Highcrest Middle School Parent Teacher Organization Bylaws

Updated: October 2024

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ARTICLE I: LEGAL NAME

The legal name of this organization is the Highcrest Middle School Parent Teacher Organization, hereinafter referred to as the HMS PTO.

ARTICLE II: MISSION STATEMENT

HMS PTO Mission Statement:

To support the HMS students and staff through various activities and venues in the hopes of providing the best educational environment and opportunity for all of our children.

ARTICLE III - OBJECTIVES

Section 1. The Objectives of HMS PTO are to:

- A. Plan and execute programming that relates to our mission statement.
- B. Provide a communication link between the District 39 families, teachers and administrative staff at HMS.
- C. Direct funding for programs that enhance the educational and social/emotional experience of HMS students and their families.
- D. Collaborate with other parent-teacher organizations in District 39 (elementary/junior high schools, D39 Educational Foundation, etc) in order to enrich and support our children through educational offerings.

Section 2. The Objectives of the HMS PTO are developed and promoted by committees within the HMS PTO which are governed and qualified by the policies set forth in Article IV.

ARTICLE IV- BASIC POLICIES

- Section 1. The HMS PTO shall be noncommercial, nonsectarian and nonpartisan.
- Section 2. The name of the organization and the names of any members in their official capacities shall not be used in connection with any commercial concern or with any partisan interest or for any purpose not related to the HMS PTO.
- Section 3. The HMS PTO as an organization shall not, directly or indirectly, participate or intervene in any way (including the publishing and distributing of statements) in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office.
- Section 4. The HMS PTO shall work with the District 39 schools to provide quality education for all children and shall seek to participate in the decision-making process establishing school policy. The PTO recognizes that the legal responsibility to make policy decisions has been delegated by Wilmette District 39 residents to the Board of Education.
- Section 5. The HMS PTO may cooperate with other organizations and agencies concerned with the education and/or social/emotional well-being of children, but those representing the organization in such matters shall make no commitments that bind the organization without the prior approval of the HMS PTO executive board.
- Section 6. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the HMS PTO shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from Federal Income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or by an organization whose contributions are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code.

ARTICLE V - PTO MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

- Section 1. Any individual who subscribes to the objectives and basic policies of HMS PTO and is a current parent, guardian or other adult standing in loco parentis of a HMS student, or a teacher or an administrator of HMS may become a member of the HMS PTO and are subject to comply with the provisions of these bylaws. Membership in this PTO shall be available without regard to race, color, creed, sexual orientation or national origin.
- Section 2. HMS PTO shall conduct an annual enrollment of members but may add persons to the membership at any time during the year.

- Section 3. The HMS PTO membership year shall commence with the launch of the electronic directory at the beginning of the new school year beginning in August and be active until July 31 following the end of that school year.
- Section 4. The HMS Executive Board shall determine annual membership dues.
- Section 5. Persons who join during the membership year shall pay the PTO membership fees for the year, and the annual dues shall not be prorated for a partial year of membership.
- Section 6. The privilege of holding office, introducing motions, debating and voting shall be limited to members of the PTO whose current dues are paid. Only a dues-paying member of the PTO shall be eligible to serve in any of its elective or appointed positions.
- Section 7. Teachers and administrators of HMS may become non-voting members, without paying dues, at the discretion of the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VI - EXECUTIVE BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1. Executive Board Responsibilities

- A. The HMS PTO Executive Board shall consist of the Principal of HMS, and at the Principal's discretion a designated teacher liaison as well as the PTO elected officers (ARTICLE VII: Section 1: A).
- B. Duties of the Executive Board shall be to:
 - 1. Attend monthly Executive Board meetings during the regular school year.
 - 2. Transact regular HMS PTO programming and regular business between executive and general meetings
 - 3. Create standing rules and policies
 - 4. Create and dissolve standing and temporary committees
 - 5. Prepare and follow a yearly budget
 - 6. Approve routine bills and expenses on an ongoing basis
 - 7. Prepare reports and make recommendations to the general membership
 - 8. Represent their standing committees at all Executive Board meetings
- C. Executive Board members agree to be present for all Executive Board monthly meetings when agreeing to accept the position. In the event of a conflict, the position holder must still email a report to the President or Secretary to present on their behalf at the meeting.
- D. Any Executive Board member with unexcused absences for two (2)

consecutive meetings shall automatically forfeit his/her/their place on the Executive Board and shall be so notified. For offices shared by more than one member, the attendance of one of those members shall constitute attendance by all persons sharing that office.

