

BYLAWS OF THE WESTFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

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ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of the organization shall be the Westford Middle School Parent Teacher Organization (or Westford Middle School PTO or WMSPTO).

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

Membership shall be open to all parents and/or guardians of children in all Westford public middle schools, specifically grades six through eight. However, any and all parents and/or guardians of students in any other grade who may be housed in any Westford public middle school shall be considered members of this PTO. Membership shall be open to all teachers, staff, and volunteers in the Westford public middle schools. Membership in this PTO shall be made available without regard to race, color, creed or national origin.

No membership dues shall be charged to the members of this PTO.

Amended: October 20, 2010

ARTICLE III: MISSION

The Westford Elementary PTO is organized exclusively for the charitable, scientific, literary or educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Amended: June 3, 2009

The mission of the Westford Middle School Parent Teacher Organization is:

- To **inform parents/guardians** of the issues, programs, and activities taking place at the Blanchard and Stony Brook schools specifically, and the Westford Public Schools generally. The WMSPTO will work with the schools and with parents/guardians to keep the lines of communication open.
- To **sponsor a variety of arts & education programming programs** for middle school students to augment the curriculum as established by the Westford Public Schools. In addition, the WMSPTO will, when possible, sponsor and support parent enrichment activities.
- To **promote student and family oriented activities and programs** that help foster a positive environment for students and to enhance families' overall middle school experience. Events should be designed to serve the needs of the school community.
- To **sponsor fundraising activities** to help the Blanchard and Stony Brook schools particularly in the areas of curriculum enrichment, special activities, field trips, social events, and classroom supplies. To support activities and spending that enhances the student bodies' learning experiences, the school staff and school community as a whole.
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- To **provide input** as a parent resource group to help school administration make decisions as they relate to issues, programs, and activities at the Blanchard and Stony Brook schools.

ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS

1. The WMSPTO president and principals will schedule WMSPTO general meetings. There will be at least three general meetings per year held approximately in October, January, and April (hereafter referred to as the “October general meeting,” the “January general meeting,” and the “April general meeting” respectively). All general meetings are open to the general membership (see Article II) and all from this membership are encouraged to attend.
2. There will be at least three Executive Board meetings scheduled yearly, including one in the early fall to develop the proposed budget, one in February to approve the Nominating Committee (hereafter referred to as the “February Executive Board meeting”), and one in June (hereafter referred to as the “Changeover meeting”) for the purpose of installing new officers and exchanging records between the outgoing and incoming Executive Boards.
3. The WMSPTO vice-presidents, on an as-needed basis, will schedule site-based planning meetings, held at their respective schools. Site-based meetings are generally for the implementation of activities that have already been approved.
4. The president may periodically schedule a planning meeting for the Executive Board and all committee chairs if there is a topic that affects the organization that needs to be discussed. Meetings should be scheduled at least one week in advance to give adequate notice to the attendees.
5. Issues relating to the operations of the WMSPTO must be presented for a vote at the general meeting. In order for a vote to be binding, two thirds of the Executive Board must vote, whether in person, via e-mail, or written submission with a simple majority determining the outcome.
6. The WMSPTO will conduct business during the summer months as needed.
7. Robert’s Rules of Order shall apply except where bylaws supercede.

ARTICLE V: EXECUTIVE BOARD

Amended: June 3, 2009

The WMSPTO Executive Board will consist of the following positions: president, vice-presidents (one from Blanchard and one from Stony Brook), treasurer, secretary, arts & education programming chairpersons (one from Blanchard and one from Stony Brook), fundraising chairpersons (one from Blanchard and one from Stony Brook), and publicity chairpersons (one from Blanchard and one from Stony Brook).

ARTICLE VI: RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **President:** The president shall preside at all WMSPTO meetings; shall work with the principals to prepare an agenda for all meetings; shall oversee elections for available parent positions on the Blanchard and Stony Brook School Councils; shall, along with the treasurer,

authorize any expenditure exceeding \$500.00; shall participate in creating the annual budget; and shall, in conjunction with the vice-presidents, appoint a Nominating Committee (see Article VII). The president may attend all site-based meetings, Superintendent's Roundtable, and School Committee meetings. The president will review the audited books and make any necessary changes.

