

# **BYLAWS OF THE SEATON ELEMENTARY PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION<sup>1</sup>**

## **Article I—Name, Location, Description and Purpose**

**Section 1. Name** — The name of the organization shall be the Seaton Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization (the “PTO”).

**Section 2. Location** — The organization is located at 1503 10th St NW, Washington, DC 20001.

**Section 3. Description** — The PTO is a non-profit organization that exists exclusively for charitable, educational, literary, and scientific purposes, within section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code. The organization has been incorporated as a stand-alone non-profit organization under DC law, and as a 501(c)(3) for federal tax purposes. It is eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions.

**Section 4. Purpose** — The purpose of this organization is to:

- A. Support the education and wellbeing of all Seaton students;
- B. Support Seaton faculty and staff;
- C. Foster relationships among parents, staff, and community members; and
- D. Assist Seaton faculty and staff to provide a safe and nurturing environment where all students, families, faculty, and staff can thrive and grow.

## **Article II—Membership**

**Section 1.** PTO Membership is automatically granted to all parents and guardians of Seaton students, plus all teachers and staff at Seaton.

**Section 2.** We also recognize our students as honorary non-voting members. We value all members of the school community and encourage them – students, families, and staff – to have an active voice and participate in specific PTO activities.

## **Article III—Participation**

**Section 1.** The PTO shall consist of a 100% volunteer group of parents, teachers, and other concerned persons wishing to support the Seaton PTO’s goals of enhancing educational excellence and community building at Seaton Elementary School (the “PTO community”).

Any parent or guardian of a Seaton student may participate. The term “guardian” may include any adult caring for a Seaton student. Any Seaton faculty or staff member may also participate.

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<sup>1</sup> These Bylaws (Amended from the October 2016 Bylaws) were approved by majority vote of the PTO Executive Board via email on January 10, 2024 and presented to the General Body on January 15, 2024.

**Section 2.** The PTO may ask participants to make voluntary financial contributions, but no membership dues or contributions shall be required.

#### **Article IV— Officers and Directors**

**Section 1. Officers.** The officers shall be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. Each Officer shall be elected by a majority vote of the PTO general body membership.

- A. **President.** The president shall preside over all meetings of the organization to include general PTO meetings and executive board meetings. The president shall be the chair of the executive board, serve as the primary contact for the principal and faculty, represent the organization at meetings outside the organization, coordinate the work of all officers and committees so that the purpose of the organization is served.
- B. **Vice President.** The vice president shall assist the president and carry out the president's duties in his or her absence.
- C. **Secretary.** The secretary shall keep all records of the organization, take and record minutes, work with the president to prepare meeting agendas, handle correspondence, and send meeting notices as required. The secretary also keeps a copy of the organization's minutes, bylaws, rules, volunteer list, and any other necessary information, and brings them to all meetings.
- D. **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 approved budget. They will present a financial statement at every executive board and general PTO meeting and will make a final report at the end of the year. They will also ensure that all required federal and District filings (i.e., 990) are filed in a timely manner each year. Because of the responsibility the position requires, the Board will appoint an assistant treasurer who will work with the treasurer and who may vote in the Treasurer's place if the Treasurer is unavailable. It is anticipated that the assistant will vote in the manner the Treasurer intends. If the assistant has reason to believe that his or her vote would be different, the assistant will disclose that to the executive board. The assistant treasurer may also chair the Finance Committee or another standing committee.

**Section 2. At-Large Directors.** The Board shall include two at-large director positions. To the extent feasible, one at-large director shall be a parent or guardian from the lower grades (Pre-K3 through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade) and one at-large director shall be from the higher grades (3<sup>rd</sup>– 5<sup>th</sup> grades). No officer may also serve as an at-large director at the same time. Each At-Large Director shall be elected by a majority vote of the PTO general body membership.

- A. **Roles and Responsibilities.** At-Large Directors main function is to support the classroom. These officials will serve as liaisons between the teachers in their respective grade groups and the PTO Executive Board.
- B. **Classroom Parent Program.** At-Large Directors will be responsible for developing and coordinating a parent facilitator for each classroom. The At-Large Director will also liaise between the classroom parent and the PTO Executive Board.

## **Article V — Committees**

**Section 1. Membership.** Committees may consist of any member of the school community who is interested in serving on a particular committee. The president will appoint a chair for each committee. Outside volunteers, e.g., persons associated with external partners or community groups, may serve as committee members on a case by case basis, to be determined by the Board. Outside chair appointees must be approved by a majority vote of the voting Executive Board members.

**Section 2. Standing Committees.** The organization will have the following standing committees:

1. Fundraising
2. Governance and Elections
3. Communications
4. Campus Events and Enrichment
5. Family Relations and Recruitment
6. Teacher Appreciation

**Section 3. Additional Committees.** The Executive Board may create additional committees as needed. These may include, for example, a temporary nominating committee.

**Section 4. Responsibilities and authority.** It is intended that committee members will meet amongst themselves and coordinate with other committees as appropriate. However, committees are responsible for communicating any material projects, plans, or events to the full board before committing, in the interests of avoiding miscommunications, duplication of efforts, or scheduling conflicts. For the same reasons, the President and Vice President will normally have primary responsibility for contacting the school administration to obtain approval for events and scheduling. However, the President or Vice President may delegate this responsibility to specific committee chairs or members as appropriate.

