved. Mr. Harding will invite the counselor to the September board meeting.

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMITTEE. Joan Powers presented plans for Pleasant Ridge's Cultural Night in November. In meeting with the Human Relations committee in the school, they have planned to focus on the arts. Parents will be asked to share the art objects, costumes, music and literature of their cultures. The music teacher will be coordinating a music program and is working with several parents in the selection of music. Ms. Rodriguez volunteered to work with a group of children to teach them a Venezuelan children's dance.

A special movie night has been scheduled for families on Friday evening, September 15. Students from the high school will help supervise the small children as part of their community service requirement. Joan moved that the PTA fund the purchase of pepperoni, sausage, and anchovy pizzas and juice or soft drinks for the evening's refreshments. The motion was seconded. Al Carter moved to amend the motion by striking the word "anchovy" from the list of pizzas. The amendment was seconded and adopted. Annie Clark moved to amend the motion to insert the word "Domino's" before "pizza". This amendment was seconded but voted down

because the best price should be a consideration in choosing the source. The main motion passed and the PTA will buy pizza with pepperoni and sausage along with juice and soft drinks for the Family Movie Night.

CLUSTER REPORT. Carolyn Howard reported that a parent group has been appointed to talk about the instructional design for the new middle school with the principal and the director. Carolyn will be serving as a member of the advisory group and report back to the executive board about their progress.

NEWSLETTER. April Foster indicated that the deadline for articles for the newsletter will be the date of the executive board meetings. She has a box in the school office and articles of interest can be dropped there or sent to her by email. The first newsletter will go out next week. Ms. Adams will provide a principal's letter to greet and welcome families back to school.

REFLECTIONS. Will report next month.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS. Mr. Alter presented the membership invitation that will be included in the newsletter. He reported that special envelopes were purchased from the Maryland PTA at a cost of \$53.00 so that members can send their dues to the PTA more easily. He moved that stickers be made to say "I joined the PTA" and be given to everyone who joins the PTA by Back-to-School Night. The motion was seconded and adopted.

NEW BUSINESS. The President reported that the Board of Education had sent out a draft of the Gifted and Talented Policy revision; they are seeking comments by October 20th. Mr. Slater moved that an ad hoc committee be established to review the proposed revised policy and make recommendations to the executive board at its October 1st meeting. The motion was seconded and approved. Jane Carr, Peter Donovan, Ed Slater, and Phyllis Evans agreed to serve. The committee's recommendations as will then be presented to the general membership at the October meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carla Appleby, Recording Secretary