2. **Vice-presidents:** There will be one vice-president from each middle school who will assist the president with all duties listed above. Additionally, the vice-presidents are responsible for securing volunteers for fundraisers and other WMSPTO events; scheduling and presiding over site-based meetings; communicating events at their respective schools; participating in the creation of the annual budget; and, in conjunction with the president, appointing a nominating committee (see Article VII). If there is a site-based meeting, the vice-presidents must record minutes and send them to the secretary for the record. The vice-presidents may also attend all WMSPTO meetings, in addition to the Superintendent's Roundtable and School Committee meetings.
3. **Treasurer:** The treasurer shall receive all moneys of the WMSPTO; shall keep an accurate record of receipts and expenditures; shall submit an ongoing financial statement at Executive Board meetings and general meetings; shall authorize, along with the president, any expenditure that exceeds \$500.00; shall make the books available for WMSPTO audit, upon request; and shall participate in the preparation of a budget prior to the first general meeting of the year.
4. **Secretary:** The secretary shall record and file the minutes of all WMSPTO general meetings and present said minutes at the following WMSPTO general meeting; shall record and file the minutes of all WMSPTO Executive Board meetings and present said minutes at the following WMSPTO Executive Board meeting; shall file the minutes of all site-based meetings (recorded and submitted by vice-president or other site-based meeting attendee); shall maintain a record of all WMSPTO correspondence, including a hard copy of all votes and official correspondence which may be done via e-mail; and shall participate in creating the annual budget.

Amended: June 3, 2009

5. **Arts & Education Programming Chairpersons:** The enrichment chairpersons—with input from the Blanchard and Stony Brook staffs—are responsible for planning and coordinating logistics for all enrichment activities and programs sponsored by the WMSPTO; recruiting volunteers for this committee; participating in the creation of the annual budget; and managing the arts & education programming spending according to that budget.
6. **Fundraising Chairpersons:** The fundraising chairpersons are responsible for planning and coordinating all fundraising events; researching alternative fundraising options and presenting them to the Executive Board for consideration; recruiting volunteers for this committee; participating in the creation of the annual budget; and managing any fundraising expenditures according to that budget.
7. **Publicity Chairpersons:** The publicity chairpersons are responsible for submitting updates for the WMSPTO webpage; creating and publishing all communication materials (including, but not limited to fliers, website updates, and so on) for each WMSPTO-related event; obtaining the required approvals from the Central Office or principals for any WMSPTO

communication material sent to the general membership; recruiting volunteers for this committee; participating in the creation of the annual budget; and managing any publicity expenditures according to that budget.

Subcommittees:

The following subcommittees shall be established and a chairperson shall be appointed for each committee. All subcommittee members are considered part of the general membership of the WMSPTO and therefore are not granted any voting privileges on the Executive Board.

1. **Teacher and Staff Appreciation:** The Teacher and Staff Appreciation committee shall acknowledge important occasions for teachers and staff at least two times a year. These shall include a fall welcome-back coffee and a spring thank-you luncheon. Responsibilities include: assembling the committee and recruiting volunteers to help with the events; planning and coordinating all logistics for the events; seeking food and monetary donations from parents/guardians as appropriate; and managing the donations received and the funds allocated to the event according to the WMSPTO budget.
2. **School Store:** The School Store committee shall coordinate the operation of the school stores (one at each school). Responsibilities include: setting a budget; submitting budget to the Executive Board; ordering school store items; managing expenditures and sales; keeping accurate record of expenditures and receipts; and submitting report to the audit team for review at the end of the school year. All funds in excess of necessary start-up costs will be turned over at the end of the school year to the treasurer.
3. **Eighth Grade Graduation:** The Eighth Grade Graduation committee shall organize, coordinate, and put on the eighth grade graduation and breakfast. Responsibilities include assembling the committee with representatives from both schools; planning graduation events; reserving event venues; seeking donations; conducting events; and managing the donations received and the funds allocated to the event according to the WMSPTO budget.

