

# **LONGFELLOW PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION CONSTITUTION**

Revised January 15, 2014

## **ARTICLE I: NAME**

The name of the organization shall be the Longfellow Parent Teacher Organization, hereafter referred to as the "PTO".

## **ARTICLE II: OBJECTIVE**

Section 1: The PTO shall foster a closer relationship, understanding, and unity among the parents and teachers at Henry Wadsworth Longfellow School in Oak Park, Illinois.

Section 2: The PTO shall act as a coordinating force, or steering committee, for projects of mutual interest.

Section 3: The PTO shall attempt to harmonize the interest of the parents and teachers of Longfellow School in the promotion of education, child welfare, and home and school relationships.

## **ARTICLE III: POLICIES**

Section 1: The PTO shall be non-partisan and refrain from factional political activities. No substantial part of the activities of the PTO shall include the distribution of propaganda, or the attempt to influence legislation. The PTO shall not participate or intervene (including the publishing or distribution of statements) in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Section 2: The purposes of the PTO shall be directed along educational and harmonizing lines and shall refrain from encroaching upon administrative functions of the school. It shall not provide ready-made audiences for community enterprises or political discussions, except as specified in Article III, Section 3.

Section 3: The PTO shall admit to its platform only those speakers or representatives who have been invited by the President(s) as part of the program for the meeting; provided, however, that this shall not bar authorized representatives of the PTO who desire to address the PTO on legitimate PTO matters.

## **ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP**

Any resident parent or legal guardian of a child enrolled at Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Elementary School in Oak Park, Illinois (the "Longfellow School") and any member of the faculty, administration or staff of Longfellow school shall be eligible for membership in the PTO. Parent members of the PTO should commit to 5 volunteer hours during the term, if at all feasible. The 5-hour commitment can be met by participation in

committee or event work or by attendance at PTO meetings. The Vice President for Volunteers shall serve as a source of volunteer opportunities for parents seeking to meet their commitment.

## **ARTICLE V NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

- Section 1: Nominations for each office shall be made by a nominating committee designated by the Executive Board. The nominating committee shall include up to 5 members of the PTO, with the goal that 2 members of the nominating committee be from outside the Executive Board.
- Section 2: The nominating committee shall present a report in writing to the Executive Board at the regular board meeting in April. The list of nominees, together with additional nominations occurring pursuant to Article 5 Section 3, shall then be presented to the PTO by means of publication on the PTO website and newsletter.
- Section 3: Additional nominations may be made by any PTO member, provided that the name(s) of the nominee(s) shall have been filed with the Recording Secretary at least fourteen (14) days prior to the first regular meeting in May. The names of nominees shall also be published in the Longfellow School PTO newsletter and on the PTO website.
- Section 4: Election of officers shall take place at the regular meeting in May.
- Section 5: Every member of the PTO is eligible to vote for the election of officers.
- Section 6: Election shall be by secret ballot except where there is but one nominee for each office.
- Section 7: In the case of a vote by secret ballot, the tellers shall be a Recording Secretary and a member at large appointed by the presiding officer.
- Section 8: A majority of votes cast shall elect.
- Section 9: In the event of resignation or departure of a President or both Co-Presidents during the year of service, that office shall be filled by election by the general PTO membership. Nominations will be taken at the PTO meeting immediately following the vacancy. An election will occur at the next meeting following nominations. In the event of a single Co-President's departure, that position may be left unfilled for the remainder of the term, at the decision of the Executive Board by simple majority. All other vacancies in any other office shall be filled in accordance with Article VII, Section 5.
- Section 10: Officers can be removed from office with just cause or special circumstances by a two-thirds vote of those present at a regularly scheduled meeting where previous notice has been given for such a vote. Reasons for removal of an officer may include, but are not limited to, an inability to fulfill the obligations and commitments of the position, and/or actions that violate the bylaws, policies, or interests of the PTO.

