



# COUNCIL PTA BYLAWS

*...OF THE...*

PTA: PTA Council of Howard County, Inc.

COUNTY: Howard

Incorporation #: D00664375

National PTA ID #: 00054428

Employer Identification Number (EIN): 23-70311159

Sales & Use Tax #: N/A

Insured by: AIM

*everychild. onevoice.*

*A Council Unit of*

**FREE STATE PTA, INC**

**5730 Cottonworth Avenue Box 20924**

**Baltimore, Maryland 21209**

April 2025

*FOR OFFICE USE ONLY*

APPROVED BY COUNCIL \_\_\_\_\_ APPROVED BY STATE \_\_\_\_\_

RESUBMIT BY \_\_\_\_\_

INSTRUCTIONS – Please read carefully

1. This is the bylaws template for use by council PTAs in Maryland. Upon submission to Free State PTA, attached page(s) should include the council PTA name, date of the meeting at which changes were approved, and the specific bylaws change(s) with the article and section referenced. Remember that PTA is a registered trademark of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. Do not use periods after each letter.
2. Council PTAs in Maryland are required to review and submit their bylaws every three years. With or without changes, the general membership must vote to approve the bylaws prior to submission to Free State PTA. (See Article XVII). Electronic submissions should be sent to [SOA@fspta.org](mailto:SOA@fspta.org). Paper submissions should be sent to the address on the cover of these bylaws.
3. Suggestions/Helpful hints for filling out the template:
  - a. Executive Committee refers to all of the council officers. The Board of Directors refers to all of the council's officers and any other selected positions as determined by the bylaws.
  - b. Article I Name – Use the first blank for the full legal name of the council. List the full legal name of the Council and use the second blank for the abbreviated form of the council's name. All Councils must be incorporated.
  - c. Article II through Article V – NO additions or deletions can be made to any part of these Articles.
  - d. Article VI Officers and Their Elections – If the Council has more than one Vice President or Secretary, then the titles of each must be specified in Section 1.
  - e. Article VII Duties of Officers, Section 2, Vice Presidents – If the council has more than one VP, each VP's duties need to be outlined in this section, including their succession order if the president is unable to serve.
  - f. Article VII Duties of Officers, Section 3, Secretary – if the council has more than one Secretary, each Secretary's duties need to be outlined in this section, and one must be the Recording Secretary.
  - g. Article VIII Board of Directors:
    - i. Section 3 – Identify other members of the Board of Directors such as Superintendent or their alternate, or a Board of Education Member or their alternate.
    - ii. Section 4 – Add to the list any other duties of the Board of Directors.
  - h. Article IX Executive Committee:
    - i. Section 1 – List any other members on the Executive Committee other than officers.
    - ii. Section 5 – List any other duties of the Executive Committee.
  - i. Article XI General Membership, Section 1 – Add a list of any other voting members.

## Article I – Name

The name of this association is the PTA Council of Howard County, Inc.

It is a council PTA organized under the authority of the Free State PTA, a constituent group of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers (the National PTA). The association shall hereinafter be referred to in these bylaws as PTACHC.

## Article II – Purposes

The Purposes of the PTACHC in common with those of National PTA and Free State PTA are:

**Section 1. Objectives.** The purposes of Free State PTA, consistent with the purposes of National PTA, are:

- a. To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, places of worship and throughout the community;
- b. To raise the standards of home life;
- c. To advocate for laws that further the education, physical and mental health, welfare, and safety of children and youth;
- d. To promote the collaboration and engagement of families and educators in the education of children and youth;
- e. To engage the public in united efforts to secure the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being of all children and youth; and,
- f. To advocate for fiscal responsibility regarding public tax dollars in public education funding.

**Section 2. Awareness.** The purposes of Free State PTA are promoted through advocacy and education in collaboration with parents, families, teachers, educators, students, and the public; developed through conferences, committees, projects, and programs; and governed and qualified by the basic principles set forth in Article III.

**Section 3. Federal Status.** The association is organized exclusively for the charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding section of any future federal tax code (referred to as "Internal Revenue Code").

