

# **BYLAWS OF THE BROOKS SCHOOL PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)**

**Revision History:**  
**First approved June 2004**  
**Revised March 2010**  
**Revised May 2013**

## **ARTICLE I: NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Brooks School Parent Teacher Organization, to be referred to as “Brooks PTO”.

## **ARTICLE II: VISION, MISSION AND VALUES**

### **A. Vision**

The creation of a cooperative relationship among the Brooks PTO, students, families, teachers and administrators of the Brooks Elementary School will ensure educational excellence, promote the well-being of children, and strengthen the entire community.

### **B. Mission**

The Mission of the Brooks PTO is to provide a bridge between the home and school so that parents/guardians, teachers, and administrators may work together in a cooperative environment to enhance and enrich the educational experience of all students attending the Brooks Elementary School. The Brooks PTO will provide resources for educational, social, and recreational needs, and promote open communication among and between all members of the Brooks community.

### **C. Values**

#### **1. The Organization**

The Brooks PTO:

- a. will be an independent, non-commercial, non-sectarian, and non-partisan advocate for the children of the Brooks Elementary School
- b. will operate in a constructive manner, comply with established policies and procedures, and respect, encourage and tolerate diversity of opinion
- c. members agree to accept their responsibilities under these Bylaws to ensure that the Brooks PTO remains a robust and active organization
- d. values innovation, communication, openness, and diversity.

#### **2. Education**

The Brooks PTO:

- a. will strive to encourage and enhance cooperation and communication among the teachers, school administrators and staff, students, and their families
- b. believes that children will be motivated to become life-long learners when nurtured in a thriving learning environment that includes the participation of families, schools, and community.

## **ARTICLE III: ADVOCACY**

- A. The Brooks PTO shall not endorse a commercial enterprise or political candidate.
- B. The name of the Brooks PTO or the names of any of its officers shall not be used in any partisan interest, or for any purpose other than the regular work of the organization.
- C. The Brooks PTO may endorse or otherwise attempt to advance legislation, or seek the enactment of regulations, policies, and practices deemed relevant to the mission of the PTO, only after approval by majority vote at a PTO meeting.
- D. The Brooks PTO may submit recommendations and suggestions to the administration of the Brooks Elementary School regarding the administration and policies of the school.

## **ARTICLE IV: BYLAWS**

### **A. Process for Approval**

A proposed set of bylaws will be presented for debate at a regular meeting of the PTO. Once the members present at the meeting approve a draft by majority vote, the approved draft will be put to a vote by the entire PTO. This vote will be held by paper or digital ballot made available to all PTO members. The draft needs approval from 2/3 of the total ballots received to be adopted.

### **B. Date of Effect**

The Bylaws will be in effect from the date they are approved until amended or dissolved.

### **C. Amendment of Bylaws**

1. Any member may propose an amendment by submitting it to the Executive Committee to put on the agenda for the next PTO meeting or by bringing it up from the floor at that PTO meeting. After initial discussion at the PTO meeting, if necessary an ad-hoc committee can be appointed to clarify the amendment.
2. Notice of proposed amendment will be included in the agenda of the next PTO meeting.
3. Approval of proposed changes: If the members present at a PTO meeting approve the proposed amendment by majority vote, the proposed amendment will be put to a vote by the entire PTO. This vote will be put to all PTO members and held by paper or digital ballot, providing that if a digital format is used, paper ballots be available upon request and availability of such paper ballots be announced in the Brooks Blue. The amendment needs approval from 2/3 of the total ballots received to be adopted.

### **D. Bylaw Availability**

The Bylaws and all amendments will be made available to all members.

## **ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP**

### **A. Membership**

All parents/guardians of students who currently attend the Brooks Elementary School and all current faculty and staff are members of the Brooks PTO. Members may attend all Brooks PTO meetings and request information regarding actions of the Brooks PTO. Two teacher representatives will be selected by the teachers to attend the PTO meetings. Brooks School students are welcomed and encouraged to attend PTO meetings.

