**Ben Franklin PTO By-Laws**

# **Article #1: Name**

The name of this organization is the Ben Franklin Elementary School Parents Teachers Organization, Bethel Park, Pennsylvania. It is also commonly known as and will be referred to in these By-Laws as the Ben Franklin PTO. The mailing address will be 5400 Florida Avenue, Bethel Park, PA 15102.

# **Article #2: Objectives**

Section 1: The objects of the Ben Franklin PTO are:

1. To promote the welfare of children in home, school and community.
2. To advocate for adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.
3. To bring closer relations with the home and school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children.
4. To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for every child the highest advantages in physical, mental and social education.

Section 2: The objects of the Ben Franklin PTO are promoted through an educational program directed toward parents, teachers, and the general public; are developed through conferences, committees, projects and programs; and are governed and qualified by the basic policies set forth in Article #3.

# **Article #3: Basic Policies**

The following are basic policies of the Ben Franklin PTO:

1. The organization shall be noncommercial, nonsectarian, and non-partisan.
2. The name of the organization and the names of any members in their official capacities shall not be used in any connection with commercial concern or with any partisan interest or for any purpose not appropriately related to the promotion of the objectives of the organization.
3. The organization shall not directly or indirectly participate or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for any public office; or devote more than a insubstantial part of its activities to attempting to influence legislation by propaganda or otherwise.
4. The organization shall work with school to provide quality education for all children and youth, and shall seek to participate in the decision making process establishing school policy, recognizing that the legal responsibility to make decisions has been delegated by the people to the board of education.
5. The organization may cooperate with other organizations and agencies active in child welfare, such as conference groups or coordinating councils. The cooperation shall be approved by the executive board, but a PTO member representative shall make no commitments that bind the group they represent.
6. Upon the dissolution of the corporation or the organization, the Board of Directors or governing staff shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the corporation or organization, dispose of all the assets of the corporation or organization in such manner, or to such organization(s) organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious, or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization(s) under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Board of Directors or governing staff shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the corporation or organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

# **Article #4: Organization**

The organization exists as an unincorporated association of its members. Its “article of organization” comprises these by-laws, as from time to time amended, and its articles of association, if any. In the absence of separate articles of association, the by-laws shall be deemed to be the articles of association. In the event of any conflict between these by-laws and the article of association, these by-laws shall govern.

# **Article #5: Membership, Dues and Financials**

Section 1: Membership in the PTO shall be made available to any individual who subscribes to the objectives and basic policies, without regard to race, color, creed, or national origin, under such rules and regulations not to conflict with these by-laws.

Section 2: Only members of the association shall be eligible to participate in the business meetings, or to serve in any of its elective or appointive positions.

Section 3: The organization shall conduct an annual enrollment of its members, but persons may be admitted at any time.

Section 4: Each family shall pay annual dues of a pre-determined amount, decided by the Executive Board, to the organization.

Section 5: Returned checks/fees:

1. Any person whose check is returned to the PTO for non-sufficient funds or any other account issues will be held liable for all bank fees applied to the PTO account related to this transaction. These fees can include, but are not limited to, the NSF fee and the re-deposit fees. These fees and the original check amount must be repaid to the PTO within 30 days. No new checks may be collected by the PTO until the original amount plus fees are repaid.
2. If the original amount plus fees are not repaid with 30 days, the appropriate steps will be taken to turn this matter over to the district magistrate for collection. All fees incurred in the collection process will be the responsibility of the check writer.
3. The current bank fee amounts will be listed at the beginning of each school year in the Franklin Flyer. Any changes applied by the bank during the school year will be listed in the next available Franklin Flyer

Section 6: All PTO requests for reimbursement must accompany a receipt and a “Ben Franklin Reimbursement Form.” No reimbursements will be made without these two things. The reimbursement form can be found on the PTO website, listed under forms.

Section 7: Handling of PTO Money

1. All PTO checks will require two signatures
2. A Vice President will review the financials, at random, once a month.
3. Monies collected: All cash will be counted and documented by at least 2 people. All funds will be deposited by the treasurer within 3 business days of receiving the money. All committee/event chairs will have the money documented and to the treasurer within 3 business days of completion of the fundraiser/event.
4. Volunteers and their immediate family members will be permitted free entrance/participation to any PTO event at which they volunteer. All other food, etc. will be paid for by the volunteer.

# **Article #6: Officers**

Section 1:

1. Officers of the PTO shall be members of this PTO and shall have served as Chairperson or Co-Chairperson of a standing committee in the past at Ben Franklin School. If there is not a nominee who fits these criteria, any PTO member who displays an active interest in the PTO and its objectives may be nominated.
2. The PTO executive board reserves the right to remove another member of the executive board after review of their performance/lack of performance in carrying out their board position’s responsibilities, as listed in at the end of these bylaws. This would occur by process of a majority vote.  In this case, the vacancy would be filled by a person selected by the executive board, as stated in Article #6, Section 3.

