SECTION 5.0 – POLICY ON ELECTIONS

5.0  Election Policy Purpose
The National PTA Bylaws set forth basic requirements for candidates seeking elective positions. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all candidates have all information needed to comply with these requirements.

5.01  Election Policy Authority
All candidates for an Officer, Board of Directors, or Nominating and Leadership Recruitment Committee (NLRC) positions, whether slated or self-self-nominated must adhere to this policy. Once the NLRC slate is announced, the listed PTA members automatically become candidates for the positions they have been nominated for. Once the self-nomination period has concluded, the Elections Committee addresses all nominees equally as candidates. The Elections Committee is the sole source for all information governing elections.

5.02  Elections Committee
The Elections Committee appointed by the National PTA President and approved by the Board of Directors shall monitor and administer the election process and develop guidelines for campaigning and campaign materials, as needed within the confines of board-approved policy.

A member of the Elections Committee must resign from this committee once they submit a Letter of Interest for any National PTA elective position. If there are self-nominated candidates, the elections committee shall ensure there is an opportunity provided by the Convention General Arrangements Committee for the delegates to meet all candidates.

The Elections Committee must perform the following additional duties:

- Provide the Board of Directors with a copy of guidelines for campaigning and campaign materials by the January Board of Directors meeting annually for approval.
- Provide guidelines for campaigning and campaign materials to slated candidates within 24 hours of the slate announcement.
- Guidelines for campaigning and campaign materials must be available when the self-nomination form is available.
- The Elections Committee Chair is responsible for notifying the National PTA President on all violations as defined within this policy and adhere to their respective roles during the advisement, presentation, hearing, and the disposition of all violations.
- Deliver online training for all candidates regarding the election process, campaign rules, and any other relevant information. This training must take place within two weeks of the close of the self-nomination period.
- Advise candidates on the election policy and guidelines for campaigning and campaigning materials. Guidelines must be provided to slated candidates after the slate announcement and included with the self-nominated application.
- Conduct a survey with all candidates on the election process to assist with suggested changes and amendments to the policy and procedure after each election cycle.
- Maintain regular communication with the NLRC and Convention General Arrangements Committee to ensure the proper resources, steps, and plans are in place to ensure fair, impartial, and success in administering the election policy.
• Conduct a pre-convention meeting for candidates and/or their campaign proxy to address any questions and to identify "no campaign" areas from campaign areas.

5.03 Self-Nomination Procedures
Those wishing to self-nominate for an elected position, must first apply to be slated by the NLRC to ensure that all candidates are subject to the same screening processes. Only those candidates whom the NLRC has considered and declined to nominate are eligible for self-nomination.

The NLRC shall provide each candidate whom they do not slate with the appropriate form to self-nominate, which shall include the Affirmation of Residency form, both of which must be submitted together to the national office.

The NLRC Chair must notify the appropriate slated candidates that the election for said position is contested.

5.04 Candidate Exposure
To help our constituents, make the best decision on the future leaders of our association, the following will be required of each candidate:

Candidates Speeches
• Candidate speeches will be pre-recorded and available on our website prior to convention.
• Speech Length:
  o Candidates for the Nominating and Leadership Recruitment Committee and shall be allowed two (2) minutes.
  o Candidates for Board of Directors - Member Representative shall be allowed two (2) minutes
  o Candidates for Secretary-Treasurer, Vice-President of Advocacy, and Vice-President of Membership shall be allowed three (3) minutes.
  o Candidates for President-Elect shall be allowed five (5) minutes.
• Candidate speech videos will be arranged by position.
• The Elections Committee will conduct a drawing with all candidates for officers, Member Representative to the Board of Directors and NLRC, to determine the order of their video speech. This order will also represent how the candidates' names will appear during balloting.

Candidates Query
• Candidates for Board of Directors – Member Representatives and NLRC will respond to at least three (3) questions.
• Candidates for Secretary-Treasurer, Vice President of Membership and Vice President of Advocacy will respond to at least four (4) questions.
• Candidates for President-Elect will respond to a minimum of at least five (5) questions.
• The Elections Committee shall be responsible for the development of questions for the candidate query and selection of a moderator who will conduct the query.

  Once a question has been responded to by a candidate, the item shall be discarded by the impartial moderator. This part of the Candidate Query section has been suspended for the 2021 Elections only.
• All candidates will have up to 75 seconds to respond to each question. The candidates may ask the moderator to repeat the question one time. The 75 seconds will start immediately after the moderator states, “You may now respond.”

Candidate Meet and Greet
All candidates have the option of participating in a scheduled meet and greet by the elective office as designed by the Elections Committee.

5.05 Campaign Materials Procedures
Upon the release of the NLRC slate and receipt of Declaration of Self Nomination, the Elections Committee provides guidelines and templates to all candidates that facilitate the production of campaign materials. All candidates must send the following campaign materials to the attention of elections@pta.org by May 1st at 11:59 PM EDT/EST. Failure to do so will invalidate the candidate. The May 1st date has been amended to April 22nd at 11:59 PM EDT/EST for the 2021 election only.