## **B. Voting**

All members listed under Membership (A. above) are Voting Members who may vote on all issues before the Brooks PTO, introduce motions, debate the merits of motions before the Brooks PTO, to elect officers, and to hold office. Each member gets one vote.

## **C. Bylaws**

All Brooks PTO members agree to comply with the guidelines established by these Bylaws.

# **ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS**

1. The Brooks PTO will hold a minimum of 5 general meetings a year. The Executive Committee is responsible for determining the time and location of the meetings, making a concerted effort to notify all members using a variety of methods (web notices, paper notices) so all who want to can attend. Every effort will be made to post the schedule by October 1.
2. Emergency meetings can be called by the Executive Committee if there is a pressing need that cannot wait until the next regularly scheduled meeting. The Executive Committee must give one week's notice of the meeting date and time and at least 20 people must attend in order for a binding decision to be made.
3. Emergency meetings can be called by PTO members if there is a pressing need that cannot wait until the next regularly scheduled meeting. Twenty (20) signatures must be submitted to the Executive Committee stating the need for a meeting. The Executive Committee must schedule a meeting immediately, giving one week's notice of the meeting date and time and at least 20 people must attend in order for a binding decision to be made.
4. A sign in for members will be completed at meetings and decisions will be made by a majority vote of those present at the meetings except where otherwise specified in the bylaws. A final meeting of the year in June will include completion of final tasks, prep for new year, accounting of funds, projection of budget, introduction of new officers, etc. to make carry over to next year smooth. In addition, there will be a review of the standing committees for additions or deletions for the next year.
5. All PTO, Committee, and Executive Committee meetings are open to all members. The only exception is that the Executive Committee can go into executive session when needed for confidentiality reasons. Every effort should be made to announce the time and place of meetings to the whole membership in advance of any meeting.

# **ARTICLE VII: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

## **A. Organization Composition**

Brooks PTO shall be comprised of Members, various standing and ad hoc Committees, and an Executive Committee and a Steering Committee.

## **B. Committee Membership and Meetings**

1. Committees shall consist of members of the Brooks PTO.
2. A Committee consists of a minimum of 3 members.
3. Members may be on more than one committee.

4. PTO members are welcome at all committee meetings regardless of committee membership, with the exception of the Executive Committee meeting in executive session.
5. Committees will adhere to the PTO Policy on Communication when distributing information with the goal of making information accessible to every member.

### **C. Committee Chairs**

1. Committees shall select chairs by a method of their choosing. Executive Committee members are not eligible to be chairs of committees.
2. General Duties of All Committee Chairs:
  - a. Coordinate committee members and coordinate recruitment of additional volunteer members as needed
  - b. Give updates for PTO meetings
  - c. Assure that attendance is taken and minutes are recorded at their meetings and post them in committee binder in Parent Resource Room, along with all other committee related materials
  - d. Submit recommendations or suggestions to Executive Committee for PTO action
  - e. Each spring, each committee chair will be responsible for preparing a budget for all of his or her potential committee income and expenditures for the following school year. Newly-elected committee chairs are encouraged to work with outgoing committee members and are required to submit a draft budget no later than June 1, so that the Executive Committee may prepare a draft of the General PTO Budget for presentation at the final General PTO Meeting of the school year
    - i. In the event a committee has not selected a chair to serve for the following school year, the current chair(s) will be required to submit a proposed budget for the following year
    - ii. Revised /final committee budgets are due to the Treasurer by the first Executive Committee meeting of the school year (normally the third week of September)
  - f. Contact treasurer monthly or as needed
  - g. Abide and enforce the bylaws
  - h. Deliver to their successors all official materials in their possession, including pending topics, within ten (10) calendar days after the expiration of their term in office.

### **D. The Executive Committee**

1. The Executive Committee shall consist of: three Executive Chairs, a Secretary, a Treasurer and a (non-voting) Monitor.
2. The purpose of the Executive Committee is to:
  - a. Carry out the mission and vision of the PTO
  - b. Transact necessary business in the intervals between organization meetings
  - c. Transact business as may be referred to it by the organization
  - d. Create and support standing and ad-hoc Committees
  - e. Present a report at the regular meetings of the organization
  - f. Approve bills according to Article VIII
  - g. Facilitate the creation of the annual budget.

