

June 1, 2019

Dear Puesta del Sol PTA Membership,

This concept has been talked about off and on from previous boards - that is - to restructure the board executive committee with the intent to reduce the commitments of the board members which are already significant and the difficulties with finding board candidates to elect.

Our Puesta del Sol PTA Standing Rules currently state:

"The Executive Committee shall be the President, Payables Treasurer, Deposits Treasurer, Secretary, and the elected Vice Presidents of Special Events, Educational Enhancement, Fundraising, Communications and Membership, and School Relations. The Board of Directors shall be the Executive Committee and one appointed position. This appointment shall be made by the Executive Committee." This structure is 9-13 elected officers (depending on co- shared positions) and 1 appointed member.

WSPTA Uniform ByLaws require: "Each local PTA and council shall have at least four elected officers: president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. Other officers may be specified in the local PTA or council standing rules." (Article 5, Section 6 A.)

Our Board proposes that we change to the following structure:

ELECTED - Executive Committee: President (may be a co- position held by 2 people), Payables Treasurer, Deposits Treasurer, Secretary, VP of Membership

APPOINTED - Directors: Director of Communications, Director of School Relations, Director of Special Events, Director(s) of Educational Enhancement, and Director(s) of Fundraising. Additional appointee: Member-at-Large.

Pros:

- **Reduce number of officers needed to have quorum.** Currently with 10-13 elected board members, we need 6-7 people to attend our board meeting in order to make decisions. With 5-6 executive committee members, only 3-4 would be required to attend and all directors may still attend and participate without negatively impacting the decision-making process if a few were unable to make it.
- **Reduce the recruiting challenges to obtain officer candidates before annual election.** Each year the Nominating Committee struggles to find people to fill half or more of the positions on the board (6+). The time commitment is the biggest reason that prospective candidates give for deciding not to serve on the board. Reducing training hours and meeting requirements may help our Nominating Committee fill positions with candidates.

- **Reduce the recruiting challenges to obtain Nominating Committee.** Each year the PTA Board has a challenge finding willing candidates for the Nominating Committee. With fewer board positions to fill, this may make the Nominating Committee position easier to fill since the board would be responsible for finding Directors instead of the Nominating Committee.
- **Reduce training requirements.** Washington State PTA requires that "all elected Board members will attend at least one State PTA approved training session. At least one elected officer is required to attend PTA & the Law. It is recommended for the Secretary to attend as well. It is also required that the Payables and Deposits Treasurers attend a Treasurer-specific training class." This means we are consistently requiring 10+ board members to get training. We can reduce this to 5-6 people and still retain the knowledge required to run our PTA.

Cons:

- **Potentially reduced voting diversity.** With a smaller Executive Committee within the Board framework, now fewer people will have the power to make decisions and vote. For instance, this could affect some of the budget protocols where there are spending decisions like re-allocating money or discretionary spending. Normally we'd have 6-12 officers voting, rather than 3-6.
Rebuttal: It remains important that the officers with the formalized training offered by WSPTA have the power to vote with the restrictions in mind required by our PTA insurance and legal restraints.
- **Could appointments seem exclusionary?** With Directors now appointed by the Executive Committee instead of VPs elected by the membership, it may seem exclusionary if the Executive Committee has the power to keep potential Directors off the Board.
Rebuttal: While this is a cautionary potentiality, the current truth is that it's often been difficult to find enough PTA members to fill all the board roles and program chair positions. If we find that we have too many qualified volunteers in the future, then this will be a nice problem to have.
- **Fiduciary accountability moves away from Directors to Executive Committee.** Fewer board members will potentially be paying attention to the financial challenges including budget planning and keeping programs operating within their budget restraints.
Rebuttal: The Directors would lack the necessary fiduciary training that comes with the PTA training that is required of elected officers. Also, the Executive Committee would be the ones legally accountable to evaluate financial impacts.

- **Reduced training requirements.** If appointed board members are not required to take official WSPTA training, then the knowledge needed to perform their director-level positions will be lacking.

Rebuttal: The Executive Committee will be trained and will have the final oversight of all programs with attention to potential impacts on fiduciary accountability, legal ramifications, and insurance restrictions. While all board members would benefit from the training, it becomes redundant and costs additional overhead in time and resources. Our ByLaws will continue to state: "The purpose of the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors is to ensure all requirements as outlined in our Standing Rules and Bylaws of the Sunset/Puesta del Sol PTA, the state, and national PTA are strictly adhered to."

Additional resource:

How other boards work:

Many other boards have an executive team with limited number of people to make decisions and a larger board of directors to influence that decision-making. This is not a new concept. "Organizations also have officers, typically from among the board members, who are given a higher level of responsibility compared to other board members. Initial officers are elected by the board; this vote usually takes place during the organization's first meeting. Much like board members, officers usually serve terms. Typically, a nonprofit has three officers serving the role of President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Officer roles and their terms should be specifically defined in the organization's bylaws."

<https://www.501c3.org/nonprofits-board-directors/>

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Please email any feedback or insights to president@puestadelsolpta.org.

Thank you,
Puesta del Sol PTA Board