## Article III – Principles

The basic principles of Free State PTA, consistent with the basic principles of National PTA, are:

- A. The association shall be noncommercial, nonsectarian, and nonpartisan.
- B. The association shall work to engage and empower children, families, and educators within schools and communities to provide quality education for all children and youth, and shall seek to participate in the decision-making process by influencing school policy and advocating for children's issues, recognizing that the legal responsibility to make decisions has been delegated by the people to boards of education, state education authorities, and local education authorities.
- C. The association shall work to promote the health and welfare of children and youth, and shall seek to promote collaboration among families, schools, and the community at large. Commitment inclusiveness and knowledge of PTA, and professional expertise shall be guiding principles for service in this association.

## **Article IV – Relationship with National PTA and Free State PTA**

**Section 1.** This council PTA shall be organized and chartered under the direct authority of the Free State PTA in the area in which this council PTA functions, in conformity with such rules and regulations, not in conflict with the National PTA Bylaws, as the Free State PTA may in its bylaws prescribe. The Free State PTA shall issue to this council PTA an appropriate charter evidencing the due organization.

**Section 2.** This council PTA must meet the requirements as outlined in the Council Standards of Affiliation by December 31 yearly.

**Section 3.** The articles of organization of this council PTA include (a) the bylaws of such association and (b) the certificate of incorporation or articles of incorporation of such association.

**Section 4.** This council PTA shall adopt such bylaws for the governance of the association as may be approved by Free State PTA. Such bylaws shall not be in conflict with National PTA Bylaws or the bylaws of Free State PTA.

**Section 5.** Bylaws of this council PTA shall include an article on amendments.

**Section 6.** Bylaws of this council PTA shall include provisions establishing quorum for all meetings.

**Section 7.** The bylaws of this council PTA shall require each officer, board member, or committee member of this council PTA to be a member of a local PTA, meeting the standards of affiliation, within the area of this council.

**Section 8.** The bylaws of this council PTA shall prohibit voting by proxy, mail (including paper or email), or absentee.

**Section 9.** A PTA member shall not serve as a voting member of this council PTA's board while serving as a paid employee of, or under contract to, this council PTA.

**Section 11.** The charter of a council PTA may be removed in the manner and under the circumstances provided in Free State PTA policies and procedures.

**Section 12.** In the event of the dissolution of this Council, the association, after paying or adequately providing for the debts and obligations of the association, shall distribute to Free State PTA its financial holdings, property, all records, and all remaining assets in order to service the state membership.

**Section 13.** This council PTA shall keep such permanent books of account and records as shall be sufficient to establish the items of gross income, receipts, and disbursements of this council, including, specifically, the number of its members and the dues collected from its members. Such books of account and records shall at all reasonable times be open to inspection by an authorized representative of Free State PTA, or where directed by the policies and procedures of Free State PTA.

## **Article V – Purposes of this Council**

**Section 1.** The Purposes of this council PTA are to:

- a. Promote the purposes and interests of Free State PTA,
- b. Unify and strengthen the local PTAs within its area,
- c. Provide for conferences, leadership training, and coordination of the efforts of the local PTAs within this council's area,
- d. Encourage programs and projects in the various local PTAs which will carry out the mission and purposes of PTA,
- e. Assist in the formation of new PTAs according to the plan of Free State PTA, and,
- f. Promote the interests of National PTA and of Free State PTA.

**Section 2. Authority**

This Council PTA shall not:

- a. Dictate to local PTAs,
- b. Legislate for the local PTAs, including taking action involving member local PTAs and setting up rules for them without their consent,
- c. Duplicate the work or program of the local PTAs,
- d. Compete with local PTAs,
- e. Compel local PTAs to enter into council projects, or,
- f. Assess local PTAs for funds without their consent.

## **Article VI – Officers and their Election**

**Section 1.** The officers of this council PTA shall be a president, three (3) vice president(s): an Executive Vice President, a Vice President of Advocacy, and a Vice President of Operations, one (1) secretary, and a treasurer.

**Section 2.** Officers shall be elected at the annual general membership meeting in the month of June for a term of one (1) year, and shall assume their duties on the first day of the fiscal year.