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3. Election to the Executive Committee:
  - a. Nominating Committee runs the process starting in April
  - b. Candidates can self-nominate or be nominated by others
  - c. Nominated candidates must provide a summary of their biographical information
  - d. Vote in May each year by Brooks PTO members through either paper or digital ballot, providing that if a digital format is used, paper ballots be available upon request and the availability of such paper ballots be announced in the Brooks Blue
    - i. Top 3 vote getters for executive committee chair are elected
    - ii. Top vote getter for secretary, treasurer and monitor, respectively, win
    - iii. An alternate (the next highest vote getter in that category) will be announced in the event elected parties cannot serve. If the alternate cannot serve, a special nomination and election process will be held for that position
    - iv. The ballot must include space for write-in candidates
  - e. Only one person per household may serve on the Executive Committee during any given term
  - f. Executive Committee members are elected prior to the June PTO meeting.
4. Voting by the Executive Committee:
  - a. Each member of the Executive Committee will have one vote
  - b. A total of 3 votes shall constitute a quorum.
5. Duties of the Executive Committee:
  - a. The Executive Committee shall:
    - i. Meet with the Brooks Principal or his/her representative on a regular basis
    - ii. Fulfill all duties under the Bylaws
    - iii. Only Executive Committee Chair Persons may sign any contract or other agreement that will require payment out of or reimbursement from the PTO bank account(s)
    - iv. Arrange for PTO member to attend school committee meetings
    - v. Review the Bylaws annually
    - vi. Prepare the agenda for the PTO meetings including circulating the agenda for member input in advance of the meeting
    - vii. Implement the PTO Policy on Communication when distributing information with the goal of making information accessible to every member.
  - b. Duties of the Executive Committee Chairpersons:
    - i. Preside over Brooks PTO Meetings
    - ii. Help coordinate activities of Committee Chairpersons
    - iii. Appoint additional ad-hoc committees as necessary
    - iv. Chairpersons have general supervision over the interests of the organization and serve as ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee
  - c. Duties of the Executive Committee Secretary:
    - i. Keep the minutes of all general PTO meetings and distribute them according to the PTO Policy on Communication

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- ii. Keep the minutes of the Executive Committee meetings and distribute them according to the PTO Policy on Communication
  - iii. Keep copies of the bylaws
  - iv. Maintain custody of all documents belonging to the organization, except those currently necessary to the work of other officers and chairpersons
  - v. Track membership attendance
  - vi. Handle the organization's correspondence that the Executive Committee deems necessary
  - vii. Notify or appoint someone to notify parents/guardians, teachers and administrators of monthly meetings or changes in meeting dates and times and other pertinent information relevant to the activities of the PTO
  - viii. Ensure committee binders are available in the Parent Room at the beginning of the year
- d. Duties of the Executive Committee Treasurer:
- i. Establish and maintain bank accounts, including the PTO's checking account
  - ii. Receive all and deposit monies collected by the Brooks PTO
  - iii. Keep a record of receipts and expenditures
  - iv. Pay out funds in accordance with the approved budget as authorized by the organization and policies established by these Bylaws
  - v. Get appropriate insurance and bonding for officers and organization
  - vi. File all necessary tax and legal documents
  - vii. Present a basic financial statement at every meeting of the organization, a detailed statement when requested by the executive committee, and a full report at the final meeting
  - viii. Make available the accounts to the monitor on a quarterly basis, at a minimum
  - ix. Oversee the creation of the annual PTO budget in conjunction with the Executive Committee, beginning in the spring with a draft budget to be presented to the incoming Executive Committee in June. The budget will be refined and presented at the first PTO meeting of the year, after being circulated for member input in advance of this meeting according to the PTO Policy on Communication. This budget should include some uncommitted funds for new ideas or projects that may arise
  - x. Provide a review of records at any time on request of executive committee or request of 20 members
  - xi. Abide with bylaws, particularly Article VIII, Finances.
- e. Duties of Executive Committee Monitor:
- The monitor serves as a fiscal auditor/advisor to the treasurer. The monitor must examine the treasurer's accounts on a quarterly basis, at a minimum. At the end of the year, the monitor satisfied, to the best of his/her ability, that the treasurer's annual report is correct, shall sign a statement of that fact at the end of the report.