• Biography in a Word document in plain text with bullets allowed
• High resolution photograph in JPEG format
• Campaign narrative that is no longer than 300 words in a Word document in plain text
• A signed Verification Accuracy Statement Position form in PDF or Word document
• A signed Affirmation Residency form in PDF or Word document

For campaign material procedures, plain text defined as no bullets, no bold, no italics, no underline, no images, or elaborate design.

The Elections Committee shall incorporate all candidates’ campaign narrative (as submitted) in a public display at the National PTA Convention and Expo as part of the election process.

The Elections Committee staff liaison will inform candidates, via email, when campaign materials are received. Campaign materials shall be reviewed by the Elections Committee staff liaison and the Elections Committee chair for policy compliance, and candidates will be notified within five (5) business days of any corrections needed and timeframe for correction. After review, all materials are distributed as submitted.

The Elections Committee Chair shall notify the National PTA President and NLRC Chair of candidates invalidated during this process.

For this policy, campaign materials are displayed in alphabetical order by positions and offices wherever possible.

5.06 Campaigning Procedures
For this policy, campaigning is defined as organizing a series of activities to try to achieve their own election or that of someone else, which includes directly or indirectly asking and persuading people to vote for a candidate.

The campaign period shall begin after the first announcement of the slated and the self-nominated candidates together.
The Elections Committee will develop guidelines for campaigning and campaign materials as directed by the National PTA Bylaws.

5.07 Campaign Violations
Election policy violations must be submitted in writing to the Chair of the Elections Committee either in person or via email at Elections@PTA.org. Violations are:

- Any non-adherence to written campaign guidelines provided by the Election Committee
- Campaigning outside of designated campaign areas at convention
- Campaigning while at a National PTA-sponsored event or as a National PTA representative
- Derogatory, demeaning, or insulting remarks about a candidate.
- Derogatory, demeaning, or insulting remarks about a candidate made by a third party on the candidate’s own social media profile.
- Distribution of campaign materials other than those produced and approved by the Elections Committee.

The following procedure will be followed when a potential violation is brought to the attention of the Elections Committee:

- The Elections Committee Chair shall immediately inform the President and members of the Elections Committee. The committee shall deliberate and determine the legitimacy of the violation. The Elections Committee shall categorize each legitimate violation in the following manner:
  - Level 1 – The violation is easily curable by notifying the candidate to take the necessary corrective action within 24 hours and has no irreparable harm to other candidates.
  - Level 2 – The violation is not easily curable, and irreparable harm to other candidates is evident and warrants the intervention of the board of directors.
  - Level 3 – The violation either blatantly disregards the policy; the previous advice is not followed within the requested time frame, deliberately intended or non-responsive to corrective action and warrants the intervention of the Board of Directors.
- The Elections Committee will prepare a report of each violation, its categorization, and the outcome for the Board of Directors via the President.
- The President shall inform the Board of Directors of campaign violations as follows:
  - If the alleged violation occurs before the convention, the board will be notified within 24 hours, and consideration of sanctions will occur within seven days.
  - If the alleged violation occurs within seven days of the start of convention or after the convention is called to order, the board will be notified immediately, and consideration of sanctions will occur as soon as possible.
- The National PTA President shall provide the necessary notification within 24 hours to the candidate if the violation occurred prior to the start of the convention. If the violation occurs during the convention, the President must provide the necessary notification to the candidate prior to the start of the next general session.
The board of directors shall meet and consider sanctions as listed below on all Level 2-3 violations:

- During the meeting the president presents the board of directors with a report from the Elections Committee, the Elections Committee chair will respond to questions submitted by the board of directors during the meeting.
- Following the presentation of the Elections Committee report, the complainant and respondent will each have up to 10 minutes to address the board of directors either in-person during convention or virtually should the violation occur before the start of the convention as part of an election hearing.
- After the violations hearing, and the board of directors will discuss the situation and determine the validity of the report and if any sanctions will be imposed.
- The board shall have the ability to impose the following sanctions:
  - A warning on behalf of the board of directors with the advice that should the same violation or a similar violation occur again, the candidate may be disqualified.
  - Disqualification of candidate by a 2/3rds vote of the members present.
- Notification to convention delegates of all campaign violations must be reported prior to the election.

5.08 Voting and Balloting

The voting and balloting process must be presented to the Board of Directors at the January Board meeting.

During the National PTA Convention, the following applies to voting and balloting for elections for office:

When there are more than two candidates, if a majority vote is not achieved in the second or any subsequent round of balloting, the candidate with the lowest votes will be dropped from the ballot before the next round of balloting. The remaining candidates may be allowed one minute from an additional presentation following each round of balloting. This part of the Voting and Balloting section has been suspended in its entirety for the 2021 Elections only.

5.09 Notification of Results

Before making election results public to the convention delegates, the election results will be shared with the candidates by the Elections Committee Chair in writing or by a phone call.