Each chairperson shall also facilitate meetings of their committee, work with the publicity chairpersons to publicize events, and file a written report after event with the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VII: NOMINATING COMMITTEE AND ELECTIONS

1. The WMSPTO president and vice-presidents shall appoint a Nominating Committee to be approved by vote by the Executive Board at the February Executive Board meeting. In order for the vote to be binding, at least two-thirds of the Executive Board must vote (either by email, in person, or written submission) with the outcome determined by a simple majority.
2. The Nominating Committee shall be composed of:
 - Two current Executive Board members, one of whom shall be designated as chairperson by the president and vice-presidents
 - Two representatives from the general WMSPTO membership
 - One fifth grade parent representative

3. The Nominating Committee, in conjunction with the publicity chairpersons or designee, shall create a flier directed toward all parents/guardians of current sixth and seventh grade students in the Blanchard and Stony Brook schools, and to all parents/guardians of current fifth grade students in the Abbot, Crisafulli, and Day schools, inviting them to run for positions on the Executive Board. Board position job descriptions shall be made available to all interested parents/guardians. Additionally, the flier will solicit names of those parents/guardians who want to volunteer on subcommittees or in other capacities but not serve on the Executive Board. The committee shall distribute the flier after the February Executive Board meeting.
4. Any parent/guardian who is interested in running for the position of president must have served in some capacity on the WMSPTO Executive Board or on a WMSPTO committee the previous year.
5. The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of nominees (one for each open position) to the WMSPTO general membership at the April general meeting. Each candidate must be elected to office by a simple majority of those present at the meeting.
6. In the case that a nominee does not receive a simple majority of votes by those in attendance at the general meeting, the floor will accept nominations for open positions. In order for a floor-nominated candidate to be *considered* for a position, she or he must be approved by a simple majority by those in attendance at the meeting by a voice / hand vote.
7. In the event that there is more than one candidate *approved* for nomination for any position, a runoff vote will be conducted and the candidate who receives the most votes for any position will be deemed the elected official.
8. In the event there are no candidates *considered* for nomination for any position, the position will remain open and the Nominating Committee may continue to recruit and fill these positions until the June changeover meeting. This meeting will open as a WMSPTO general meeting and the Nominating Committee will once present a candidate for each open position for approval by the general membership present at this meeting. Nominations can also be made by the floor at this meeting as outlined above.
9. All Executive Board positions have terms of one year and no person may be elected to the same Executive Board position for more than two consecutive terms. There is no limit to the number of times a member may serve on the Executive Board.
10. Vacancies occurring during the year, with the exception of the office of president, shall be filled by appointment and voted on by at least two-thirds of the Executive Board (either by email, in person, or written submission) with the result determined by a simple majority. Should the office of president become vacant during the school year, the vice presidents automatically assume that role.
11. Any officer who does not perform the duties of that office may be relieved of the position by a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Board (either by email, in person, or written submission).
12. Installation of officers shall take place at the June changeover meeting (see Article IX). New officers shall assume their responsibilities at the beginning of the next fiscal year.

Amended: October 20, 2010

ARTICLE VIII: FINANCES

Section 1: Fundraisers

1. The Executive Board shall determine at the beginning of the school year the specific town-wide fundraisers for that year. The number or type of fundraisers may be revised at any time at the Executive Board's discretion.
2. A town-wide fundraiser, in general, is to benefit all Westford public middle schools.
3. A shared fundraiser is also considered to be in the same class a town-wide; however, the funds are split between the schools sharing the fundraiser.
4. Any school holding its own fundraiser will retain those funds.
5. Fundraising is an opportunity to generate revenue for the PTO as a group, not individuals. Therefore, revenues should be recorded in a group account where all members or students have the same opportunity to benefit equally from the revenues. One member or student should not receive a larger benefit from fundraising than another.

