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# **Somerville High School PTO**

*222 Davenport Street, Somerville, NJ 08876*

[shsptochair@gmail.com](mailto:shsptochair@gmail.com)

[www.shspto.org](http://www.shspto.org)

## **BY-LAWS**

**Established September 2011**

**Amended May 16, 2017**

**Draft Amendment October 2019**

**Amended October 23 2023**

### **Article I – ORGANIZATION**

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the Somerville High School Parent Teacher Organization (henceforth referred to as the SHSPTO).

### **Article II - MISSION**

It is our mission to foster a strong foundation upon which our children can build both educational and social bonds during their formative years.

### **Article III – GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

The goals and objectives of the SHSPTO shall be:

- a) To promote the physical, mental, social, and educational welfare of all the students attending Somerville High School;
- b) To provide an avenue of communications, enhance mutual understanding, and foster a cooperative relationship between parents and the administration, teaching faculty, staff and other personnel at Somerville High School;
- c) To assist in the operations of Somerville High School by providing volunteers for educational and co-curricular activities;
- d) To conduct fundraising events for the purpose of securing financial resources to supplement those provided by school district budget allocations, and

- e) To finance such democratically decided, special projects, as will serve the goal of enriching the learning and social experiences of the students attending Somerville High School.

#### **Article IV - FISCAL YEAR AND TAX STATUS**

Section 1. The fiscal year of the SHSPTO shall begin the 1<sup>st</sup> of September of any given year and shall continue through 31<sup>st</sup> of August of the following year.

Section 2. This section contains IRS legal statements which are required to be part of the bylaws exactly as written as a condition of the Tax Exempt 501 © (3) status of the SHSPTO:

##### Tax Exempt Status

- (a) The organization is organized exclusively for charitable religious, education, and/or scientific purposes under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- (b) No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the purpose clause hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of this document, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.
- (c) Upon the dissolution of the organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

#### **Article V - MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Any person, who is interested in the goals and objectives of the SHSPTO and willing to uphold its policies, may become a member upon payment of annual membership fee.

Section 2. Any administrator, teaching faculty or staff member currently working at Somerville High School, who is interested in the goals and objectives of the SHSPTO and willing to uphold its policies, may become a member upon payment of annual membership fee.

Section 3. Membership in the SHSPTO shall be made available to all eligible persons without regard to sex, race, color, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, disability, or age.

Section 4. All paid members shall be eligible to participate in general membership meetings, or to serve in any of its elective or appointed positions. The privilege of holding office, introducing motions, debating, and voting shall be granted to all members.

Section 5. There shall be an annual membership fee per family, determined by the Executive Board prior to the beginning of any membership period.

Section 6. The Executive Board shall have the authority to discipline, suspend, or terminate the membership of any member when the conduct of such person is considered detrimental to the best interests of the SHSPTO.

#### **Article VI - MEETINGS**

Section 1. Regular membership meetings of the SHSPTO shall be held 3 times (typically October, March, and May) between September and June of any given school year, at a date, time and place deemed preferable and agreed upon by the presiding officer/s and communicated to the membership.

Section 2. All membership meetings of this organization shall be open to all SHSPTO members.

Section 3. Public notice of all membership meetings shall be given to all members at least five (5) days before the meeting. To the extent practical, public notice shall also be given to the administrative office of Somerville High School and the School Administrative office. Meeting times and place shall also be announced on the school websites and calendar at a reasonable time prior thereto.

Section 4. Membership meetings shall have an agenda including, but not limited to:

- (a) Call to Order
- (b) Treasurer's Report
- (c) Principal's Report
- (d) Committee Report(s)
- (e) Old Business
- (f) New Business
- (g) Adjournment

Section 5. Executive Board meetings will be scheduled periodically throughout the year as deemed necessary.

Section 6. Special meetings may be called by the **President and/or Vice President** upon the request of any member of the SHSPTO, but are reserved for the transaction of only such business as stated in the call for the special meeting.

## **Article VII - OFFICERS**

Section 1. Each Officer of the SHSPTO shall be a member of this organization.

Section 2. The Officers of the SHSPTO shall be: President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, and Project Graduation Chairperson.

The Principal of Somerville High School, or the person acting pursuant to his/her authority (e.g. the Assistant Principal), shall serve in an advisory function.

Section 3. The length of a year of service of any elected Officer shall be equivalent to that of a fiscal year, commencing on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September of any given year and ending on the 31<sup>st</sup> of August of the following year.

Section 4. All Officers shall serve a term of two full years and should not serve in the same capacity for more than one consecutive term. In the event that no other qualified candidate is forthcoming, the officer may be elected for multiple terms. The term of the Principal of Somerville High School or the person acting pursuant to his/her authority (e.g. the Assistant Principal), shall not be restricted.

Section 5. The Nomination Committee will consist of President (as chairperson), one other currently serving Officer, and two members at large.