- E. The Executive Board, under the leadership of the Treasurer, shall prepare the annual budget.
- F. Meetings of the Executive Board may be called by the President, the President-Elect or by a majority of the Executive Board members.
- G. Seven Executive Board members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at Executive Board meetings.
- H. During the school year, the Executive Board shall generally meet monthly. The minutes shall be written up and distributed by the Secretary seven (7) days before the next meeting and presented for board approval. Once approved, the minutes will be stored electronically in a PTO Gmail account and shall include attendance and any handouts, proposals or other presented material from the meeting. Minutes shall be stored for a maximum of seven (7) years for historical purposes.
- Each Board member shall be entitled to one vote via email, in person, or Zoom meeting by a show of hands, verbal or written consent (chat message) as selected by the President. Unless otherwise specified in these bylaws, resolutions require a majority vote of the Executive Board members present and voting.
- J. An executive board member may call an online vote at any time, in which quorum must be reached with a majority rule, results of the vote will be added to the next meeting agenda.
- K. At the beginning of his/her term of office, each member of the Executive Board shall be given a copy of these Bylaws and shall be responsible for making a thorough study of them and then sign the bylaws. A copy of these Bylaws shall be posted to the website for the PTO members visibility.
- L. When a recommendation for an item of business or an announcement that has not had prior consideration by the Executive Board is brought to a General or Executive Board meeting, it may be referred to a committee and/or the Executive Board for further evaluation and study.
- M. The Executive Board may transact business in an emergency; however, no action taken shall be in conflict with the General Board.
- N. The Executive Board may vote to authorize the payment of unbudgeted PTO expenses of up to \$5,000 provided that such payment is made in accordance with

Article II of these Bylaws. Unbudgeted expenses in excess of this amount shall be approved by vote of the General Board members in accordance with these Bylaws and recorded in the minutes.

O. The HMS PTO shall make efforts to ensure that HMS officers comply with the above provisions but reserve the right to make suspensions of term limits in the event of extenuating circumstances (i.e., national pandemic, medical circumstance, etc) or if the Nominating Committee should be unable to fill the slate for the upcoming year.

ARTICLE VII - EXECUTIVE BOARD OFFICERS AND THEIR INDIVIDUAL DUTIES

- Section 1. The proposed Highcrest PTO officers will be elected at the final Board meeting of the school year. Once elected and once the officer agrees and signs the confidentiality agreement, agrees to and signs the bylaws and agrees to their executive and individual duties, he/she/they will become known as members of the Executive Board.
 - A. The twelve officers of the HMS PTO Executive Board are:
 - 1. President (1)
 - 2. President-Elect (1)
 - 3. Secretary (1)
 - 4. Treasurer (1)
 - 5. Assistant Treasurer (1)
 - 6. Vice Presidents (7):
 - Legislation
 - Ways and Means
 - Enrichment
 - Hospitality
 - Special Events
 - Communications
 - Student Programs
 - B. The numbered Vice Presidents shall, in their order in the event of the absence of the President and President Elect, assume the duties of that office.
 - C. The HMS PTO officers shall serve for a term of one year and shall be eligible for only two consecutive terms in the same office. If the officer has another child who will be attending HMS the following school year after the previous child's graduation, he/she/they can consider serving in the same position and it will be considered a new term. This will be the case except for President Elect and Assistant Treasurer, who will ascend to the President and Treasurer subsequently.
 - D. When agreeing to assume the Executive role, board members agree to be present, virtually or in person at the scheduled monthly board meeting and represent their respective committees.
 - E. The newly elected officers and appointed chairs will assume their duties

following their election, with the exception of the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, whose duties start at the new fiscal year.