## **Article VI—Executive Board and Voting**

**Section 1. Executive Board Membership.** The Executive Board shall consist of the four officers and two at-large directors defined in Article IV, and the standing committee chairs defined in Article V. The Board shall also include the principal, assistant principal, and at least one Seaton teacher or staff member, to the extent they are interested and willing to participate. The Executive Board shall govern all Board matters. Board matters are those matters related to the business, affairs, and functions of the PTO.

**Section 2. Voting Rights.**

- a. **Officers:** The four officers and two at-large directors defined in Article IV and the chair of each standing committee defined in Article V shall be voting members of the Executive Board. Each Executive Board member shall be limited to one vote per person.

- b. **At-Large Directors:** Each at-large director as defined in Article IV shall have one vote on Board matters.
- c. **Standing Committees:** Each standing committee chair shall have one vote on Board matters unless the committee chair or chairs are all voting officers or at-large directors. If an officer co-chairs a committee, that person shall have one vote (meaning the officer would not have an individual vote in their officer position). If both committee co-chairs are also voting officers, the committee would not have a vote. This provision is intended to ensure that the committed volunteers who lead committees have a say in the organization, but to prevent any officer from effectively having two votes.
- d. **Principal and Assistant Principal:** The principal and assistant principal shall be non-voting, ex-officio members.
- e. **Teacher Board Members:** Any teacher serving in a defined voting position on the board shall have a vote.
- f. **PTO General Body Members:** General body members as defined by Article II Section 1 may vote on the election of Executive Board Officers and the approval of the yearly PTO proposed event funding budget. Each general body member has one vote per executive board position during and one vote to approve or reject the proposed budget. General Body Members do not have a vote on Board matters as defined in Article VI Section 1.

**Section 3. Powers**—The business and affairs of the organization shall be managed by or under the direction of the Executive Board, which may exercise all such powers of the organization and do all such lawful acts and things as are not prohibited by statute or by the Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws.

**Section 4. Duties**—The duties of the Executive Board shall be to govern Board matters including the following: transact business between general meetings, prepare for general meetings, create standing rules and policies, create standing and temporary committees, prepare and submit a budget to the entire general body membership for approval, monitor expenses and approve routine bills, coordinate PTO activities, and prepare reports and recommendations to the membership.

**Section 5. Term of Office**—The term of office begins upon election, and ends upon the election of Officers for the following school year. Upon expiration of the term of office or vacation of the office, officers shall facilitate the transition of files, materials and resources pertaining to the office. Currently there is no limit on the time period of the officer’s terms of service. As the PTO grows, the concept of “term limits” may be revisited and added to these bylaws by amendment.

**Section 6. Qualifications**—Any Member (see Article II) may serve as an Officer of the PTO. It is encouraged that PTO members who already have been active in the PTO for one year run for election to the Executive Board, but all Members are welcome to run for office.

**Section 7. Quorum.** A majority of currently serving voting board members constitutes a quorum.

## **Article VII—Executive Board Eligibility, Nominations, and Election.**

**Section 1. Eligibility.** A volunteer is eligible to serve on the Executive Board if he or she:

- A. has provided a statement of interest to the president, secretary, or chair of the nominating committee at least seven (7) calendar days before the election;
- B. is a parent or guardian of a Seaton student or is a Seaton employee; and
- C. has acknowledged the Bylaws of the PTO.

\*Although not a requirement, it is hoped that any person seeking an Executive Board position will consult with a member of the existing board to gain a better understanding of the board's responsibilities and practices before the election.

**Section 2. Nominations and Elections.**

- A. Elections for Executive Board Officers will be held at a PTO general body meeting held in April of each year. The outgoing board will maintain its duties until the end of that school year and shall cooperate with the new board to ensure a seamless transition and facilitate the new board's planning for the next school year.
- B. Nominations for any Executive Board position must be provided to the current PTO President, Vice President, or Governance Chair via email at least seven (7) days prior to the election. Candidates nominated for an Executive Board position must accept the nomination at least 48 hours prior to the election to appear on the paper ballot. Individuals may self-nominate.
- C. Each person who satisfies membership requirements as outlined in Article II Section 1 of these Bylaws shall be entitled to one vote during Board elections. All persons eligible to vote in Board elections may vote in-person, or remotely, at the PTO general body election meeting. Eligible persons may vote absentee via email to the designated Governance email address by 5:00 p.m. on the day of the general body election.
- D. Each candidate will be given an equal amount of time, but no more than five minutes, to address Members prior to the vote. The vote shall be conducted by paper ballot and a majority vote of PTO Members pursuant to Article II Section 1 shall elect. When there is only one candidate for any office that election may be held by voice vote.
- E. Paper ballots containing all nominees will be available at the election meeting. For PTO general body members attending virtually, voting may take place on election day by emailing the current president and governance chair the selected candidate for each available position. If the current president is running in a contested election, the votes shall be emailed to the Principal and governance chair. All votes will be counted in real-time on election day and results will be shared with the members.
- F. The president, governance chair, or a designee, shall conduct all elections, except in the event that the individual is running for a position that is contested and requires a written ballot. In such cases, an officer or director who is not involved in a contested election shall conduct the election.