Section 6. By February, the Nomination Committee will announce upcoming officer vacancies along with brief description of duties/responsibilities via email to all members. The Nomination Committee will also present the upcoming officer vacancies and duties/responsibilities at the March member meeting, as well as post to the website.

Section 7. Applications & nominations will accepted until a date announced annually by the Nomination Committee. An applicant may request consideration for more than one office, but may only be elected to a single office. Only those persons who have signified their consent to serve if elected shall be nominated to an office.

Section 8. The Nomination Committee shall present a slate of nominated officers at the May member meeting All Officers shall be elected by ballot during the May meeting, by a simple majority of those present. In cases where there is but one nominee for any given office, election for that office may be by voice vote. All incoming Officers will assume their position on September 1<sup>st</sup> of any given year.

Section 9. All Officers of the SHSPTO shall be indemnified for any and all costs or liabilities in connection with any lawsuit involving them in their official capacity.

Section 10. If an elected officer has to resign his/her office, an announcement of the vacancy shall be made immediately and the acceptance of nomination shall open at the earliest scheduled membership meeting. Elections for the vacated position shall take place at the membership meeting immediately following the nominating meeting. The newly elected officer will complete the term of the resigning officer.

Section 9. Serving out another officer's term under the provisions of Sections 8, shall not count towards the term limits specified under Section 4, unless the remaining years of service that are served constitute more than half of the original term.

Section 10. In the event that the current Officer/ Officers have finished their term to the complete limit, and are the only people interested in serving, and are running unopposed the term limits will be extended another year by vote of the majority present at the May meeting.

Section 11. All Officers, by virtue of their position, shall be members of the Executive Board

### **Article VIII - EXECUTIVE BOARD**

#### Section 1. Executive Board

- (a) Direct and coordinate the activities of the organization, including all PTO Committees
- (b) Attend all scheduled PTO meetings
- (c) Form necessary PTO Committees and appoint chairpeople
- (d) Be responsible for maintaining and updating all files for their position.

#### Section 2. President

- (a) Presides at all meetings of this organization and its Executive Board
- (b) Enforce the bylaws, conduct affairs and of the SHSPTO and execute policies established
- (c) Oversees PTO standing committees and obtains updated reports from each chairperson
- (d) Serves as chairperson of the Nomination Committee
- (e) Acts as single point of contact with HS Principal and administration
- (f) Coordinates the yearly calendar of PTO meetings and events
- (g) Performs all other duties usually pertaining to this office
- (h) Coordinate and be responsible for the activities of the following committees: Staff Appreciation

#### Section 3. Vice President

- (a) Performs the duties of the President in her/his absence.
- (b) Serves as Coordinator of PTO Membership
  - a. Recruiting and retaining members

- b. Enhancing member relations and member involvement
  - c. Periodic member drives
  - d. Maintaining list of active PTO member, for running 4 years
- (c) Coordinate and be responsible for the activities of the following committees: PTO Scholarships, Prom & Graduation Flowers

#### Section 4. Recording Secretary

- (a) Keep minutes of all membership meetings and of all formal actions of the SHSPTO and distribute copies of said minutes to Executive Board for approval.
- (b) Publish approved member meeting minutes to all members.
- (c) Maintain SHSPTO By Laws
- (d) Maintain PTO Google Drive
- (e) Update and publish Calendar of Events & Board Contact Roster
- (f) Coordinates and be responsible for the activities of the following committees:

#### Section 5. Treasurer

- (a) Have charge of all SHSPTO funds and presents a financial report at all member meetings
- (b) Receives all bills and makes deposits of money received
- (c) Keeps an accurate record of receipts and expenditures, and has the current year's financial records at all meetings
- (d) Sign all checks on the account on the authorization of the President or Vice President and the membership. Both the treasurer and either the President or the Vice President must countersign all checks in excess of \$3,000.00 for the operational account.
- (e) Responsible for disbursement of all funds relating to specific school requests made by the Principal and approved by the Executive Board
- (f) Files Form 990-N, Electronic Notice (e-Postcard) for Tax Exempt Organizations, with IRS annually
- (g) Retains Tax Exempt Identification Number and Certification
- (h) Coordinate and be responsible for the activities of the following committees: Balloons in June, and Spiritwear

#### Section 6. Project Graduation Chairperson

- (a) Responsible for alignment, coordination, and execution of all Project Graduation committee activities/duties including, but not limited to, securing the venue, transportation, food and beverages, entertainment, and prizes, as well as fundraising and securing volunteers for the event. All such activities will align with the overall SHSPTO mission and objectives.

- (b) Partners with Executive Board to establish a Project Graduation Budget each year. Expenses shall not exceed the established budget without additional SHSPTO board approval.
- (c) Shall be designated as co-owner with at least one SHSPTO Officer on the Project Graduation bank account. All Project Graduation expenses will be funded from this account. Receipts for all purchases shall be given to the Treasurer for reimbursement.