**Section 3.** Officers shall be elected by ballot; however, if there is but one nominee for any office, election for that office may be by voice vote. A majority vote shall be required for election.

Each officer must be a member of a local PTA within the area of this council PTA.

No officer may be eligible to serve more than four (4) consecutive terms in the same office.

A person who has served in an office for more than one half of a full term shall be deemed to have served a full term in such office.

**Section 4.** The following provisions shall govern the eligibility of individuals to be officers of the PTACHC:

- A. Candidates must be members of a local PTA whose state and council PTA dues are paid.
- B. All candidates shall have served at least one (1) full year as a local PTA Board of Directors member or one (1) full year on the council PTA board of directors or one (1) full year as a PTACHC delegate.
- C. In the event that the PTACHC president is a full-time employee of HCPSS, then the executive vice-president cannot be a full-time employee of HCPSS.
- D. The treasurer candidate shall have at least one (1) year of PTA Treasurer or PTA President experience.

**Section 5.** A vacancy occurring in any office shall, except president, be filled for the unexpired term by a person elected by a majority vote of the board of directors, fourteen (14) days' notice of such election having been given. A vacancy occurring in the office of president shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term by the Executive Vice President. In the event this officer chooses not to assume the office of president, the general membership shall be notified by him/her within seven (7) days and a special election shall be held by the general membership within fourteen (14) days of notification with a minimum of five (5) days' notice to the general body.

**Section 6. Removal from Office**

Article VIII Section 5 applies.

**Section 7. Nominating Committee**

- A. There shall be a nominating committee for officers composed of three (3) members who shall be elected by the general membership.
- B. The nominating committee shall be elected at least four (4) months prior to the election of officers.

- C. The nominating committee shall serve for a term of six (6) months. No two (2) members shall be from the same local PTA.
- D. The committee shall elect its own chair and notify the president in writing of its decision within ten (10) days of such election.
- E. The committee shall nominate one (1) eligible person for each office to be filled and send its written report to the board of directors. The report shall be published to the general membership at least fifteen (15) days prior to the election. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- F. Only those individuals who have met the qualifications as outlined in Article VI, Section 4 and who have signified their consent to serve if elected shall be nominated for or elected to such office.

## **Article VII – Duties of Officers**

### **Section 1. The president shall:**

- A. Preside at all meetings of this council PTA,
- B. Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee,
- C. Coordinate the work of the officers and committees of this council PTA in order that the Purposes may be promoted,
- D. Assist in extending PTA work into all parts of the council PTA area, keeping it in harmony with the Free State PTA strategic plans,
- E. Perform such other duties as may be provided for by these bylaws, prescribed by the parliamentary authority, or directed by the board of directors,
- F. Review bank statements monthly with the treasurer, and
- G. Serve as a signatory on all bank accounts.

### **Section 2. The three vice presidents shall be as follows:**

- A. The Executive Vice President shall:
  - a. Act as an aide to the president,
  - b. In their designated order, perform the duties of the president in the president's absence or inability to serve, and
  - c. Perform such other duties as may be provided for by these bylaws, prescribed by the parliamentary authority, or directed by the president, the board of directors, or the executive committee.
  - d. May serve as signatory on all bank accounts.
- B. The Vice President of Operations shall:
  - a. Same duties as the executive vice-president, as well as,
  - b. Coordinate the work of committees as designated by the Board of Directors or Executive Committee,
  - c. Coordinate the work of service and program committees and recommend motions and activities in support of service and program efforts, and
  - d. Provide oversight and be the point of contact for all special committees.
  - e. May serve as signatory on all bank accounts.
- C. The Vice President of Advocacy shall:
  - a. Perform the same duties as the Executive Vice President, as well as,
  - b. Coordinate the work of committees as designated by the Board of Directors or Executive Committee, and
  - c. Coordinate the work of legislative and advocacy committees and recommend motions, resolutions, and activities in support of advocacy efforts.
  - d. May serve as signatory on all bank accounts.