Section 2. Duties of Individual Officers:

A. The **PRESIDENT** shall ascend from the President Elect position. Therefore, the President Elect position should be filled by a person who will commit to two (2) years of service to the PTO (one as President Elect and the following year as President).

The president shall preside at all General Board and Executive Board meetings, shall appoint all special committees and shall attend meetings of President's Council and District 39's Village-Wide PTO or shall appoint an executive board member to attend in his/her/their absence. The President shall have the authority to sign checks in the event of absence or inability of the Treasurer, shall be a member ex-officio of all committees except the Nominating Committee, shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed in these bylaws or assigned to this office by the Executive Board or the General Board, shall coordinate the work of the officers and committees, and shall work with the Treasurer on establishing the annual budget over the summer for presentation at the first meetings of the Executive Board.

The President, President-Elect and VP Communication shall have access to the principal's weekly newsletter Google account so as to include any timely information for the parent community.

Both the president and the president-elect shall serve as liaisons for student community service, long term community field and playground planning, Spirit Wear, CRC rep, PASS39 rep, D39 Educational Foundation and monitor the Facebook page.

The immediate **PAST PRESIDENT** may serve as an advisor to the current President but would not have any voting privileges.

- B. The **PRESIDENT-ELECT** shall assist the President in performing any executive duties and leadership tasks described above. The President-Elect shall also preside at all PTO meetings in the absence of the President. The President-Elect shall succeed the President in office for a term of one year so as to provide continuity in PTO leadership, programming and policies. See additional duties listed above under president duties.
- C. The TREASURER shall ascend from the Assistant Treasurer position. The Treasurer, in cooperation with the Executive Board, prepares the PTO's annual budget and presents it for approval at the final General Board meeting. The Treasurer, with cooperation from the President and presents a statement of account at all Executive and General Board meetings.

The Treasurer shall maintain appropriate documentation for all financial transactions, bank accounts and state/federal filings for seven (7) years. Pay out funds in accordance with the approved budget as properly authorized by the Executive Board or as approved by a majority vote of the General Board. The Treasurer shall act in accordance with Financial Policies adopted by the Executive Board.

The Treasurer's accounts shall be examined after the end of each fiscal year by a professional auditor or an auditing committee of two or more members who, if satisfied that the Treasurer's annual report is correct, shall sign a statement of that fact at the end of the report. The Treasurer cannot be a member of the auditing committee.

The Treasurer is responsible for ensuring that the PTO is in compliance with all local, state, and federal audit, registration, and filing requirements. The Treasurer shall be responsible for adhering to the Financial Policies of the HMS PTO as outlined in the document of the same name and recommend any revisions/additions as necessary to be voted upon by the Executive Board.

- D. The ASSISTANT TREASURER shall be supervised by the Treasurer and can assist The Treasurer in fulfilling any duties that the Treasurer directs, including the authority to pay out funds of the PTO. When possible, the Treasurer shall ascend from the Assistant Treasurer position. Therefore, the Assistant Treasurer position should be filled by a person that will commit to two (2) years of service to the PTO (one as Assistant Treasurer and the following year as Treasurer).
- E. The **SECRETARY** shall be responsible for attending all Executive and General Board meetings, taking attendance and recording the minutes and sending them to the Executive Board before the next board meeting for approval at the meeting. The Secretary records all votes including spending, gifting and policy decisions. The Secretary will include any reports from the administration, PTO members and the community about news, issues and events. The secretary shall also keep copies of these bylaws and be responsible for all official correspondence.
- F. The Vice President **LEGISLATION** shall apprise the PTO of major legislation affecting children and education, advise on parliamentary procedure, shall review the bylaws at least every two years and shall, in the temporary absence or resignation of the President or President-Elect, assume their duties until the Executive Board chooses a new President. She/He/They will also serve as the Safety representative and any related activities.
- G. The Vice President WAYS AND MEANS shall be responsible for activities that

collect monies that the HMS PTO uses for the benefit of the students, teacher community and parent community including (but not limited to) the iGNITE Fund for Enrichment, Birthday Books, Book Fair, HawkHut, and School Supplies.

