

STEPS TO UPDATING BYLAWS

Bylaws must be adopted by the unit or council and approved by New York State PTA every three years for the unit or council to remain in good standing. Don't be intimidated by bylaws. Follow these steps and you'll be done before you know it.

- ◆ Form a bylaws committee of **3-5** members including the chair. Use experienced people on the committee as well as newer members. Form the committee early so that the members can attend a region or state bylaws workshop.
- ◆ The chair should:
 - a. Secure a copy of the most recent state approved bylaws. The president and secretary should have official copies signed by the State Bylaws Coordinator.
 - b. Consult executive board members for possible changes. Bylaws should reflect the way your unit or council operates.
 - c. Make a copy of the existing bylaws and any recommended changes for every member of the committee so they can be reviewed prior to the meeting.
- ◆ The committee members should review the existing bylaws and consider any recommendations submitted by the executive board or membership.
- ◆ Bylaws should:
 - a. Meet the needs of the unit or council. The intent must be clear.
 - b. Not give detailed instructions for carrying out each provision. Detailed instructions are better handled in unit or council procedures that can be modified at the local level. These procedures, after adoption, complement the bylaws by defining how the unit or council operates.
- ◆ Go to the NYS PTA website at: www.nyspta.org. Click on the Bylaws EZ button on the homepage. The Bylaws Wizard will walk you through a series of easy questions, e.g. dues amounts, officers, etc. The Wizard validates the information as you go through each step. Normally, all information can be completed within 10 to 15 minutes
- ◆ As information is entered to Bylaws EZ, appropriate data or sections of text are added to the template. As the final step in this process, a completed draft template of your bylaws are available for printing or review. The committee should review this draft and repeat the process until the final draft meets all committee concerns
- ◆ The membership must receive 30 days' notice of a meeting at which they will vote on any proposed changes or, if there are none, the proposed reapproval of the existing bylaws.
 - a. Unit proposed bylaws are submitted to all members and must be approved by a 2/3 vote of members present and voting at a general membership meeting.
 - b. Council proposed bylaws are submitted to all member units and must be approved by a 2/3 vote of members present and voting at the member units' general membership meetings.

- ◆ Once the bylaws are adopted, the President and Secretary must sign the cover page and insert the Adoption Date. Make a copy of this cover page for your records and send the signed original cover page to your Region Bylaws Chair (contact information is available on the NYS PTA website)
- ◆ Do not make additional copies for distribution until the state approved copies have been received. ***Bylaws become effective on the date of approval by the State Bylaws Coordinator.***
- ◆ The Region Bylaws Chair will review the bylaws and forward them to the State Bylaws Coordinator. Any questions or issues will be addressed during this process before state approval is given
- ◆ Two (2) copies of the approved bylaws, with the State Bylaws Coordinator's signature, and a copy of the approved bylaws in pdf format will be sent to the unit or council by the Region Bylaws Chair or Region Director. These are your ***official*** copies and are to be placed in the president's and secretary's books.
- ◆ Units can make additional paper or electronic copies for members as appropriate and may place a copy on file in the school office and/or library. Councils should provide a set of approved bylaws to each member unit.
- ◆ ***Bylaws are valid for three years from the date of approval by the New York State PTA Bylaws Coordinator.*** They can be reviewed at any time and resubmitted. However, every three years they must be sent, whether revised or not, 90 days prior to date of expiration to the Region Bylaws Chair or, in the Chair's absence, to the Region Director.

NOTES:

Changes in mandated articles and sections are voted upon by delegates at the National PTA and New York State PTA conventions and automatically become part of bylaws. Unit or council members should be made aware of changes in mandated sections.