Section 2: Budget

1. At the beginning of the school year, the budget committee shall establish a budget, including the projected revenues from the town-wide fundraisers. The budget committee will consist of the WMSPTO Executive Board.
 - The treasurer solicits budget inputs (revenue/expenses) from all committee chairs
 - An overall WMSPTO line item budget is prepared containing both projected income and proposed spending.
 - The treasurer presents current budget, starting balance, and any items requiring carry over from the previous budget.
2. The budget will follow the laws regulating non-profit organizations, giving a detailed accounting of where raised money will be allocated, and keeping a record of all financial transactions including all documentation required by the IRS.
3. The fiscal year will begin on July 1 and end on June 30.
4. The budget will be submitted to the first general meeting annually of the WMSPTO for approval.
5. The treasurer shall balance the over/under variance to budget allocation in January and again in April (as needed). If the town-wide actual are significantly different from the budget, an adjusted budget shall be established with a new allocated amount determined for each budget

category.

6. Any excess funds from prior year's operations will be allocated for use by the WMSPTO Executive Board and must be voted in by a simple majority of at least two-thirds of the Executive Board (either by email, in person, or written submission). If excess funds are allocated generally to schools or principals' funds, the principals must submit in writing a proposal for the use of this money and it must be approved by a simple majority of at least two-thirds of the Executive Board (either by email, in person, or written submission).
7. A minimum of \$2,000 balance will be left at the end of each school year for start-up costs at the beginning of the next school year.
8. All chairpersons are responsible for managing spending to their approved allocation of funds according to the annual budget.

Amended: October 20, 2010

Section 3: Disbursement of Funds

1. The Middle School PTO shall maintain a tax-exempt status as defined by section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code.
 - a. As such, all PTO funds should be spent to benefit all or a significant portion of the general student body, teachers, staff and community unless specifically budgeted for otherwise.
2. Receipts should accompany all requests for disbursement of funds and an explanation of what the money will be / has been used for should accompany each request.
3. The WMSPTO will not issue any blank checks.
4. All checks written by the WMSPTO exceeding \$500 will require the signature of the treasurer and president.
5. The treasurer may authorize, along with the president, any WMSPTO expenditure up to a maximum of \$100/month, not authorized in the current budget.

ARTICLE IX: EXECUTIVE BOARD CHANGEOVER

Section 1: Transitioning Boards

1. The Executive Board's fiscal year shall run for 12 months, starting in July following the changeover meeting (see below).
2. The treasurer's financial records and reports will be audited by the incoming treasurer at the end of the fiscal year and no later than July 31. The period covered will include from the previous July 1 through June 30 of the current year (12 months).
3. In the event that the current treasurer plans to stay in the position for an additional year, the Executive Board will seek a parent/guardian to audit the records and reports. The audit will span the same time period.

4. The audit results shall be presented to the president and vice presidents. Upon completion of the audit, the Executive Board will notify parents/guardians at the October general meeting that the financial reports and records have been reviewed. Any findings must be immediately documented and reported to the Executive Board.

Section 2: Changeover Meeting

1. The Executive Board shall have a changeover meeting in June for the new board members to obtain information from the prior year's board members. The outgoing president is responsible for organizing the meeting. All records, files, and documents must be transferred to the new board members at such time.
2. The Nominating Committee will also compile a list of volunteer names and submit said list to the incoming board at the changeover meeting.

ARTICLE X: DISSOLUTION OF ORGANIZATION

In the event that the WMSPTO dissolves, any remaining funds will be distributed equally to Blanchard and Stony Brook Middle Schools, to be used at the discretion of the school principals.

ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS

These bylaws can be amended at any WMSPTO general meeting by a two-thirds vote of the general membership present and voting, provided the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing or via email to the Executive Board at least two weeks prior to the general meeting. The Executive Board must provide written notification of the amendment to the general membership at least one week prior to the voting.

These bylaws shall be reviewed annually.

Middle School PTO By-Laws Revision	June 3, 2009
Middle School PTO By-Laws Revision	October 20, 2010