### **Section 3. The secretary shall:**

- A. Record the minutes of all meetings of the Council PTA,
- B. Be prepared to read the minutes of the previous meetings,
- C. File all records,
- D. Have a current copy of the bylaws,
- E. Maintain a current membership list,
- F. Notify committee chairs of their elections,
- G. Conduct delegated correspondence, and,
- H. Perform such other duties as may be provided for by these bylaws, prescribed by the parliamentary authority, or the board of directors.

**Section 4.** The treasurer shall:

- A. Have custody of the funds of this council PTA,
- B. Maintain a full account of the funds of this council PTA,
- C. Keep a full and accurate account of receipts and expenditures including reconciliation of the bank statement each month,
- D. Make disbursements as authorized by the president, board of directors or this council PTA in accordance with the budget adopted by this council PTA,
- E. Have checks or vouchers signed by two people - the treasurer and one other authorized officer,
- F. Review, sign, and date bank statements monthly, obtaining review, signature and date of the president and one member of the council board of directors who is not a signatory on the account(s),
- G. Be responsible for preparing and filing all required tax forms and submitting copies in accordance with the Council Standards of Affiliation,
- H. Submit a proposed annual budget to the general membership for approval,
- I. Present a written financial statement at every meeting of the executive committee, the board of directors, the general membership and at other times when requested by the board of directors,
- J. Present an annual report of the financial condition of the organization to the membership,
- K. Submit the books annually for a financial review,
- L. Report the findings of the annual financial review to the board of directors and submit a copy to Free State PTA within the timeframe specified by the Council Standards of Affiliation, and,
- M. Perform such other duties as may be provided for by these bylaws, prescribed by the parliamentary authority, or directed by the board of directors,
- N. Submit amendments to the budget as needed. Changes within budget categories may be approved by the board of directors. Changes between budget categories must be approved by the general membership,
- O. Ensure that the total budget amount is not exceeded, without the approval of the general membership, and
- P. Assure that at least three (3) officers have signatory authority on all bank accounts.

## **ARTICLE VIII – Board of Directors**

**Section 1.** The affairs of the PTACHC shall be managed by the board of directors in the intervals between general membership meetings.

**Section 2.** Each board of directors member shall be a member of a local PTA within the area of this council whose state and council PTA dues are paid.

**Section 3.** The members of the board of directors shall be:

- A. Elected officers,
- B. Chairs of Standing Committees, or their alternates,
- C. A parliamentarian (non-voting) may be appointed by the president, subject to approval of the board of directors of this council PTA.

**Section 4.** Duties of the board of directors shall be to:

- A. Carry out such business as may be referred to it by the membership of this council,
- B. Create special and standing committees,

- C. Present a report at the regular general membership meetings of this council PTA,
- D. Select a financial review committee at least fifteen (15) days before the new board of directors assumes its duties to review the treasurer's accounts,
- E. Approve and submit an annual budget to this council PTA general membership for adoption,
- F. Approve payment of routine bills within the limits of the approved budget,
- G. Approve plans of work of council PTA standing committees,
- H. Support, educate, and make recommendations to local PTAs, as needed,
- I. Set the dates and places of general and special meetings,
- J. Adopt rules of transaction to facilitate its business provided they do not conflict with PTACHC, Free State PTA, or National PTA, as needed, and
- K. Recommend dues to the general membership for membership in PTACHC.

**Section 5.** The board of directors, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting a quorum being established, may remove from their position any board member who fails to perform designated duties as outlined in these bylaws or the current standing rules, fails to attend two consecutive meetings and/or board of directors meetings without being excused, violates the basic policies, misrepresents the positions of the association or acts in any other way which is detrimental to the philosophy and purposes of the association. When removal action is contemplated, the member shall be advised, by certified mail at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting of determination, of their right to appear before the board of directors at that meeting. Such removal constitutes a vacancy in that position.

**Section 6.** Regular meetings of the board of directors shall be held with the date and time to be fixed by the board of directors at their first meeting of the year.

**Section 7.** Special meetings of the board of directors may be called by the president or when requested by a majority of the Board of Directors members upon five (5) days written notice to each member of the board of directors.