- H. The Vice President ENRICHMENT shall be responsible for PTO sponsored/faculty-approved, curriculum driven enrichment programs, which may be presented through field trips, in classroom speakers/traveling exhibits and/or grade or all-school or grade specific assemblies for the benefit of HMS students. She/He/They will also be responsible for Environmental Awareness, Community Service, and Outdoor Classroom activities.
- I. The Vice President HOSPITALITY shall oversee all activities relating to Hospitality including 5th Grade Orientation Coffee, Newcomers to D39 district, Staff Appreciation including any holiday gift and Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week, and any parent/community focused outreach. She/He/They shall oversee any PTO supported activities related to the community and/or outside of the immediate HMS organization.
- J. The Vice President **SPECIAL EVENTS** is responsible for overseeing, planning and organizing events that build community spirit and/or team building within HMS. He/She/They shall be responsible for serving as a liaison to standing committees such as 5th Grade Connections, Freaky Friday, and Beach Bash. These events will not be held for fundraising purposes.
- K. The Vice President **COMMUNICATIONS** shall be responsible for ensuring the HMS PTO website is live, up to date, and organized, making sure timely announcements appear and can be easily accessed by the general public. He/She/They will oversee the Headline Editor, the webmaster and the Directory/Membership as well as all communications and publicity for the PTO including articles to the local newspapers, highlighting programs and events at the School; weekly HMS Headlines, Monday Broadcast and the Monthly Member Newsletter; and coordination with the PTO website manager.
- L. The Vice President STUDENT PROGRAMS shall be a liaison and responsible for overseeing the chair and respective committees for after-school clubs, Yearbook and the Variety Show. After-School Clubs that are sponsored by the PTO shall be limited to third party/outside vendor organizations unless otherwise approved by the school. The VP Student Programs shall also serve as the liaison between the HMS Student Council and any PTO sponsored extracurricular activities.

ARTICLE - VIII ELECTIONS, RESIGNATIONS, REMOVALS AND VACANCIES

- A. Any parent or guardian of a child who attends HMS, who is a member in good standing of this PTO is eligible to hold an office.
- B. If elected, PTO members who have consented to serve shall be eligible for nomination.

Section 2. Nominating Committee:

- A. The Nominating Committee shall be formed with the help of the current Executive Board and will consist of at least seven (7) voting Members. The committee will be comprised of: The Executive Board Chairperson, four (4) fourth grade parents, preferably one from each sender school, and two (2) current HMS Executive Board members (or should we add just general board/PTO members). Voting members of the Nominating Committee shall not be nominated to serve on the Executive Board.
- B. The chairperson of the Nominating Committee shall be the Vice President of Legislation. The outgoing President and the President Elect may serve in an advisory capacity and should vote only as a tiebreaker.
- C. Prior to meeting, the Nominating Committee will sign a confidentiality agreement. The Nominating Committee shall meet at least one (1) time, either in person or virtually (Zoom, email, etc) to discuss and slate officers and compile a list of potential committee members/chairs.
- D. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of candidates for Executive Board positions as well as a list of committee members and chairs that will include nominees from each sender school. The outgoing Executive Board will also be requested to help fill their position for the following school year by connecting with committee members that they oversee.
- E. The Committee will present the recommended officer slate and committee list on the PTO website at least two weeks before the last General Board meeting of the year.
- F. The officer slate will be voted upon by the entire General Board membership in good standing present at the final General Board meeting of the school year. Voting for the election of officers shall be determined by the outgoing president and can be either voice vote, show of hands or written ballot. A quorum of 2/3 vote needs to be established to approve the slate in its entirety
- G. The newly elected slate of officers and appointed chairs will review and sign these bylaws and assume their duties following their election with the exception of the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, whose duties start at the new fiscal year.

Section 3. Resignation:

A. If at any point, an officer or committee member would like to resign from his/her/they position, the resignation needs to be completed in writing/email to 2 Board members (President, President Elect, VP Legislation, Secretary, Treasurer). At least two weeks should be given before resigning from office.

