

Montgomery County Council of PTAs

Standing Rules

These standing rules cover the MCCPTA Board of Directors (BOD) and Delegates Assembly (DA)- *Approved on January 25, 2022*

Rule I – Eligibility to Vote at Delegates Assembly

Local PT(S)As- Each local PT(S)A is eligible to receive voting privileges for three individuals- the president and two delegates. There is one vote per delegate, even if the individual represents more than one PT(S)A. Voting privileges are required for introducing and voting on resolutions, motions, and other issues during the DA. The lack of voting privileges will not preclude anyone from speaking to a motion or during other discussions.

In order to receive voting privileges, a local PTA must first:

1. Submit the names of delegates to the MCCPTA Office after the delegates have been elected, using the MCCPTA Blue Book information form; and
2. Pay dues (\$1 per member) for at least 25 members to MCCPTA. The dues requirement does not apply for the September or October meeting.

Each local PTA may have one or more alternate delegates attend the DA when a regular delegate (or the president) is unable to attend. The delegate should notify the MCCPTA DA Secretary and MCCPTA President prior to the meeting that the alternate will attend.

BOD eligibility to vote at DA

All voting and non-voting members of the BOD can vote at delegates assemblies. BOD members who are also a president or delegate for a local PT(S)A have one vote at the DA. When the DA votes on MCCPTA priorities or resolutions, the BOD members who also hold local PT(S)A voting roles need to indicate the role they represent (on the sign-in sheet).

Rule II – Eligibility to Vote at BOD Meetings

Eligibility to vote at BOD meetings is outlined in MCCPTA Bylaws, Article VIII. At each BOD meeting, the voting members are: elected officers, area vice presidents, one cluster coordinator per cluster, and chairs of standing committees. Members have one vote at a BOD meeting, regardless of the number of voting BOD positions they hold.

If a standing committee chair cannot attend a BOD meeting, a committee vice-chair or a subcommittee chair can substitute. The substitute can participate fully as a BOD member and vote. The substitute must have completed the required boardsmanship and fiduciary training. The standing committee chair must notify the MCCPTA BOD Secretary and MCCPTA President of the substitution prior to the BOD meeting.

To vote at a BOD meeting, an individual must be a member of a local PTA that has paid dues for at least 25 members to MCCPTA and the state PTA. The dues requirement does not apply for the September or October meeting.

Upon assuming a role as a voting member of the BOD, each member must complete boardmanship and fiduciary training. This training must be completed by October 1 if service on the BOD begins on or before the start of a fiscal year (July 1). Members can satisfy this requirement with confirmed attendance at MCCPTA boardmanship workshops, or by submitting completion certificates for National PTA e-learning courses specified each year by the Executive Committee. Training is valid during continuous board service and must be retaken if there is a lapse in service. Exception: re-training is not required for members who return to service within the same academic year. Members who have not completed training by the Oct. 1 deadline are not allowed to vote without an advance exception from the President. Individuals whose term of office on the BOD begins after the start of the fiscal year have two months from appointment/election/confirmation to complete required boardmanship and fiduciary training or they cannot vote at BOD meetings.

BOD members not eligible to vote at BOD meetings (member in non-voting positions, not a member of a PTA that paid MCCPTA dues of at least \$25, or have not taken the required training) can participate in discussion at BOD meetings. They are restricted from voting and from entering or seconding motions.

Rule III – MCCPTA Procedures for Resolutions

MCCPTA has a formal process for the identification of issues for which we take a position, development of a resolution that communicates the position, discussion and debate of the resolution, and adoption of the resolution. The goal of the process is to ensure that MCCPTA speaks with one voice that supports all students.

Topic selection

MCCPTA adopts a list of priorities each year. MCCPTA may adopt other positions throughout the year if they are consistent with the mission and scope of PTA and are consistent with MCCPTA priorities.

The following groups can bring issues to MCCPTA for consideration as a position that will be developed into an MCCPTA Resolution:

- MCCPTA Committees
- Local PT(S)As
- PT(S)A Clusters or Areas
- MCCPTA Executive Committee
- MCCPTA BOD

Each year MCCPTA develops and approves Advocacy Priorities, with the process led by the MCCPTA VP of Advocacy and the Advocacy Committee. The process for development and approval follows the steps described below for resolutions.