**Section 8.** At all meetings of the board of directors, a majority of the members of the board of directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

**Section 9.** Upon the expiration of the term of office or when individuals cease to hold the position that entitles them to be a member of the board of directors, they shall automatically cease to be a member of the board of directors and shall be relieved of all duties and responsibilities incident to such membership. All records, books and other materials pertaining to the position shall be turned over to the president and all funds pertaining to the position shall be returned to the treasurer within fourteen (14) days of said expiration.

**Section 10.** A member of the PTACHC board of directors shall be automatically removed from the board if they are appointed or elected to public office or the Howard County Board of Education.

## **Article IX – Executive Committee**

**Section 1.** The elected officers shall be members of the executive committee.

**Section 2.** Each executive committee member shall be a member of a local PTA within the area of the council whose state and council PTA dues are paid.

**Section 3.** Regular meetings of the executive committee shall be held with the dates and times fixed by the executive committee at its first meeting of the fiscal year. Special meetings of the executive committee may be called by the president or upon written request of a majority of the executive committee members, with seven (7) days' notice to each member of the executive committee.

**Section 4.** At all meetings of the executive committee, a majority of the members of the executive committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

**Section 5.** Duties of the executive committee shall be to:

- A. Transact business referred to it by the board of directors,
- B. Elect standing and special committee chairs,
- C. Act in emergencies between meetings of the board of directors, and,
- D. Provide a report at each board of directors meeting.

**Section 6.** The executive committee shall take no action in conflict with any action taken by the board of directors.

## **Article X – Committees**

**Section 1.** Only members of a local PTA within the area of the council whose state and council PTA dues are paid shall be eligible to serve in any elected or appointed positions.

**Section 2.** Standing Committee chairs shall be elected by the executive committee.

**Section 3.** The board of directors may create such special and standing committees as it deems necessary to promote the purposes of PTA and carry on the work of this council PTA. A newly committee shall be clearly identified as a special or standing committee.

**Section 4.** The term of office of a standing committee chair shall expire at the end of the current fiscal year.

**Section 5.** The chair of each standing committee shall present a plan of work to the board of directors for approval. No committee work shall be undertaken without the consent of the board of directors.

**Section 6.** A person elected by a majority vote of the executive committee shall fill a vacancy occurring in any committee chair position for the unexpired term.

**Section 7.** PTACHC shall have at least three (3) standing committees: Legislative, Policy, and PTA Recruitment.

## **Article XI – General Membership**

**Section 1.** The general membership (voting body) of this council PTA shall consist of the board of directors; the president of each member local PTA or their alternate; and delegates or their alternates as specified in Section 2 of this article.

**Section 2.** Each member local PTA shall be eligible to be represented by two (2) delegates or their alternates as selected by the local PTA according to its own bylaws.

**Section 3.** Individuals are entitled to one vote, even though they may be serving in more than one position.

**Section 4.** The following shall be courtesy participating members of the PTACHC:

- A. Members of the HCPSS Board of Education,
- B. The superintendent of the HCPSS or their representative,
- C. The president of the Howard County Education Association or their representative,
- D. The president of the Howard County Association of Supervisors and Administrators or their representative,
- E. A student member selected by the Howard County Association of Student Councils, and
- F. The principal of each local PTA member school or their designee.

Courtesy members of this body may be called up to speak at a general membership meeting and may choose to present opinions on a motion during the discussion. These members do not have voting rights, nor does their presence or absence count towards quorum of the general membership.

## **Article XII – General Membership Meetings**

**Section 1.** Regular meetings of this council PTA shall be held during the year, the time to be fixed by the board of directors at its first meeting of the fiscal year. At least seven (7) calendar days' notice shall be given to the membership of any change of date. Meetings will be canceled following the inclement weather school closing policy for the county.

**Section 2.** Special general membership meetings of this council PTA may be called by the president or by a majority of the board of directors, when at least seven (7) calendar days' notice is given.

**Section 3.** The annual meeting shall be held in June.

**Section 4.** A quorum for the transaction of business of any general membership meeting of this council PTA shall consist of at least twenty-five (25) members of the voting body.

**Section 5.** Meetings of this council PTA shall be open to all members of the local PTAs holding membership in the council PTA, but the privilege of introducing motions and voting shall be limited to the voting body as outlined in Article XI.

