

## COVID-19 Resources for PTA Leaders

### GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR PTA MEETINGS AND EVENTS DURING THE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

#### Executive Board/Committee Meetings

Our bylaws allow for Executive Board/Committee meetings to be held via telephone or video conferencing as long as all of the members are able to hear each other. California State PTA (CAPTA) normally requires that units, council and districts obtain approval from the State Parliamentarian for this section of the bylaws prior to using this method of meeting. However, given the sudden rise in coronavirus throughout the state, CAPTA will temporarily waive the approval process for this section of the bylaws and will allow all units, councils and districts to use telephone or video conferencing for their Executive Board/Committee Meetings. This waiver will remain in effect until June 30, 2020.

For those PTAs that do not have approval for telephone or video conferencing Executive Board/Committee meetings, we suggest that at the beginning of the telephone or video conference you present and vote on a motion to 'Suspend the Rules' to allow virtual meetings (with a 2/3 vote needed to approve).

#### Association/General Meetings and Events

While our bylaws do not directly prohibit meetings via teleconference, they do not specifically allow for them either. However, we looked at the non-profit corporate code and it does allow for meeting by teleconference and video conference. Also if there is a health emergency (which COVID-19 is), it supersedes any rule or regulation that would require in-person meetings if they pose a risk to a person's health. Even Governor Newsom relaxed the open meeting requirements under the Brown Act to help keep citizens of California safe.

California State PTA rules do not allow proxy votes, but teleconferencing and videoconferencing still allows for voting by the members themselves.

### TELECONFERENCING GUIDELINES

#### Getting Started

- Find a platform/app for hosting the meeting. There are several available. (See the **Teleconferencing and Videoconferencing Tools** section below for some suggestions.)
- Set up your account.
- Practice having a meeting with your executive board before you have one with your general association.

#### Before the Meeting

- Give notice of the meeting.
- Establish the ground rules for the teleconferencing meeting.

- Prepare the agenda, financial reports, minutes from the last association meeting.
- Email the reports, agenda and ground rules for the meeting to those who indicate they will be on the call.
- Make sure your membership list is up to date and your secretary has a copy.

### **During the Meeting**

- Conduct the meeting as you normally would. Make note of time you open the meeting as well as adjourn the meeting.
- Set ground rules for the call.
- Verify everyone on the call can hear and be heard.
- Remind people to “Mute” themselves to get rid of outside noises.
- Quorum should be established by roll call and identification of individual members.
- Have your Secretary do a roll call of the Executive Board that is on the call.
- Have your Secretary do a roll call of other members that are on the call. Verify they are actually paid PTA members.

**Remember:** The normal rules of holding a meeting apply to your teleconferencing meeting. People should be treated and treat others with respect and courtesy.

## **FAQS FOR MEETINGS VIA TELECONFERENCE**

### **I have no idea how to find a way to do teleconferencing? Where do I start to look?**

Go to the internet and type in “teleconferencing” or “conference calls,” or refer to the **Teleconferencing and Videoconferencing Tools** section below.

### **How much notice of this meeting do I need to give?**

General Association meetings need a minimum of 10 days’ notice before hosting the actual meeting. Standard notice is 30 days. No meeting can be held with less than 10 days’ notice.

### **How do we give notice of the meeting?**

1. Use the PTA’s social media platforms as well as the website to announce details of the meeting
2. See if your principal can place notice of the meeting on the school website and social media platforms
3. Email your membership list directly announcing the meeting and agenda
4. Board members should also share information about the meeting on their personal pages. This may notify people who are not following the PTA.

### **Is it OK to post the documents for the meeting on our website and social media?**

Yes, as long as you make sure they are non-editable documents. Also make sure that there is nothing controversial or confidential in the documents. Example: you can list that there are bounced checks from your last fundraiser but do not list the names of the people who bounced the checks.

### **Is it OK to present our financials at this teleconferencing meeting?**

Yes, you can present a full treasurer's report including ratification of payments made and releasing funds. Have the auditor present the mid-year audit. You can also present the budget for the next school year and release funds to pay summer bills.

**What should we do if we do not have a current membership list?**

If there is no current membership list, then you would have to grant voting rights to all those on the call, once you verify they are actually members of your school population.

**How do we handle translation of this teleconferencing meeting?**

See if the application or tool you are using has a translation option. Test it out before the meeting. If it does not offer that option, talk to someone who can do translation from the school community. The translator(s) would need to be on the actual call, translating in real time. Prior to the event make sure that person knows the order of what is happening during the meeting and work out how the translation process will work during the call. It is very important to make all our parents feel included.

**FAQS FOR ELECTIONS VIA TELECONFERENCE**

**Does the slate of officers need to be posted?**

Yes, your proposed slate of officers should be posted 30 days in advance.

**We never elected a nominating committee and do not have a slate of officers, what should we do?**

It is still important to hold an election. You will need to take all nominations from the floor for the positions listed in your bylaws. Please see the California State PTA Toolkit for further details.

**How do people run from the floor?**

You can handle this one of many ways. A few suggestions:

- Have those who want to run from the floor announce their intention at the very beginning of the teleconference. That way it will make things easier when the time comes to hold the election.
- Have those who are interested in running from the floor make their intent known within a certain time frame after the meeting notice goes out. The chair could then announce the names of those who are running from the floor to let people know in advance, who is running for the various positions.

**How do we handle a ballot vote when people wish to remain anonymous regarding who they are voting for?**

There are several alternatives to handling a ballot vote. Some of the conferencing services will allow you to vote and only the organizer see who has voted. You can utilize Survey Monkey, the free version, if you set the account up ahead of time and have the names of the candidates.

If there is no election because school is closed, does the current board roll over to the next school year?

Boards staying in place past the end of the term is not the ideal situation. For many reasons, PTA leaders may need to move on from their current position. Whenever possible, boards should try to hold an election meeting prior to the end of the term, in most cases, June 30th, 2020.

## TELECONFERENCING AND VIDEO CONFERENCING TOOLS

If local leaders choose to hold meetings via teleconference or video conference based on our recent guidance, there are various free tools to consider that allow you to hold online conference calls or video meetings with multiple attendees (subject to limitations).

Some options include:

1. [GoToMeeting](#) and [GoToWebinar](#)
2. [Zoom](#) \*
3. [Slack](#)
4. [GROUPME](#)
5. [Facebook Messenger](#)
6. [Google Hangouts](#)

To compare conference call systems, please go to <https://www.quicksprout.com/best-conference-call-services/>.

\* Please note that Zoom's free plan normally limits conference calls to 40 minutes, but this rule has been **temporarily lifted for K-12 schools affected by Coronavirus**.

*Mention of these companies does not imply endorsement by California State PTA.*

: <https://capta.org/news-publications/covid-19/covid-19-resources-for-pta-leaders>