Section 4. Removal:

- A. Any volunteer, committee member, executive board of HMS PTO may be removed, for good cause shown, by a ²/₃ vote of those present (assuming a quorum) at an executive board meeting where previous notice has been given.
- B. A motion for removal must be submitted in writing/email to 2 Board members (President, President Elect, VP Legislation, Secretary, Treasurer). Reasons may range from, but are not limited to: absenteeism; lack of participation; failure to support the mission of the PTO; harassment and/or unbecoming behavior. Once a motion for removal has been received, the person(s) must be notified in writing within 48 hours that vote will be taken at the next executive board meeting and he/she/they will be given the chance to address the board.

Section 5: Officer Vacancies:

A. In the event of an officer's resignation or removal from office, the remaining officers shall elect, by majority vote, a replacement to fill the unexpired term of the office. In the absence of a replacement, another executive board member may fill in on an interim basis.

ARTICLE IX - STANDING COMMITTEES

- Section 1. Standing Committees shall be created and dissolved by the Executive Board as required to promote the objectives and interests of the PTO.
- Section 2. The term of the Standing committee chairperson shall be one year but may be up for renewal depending upon need and necessity.
- Section 3. Standing committees will perform the tasks assigned to them by the Executive Board and shall provide monthly updates as well as advise the Executive Board if any issues arise.
- Section 4. The President shall be a liaison member of all committees, except the nominating committee.
- Section 5. The Chairman of each standing or special committee shall present a written

plan of work for the following school year to the Executive Board, and shall update his/her VP liaison of any changes or additions in a timely manner.

- Section 6. No committee work shall be undertaken without the consent of the Executive Board and is required to stay within budget which is dictated by the yearly budget and may not go over budget without the Executive Board consent. If committee chairperson exceeds budget and the Executive Board has not provided consent, the chairperson may be liable to pay for the outstanding balance.
- Section 7. The power to form special committees and appoint their members rests within the Executive Board. Special committees shall be created for a specific time and/or task and shall cease to exist when that time or task has been completed.

ARTICLE X - GENERAL BOARD AND THEIR DUTIES

- Section 1. The General Board shall consist of the elected officers, the chairpersons of all standing committees, the Principal of HMS, the Grade Level Administrators of HMS, one (1) teacher representative and the PTO members at large. The teacher representative represents the faculty of HMS and shall report on faculty news at the General Board meetings. Following these meetings, they shall report PTO information back to the faculty.
- Section 2. General Board members and Executive Board members are strongly encouraged to attend all the General Board meetings.
- Section 3. Each member of the General Board shall maintain a file (PTO Gmail account and/or paper file) of official material and shall transfer any materials to the President or the successor in office. She/He/They shall prepare a written annual report and conduct a transition of office meeting to the successor before the end of the school year.

ARTICLE XI - GENERAL BOARD MEETINGS AND VOTING

- Section 1. Regular meetings of the General Board will be determined by the HMS PTO Executive Board and listed in the District 39 Calendar. Special meetings may be held upon notice, either by Zoom or in person, from the President or President-Elect, or from other duly elected officers of the PTO.
- Section 2. There shall be an annual meeting of the General Board during late April/early May for the election of officers and standing committee chairs for the ensuing year.

- Section 3. Once elected, there shall be an annual joint meeting of old and new HMS Executive board members in late May/early June to review policies, pass along information to the incoming board members, sign bylaws and confidentiality agreement.
- Section 4. EIGHT General Board members, including at least TWO Executive Board members, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at meetings of the General Board.
- Section 5. Each Board member shall be entitled to one vote via email, in person, or zoom meeting by a show of hands, verbal or written consent (chat message) as selected by the President. Unless otherwise specified in the bylaws, motions require a majority vote of the General Board members present and voting.