## **ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES**

- Section 1: The officers shall be President or Co-Presidents (not to exceed two), Vice President for Enrichment, Vice President for Fundraising, Vice President for Community, Vice President for Diversity, Vice President for Communications, Vice President for Volunteers, Treasurer or Co-Treasurer (not to exceed two), Recording Secretary, the Member-At-Large and the Teacher Liaison. Officers may also serve as Coordinators or Committee Chairs by appointment, or as other Board positions pursuant to Article VII Section 5, though they may only vote once regarding Executive Board matters.
- Section 2: The officers shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the PTO. They shall assume office at the completion of the school year, and serve for a period of one (1) year, or until the terms of their successors begin. No person shall be eligible to succeed herself/himself to the same office for more than four consecutive terms.
- Section 3: The duties of the President(s) shall include, but not be limited to: acting as a liaison between parents and administrators of Longfellow School on community issues; and organizing and presiding at all meetings of the PTO and Executive Board.
- Section 4: If the immediate past officers remain eligible members of the PTO, they may, upon invitation of the current Executive Board, be permitted to serve as voting members of the Executive Board in order to ensure continuity of leadership.
- Section 5: The Vice President for Enrichment shall oversee all enrichment programs funded by the PTO, including but not limited to Always Learning at Longfellow (ALL), Author Visits, Be Enthusiastic About Reading (BEAR), Chess Club, Display Case, Foreign Language Instruction Program (FLIP), Girls On the Run, Green Team, Parents of African American Children/Harambee, Reading Buddies, Science Night, Spelling Bee, Sports Night, Super Summer Math, Talent Show, Thursday Packets, and Wellness. They supervise and serve as member ex-officio of each enrichment committee.
- Section 6: The Vice President for Fundraising shall oversee all fundraising programs of the PTO, including but not limited to the Bake Sale, Book Fair, Box Tops, Dining for Dollars, Winter Carnival, Back to School Supplies, Market Day, Spirit Wear, Electronic Fundraising, Fun Run, Directory, Yearbook, School Pictures, and Parties at Longfellow. They supervise and serve as member ex-officio of fundraising committees.
- Section 7: The Vice President for Community shall oversee all community-building programs of the PTO, including but not limited to Henry Longfellow's Birthday, 5th Grade Celebration, Back To School (B2S) and Halloween Coffees, Courtyard, Ethnic Fest, Family Fun Night, New Family Welcome, Olympic Day, Turkey Trot, B2S Picnic, Year-End Picnic, Staff Conference and Appreciation Lunches, and the Veggie Garden. They supervise and serve as member ex-officio of community committees.
- Section 8: The Vice President for Diversity shall oversee the diversity programs and events of the PTO and chair the Diversity Committee.

- Section 9: The Vice President for Communications maintains the weekly and quarterly newsletters, the PTO website, the PTO's social media presence, and communicates with District Office regarding PTO business directed to all families.
- Section 10: The Vice President for Volunteers creates and maintains a database of PTO volunteers and tracks PTO member attendance at meetings.
- Section 11: The Treasurer(s) shall be the custodian(s) of the funds of the PTO. They shall present an itemized account of the financial condition of the PTO at each regular meeting and at each Executive Board meeting. They shall pay all bills as the Executive Board directs. The Treasurer(s) shall file all required state and federal tax and annual forms and reports. The Treasurer(s) shall chair the Budget and Finance Committee.
- Section 12: The Recording Secretary shall record the minutes of all meetings of the PTO and of the Executive Board, attend to such PTO notices and correspondence as directed by the President or the Executive Board, and maintain a list of the home address of each officer.
- Section 13: The Member-At-Large is a member of the PTO with such experience and institutional knowledge as to advise and assist the Board as the Board sees fit.
- Section 14: The Teacher Liaison represents teachers and their interests to the Board. The Teacher Liaison must be a current teacher and will inform Longfellow teachers of PTO activities and solicit input and feedback from the teachers.
- Section 15: The Officers shall elect the Kindergarten Liaison to represent kindergarten families and their interests to the Board. The Kindergarten Liaison must have a current kindergarten student and will inform kindergarten families of PTO activities and solicit volunteers.