### **E. Steering Committee**

The Steering committee consists of the chairs or designated contacts of all standing and ad- hoc committees. Meets regularly with the Executive Committee and provides updates for PTO meetings as needed.

### **F. Standing and Ad Hoc Committees**

1. The Brooks PTO Committees currently consist of the following:
  - a. PTO Extracurricular Program (PEP) (formerly the “After School Program”)
  - b. Communications (includes Brooks Blue, Yahoo Groups, Directory, Classroom Coordinators, and the Web Team)
  - c. Diversity
  - d. Enrichment
  - e. Fifth Grade
  - f. Fundraising & Events
  - g. Grant Writing
  - h. Helping Hands
  - i. Library
  - j. Lost & Found
  - k. Nominating
  - l. Welcoming
2. Formation of Committees
  - a. Executive Committee will call a meeting of the Brooks PTO to order and facilitate the process of committee formation in September
  - b. Committee membership is voluntary and all committee members are welcome whether or not they can attend committee meetings
  - c. Committees determine their own chair persons as defined in Article VII, C
  - d. The Executive Committee annually will review the necessity for all standing and ad- hoc committees and propose any changes at the final PTO meeting of the year. The proposed changes will be accepted by a majority vote at the meeting.

### **G. Terms of Positions**

1. All committee chairs are elected for one school year with the option to run for reelection for a second consecutive year. Each chair must take a year off after their second term has expired before running for reelection. Terms begin on June 1st and end on June 30th, a year later, to provide a month overlap.
2. The Executive Committee Chairs and Secretary are elected for one school year with the option to run for reelection for a second consecutive year.
3. The Treasurer is elected for two school years.
4. The Monitor is elected for one school year and must take a year off after their term has expired before running for reelection.
5. Each chair or officer must take a year off after their term has expired before running for reelection.

## **H. Resignation or Removal**

1. Resignation – Any committee chair or Executive Committee member who wishes to resign must submit their resignation in writing to an Executive Committee Chairperson.
2. Vacancies on the Executive Committee will be filled by the alternate (the next highest vote getter in that category). If the alternate cannot serve, a special nomination and election process will be held for that position within a month of resignation.
3. Removal:
  - a. Any committee chair may be removed from office by a majority of the committee present at a special meeting. Before this vote can be called, the complaint must be brought to the Executive Committee, who will speak to all parties and try to resolve the issues. If there can be no resolution, all committee members must be notified of the meeting agenda, time, date and place, by phone, at least one week in advance of the meeting, where the vote can be taken
  - b. A member of the Executive Committee may be removed from office. A motion of at least 20 members of the Brooks PTO, delivered in writing to the Executive Committee must be made. The motion will be brought before a special meeting of the Steering Committee and the Executive Committee, where a 2/3 vote will effect removal
  - c. Attendance will be taken and recorded in the minutes at each Executive Committee and PTO meeting. A member of the Executive Committee may not have more than three absences without due notice or cause in the school year, or s/he will be removed from the Executive Committee and an alternate will be seated for the remainder of the term.

## **I. School Council**

1. The School Council consists of the principal of the Brooks School, three teachers, four parent representatives and one representative of the community.
2. The purpose of the School Council is to examine the school's areas in need of improvement, to specify the educational goals of the school, and to prepare a school improvement plan.
3. Election of Parent Representatives to the School Council:
  - a. Nominating Committee runs the process starting in April
  - b. Candidates can self-nominate or be nominated by others
  - c. Nominated candidates must provide a summary of their biographical information
  - d. Vote in May each year by Brooks PTO members through either paper or digital ballot, providing that if a digital format is used, paper ballots be available upon request and the availability of such paper ballots be announced in the Brooks Blue
    - i. Top 4 vote getters are elected
    - ii. An alternate (the next highest vote getter in that category) will be announced in the event elected parties cannot serve. If the alternate cannot serve, a special nomination and election process will be held for that position
    - iii. The ballot must include space for write-in candidates
  - e. Only one person per household may serve on the School Council during any given term
  - f. School Council members are elected prior to the June PTO meeting for a one year term. School Council parent representatives are elected for one school year with the option to



run for reelection for a second consecutive year. Each member must take a year off after their second term has expired before running for reelection.

