



Secretary Handbook

PTA Council of Howard County
5451 Beaverkill Road
Columbia, MD 21044
410-740-5153

E-mail: office@ptachc.org

PTACHC Website: www.ptachc.org
MD PTA: www.mdpta.org
National PTA: www.pta.org

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STRUCTURE OF PTA

Each level of PTA has been established for the purpose of forming a nationwide movement to advocate the need to support and speak out on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, before governmental agencies, and other organizations that make decisions affecting all children.

LOCAL UNIT

The local PTA is the *most important* level of PTA. All other levels exist to serve the local PTA.

1. Operates as a self-governing body and is chartered by the state.
2. Plans programs and activities to meet community needs.
3. Works at the school site, at home, and in the community for all children.
4. Serves as the local organization through which the Maryland and National PTA objectives are carried out.
5. Is represented on the PTA Council of Howard County or at Maryland PTA functions by the unit president and/or designated representatives.

YOUR SCHOOL'S PTA

COUNCIL

1. Includes all units within the county
2. Is the connecting link between locals and MD PTA
3. Serves as a conference body
4. Provides workshops, leadership development, information, and programs
5. Coordinates programs and projects of member units
6. Works to promote PTA in the area

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STATE PTA

1. Liaison between National PTA and local PTA unit
2. Organizes units and councils.
3. Cooperates with other groups and organizations working for youth.
4. Maintains a legislative advocate.
5. Holds an annual convention.
6. Interprets and implements policies, programs and projects.
7. Provides workshops, field services and leadership development.
8. Provides publications.
9. Represented on the National PTA Board of Directors by the current Maryland PTA President.

MDPTA 410-760-6221

5 Central Ave
Glen Burnie, MD 21061
E-mail: office@mdpta.org
Website: www.mdpta.org
Fax: 410-760-6344

NATIONAL PTA

1. Includes all who join local PTAs.
2. Establishes basic policies.
3. Develops and funds projects that are national in scope.
4. Maintains legislative advocates at the federal level.
5. Provides field services and leadership development.
6. Develops and provides resource materials and publications.
7. Holds an annual convention.

NATIONAL PTA 1-800-307-4782

1250 N. Pitt Street
Alexandria, VA 22341
E-mail: info@pta.org
<http://www.pta.org>

RECORDING SECRETARY DUTIES

First, read the **duties of secretary** as listed in your bylaws Article VII, Section 3.

The recording secretary is responsible for keeping accurate records of the proceedings of the association.

I. MEETING NEEDS:

1. Paper and pencil or a lap top computer to take notes
2. Secretary's Notebook
3. Copies of last month's minutes awaiting approval

II. TAKING MINUTES

1. Record the minutes of all meetings – general, board of directors, and executive committee.
2. The notes taken in a meeting must be accurate but not verbatim unless recording a motion
3. Use the agenda as a guide and look at previous minutes are helpful
4. Keep in mind the following:
 - a. Record the date, time, and place of meeting, who called the meeting to order and the time of adjournment.
 - b. Take attendance with a sign in sheet (to establish quorum as required by bylaws)
 - c. Sit near the presiding officer so that you hear everything clearly and accurately
 - d. Use your judgment about what is important. If in doubt, include it. Record the actions not the opinions of the members
 - e. Record the name of the person who makes a motion, better yet, have the motion written and signed. File along with the minutes
 - f. Write –Adopted- or –Failed- at the end of the motion, record the vote for/against if it was by ballot.

III. TYPING MINUTES

1. Within the week after the meeting, while everything is fresh in your mind, type a rough draft.
2. If portions are unclear, make the appropriate calls
3. If your Presidents requests, send them the rough draft
4. All minutes should be signed by the secretary
5. The final copy of the minutes should be typed and copies made for all attending the next meeting

IV. CORRECTING THE MINUTES

1. At each meeting, the minutes of the previous meeting are read either by the secretary or in silence by all present.
2. The President then will ask if there are any additions or corrections to the minutes.
3. If a correction is made, note it on the original copy and state the correction in the next set of minutes.