For resolutions developed for an eventual DA vote, the group that identifies the issue must contact the MCCPTA executive committee and indicate the need for an MCCPTA position. The executive committee will ensure that the appropriate committee(s) is involved in development of the position. If an appropriate committee does not exist, the MCCPTA executive committee will help develop the position or will assign an ad hoc committee.

In some cases, the executive committee or the committee assigned to assist with the position may determine that the position is not appropriate for development of an MCCPTA position for one of the following reasons:

1. The issue is addressed by positions or resolutions from MCCPTA, Free State PTA, or National PTA. (In some cases, resolutions that are addressed by other layers of PTA may be reaffirmed by resolution if extra emphasis on the issue is deemed important.)
2. The proposed position is contrary to the Objectives and Mission of PTA.
3. The scope of the issue is deemed too narrow.

If it is determined that the issue is not appropriate for development of an MCCPTA position statement, the executive committee will inform the BOD and DA of the decision and rationale.

Development of an MCCPTA Resolution

After a topic is selected for development and debate as a potential MCCPTA position, the steps below will be followed. This preferred process allows initial input by the relevant committee, the MCCPTA BOD and further discussion by the delegates assembly and local units. Expedited processes for time sensitive issues are presented later in this document.

1. The committee drafts a resolution that includes background information and a recommended MCCPTA position. It is expected that the committee is comprised of individuals who are experts in the subject matter or who have a high interest in the subject and will conduct thorough research. Thus, an in-depth discussion of the topic should occur at the committee level.
2. The draft resolution is presented to the MCCPTA BOD for discussion, debate, and vote. The purpose of the vote is to determine whether the resolution is sent to the DA for further discussion, sent back to the committee for further development, or not developed into an MCCPTA position.
3. The draft resolution is presented to the DA. The DA does not vote on the resolution when it is first presented. The committee presents the resolution and provides relevant background information to ensure the delegates understand the rationale and context of the resolution.
4. Delegates take the resolution to their local PT(S)A for discussion and input. Each delegate should request time at the next PT(S)A meeting for discussion of the resolution. To aid broad discussion of the resolution, the topic should be publicized to the local PT(S)A prior to the meeting. The PT(S)A considers the issue and provides guidance to the delegate, so the delegate can vote on behalf of the local PT(S)A.

5. The resolution is presented for vote at the next DA. The committee chair summarizes the background information and presents the proposed MCCPTA position in motion form which, coming from a committee, does not require a second. Debate on the motion and any amendments is conducted by the president, with the committee chair serving as a resource person for questions from the floor. The amendment and voting process is also conducted by the president. Delegates represent the opinion of their local PT(S)A when they present and/or vote on amendments, and vote on resolutions.

Time sensitive issues

In some cases, time constraints make the above procedure impossible. For example, an earlier position statement by MCCPTA may be needed prior to action by the Board of Education, County Council, or other official body. Depending on the time constraints, one of the following expedited procedures is followed. The expedited procedures are presented in decreasing order of preference. The goal is to allow input from as broad a representation of MCCPTA members as possible. The BOD will be notified (email) prior to initiation of any expedited process.

Expedited process one

Skip the discussion at the BOD meeting and begin the process at the DA, followed by local PT(S)A discussion and a vote at the next DA.

Expedited process two

Following discussion at the BOD meeting, present the position for discussion and vote at the next DA. The draft resolution, which includes background information and a recommended MCCPTA position, is sent to the delegates at least 10 days prior to the next delegates assembly. Delegates should get input from their local PT(S)A prior to the discussion and vote at the DA. It is recognized that some PT(S)As may not meet prior to the DA. Delegates should work with their PT(S)As to solicit input on the issue, holding a special meeting if needed. *(At the DA, a motion to consider the resolution on an emergency basis must be proposed and then approved by a two-thirds majority. Adoption of the emergency resolution is accomplished by a majority vote.)*

Expedited process three

The BOD takes an official position (motion by the board), without any discussion at a DA. *(At the BOD, a motion to consider the motion on an emergency basis must be proposed and then approved by a two-thirds majority. Adoption of the emergency motion is accomplished by a majority vote.)* Communications related to approval of the motion will indicate the decision was made by the BOD, not the DA.

