

MINUTES

The official record of all meetings, known as the minutes, serves as the enduring repository of the PTA's proceedings. Given their potential use as legal documents during litigation, it is of paramount importance that they are meticulously and objectively documented, then conscientiously transcribed into a final form. Although the Secretary bears the primary responsibility for recording, preparing, and preserving the minutes, it is incumbent upon every member to review them diligently. It is worth emphasizing that if an event or action is not documented in the minutes, it is as if it never occurred.

Minutes should not be mistaken for a mere report; they are, in fact, a comprehensive record of the PTA's business. Their role is to safeguard the PTA and its members by chronicling actions taken rather than delving into verbal exchanges or personal opinions. In the minutes, you will find an exhaustive account of all group actions, including the precise wording of motions, the names of their proposers, and the outcomes of these motions. The composition of the minutes should strike a balance between completeness, conciseness, and accuracy, aiming for brevity while ensuring the inclusion of essential and precise details.

These minutes should be handwritten in black or blue ink, then endorsed by the Secretary within a bound journal featuring numbered pages to prevent any potential tampering or removal of pages. The Secretary may also utilize a computer and type the minutes during the meeting rather than hand write them into a journal. Each entry in the minutes should specify the date, location, time, meeting type, and the names of the presiding officer and Secretary, or their alternates if applicable. During the meeting, the Secretary should adhere to the agenda's format and organization, taking notes exclusively on factual information and motions, with personal opinions and discussions omitted. At the meeting's conclusion, the Secretary's signature finalizes the minutes.

When tasked with recording the minutes of a meeting, make sure to have extra pens, a bound journal designated for minutes or a computer, and blank Motion Forms (located at the end of this section) at your disposal. Arrive at the meeting venue ahead of time to ensure that all necessary materials are prepared. Also, have a copy of the meeting agenda, the sign-in sheet for attendees, any relevant reports, financial statements, and documents that may be referenced during the meeting. In the event that the Secretary is absent, a secretary pro tem may be appointed for that meeting.

The most challenging aspect of minute-taking involves determining what information should be transcribed verbatim, what can be paraphrased, and what is not essential for the official record. Minutes should be succinct, factual, and impartial accounts of the meeting proceedings. Therefore, it is important to avoid letting personal preferences influence notetaking. Distinguishing between various opinions and facts can be challenging. Aim to impartially document the proceedings. As the recorder, listen attentively and don't hesitate to seek clarification and ask questions from the President or Chair if necessary.

All meetings may be recorded (either through audio or video) by one Board Member, preferably the Secretary, with the sole purpose of accurately documenting the business conducted during the meeting. It is essential to inform all attendees at the outset that the meeting will be recorded, and anyone can request a pause in the recording during discussions. All recordings should be deleted once the minutes have been compiled.

Courtesy Seat: Only individuals included in the meeting agenda are authorized to address the assembly. However, a "Courtesy Seat" privilege may be granted to a non-Board Member visiting the meeting. The meeting minutes will include a notation such as: "A courtesy seat was granted to Officer Brown who discussed traffic dismissal concerns."

During a formal vote, the method and tally of votes for each side should be documented. The Secretary should have blank sheets of paper available for secret ballot voting and assist in the vote count when requested. Reports from officers, standing committees, and special committees may be appended to the minutes to avoid duplicating information. The Secretary can provide a concise summary of the activities, and any motions arising from the reports must be included in the minutes. An example of a Tellers Report for voting can be found in the LPTA Toolkit: Elections and Nominating Committee.

At the end of a meeting, a motion to adjourn is only necessary if all items on the agenda were not covered.

CONTENT OF MINUTES

- **Heading:** Kind of meeting (General Membership, Board of Directors, Special, etc); PTA name; date; location
- **Call to Order** by _____(name) at _____(time)
- **Opening:** optional such as stating the PTA Mission and why we PTA; note what it was and who did it.
- **Attendance:** Names of members present (usually in meetings with 20 or fewer members) may be included or attach a sign-in sheet; quorum was or was not established.
- **Secretary's Report:** Draft minutes from ____ (date) meeting were (read/distributed/mailed) and (approved as presented/approved with corrections) or the reading of the minutes was waived and approved as distributed.
- **Treasurer's Report:** State the bank name and account balance(s); attach the reconciliation report, budget report, reviewed and signed bank statement, and other details; a motion is not required to file the reports.
- **President's Report:** details
- **Principal's Report:** details
- **Committee Reports:** List the committees and their details
- **Unfinished Business:** details
- **New Business:** details
- **Announcements:** details
- **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at _____ am/pm.
- Secretary signs their full name and dates the minutes in both the journal and the final approved minutes.