V. INDEXING THE MINUTES

1. Minutes are kept chronologically in a minute notebook (a three ring binder) and kept for 7 years.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

THINK OF ALL TYPES OF COMMUNICATION, NOT JUST LETTERS!

1. Copies of letters sent by the PTA should be kept on file by both the secretary and the president
2. Letters from the PTA should be written on PTA letterhead (NOT school stationary)
3. Letters should be written in business form. They should be brief and contain all necessary pertinent information.
4. If the president composes the letter, it should be signed by him/her. If the secretary composes the letter, it should be signed by him/her.
5. A willing corresponding secretary could make him/herself almost indispensable to the very busy president.

Corresponding Secretary duties would need to be added to the bylaws.

Some suggested other duties could be:

- a) Maintain a PTA Bulletin Board somewhere highly visible in the school
- b) Awards – be responsible for completing various award nomination forms.
A few awards are: The National PTA Phoebe Apperson Hearst Award due in February, the PTA Councils award in May.
- c) Send the list of newly elected local PTA officers to the PTA Council and MD PTA in June
- d) Organize and publish a directory of parents and students to be used only for PTA communication and noncommercial community activities
- e) Be the editor for the PTA newsletter
- f) Be responsible to display the PTA Objects and Mission during each meeting
- g) Remember to send thank you notes to guest speakers or others who helped in a PTA program.
- h) Make sure that the names of those who have volunteered during the school year are published with a recognition and thank you in your newsletter.
- i) Be responsible for the social media updates the PTA website, PTA Twitter account, etc.

OUTLINE FOR SECRETARY'S NOTEBOOK

Section 1. Organizational Papers

- Contact list of officers and chairs with phone numbers and email address
- Copy of current bylaws
- Approved budget
- Insurance policy (unless maintained by the treasurer)
- Membership list (copy from membership chair)

Section 2. Executive Committee/Board of Directors Minutes

- Agenda
- Attendance sheet
- Treasurer's report
- Approved minutes
- Committee reports
- Handouts

File these items monthly, in chronological order.

Section 3. General Meeting Minutes

- Agenda
- Attendance sheet
- Treasurer's report
- Approved minutes
- Committee reports
- Handouts

File these items monthly, in chronological order.

Section 4. Miscellaneous

- School Newsletters
- PTA Newsletters

HELPFUL HINTS

1. Using a lap top computer is helpful to write the minutes as the meeting is taking place.
2. **Take attendance at each meeting** to establish quorum. Create a master roster sheet for the board of directors to sign at each meeting. Keep attendance records. Record absent members, note if they were excused or unexcused absences. Verify local bylaws. There may be provisions for removing non- productive members who repeatedly miss meetings
3. Request that **all motions and amendments be written**, then file these copies of the motions with the minutes. Index cards are handy to write down motions. Record the name of the person who made the motion.
4. **Minutes should be written up in a timely fashion** (within the week after the meeting). Decide with your president how to disseminate them to members, i.e. e-mail, back packs, school mailbox, and at next meeting.
5. Be concise. Record the action of the group, not the discussions or personal opinions
6. Use the agenda as a guide in writing up minutes
7. Committee reports that are written ahead of time can be recorded as “see report attached”
8. Record the number of votes on each side in a vote by ballot or in a counted vote.
9. Corrections to the minutes -Do be specific when recording corrections in the minutes. Record the date, page, and line in the minutes of the meeting in which the correction was made.
10. Request written reports from all chairs. Create a standard form and give enough to each chair for the year. Request that they file one each month, even if there wasn't any activity that month. This will allow the board of directors the ability to build a working notebook documenting when each committee has activity and will be helpful when trying to interest someone new to take a position. This will document month's of activity and approximately how much time was invested
11. Meetings - verify the bylaws as to the number of day's notice that different types of meetings require.
12. **Create an Action Item list after the meeting.** Note what motions were made and if action is to be taken and who is to complete the task.
13. Whenever possible, use all media available to advertise your events and meetings.
14. Create a mailbox file system for the board of directors. A plastic crate with a hanging folder for each member works well. Use a sticky note stapled inside each hanging folder with the name of

the current person in that position (and their child's name, grade, & teacher to send correspondence home via the child's backpack. This works well at the elementary level)