Debate of a Motion or Resolution at a DA

All motions shall be presented in writing. Debate shall be limited to 15 minutes per motion, unless the executive committee determines prior to the meeting that a longer duration is needed. Also, the DA may determine at the beginning of the meeting that a longer duration is needed (majority vote). An individual designated by the president shall serve as timekeeper

during the meeting. Motions to extend debate should be made prior to the time expiration. Debate is limited to members of the DA.

Debate alternates between speakers for and against the motion. In debate, each speaker will be limited to one minute per turn. Each individual has the right to speak more than once on the same question on the same day, but may not make additional remarks on the same question so long as anyone who has not spoken on that question desires the floor.

The debate, including motions for amendments, follows parliamentary procedures outlined in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

MCCPTA Resolutions- review and reconsideration

Approved MCCPTA resolutions will be reviewed every five years (on a school year basis), to determine whether they need to be retired (no longer relevant), rescinded (if not aligned with current MCCPTA priorities), amended (acceptable with changes), or maintained in its current form. The executive committee will work with the relevant committees and present a proposal for the relevant resolutions to the BOD at the first or second BOD meeting of the year. The decision is presented to the DA at their next meeting. Delegates report the decision for discussion with the local PT(S)A and vote at the following DA.

This process will begin with resolutions passed in the 2020-2021 school year. The executive committee will determine a timeline for addressing the resolutions passed prior to the 2020-2021 school year.

Rule IV- MCCPTA Committee Work

MCCPTA Bylaws, Article X, is related to MCCPTA committee work. Committees are created by the MCCPTA BOD and committee chairs are elected by the MCCPTA executive committee. Only members of a local PT(S)A whose MCCPTA and state dues are paid are eligible to serve in an elected or appointed position or as a committee member.

As indicated in MCCPTA Bylaws, Article X, Section 5, the chair of each committee shall present a plan of work, including the committee's proposed budget, to the BOD for approval. No committee work shall be undertaken without the consent of the BOD. No funds can be spent before the budget is approved. For committees that include subcommittees, the subcommittee plan of work can be a separate document or part of the committee plan of work.

The plans of work should be presented at the first BOD meeting of the school year. A draft of the plan should be submitted to the treasurer over the summer, to assist with preparation of the budget. The information in the work plan needs to support the requested budget.

Workplans must include a description of plans for communication with MCPS and external groups, including plans for regularly scheduled meetings.

If a committee determines they need to do work outside the scope of the approved workplan, they should submit a revised workplan to the BOD for approval.

Committees need to submit reports for each BOD meeting. The reports include work completed or ongoing during the reporting period, communications with MCPS or external groups, and plans for the next month.

Committees may have up to two vice-chairs. Committees nominate the vice-chairs, who must be approved by the Executive Committee. Like committee chairs, vice-chairs serve a one-year term and can be reappointed.

Committees nominate subcommittee chairs, who must be approved by the Executive Committee. Subcommittee chairs serve a one-year term and can be reappointed. A committee may propose additional subcommittees, which must be approved by the BOD. The need for new subcommittees should be included in a workplan or an amendment to a workplan.

Committees should actively seek members from throughout the sectors of MCCPTA/MCPS that are stakeholders for their work (MCCPTA areas/clusters, primary and secondary schools). Cluster coordinators and area vice presidents should work with the PT(S)As that they represent to solicit members of committees.

Rule V- Speaking on behalf of MCCPTA

External communications from MCCPTA BOD members and committees are perceived as messages “from MCCPTA” so it is essential to have appropriate clearance.

As indicated in Rule IV, committee and subcommittee workplans must include a description of plans for communication with MCPS and external groups. Opportunities to speak to MCCPTA priorities via letters, testimony at public hearings, and other public statements can be helpful advocacy tools. Being “within the scope” of a workplan or MCCPTA Priorities does not guarantee a specific message is supported by MCCPTA membership so committee and subcommittee chairs should ensure the overseeing officer assigned to the committee is included in discussion/crafting of material. When a committee or subcommittee plans to make a public communication, they must inform the MCCPTA executive committee overseeing officer who will ensure the content is within scope and aligned with the MCCPTA mission and previous deliberations and will approve the planned communications.