- G. Terms of office end on the day of the final PTO Executive Board meeting for that academic year. Upon expiration of the term of office, officers shall facilitate the transition of files, materials, passwords, documents, and all relevant corresponding resources pertaining to the office.

## **Article VIII—Terms of Office, Vacancies, and Removal from Office**

### **Section 1. Vacancies.**

- A. Elected Executive Board members will be expected to serve a minimum one year term.
- B. If there is a vacancy in any Officer or At-Large Director position, the Executive Board will identify and elect by majority vote a new person to fill the role. The new officer elected to fill that vacancy will serve the remainder of the unexpired term and will then be eligible for election to a full term at the next election meeting.

### **Section 2. Resignation and Removal from Office.**

- A. An officer or at-large member may resign at any time. Such resignations shall be made in writing to the President or Secretary and shall take effect at the time specified therein, or if no time be specified, at the time of its receipt by the President or Secretary. The acceptance of a resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.
- B. Officers, at-large directors, and committee chairs can be removed from their position with or without cause by a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Board.

## **Article IX—Meetings**

**Section 1. Executive Board Meetings.** During the school year, the Executive Board shall meet at least four times—ideally more as business requires—at times and places determined by the Board. While not required, a pre-school year summer planning meeting is also desirable.

In the spring following a board election, the new board is also encouraged to meet to draft a proposed budget for the following school year.

**Section 2. General Membership Meetings.** At least five general PTO Community meetings will be scheduled during the school year. These meetings are open to all volunteers, parents, faculty, staff, and community members. The tentative meeting schedule for the entire school year should be posted by the first day of school and communicated to the school community. The Secretary, or Communications Committee Chair, will remind the PTO Community of each meeting at least 7 days in advance of the meeting through flyers, email, and/or other means of communication (including official school channels, with the cooperation of the school administration). The Board will make reasonable efforts to ensure that meetings are scheduled well in advance, that the principal or assistant principal can attend. The Board will also make

reasonable efforts to ensure that interpreters are available to assist members of the community for whom English is a second language.

**Section 3. Special Meetings.** Special meetings may be called by the president or any two members of the Executive Board, or by five persons from the PTO Community who submit a written request to the secretary or president. The PTO Community should be notified of the special meeting at least 5 days prior to the meeting (notice should be sent using fliers, e-mails, and phone calls).

**Section 4. Quorum for General PTO Community Meetings.** A quorum shall consist of 15 members of the school community, including members of the Executive Board and committees. General body meetings and special meetings may be held without a quorum, but no decisions involving votes may be made in the absence of a quorum.

## **Article X—Finances**

**Section 1.** The organization shall operate on a cash basis.

**Section 2.** The organization's fiscal year shall be July 1 through June 30.

**Section 3.** A list of potentially PTO funded events for the following school year shall be drafted each spring, and submitted to the PTO Membership as defined in Article II Section 1 for consideration and approval by majority vote at the last general body meeting of the school year or, if the Board requests, earlier. The list shall include the cost of the event funded by the PTO in the year prior, and a prospective budget for the event the following year. If an event not previously funded by the PTO is included in the list, the PTO shall provide an estimate of possible associated costs. If the general body declines to approve the list of proposed PTO funded events, the PTO shall submit a new list to the general body at the first meeting of the following school year for approval by majority vote of the general body in attendance.

**Section 4.** The treasurer, aided by the assistant treasurer and the Finance Committee, shall keep accurate records of any disbursement, income, and bank account information.

**Section 5.** The treasurer is authorized to generate payments for invoices and expenses for any payment under \$300, assuming it is within approved budget limits. Any expense that exceeds \$300, must be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board, as described above, prior to payment

**Section 6.** Two authorized signatures shall be required on any check for more than \$100 (or any payments to one person or entity within a 30 day period that total more than \$100). Authorized signers shall be the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and assistant treasurer. The treasurer will ensure that all bank documents and signature cards are current.

As soon as practicable after each Executive Board election, outgoing officers shall be removed from bank account access and incoming officers shall be added.

**Section 7.** The treasurer shall prepare at least quarterly financial statements and a final statement for the school year. He or she will also be responsible for filing all required federal and District tax forms, though may delegate this to the assistant or another volunteer with Board approval.

#### **Article XI—Dissolution**

**Section 1.** The organization may be dissolved with previous notice (14 calendar days) and a two-thirds vote of those present at a general membership meeting where a quorum is present.

**Section 2.** In the event the organization is dissolved, any remaining funds should be used to pay any outstanding bills and with the membership's approval, be used for the benefit of the school.

#### **Article XII—Amendments**

The voting members of the Executive Board may propose amendments to these bylaws. The amendments shall be effective only after being presented to a general body meeting, with at least 7 days notice to the community, where a quorum is present. A vote on the proposed bylaws at the general body meeting shall not be necessary.