**Section 6.** Only members of this council PTA who have paid dues for the current membership year may participate in the business of this council.

## **Article XIII – Council Membership**

**Section 1.** Membership in this council PTA shall consist of local PTAs chartered by Free State PTA in Howard County upon payment of dues as hereinafter provided.

**Section 2.** The membership dues in this council PTA shall be determined annually by the board of directors with initial payment on or before October 31st and are considered in arrears after March 31st.

**Section 3.** Membership in PTA shall be open, without discrimination, to anyone who believes in and supports the mission, purposes, and principles of National PTA and pays dues as required in these bylaws.

**Section 4.** Local PTAs may be accepted as members at any time. Bylaws and incorporation documents of local PTA shall be provided to this council upon approval by the local PTA membership.

## **Article XIV – Electronic Meetings and Communication**

**Section 1.** Meetings. PTACHC and all committees and subcommittees shall be authorized to meet by telephone conference or through other electronic communications media so long as all the members can simultaneously hear each other and participate during the meeting.

**Section 2.** Communication. Unless members indicate otherwise to the board of directors, all communication required in these bylaws, including meeting notices, may be sent electronically.

## **ARTICLE XV – Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of this council PTA shall begin on July 1st and end on the following June 30th.

## **ARTICLE XVI – Review and Amendments**

**Section 1.** These bylaws may be amended at any general membership meeting of this council PTA by a two-thirds vote of those members present and voting, a quorum being present, provided notice of the proposed amendment has been given to the general membership at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which the amendment is to be voted upon. When amended, articles are in effect, but shall be subject to the approval of Free State PTA.

**Section 2.** A decision to totally revise the bylaws as a substitute for the existing bylaws, requires a majority vote of those members present and voting at a general meeting of this council PTA, or a two-thirds vote of the board of directors. A committee to carry out this task shall be appointed by the board of directors. The requirements for adoption of a revised set of bylaws shall be the same as in the case of an amendment, including thirty (30) days prior notification to the general membership.

**Section 3.** Submission of amendments or revised bylaws for approval by Free State PTA shall be in accordance with the bylaws of Free State PTA.

**Section 4.** These bylaws shall be reviewed and approved by the membership at least every three years.

## **ARTICLE XVII – Parliamentary Authority**

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall govern this council PTA in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not in conflict with the National PTA Bylaws, the Free State PTA Bylaws, special rules of order, or the Articles of Incorporation.

These bylaws are submitted by an existing council PTA in Maryland and were approved at a GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING of the

PTA Council of Howard County on April 7, 2025.

Ruth Cung  
Secretary

Ruth Cung  
Secretary (Signature)

Please indicate address where bylaws  
should be sent:

Name: Ruth Cung

Title: Secretary

Phone: (410) 796-7927

E-mail: [secretary@ptachc.org](mailto:secretary@ptachc.org)

Address: 5451 Beaverkill Road

Columbia, MD 21044

If Free State PTA has questions or must  
decline these bylaws, the person to contact, if  
different than the person named to the left, is:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

FREE STATE PTA USE

Approved By \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## PURPOSES OF THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS

- A. To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, places of worship and throughout the community;
- B. To raise the standards of home life;
- C. To advocate for laws that further the education, physical and mental health, welfare, and safety of children and youth;
- D. To promote the collaboration and engagement of families and educators in the education of children and youth;
- E. To engage the public in united efforts to secure the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being of all children and youth; and,
- F. To advocate for fiscal responsibility regarding public tax dollars in public education funding.

## PRINCIPLES OF THE PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

- A. The association shall be noncommercial, nonsectarian, and nonpartisan.
- B. The association shall work to engage and empower children, families, and educators within schools and communities to provide quality education for all children and youth and shall seek to participate in the decision-making process by influencing school policy and advocating for children's issues, recognizing that the legal responsibility to make decisions has been delegated by the people to boards of education, state education authorities, and local education authorities.
- C. The association shall work to promote the health and welfare of children and youth, and shall seek to promote collaboration among families, schools, and the community at large.