Section 2: Officers and their selection:

1. The officers of this organization shall consist of an uneven number of members. There must be a President, Treasurer and Secretary.
2. Nominations shall be submitted in writing in March. Only those persons who have signified their consent shall be placed on the ballot.
3. Elections will be held in April, during a general meeting, by written ballot made available to the PTO membership.
4. A person shall not be eligible to serve on the Executive Board more than two consecutive terms of one year each term, in the same office. This rule will not apply if there are no candidates to run for election, and then the incumbent can keep the office for another year.

Section 3: Vacancies occurring in any office shall be filled for the unexpired term by a person selected by the Executive Board. In case a vacancy occurs in the office of President, one of the Vice Presidents shall succeed the office of President and be confirmed by the Executive Board, and also by voice vote at the next regular meeting.

# **Article #7: Duties of Officers**

Section 1: The officer’s duties shall be outlined and included at the end of the By-Laws.

Section 2: The treasurer shall be authorized to set aside each year from the funds of the organization, an amount not less than $3000.00 to be appropriated for use of the succeeding administration.

Section 3: Monies allotted for programs will be approved by the Executive Board. Bills not pertaining to committees or operating expenses, exceeding $250.00, will require a vote of the PTO membership. This vote can be conducted in person and/or electronically.

Section 4: Officers shall perform their duties in the parliamentary authority and also deliver to their successors all official material and reports kept together in the binder given to them at the last meeting.

# **Article #8: Executive Board**

Section 1: The Executive Board shall consist of the officers of the organization.

Section 2: The duties of the Executive Board shall be:

# To transact business in the interval between meetings.

# To present a report at the regular meetings.

# To approve the budget for the following year.

# To approve routine bills within the limit of the budget.

Section 3: Special meetings of the Executive Board may be called by the President or by a majority of the Executive Board. A five (5) day notice is required.

Section 4: The principal of Ben Franklin Elementary School will have an advisory position on the Executive Board of the PTO.

# The Principal will be included in any financial circumstances that may arise.

# The Principal is not a member of the Executive Board.

# The Principal will NOT have a vote in Executive Board PTO affairs.

# The Principal’s input will be utilized in the Accountability process, if needed.

# **Article #9: Meetings**

Section 1: A regular meeting of this organization shall be held once a month, during those months that school is in session for the entire month, on dates determined by the newly formed Executive Board.

Section 2: The last regular meeting of the school year shall be the annual meeting, at which time annual reports shall be received and the new officers installed.

# **Article #10: Parliamentary Authority**

Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the organization in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not in conflict with these By-Laws.

# **Article #11: Amendments**

Section 1: These By-Laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the organization by a two-thirds margin of members present, provided that notice of the proposed amendment has been given at least thirty days prior to the meeting.

Section 2: A committee may be appointed to submit a revised set of By-Laws for the existing By-Laws only by a majority vote at a meeting of the organization, or by two-thirds vote of the Executive Board. The requirements for adoption of a revised set of By-Laws shall be the same in the case of an amendment.

# **Article #12: Ben Franklin PTO Award for Higher Education**

Section1: Establishment of Scholarship Fund. A scholarship award will be given annually in accordance with the scholarship guidelines listed below. The award will be no less than $750, and no more than $1500. The scholarship money will be awarded to a maximum of two individuals. The scholarship amount and the number of scholarships awarded each year will be determined by a board vote.

Section 2: The Secretary shall chair the committee.

Section 3: The three judges will be selected from the faculty and the community. The judges must not be related to or close friends of any student applying for the scholarship. The applications will remain anonymous throughout the review and selection process.

Section 4: Scholarship Guidelines:

1. Applicant must have attended at least two years at Ben Franklin Elementary.
2. Applicant must be a current member of the Senior Class of Bethel Park High School.
3. Applicant must provide evidence that he/she has been accepted and will be attending a college, university, or school offering post high school training.
4. Applicant must be actively involved in one of the following: school activity or club, community activity or organization, or be employed.
5. Applicant must not be applying for a scholarship from another Bethel Park Elementary school.
6. In addition to the completed application, the applicant must answer the following question (total of 300-500 words typed, double-spaced, on a separate sheet of paper.) *How would winning the Ben Franklin PTO Scholarship help you achieve your academic goals?*
7. The application must be completed by the student applying for the award. The completed application, anonymous essay and evidence of acceptance from college, university or school offering post high school training must be submitted by the due date.
8. The award recipient must attend the Bethel Park High School Awards Program.

# **Article #13: PTO Committees**

Section 1: Committee chairperson positions will be filled at the April PTO meeting. If a person has chaired a committee for two consecutive years, the position must be offered back to the PTO membership for a new chairperson at the April meeting. If more than one person signs up for an open committee, the selection will be made by random drawing at a PTO meeting.