## **ARTICLE VIII: FINANCES**

1. The fiscal year of the organization shall be from July 1 to June 30, inclusive.
2. At the first meeting of the year, a tentative budget for the year will be proposed and approved. The budget will be reviewed and amended throughout the year as needed.
3. The Treasurer will document all policies and procedures regarding finances.
4. There shall be at least 2 signers on the checking account, the treasurer and one chairperson. Authorized signers on the checking account are not allowed to reimburse themselves for expenses but must get another signer to write and sign the check.
5. The Executive Committee as a whole has the authority to approve a non-budgeted item under \$250.
6. Any non-budgeted request for funding over \$250 must be proposed at a general meeting and voted on for approval.
7. Two authorized signatures shall be required on each check over the amount of \$250.

## **ARTICLE IX: PARLIAMENTARY FUNCTIONS**

During meetings, the Brooks PTO conducts regular business as dictated by the following Simplified Rules of Order and these bylaws. All votes are by majority except where indicated otherwise in these bylaws.

### **A. Simplified Rules of Order**

1. One member of the executive committee, or other person selected by the executive committee, will be designated to be the meeting chair, and will be responsible for generally following the agenda previously set forth.
2. The person responsible for the agenda item will be called upon to give their report or state their resolution, after which questions and debate from the floor will be entertained. Anyone wishing to speak must either rise or raise their hand and wait to be called upon by the meeting chair.
3. The meeting chair will take each question in turn without favoring any one individual. After each speaker, the person responsible for the agenda item may speak to answer a question or clarify or rebut a point. Discussion continues until all who wish to speak have been recognized, or a motion passes to limit the time allowed for discussion.
4. Only motions to amend the current resolution, to limit discussion, or to suspend discussion until a point can be clarified can be made while the initial resolution or agenda item is being discussed.
5. Speakers may not interrupt one another. The meeting chair may ask offending parties to leave the meeting until they are able to control themselves, and wait to be called upon.

### **B. Items from the Floor**

After the scheduled agenda items, people may bring items from the floor for discussion following the procedure outlined above for debate on agenda items.

### **C. Voting at Meetings**

1. All resolutions must be put in the form of a motion whether from the floor or as the result of an agenda item. The person responsible for the agenda item may make the initial motion. A second must come from the floor. Once a motion has been made and seconded, debate may occur as described above. When debate has been completed a vote may be taken.
2. Voting will be by voice with the chair first repeating the question to be voted upon specifically stating what an yes or no vote means, and then calling for those in favor of the resolution to say "aye", followed by those opposed to say "no", and then determining which of the voices is louder.
3. Any member present or the meeting chair may call for a "show of hands" if they feel that the voice vote is too close to determine. The chair will again state the question and ask first for people to raise their hands if in favor of the resolution and then if they are opposed. The chair will determine the vote by estimating which received more hands.
4. Any member present or the meeting chair may call for a "full tally" if they feel that the show of hands is too close to determine. The chair will again state the question and ask people to respond individually as to whether they are for or against the resolution or wish to abstain. The recording secretary will record the number of yes or no votes and state the result.
5. All votes that require more than a simple majority must either be by "full tally" or by published ballot to the entire PTO body.

### **D. Meeting Content**

At PTO meetings, the presiding member of the Executive Committee calls meeting into order. Meetings must include at least, the following:

1. Reports from Treasurer
2. Reports from Executive Committee
3. Report on continuing/new business
4. Reports from Committees, as needed
5. Open meeting up to members to take the floor.

## **ARTICLE X: DISSOLUTION**

In the event of dissolution, the assets of the Brooks PTO shall be distributed for one or more purposes as determined by majority vote of all voting members in attendance.