In the event the overseeing officer does not see the alignment of the communication with already established MCCPTA priorities, the overseeing officer may forward to the Executive Committee for approval. Two-thirds of the executive committee needs to provide input, with the decision requiring a majority of those voting. (Ex: with 8 executive committee members, 6 must vote). The executive committee may determine that the communication needs to be approved by the BOD or DA, with consideration of the impact, consistency with the committee workplans and MCCPTA Priorities, and timeliness.

In instances where a timely statement from MCCPTA seems prudent due to current events, the MCCPTA Executive Committee, following the same requirements for input and voting outlined above, may put out a statement on behalf of MCCPTA. The statement will include wording that indicates it is from MCCPTA Executive Committee.

Requests for comments or interviews with the press need to go through the MCCPTA President or designee.

Details of the discussions and decisions described above need to be included in the President's report (may be delegated to another MCCPTA officer) to the BOD, which is also shared with the DA.

Note: Comments or testimony on behalf of specific cluster(s), areas, or local PT(S)A do not need to be approved beyond the scope of the group represented. However, the communications need to clearly indicate on whose behalf they are made. When BOD members provide statements in their personal capacity, they should clarify they are speaking as an individual, not a representative of MCCPTA.

Rule VI- Ethics and Conflicts of Interest

Ethics issues related to elections for public office

MCCPTA Bylaws include the following provisions related to BOD members who file for candidacy for public office: (1) Article VI, Section 4.f. indicates "Any officer of MCCPTA shall resign within a week of filing for candidacy for public office" and (2) Article VII, Section 10 indicates "If a member of the board of directors (other than an elected officer) files for candidacy for public office, the member shall not speak publicly on behalf of MCCPTA. If elected to public office, a member of the BOD shall resign immediately."

An MCCPTA officer or BOD member who files for candidacy for public office must notify the MCCPTA President within 48-hours. If the MCCPTA President files for candidacy, they must notify the MCCPTA Vice President for Education. The notification should include the position sought and a description of how the candidate will meet the provisions in these standing rules.

MCCPTA BOD and delegates will be notified within one week.

To meet the provision of not speaking publicly on behalf of MCCPTA while a candidate for public office, BOD members shall not provide public testimony or statements, whether oral or written, on behalf of MCCPTA, including cluster or committee testimony. If the BOD member is an MCCPTA Committee Chair, oral reports at BOD meetings and delegates assemblies and speaking roles at MCCPTA public events should be delivered by another committee member. At non-MCCPTA events, if there may be a perception that the candidate is speaking on behalf of MCCPTA, the individual should provide a disclaimer that they are speaking in their individual capacity.

If a BOD member is being considered for a public office through a process that does not involve an election, they should follow the provisions above while they are under consideration. If selected, they must resign from the BOD immediately.

Conflicts of Interest

MCCPTA is the primary beneficiary when delegates and BOD members bring their outside expertise to support MCCPTA advocacy. This outside expertise often provides depth and

outlines the nuances of situations that help inform and shape MCCPTA advocacy positions. However, it is important that individuals with outside organizational interests disclose those interests and potential conflicts when discussing MCCPTA positions and approaches.

If MCCPTA BOD deliberates on a matter that involves a business or organization in which a BOD member has an interest, the BOD member shall declare the outside interest. The BOD member can participate in the discussion. In most cases, the BOD member can also vote after declaring the outside interest. Situations when the BOD member should not vote on a matter include: (1) the BOD member, representing an outside interest, requests that MCCPTA support the outside interest either financially or through co-sponsorship of an event, and (2) the BOD member has a leadership role in an organization and MCCPTA BOD votes on whether to support that organization by name or donate funds to the organization.

Delegates and BOD members should ensure MCCPTA communications, including e-lists, are only used for MCCPTA purposes and avoid the appearance of using MCCPTA forums and platforms as a mechanism to promote other organizations and/or personal matters. MCCPTA delegates and BOD members should include identifying information when posting to MCCPTA platforms (name, role in MCCPTA or local PTA) and ensure signature lines embedded in email responses cannot be construed as promotional (selling a product or service) when sent via MCCPTA e-lists.