Section 2: A PTO member can chair a maximum of two committees in a given school year unless the Executive Board is unable to fill an open chairperson position by the first PTO meeting of the new school year. Then a PTO member can chair more than two committees.

Section 3: Any person accepting a Committee position will be held accountable for the duties of that position, along with the following:

1. PTO positions are accepted upon Board approval.
2. All Chairpersons are strongly urged to attend an Informational PTO Committee meeting at the start of the school year.
3. All volunteers chosen for Book-It or Home Room Parent positions are also encouraged to attend an Informational Meeting at the start of the school year.
4. All PTO members will work with the staff of Ben Franklin Elementary School to enhance our children’s educational experiences.
5. The PTO retains the right to remove a Chairperson(s) or volunteer(s), after review of their performance/lack of, and provide an alternate for ANY PTO Committee position.

Section 4: The Home Room Parent and Book-It positions will be selected by a drawing held prior to or during the first PTO meeting of the new school year.

1. A PTO member can submit their name for both positions and for multiple classrooms, but can be selected for only one position. However, a PTO member can hold more than one position if the position cannot be filled by the drawing method. (i.e. not enough volunteers).
2. A Home Room and Book-It Chairperson and a member of the Executive Board MUST be present at the drawing.
3. The Chairpersons and co-chairpersons of Home Room Parents and Book-It Parents can choose to select to be a Home Room Parent or Book-it Parent BEFORE the drawing takes place.
4. The PTO Executive Board retains the right to remove a Home Room Parent or Book-It Parent after review of their performance/lack of, and provide an alternate.

**Ben Franklin Executive Board Responsibilities**

# Coordinate PTO activities and schedule of events with school principal.

# Approve and monitor PTO operating budget for the school year.

# Decide on and approve PTO purchases on behalf of school.

# Maintain presence at school functions.

1. Send thank you notes to each committee chairperson upon completion of their committee.
2. Update and maintain the 2 PTO bulletin boards in lobby.

# Sort and distribute PTO mail.

# Decorate the school for Christmas. Coordinate holiday gifts for principal, secretary and custodian.

# Keep PTO closet inventoried and organized.

**Ben Franklin PTO President Responsibilities**

# Determine committees for the school year. Coordinate and assign committee chairperson and volunteers. Organize and distribute files to each committee. Explain necessary details (Reports, budgets, and timetables). Monitor progress of all committees.

# Preside over meetings.

# Arrange and plan PTO sponsored assemblies. Have all assemblies approved by Principal.

# Attend monthly PTO council meetings and give the membership a report.

# Handle PTO portion of Kindergarten Orientation and New Student Welcome packets.

# Coordinate election of Officers for the following year.

1. Prepare and have copied Membership, Directory and Homeroom/Book-It Coordinator Forms for first day packets.

**Ben Franklin PTO Vice-President Responsibilities**

1. Function as President when the President is unavailable.
2. Coordinate and run all PTO fund-raisers.
3. Attend monthly PTO council meetings with the President.
4. Review the PTO Bank Financials, at random, once a month.
5. Help prepare and organize committee folders.
6. Update and maintain the school sign.

**Ben Franklin PTO Treasurer’s Responsibilities**

1. Transfer name and President’s name to all accounts.
2. Set up ledger with monthly items.
3. Prepare book with committee headings for expenses and deposits to be charted.
4. Set up checkbook for each account with beginning entry to establish the new school year.
5. Always look ahead for each month to the needs of each committee and its chairperson. (Possible needs include petty cash, deposits, or checks for purchases) Maintain communication with all committee chairpersons.
6. Make the deposits yourself to keep track of each one. Mark each deposit with the appropriate committee.
7. Reconcile all bank accounts monthly.
8. Prepare a monthly report, even when PTO meetings are not held. (Always take the checkbook to meetings.)
9. Write scholarship checks as needed.
10. Maintain communication with the Librarian for the Book Fairs and with teachers for Grade Special Activities.
11. Maintain communication with all executive board members about any potential problems.
12. Pay bills promptly and follow up anything that is in question.

**Ben Franklin PTO Secretary’s Responsibilities**

1. Prepare and maintain minutes of the monthly meetings. Insure that the minutes are posted to the PTO website.
2. Maintain and update PTO Emails and Website.
3. Prepare the monthly Franklin Flyer.
4. Set meeting agenda, referencing past minutes and current Franklin Flyer.
5. Create and maintain the annual school directory.
6. Serve on the Board of the Ben Franklin PTO Scholarship Committee. Coordinate all items and meetings for the scholarship awards.
7. Send sympathy and get well notes to faculty, staff and PTO members when necessary. (Send flowers, fruit baskets, or appropriate item that the board has chosen.)
8. Camera responsibilities: establish a sign out sheet for digital camera.