

# Monroe Elementary PTA Committee Guidelines

[California State PTA Toolkit – 2011 PTA Management]

## Committee Development

Committees are formed to plan, promote, and implement the activities of the PTA. The **quorum** for a committee is a simple majority of the members serving on that committee. A **standing committee** is established to perform a continuing function and remains in existence permanently for the life of the assembly that established it. A **special committee** should have a definite purpose and is subject to the directives of the membership. It remains in existence until the duty assigned to it is accomplished, unless discharged sooner, and it ceases to exist as soon as the association receives its final report.

## Responsibilities and Goals

The responsibilities and goals of the committee must be clearly defined. The committee members should know if funds have been allocated for the committee's use and what records or resources are available to them. A timeline must be established for scheduled meetings, the completion of specific tasks, and the presentation of the final report to the president and executive board.

Committee members must understand that:

- Committees do not function as separate groups but are part of the association and must operate within the framework of PTA bylaws, policies, and procedures;
- Committees make recommendations, not decisions;
- All projects and activities must have the approval of the executive board and the association in advance; and
- All money raised or derived from the activities of a committee is deposited in the unit treasury and shall not be expended by any chairman or committee without the approval of the executive board and association.

## Committee Member Selection

The president appoints the chairman and members of all committees, with the exception of the nominating committee. All appointments are subject to ratification by the executive board. The president should seek recommendations from the chairmen. Committees should be representative of the membership. The president is an ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee. The nominating committee is elected by the membership (See California State PTA Toolkit: Nominations and Elections 2.2).

## Considerations for Member Selection

- Do they have a special interest in the subject?
- Do they have the background needed to address the issue?
- Will they attend committee meetings and make a positive contribution?
- Do they have access to special resources?
- Would serving on the committee enhance their skills?
- Would student input be appropriate and helpful?
- Do they represent the needs of a diverse membership?
- Are the members representative of the community?

The principal can be a valuable resource on a variety of issues and may be asked to serve in an advisory capacity on any committee.

## Guidelines for the Chairmen

The president should provide the chairmen with their respective job descriptions as soon as possible. The job descriptions for all recommended chairmen can be found under the Job Descriptions, Chapter 10, of the *California State PTA Toolkit*.

# Monroe Elementary PTA Committee Procedures

## Chairmen Responsibilities

1. Make committee member recommendations to the President
2. Find out if funds have been allocated for the committee's use and what records or resources are available
3. Establish a timeline for scheduled meetings, the completion of specific tasks, and the presentation of the final report to the president and executive board
4. Schedule meetings with committee members to establish goals
5. Run committee meetings
6. Make recommendations to the executive board and ask for approval of the executive board and the association *in advance*
7. Make periodic reports to the executive board
8. Ensure that anything that is sent home to families is **approved by the President and the Principal** and that:
  - Extra copies are given to the office
  - If forms will be returned to the committee, a place is created to collect them in the workroom or, if money will be involved, the office
9. Turn in receipts and Payment Authorization/Request for Reimbursement to Treasurer
10. Write and submit a written report to the executive board
11. Report orally to the executive board/association

## Committee Meetings

Well-planned and efficiently managed committee meetings can be a source of pleasure as well as productivity. A chairman can be an efficient meeting manager by planning ahead.

### Before the Meeting

1. Determine the necessity and relevance of the meeting.
2. Since all voting must be handled in person, if there are a couple of items of business to take care of, plan to shorten the meeting. Effective meetings do not need to be lengthy. Meet briefly to vote officially and record the committees' decisions.
3. Whenever possible, send or e-mail an agenda in advance to committee members—or at least provide one when committee members arrive. Indicate a starting and ending time. Be specific about topics to be discussed and decisions to be made.
4. Organize thoughts and materials—and come prepared!

### During the Meeting

Since committee meetings are usually conducted in an informal manner, the rules of parliamentary procedure for motions, seconds, and voting, can be replaced by the use of general consent or consensus. A good working relationship is established when the leader acts as a facilitator and provides a relaxed and supportive atmosphere.

1. Begin on time. If the leader will be conducting business and the group is short of a **quorum**, wait to discuss action items until a quorum is present.
2. Briefly review the agenda and the purpose of the meeting.
3. When necessary, pause, reflect, and summarize, so everyone is aware of what is being accomplished.
4. Encourage each committee member to participate. Courteously discourage those who monopolize the floor and encourage the shy ones to speak. Reinforce the fact that the committee needs to hear from everyone in order to combine all good ideas and suggestions.
5. Before adjourning, sum up what decisions were made and what future assignments designated. Does everyone know who is to do what and by when? If practical, set the date of the next meeting; otherwise, assure members the leader will notify them later.
6. As chairman, set the tone by being optimistic and enthusiastic about the committee's tasks. Members will share that excitement.

Meetings must be held to vote on issues. **Voting by proxy is prohibited.** This also means no absentee voting or voting by mail, e-mail, or phone.