15. If one of your duties is to sort the PTA mail, as mail is received, drop in each appropriate folder and encourage members to look in the mailbox every week. Post on the front of the mailbox the number of copies needed to disseminate information to everyone.
16. If a member is absent from a meeting, be sure to put all handouts into their hanging folder.
17. Create a correspondence notebook with dividers for each month. Discuss with the president who will maintain the notebook. It should be brought to each meeting so all members have the opportunity to review the correspondence.
18. Create an emergency telephone tree and distribute to all board of director members. This is very useful if there is an emergency or a cancellation due to inclement weather. Emails are not always the best way to communicate immediate information.
19. Written correspondence will be directed to the president. You may be asked to send out invitations, thank you notes or letters as necessary. Make sure that there is a budget line item for postage and stationery to cover your expenses.
20. Create PTA letterhead stationary that can be used by your board of directors if there is none. Logo must be standardized using National PTA logo. For more information, <http://www.pta.org>
21. Executive committees/Board of Directors run differently at each local PTA. Some PTAs enjoy refreshments and encourage members to sign up for a specific month; and others acknowledge birthdays. These items could be listed at the end of the minutes along with the date of the next scheduled meeting.

SAMPLE AGENDA

General or Board of Directors PTA meeting

Date

Call to Order

Attendance List – Quorum Check

Purpose of the National PTA Read

Introduction of Guests, Agenda

Agenda

Minutes

Treasurer's Report

Reports of Officers & Committees

Principal's Report

UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ITEMS TO BE ADDRESSED

New Business & Motions

Reminders

Adjournment

Calendar of upcoming dates of activities

_____PTA
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
ATTENDANCE ROSTER

(SAMPLE OF MEETING SIGN IN) – (ADAPT TO YOUR NEEDS) – (ADD OR DELETE COMMITTEE CHAIRS AS NEEDED)

Type of Meeting:_____ Date:_____

Position

Signature

President _____

First Vice President _____

Second Vice President _____

Treasurer _____

Recording Secretary _____

Corresponding Secretary _____

PTA Council Delegate _____

PTA Council Delegate _____

Teacher Representative _____

Committees: (add or delete committees as needed)

X committee name _____

Z committee _____

Y committee _____

A committee _____

B committee _____

C committee _____

Principal _____

Guests _____

WHAT RECORDS SHOULD MY PTA KEEP?

Retention period to be kept permanently: (a notebook or file box would be good for keeping safe)

Articles of Incorporation
Annual Audit Reports
Bylaws, include amendments
Checks
Contracts & leases
Corporation reports filed with the Secretary of State
Correspondence (legal)
Equipment owned by PTA
Insurance records, accident reports, claims, policies, certificates
Invoices
Journals
Minute books
PTA Charter
Standing Rules (current)
Tax-exempt status documents
Trademark registrations

Retention Period for 7 years:

Accounts payable records
Cash receipt records
Checks, canceled
Contracts (expired)
Inventories
Invoices
Financial statements (10 years)
Grant award letters of agreement (10 years)
Purchase orders
Sales records
Vouchers for payments to vendors, officers, etc.

Retention period of 1 - 3 years

Bank reconciliation
Correspondence with vendors, general
Duplicate deposit slips
Employee records (if applicable)
Inventories (product & materials)
Invoices
Petty cash vouchers

_____ PTA

COMMITTEE PLAN OF ACTION
FOR _____ SCHOOL YEAR

Committee Chairs are expected:

- to complete this form and submit it to the Executive Board for approval prior to any action taken on behalf of the committee, or in the name of PTA.
- to submit monthly written reports for executive board and general meetings, noting if there was or was not any activity.
- to submit an article for the PTA newsletter when needed to communicate with the membership.
- to attend all executive board and general meetings - or send an alternate from the committee.

Name of Committee: _____

Name of Chair: _____

Home Phone: _____ **Work Phone:** _____

Email: _____

Purpose of Committee: _____

Anticipated Expenditures: _____

Goals and Objectives:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Members of Committee:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.