ARTICLE XII: TAX EXEMPTION AND INSURANCE

- Section 1. No part of the net earnings of the PTO shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, officers, other private persons or other organizations and agencies; provided, however, the PTO shall be authorized and empowered, as set forth in the approved budget or with the prior approval of the Executive Board authorized in accordance with these Bylaws, (i) to pay reasonable compensation for the services rendered on behalf of the PTO specifically in furtherance of the requirements of these Bylaws, or (ii) to make donations to any organization exempt from Federal Income Tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code if such organization is working with the School on a program or activity directly applicable to and involving the School, or the teachers or students at the School.
- Section 2. The PTO board will also carry Directors & Officers Professional Liability
 Master policy and Certificate reflecting benefits and limits specific to our HMS
 Organization. It is up for renewal yearly, on September 24th. The Certificate also
 reflects premium paid and no further premium is due. The policy is secured
 through AIM (American Insurance Management and should cover events
 sponsored by the PTA. However, if hiring outside vendors, the vendors must
 carry their own liability coverage.
- Section 3. All vendors and partners that are sponsored by PTO activities or events need to have pre-approved PTO contracts that include background checks on all individuals that will be on school premise and/or interacting with student body.
- Section 4. When signing contracts, Insurance coverage needs to cover:
 - 1. Highcrest Middle School Parent Teacher Organization; 569 Hunter Road, Wilmette, IL 60091
 - 2. Wilmette Public School District 39; 615 Locust Street,

Wilmette, IL 60091

3. If the event is being held outside include: The Wilmette Park District; 3000 Glenview Road, Wilmette, IL 60091

ARTICLE XIII - FISCAL YEAR, RECORD KEEPING AND DISSOLUTION

- Section 1. The fiscal year of the HMS PTO shall be August 1 through July 31 of any given year.
- Section 2. The Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and the HMS PTO shall keep digital records and any past paper files of accounting for seven (7) years, as shall be sufficient to establish the items of gross income, receipts and disbursements, including specifically the number of its members and the dues collected from its members.
- Section 3. This organization may dissolve and terminate its existence in the following manner:
 - a. Upon receipt of a petition signed by twenty-five (25) or more members in good standing of this organization, the Executive Board shall give all members at least sixty (60) days notice and shall put the question of dissolution to a vote at a General Board meeting.
 - b. Approval of dissolution of the HMS PTO shall require the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the total membership.
- Section 4. In the event of the dissolution of the HMS PTO, the Executive Board shall, after paying all liabilities of this PTO, dispose of all remaining assets of the organization to another organization that qualifies as an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code chosen by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board of this organization.
- Section 5. Any action that may be or is required to be taken at a meeting of the General Board may be taken without a meeting if consent in writing, setting forth the action to be taken, shall be signed by all of the members of the General Board. Consent may be signed in counterparts. The action taken shall be effective when all General Board members have signed the consent unless the consent specifies a different effective date. Pursuant to Section 101.80(p) of the Illinois General Not for Profit Corporation Act of 1988, a consent transmitted or received by electronic means shall constitute a valid consent in writing.

ARTICLE XIV - CONSTRUCTION AND TERMS

All reference in these Bylaws to a section or sections of the Internal Revenue Code shall be to such sections of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended from time to time, or to corresponding provisions of any future federal tax code.

ARTICLE XV - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the PTO in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not in conflict with the HMS bylaws.

ARTICLE XVI - AMENDMENTS

- Section 1. These Bylaws may be amended at any General or Executive Board meeting, virtual or in person by a two-third vote of the members present and voting, provided that proper notice of proposed amendments has been given to its membership.
- Section 2. The Executive Board may appoint a committee to develop a revised set of these bylaws. The requirements for adoption of a revised set of bylaws shall be the same as in the case of amendments.
- Section 3. The First Vice President of Legislation, the President, and the President-Elect shall review these bylaws at the conclusion of each Executive Board term and recommend any needed amendments or revisions to the Executive Board for approval. Any recommended amendments shall be approved by the General Board.

CERTIFICATION

| We hereby certify that these | e bylaws were adopted by the memb | ers of the Highcrest Middle |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| School PTO at its meeting held on, 2024. | | 024. |
| | | |
| Laurel Nelson- President | Connie Moran- President-Elect | Melissa Dahm- Secretary |