Draft Minutes: Minutes shall be typed within five days of its meeting, which are called the “draft minutes.” To begin, have the agenda, bound journal, Secretary’s binder, any reports or documents distributed at the meeting, verbatim copies of motions, and Bylaws at hand. Use the same template for all minutes which can be in a narrative or outline form. Number the pages. Assemble all attachments for inclusion with the final copy. Minutes are written in the third person. It is good practice to present the President with a draft for an initial viewing.

Approved Minutes: At the next meeting of that body and after the call to order, opening, and establishment of a quorum, the Secretary immediately stands and reads the distributed draft minutes. By a majority vote without debate, the reading of the minutes may be waived and not read. The minutes can also be read later in the meeting. Upon completion, the Secretary asks, “**Are there are any corrections?**” Corrections are made in red ink by drawing a line through the information with the correction above or written in the margin. The minutes are either “approved as presented” or are “approved with corrections,” with the date of approval recorded, and the Secretary’s signature on the minutes. The Secretary or Chair closes by saying, “**The minutes are approved as read**” or “**The minutes are approved as corrected.**” A motion is not needed to approve the minutes. Once approved, the minutes become the official, recorded minutes.

Correcting the Minutes: Corrections are suggested without motion or vote. Be grateful for corrections to the minutes. At least someone was listening closely enough to detect an error. Minutes may be corrected whenever the error is noticed, regardless of the time that has elapsed. To correct minutes after they have been approved requires an affirmative two-thirds vote. Corrections are made in red ink by drawing a line through the information with the correction above or written in the margin and initialed by the Secretary.

The written minutes remain in the bound journal. All audio or video recordings must be discarded. A copy of digital minutes may be stored on a flash drive. Should minutes not be available for approval, then those minutes are approved at the next meeting. Past minutes are approved in date order. Minutes are read only to the body who created them. Unless password-protected, do not post on websites. Do not publish them in newsletters or post where nonmembers may access them.

Minutes Committee: It is permissible, if the meeting occurs less often than quarterly, to authorize a committee to approve the minutes on behalf of the assembly during the meeting. The annual LAPT A General Membership Meeting is a good example. It would be futile to get the minutes one year later. A script is in the President’s toolkit.

Nothing is ever erased once the minutes have been approved and signed. Any member has a right to examine the minutes of the General Membership Meetings, but this right must not be abused. The original minutes must not be released from the custody of the Secretary except upon the written order of the President. If a committee needs

records held by the Secretary, the Secretary provides a copy to the committee chair after consulting with the President.

Distribution: The Secretary should provide the President with a copy of the minutes within five days and well in advance of the next meeting. Minutes of Board meetings can be distributed by email to save time at meetings. General Membership Meeting minutes can be disbursed or posted on a bulletin board. If minutes have been previously distributed, they can be approved without reading and recorded as “approved as distributed.”

MOTIONS

Motions are statements that describe a proposed action or decision. The process of making motions ensures that all decisions are fairly discussed and voted on. It is necessary to record motions verbatim, as well as the name of the individual who made them. There is an optional **Motion Form** at the end of this section to assist in recording motions properly. Record the name of the person who made the motion, whether there was a second (this second name is not needed), the date, the exact verbiage of the motion, verbal or ballot vote, and whether the motion passed or failed. When there are multiple motions in a meeting, keep the motions numbered and in order. If a motion is withdrawn, it is as though it never happened. Only record the final version of a motion.

When typing a motion in the minutes, indent it and use bold and all caps. Here is an example:

A MOTION WAS MADE by Kaionnia Snow and seconded to create a Nominating Committee of Cindy Allen, Ree Jones, and Tonya Lincoln. A verbal vote was taken. **MOTION PASSED.**

ELECTIONS

When writing the minutes for election results, use the following sample template for an uncontested election: No nominations from the floor were submitted. A verbal vote was taken, and the slate of officers was accepted. The elected Board of Directors for 2024 ABC PTA is:

Abby Lincoln, President
Jim Washington, Vice-President
Kami Adams, Treasurer
Ree Kennedy, Secretary

Include another paragraph listing the previous officers' names who will be removed from the account. Include names of those officers authorized to receive debit cards if the PTA chooses to do this. Caddo Parish does not allow this. See the Bylaws and the Elections and Nominating Committee Toolkit for further details on elections.

RECORDS RETENTION

Digital and paper records are acceptable.

Permanent

- Minutes
- Bylaws and Standing Rules
- PTA Charter
- Confidentiality, Ethics, and Conflict of Interest Policy
- Tax and Legal Correspondence
- Insurance Policies and Claims

7 Years

- Contracts and leases
- Budgets adopted at meetings
- Financial Report
- Grant Agreements

3 Years

- Bank statements
- Deposit Forms
- Expense Forms
- General correspondence

1 Year

- Routine Emails