
Meetings

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LouisianaPTA.org/president

Hold Effective Meetings (LouisianaPTA.org/meetings)

Use Roberts Rules of Order at **RobertsRules.org**. See robertsrules.com/frequently-asked-questions. Always have an agenda and current financial reports. Know your quorum. Start and end on time. Keep meetings as short as possible with long discussions occurring outside of the meeting. Add icebreakers to help people get acquainted. Hold General Membership Meetings before or during highly attended school events or in conjunction with a PTA program.

- In Board Meetings of about 12 or fewer attendees and in committee meetings, the President may make motions, vote, and debate. If the meeting has more than 12 people, the chair needs to be impartial and may not make motions, debate, or vote (except with a ballot vote or if their vote will affect the result.)
- Use **Unanimous Consent** to reduce the time needed to pass a motion if a matter is minor or opposition is unlikely. "By unanimous consent, I'd like to make a motion that [details]. Do I have a second? Is there any objection?" If all members remain silent, the chair says, "Hearing none, the motion passed by Unanimous Consent." If a member disagrees, they say, "Objection." The chair then allows for discussion and takes a vote in the usual way.
- Only members may participate in making motions, engaging in debates, and voting. Let attendees know the rules.
- Difficult People: Set boundaries. Don't give them power over your happiness. Don't pick up what they're putting down. Be direct and brief when communicating. If confronted with challenges to integrity, avoid defensiveness. Maintain a good sense of humor. If discussions become contentious, establish debate guidelines. Maintain your composure. Do not respond by shouting. If there are whispers, remain silent to regain attention. Use the Termination of Membership for truly difficult people and know that it might lead to lawsuits. Consult your insurance company about proper coverage.

The Agenda Runs the Show

Agendas help business to be conducted efficiently. The following is the normal order of business. A sample agenda and sample meeting script are at the end of this section. See a sample in the President Toolkit (LouisianaPTA.org/toolkits).

- Call to Order
- Opening (Mission statement; optional)
- Attendance & establishment of a quorum
- Secretary Report and Approval of Minutes
- Treasurer Report
- President Report
- Principal Report
- Standing Committee Reports, as needed
- Special Committee Reports, as needed
- Unfinished or Old Business
- New Business
- Programs
- Announcements
- Adjournment

The Secretary Report includes the distribution of the previous meeting's minutes. The "draft" minutes are reviewed, corrections are sought, if any corrections are made, and if they were "accepted" or "accepted with corrections." They then become the official record of the PTA. Approval of the minutes does not need a motion.

The Treasurer Report includes the current balance of available funds, detailing expenses and deposits within each budget category. It compares the current actual amounts with the initial budget amounts. A motion to approve the financial statement or reports is only needed to approve the proposed annual budget. The report becomes part of the record.

Committee Reports inform the BOD or General Membership on their progress. Typically, the committee chair delivers these updates. Not all reports demand action (motion). If a report calls for the approval of the members, the person presenting it makes a motion. Since the motion originates from a committee, there's no need for a second.

Adjournment is when the agenda is completed and the meeting ends. The chair may state "If there is no further business, the meeting is adjourned." A motion to end the meeting is *only* needed if all items on the agenda were not covered. Many PTAs have a social time with refreshments after the close.

Contents of the Minutes

The minutes generally follow the layout of the agenda. Here is a brief, typical overview.

- **Heading:** Include the meeting type (Executive Comm, Board, or General Membership), PTA name, date, and location.
- **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by [name] at [time].
- **Opening (Optional):** Note what was done and by whom.
- **Attendance:** List attendee names or attach sign-in sheet. State if a quorum was or was not established.
- **Secretary Report:** “Minutes from previous meeting were [read/distributed/emailed] and [approved or approved as corrected]” or “The reading of the minutes was waived and approved as distributed.”
- **Treasurer Report:** The XYZ Bank Account has \$99,999. CheddarUp.com has \$209. *(You can round to whole dollars.)*
- **President Report:** details
- **Principal Report:** details
- **Committee Reports:** details for each committee
- **Old Business** (optional): details
- **New Business** (optional): details
- **Announcements:** details
- **Adjournment:** Note the time the meeting ended.

Draft Minutes vs. Approved Minutes

- The minutes should be typed within 5 days of the meeting. Number the pages. Include all reports. Have the President preview the minutes. These are called the “**Draft Minutes**.”
- At the next meeting, the Secretary distributes and/or reads the Draft Minutes. (The reading of the minutes may be waived by a majority vote without debate.) The Secretary asks for any corrections which are made in red ink. The Secretary then states that the minutes are “approved as read” or are “approved as corrected,” and signs the minutes. A motion is not needed to approve the minutes. The secretary signs & dates the minutes. The minutes then become the official **Approved Minutes**.

Recording a Motion

The process of making motions ensures that all decisions are fairly discussed & voted on. Record the name of the person who made the motion, whether it was seconded, the exact motion verbatim, how the vote was taken (verbal or ballot), and if the motion passed or failed. If a motion is withdrawn, it is as though it never happened and is not included in the minutes. If a motion is not seconded, then it cannot continue to be discussed and it dies. Only record the final version of a motion. Use this format including the indentation, bold text, and skipping a line before and after the motion:

A MOTION WAS MADE by Mignon Bergeron and seconded to host a Read-It-Again Library event by the ABC PTA. A verbal vote was taken. **MOTION PASSED.**

A MOTION WAS MADE by Evangeline Hebert and seconded to purchase a vehicle for the principal. The ballot vote was taken with 1 yes and 12 nos. **MOTION FAILED.**

A MOTION WAS MADE by Chantelle Champagne and seconded to have Massage Envy provide free massages during Teacher Appreciation Week using unanimous consent. There were no objections. **MOTION PASSED.**

A MOTION WAS MADE by Etienne Theriot to accept the proposed annual budget from the Budget Committee. A verbal vote was taken. **MOTION PASSED.** *(A second is not needed if a motion is coming from a committee.)*

A MOTION WAS MADE by Magnolia Chiasson and seconded to adjourn the meeting early before all items on the agenda were covered. A verbal vote was taken. **MOTION FAILED.** *(The only time a motion is needed to adjourn a meeting early is if all items on the agenda are not covered.)*