#### **ARTICLE VII: THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

- Section 1: The Officers, along with any invited past-Officers, and the Kindergarten Liaison as a group shall constitute the Executive Board.
- Section 2: The Executive Board shall have general control of the affairs of the PTO.
- Section 3: The Executive Board shall meet at least once a month during the school year prior to the regular meetings of the PTO with each Officer, the Kindergarten Liaison, and the Principal each having a place on each meeting agenda to report on their activities and to raise questions or issues.
- Section 4: A majority of the members of the Executive Board at a duly called meeting shall constitute a quorum. Decisions of the Executive Board shall be made by affirmative vote of the majority of those present at any meeting of the Executive Board at which a quorum exists, except where otherwise provided in this Constitution.
- Section 5: The Executive Board, by majority vote at a meeting at which a quorum is present, shall have the power to fill vacancies in its own body.

- Section 6: At the Annual Meeting, the incoming Executive Board shall designate the time for the PTO's regular meetings in the coming school year. Special meetings of the Executive Board may be called by the President or any three members of the Executive Board by telephone, email or written notice to all members of the Executive Board. (Written notice shall be deemed given if personally delivered or mailed to the address of the Executive Board members carried on the records of the PTO maintained by the Recording Secretary. Notices mailed shall be deemed given three (3) business days after being posted in the U.S. mail with sufficient first class postage.)
- Section 7: The Principal and Assistant Principal of the Longfellow School shall be invited to attend all meetings of the Executive Board (by the same notice provisions applicable to the calling of the Executive Board meetings) in a non-voting capacity for the purpose of advising and consulting with the Executive Board on matters before it.
- Section 8: The Executive Board meetings are closed to the public, though members of the public, the school administration and faculty, and other PTO personnel or guests may be invited to attend part or all of an Executive Board meeting by the President(s) by the same notice provisions applicable to the calling of the Executive Board meetings. Such invitations may be for individual meetings or a standing invitation.

#### **ARTICLE VIII: STANDING COMMITTEES**

- Section 1: The standing and optional committees shall be appointed by the President(s), with the approval of the Executive Board. The terms of office of all committee chairpersons and members shall run for one year concurrently with that of the President(s) by whom they were appointed and expire on the date on which his/her term expires. All committee chairpersons must be members of the Longfellow PTO. The standing and optional committees shall be listed in Article VIII, Sections 2 through 9. All proceeds of fundraisers go to the general fund of the PTO unless otherwise specified or approved by the Executive Board.
- Section 2: The Search Committee is chaired by the VP for Volunteers and includes the Member-At-Large, the VP for Enrichment, the VP for Fundraising, the VP for Community and the VP for Diversity. The Search Committee secures from each Committee head their interest in continuing in their position and names of potential replacements in advance of the Executive Board meeting prior to the Annual PTO meeting.
- Section 3: The Diversity Committee is chaired by the VP for Diversity and shall identify the diversity strengths, issues, and opportunities within the activities of the PTO. The Committee shall systematically examine and enhance the PTO effectiveness at meeting the needs of its diverse membership. It shall respectfully celebrate and document the successes of the PTO's diversity efforts.
- Section 4: Standing Committees – Enrichment.

The following standing committees shall report to the VP Enrichment:

- a. Always Learning At Longfellow (ALL)
- b. Authors Visits
- c. Be Enthusiastic About Reading (BEAR)
- d. Chess Club
- e. Display Case
- f. Foreign Language Instruction Program (FLIP)
- g. Girls On the Run
- h. Green Team (Zero Waste)
- i. HARAMBEE/Parents of African-American Children
- j. Reading Buddies
- k. Science Night
- l. Spelling Bee
- m. Sports Night
- n. Super Summer Math
- o. Talent Show
- p. Thursday Packets
- q. Wellness
- r. Kumba/Ethnic Fest

Section 5: Standing Committees – Fundraising

The following standing committees shall report to the VP Fundraising:

- a. Back to School Supplies Sale
- b. Bake Sale
- c. Book Fair
- d. Box Tops
- e. Dining for Dollars
- f. Directory
- g. Electronic Fundraising
- h. Fun Run
- i. Market Day
- j. Parties at Longfellow (PAL)
- k. School Pictures
- l. Spirit Wear
- m. Winter Carnival
- n. Yearbook

Section 6: Standing Committees – Community

The following standing committees shall report to the VP Community:

- a. 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Celebration
- b. Coffees
  - a. Back To School (B2S)
  - b. Halloween
- c. Courtyard
- d. Family Fun Night

- e. Henry Longfellow's Birthday
- f. New Family Welcome
- g. Olympic Day
- h. Picnics
  - a. Back To School (B2S)
  - b. Year-End (YE)
- i. Staff Lunches
  - a. Institute Day
  - b. Fall Conference
  - c. Spring Conference
  - d. Teacher Appreciation
- j. Turkey Trot
- k. Veggie Garden

Section 7: The Care and Comfort Committee shall act to give support to members of the Longfellow Community in need and act at the direction of the President(s).

Section 8: The Budget and Finance Committee is chaired by the Treasurer(s) and reviews requests for committee and project support. They shall prepare the annual PTO budget, and recommend the budget to the PTO at its 2<sup>nd</sup> to last meeting of the prior school year, to be voted on at the last annual meeting of the school year.

Section 9: The Executive Board may establish optional committees as it considers necessary from time to time.

Section 10: Committees shall present reports of their plans and activities and appear at PTO General and Executive Meetings as requested. Committee heads will report after events and activities about their desire to return for subsequent terms in their position or potential successors. No unbudgeted expenses shall be undertaken without prior approval of the Executive Board.

**ARTICLE IX: PTO MEETINGS**

Section 1: Regular meetings shall be scheduled every other month during the school year on dates determined by the President(s) with the approval of the Executive Board, as provided in Article VII, section 6. Special meetings of the PTO membership may be called by either the Executive Board or the Recording Secretary upon the receipt of the petition for that purpose signed by at least thirty (30) members of the PTO.

Section 2: The annual meeting shall be the last regular meeting in the school year.

Section 3: Ten members present at a duly called meeting shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of any business. Decisions of the PTO membership shall be made by affirmative vote of a majority of those voting at any duly called meeting of the membership where a quorum exists, except as otherwise provided in this Constitution.

Section 4: Notice of regular and special meetings, including tentative agenda highlights, shall be given during the week in advance of the meeting.

**ARTICLE X: FINANCES**

- Section 1: By the time of the first regular meeting of each school year, the Budget and Finance Committee shall prepare and submit to the Executive Board a budget itemized by line item. Once received and approved by the Executive Board, the budget shall be posted on the PTO website during the first week of the school year. It shall then be presented at the first regular meeting of the PTO in each school year for approval by the membership.
- Section 2: The Treasurer shall prepare and file or cause to be prepared and filed such federal and state tax and accounting returns and reports as shall be required by law, at the expense of the PTO.
- Section 3: The PTO may maintain such bank accounts as are approved by the Executive Board. The Treasurer may sign all checks under \$500. All checks of \$500 or more shall be co-signed or otherwise approved by the President and Treasurer.
- Section 4: The Treasurer will provide a monthly report of all receipts and expenditures at every regular PTO meeting.

**ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS**

- Section 1: The Constitution may be amended by two-thirds votes cast at any regular meeting where a quorum is present, notice having been given at least one meeting in advance.
- Section 2: This Constitution shall be reviewed every five years beginning in 2015 and revised when deemed necessary.

**ARTICLE XII: DISSOLUTION OR LIQUIDATION**

In the event of the liquidation or dissolution of the PTO, whether voluntary or involuntary, no member shall be entitled to any distribution or division of its remaining property or its proceeds, and the balance of all money and other property received by the PTO from any source, after the payment of all debts and obligations of the PTO, shall be used or distributed according to law and within the intent of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code 1986 and the Regulations there under as the same now exist or as they may hereafter be amended from time to time.