## **Article IX - COMMITTEES**

Section 1. Standing committees shall be determined annually at the first membership meeting of the SHSPTO. Such committees may include but are not restricted to:

- (a) Spiritwear
- (b) Freshman T-shirts (August - summer orientation)
- (c) "Stock the Fridge" (first day of school)
- (d) Staff Appreciation (May)
- (e) Prom Flowers (May)
- (f) Ice Cream Social (June)
- (g) Senior T-shirts & Signs
- (h) Balloons in June (June)
- (i) Graduation Water/Flowers (June)
- (j) Project Graduation
- (k) Social Media
- (l) Other?: Christmas Tree Sale, Senior Selfies

Section 2. Ad Hoc committees may be constituted by the Executive Board upon the request of any member of this organization, to fulfill specific tasks related to the organization and ongoing operations of the SHSPTO.

Section 3. All committees are to serve until the completion of the work for which they were constituted.

Section 4. All committees shall consist of a Chairperson and as many members/volunteers as deemed necessary by the Chairperson.

Section 5. All Committee Chairperson(s) shall provide a committee report to the Executive Board and members at all membership meetings.

Section 6. By February, the Nomination Committee will announce upcoming Committee Chairperson vacancies along with brief description of duties/responsibilities via email to all members. The Nomination Committee will also present the upcoming Committee Chairperson

vacancies and duties/responsibilities at the March member meeting, as well as post to the website.

Section 7. Applications & nominations will be accepted by the Nomination Committee. An applicant may request consideration for multiple Committee Chairperson roles as long as not in conflict.

Section 8. The Nomination Committee shall present a proposed slate of Committee Chairpersons at the May member meeting for election by current PTO members.

Section 9. All incoming Committee Chairpersons will assume their position on September 1<sup>st</sup> of any given year, but ideally will shadow the outgoing Committee Chairperson, especially with the larger events (Project Graduation, Balloons in June).

Section 10. All Committee Chairpersons shall serve a term consisting of one full year of service, with the exception of Project Graduation Chairperson whose term shall be a minimum of two full years.

Section 11. All Committee Chairpersons can serve multiple additional one year consecutive terms to provide stability and consistency of SHSPTO activities.

#### **Article X - POLICIES**

Section 1. The SHSPTO shall work cooperatively with the administration of Somerville High School in all policy-making decisions.

Section 2. All programs, initiatives, and actions of the SHSPTO shall be related to fulfilling the goals and objectives stated in these by-laws under Article II.

Section 3. The SHSPTO may cooperate with other organizations and agencies active in child welfare, such as conference groups or coordinating council, provided that they make no commitments that bind the group they represent.

Section 4. At all times and in all its undertakings, the SHSPTO shall remain non-commercial, non-sectarian, and non-partisan. No commercial enterprise and no candidate shall be endorsed by it. Neither the name of the SHSPTO, nor the name of any members in their official capacities, shall be used in any connection with a commercial concern or with any partisan interest or for any purpose other than the regular work of the organization.

Section 5. A member must absent him/herself from any portion of a SHSPTO membership meeting in which discussion or decisions occur for which he/she has a real or perceived conflict of interest or which could evoke the appearance of impropriety. Real or perceived conflicts may occur if there is: a close, active association with another parent organization, program or institution; a financial or personal interest; or any reason that the individual cannot render an



unbiased decision. The names of members who have recused themselves during a meeting for conflicts of interest shall be recorded.

Section 6. No member of the SHSPTO may serve on any committee when he/she has a financial or other material interest that may be seen as competing with the interests or concerns of the SHSPTO. This policy shall apply even if the member with the potential conflict of interest believes he/she can be fair, objective and can overcome the conflict in fulfilling the duties of the committee.

Section 7. No officer of the SHSPTO shall participate in any decision or any vote in which he/she stands to receive monetary or material benefit as a result of the decision. This recusal requirement shall be absolute, regardless of whether the potential benefit is direct or indirect, derived personally, through member of his or her immediate family, or through a third person, including another nonprofit or charitable organization.

Section 8. All members of the SHSPTO shall maintain in strict confidence and security all information in his/her possession about Somerville High School or any of its constituent parts which by institutional policy is considered to be confidential. Including but not limited to: information related to school records, student work, student behavior and/or student medical condition; personal information about students, parents, faculty, staff and/or support personnel; or any other information related to Somerville High School and its operations which may be collected by the SHSPTO through questionnaires, feedback forms, or other means.

#### **Article XI – STANDING RULES**

Section 1. The SHSPTO may submit proposals for consideration and approval by the membership through mail or email referendum.

Section 2. In case of emergency, action may be taken by the President after consultation with the Vice President, Treasurer and the Secretary by telephone, conference call, fax, text or email. There must be a concurrence of majority of these Officers, and such action shall be notes in a special memorandum placed in the minutes book and signed by the person obtaining such concurrence and shall be reported in the minutes of the next scheduled membership meeting.

Section 3. In case of emergency, a spending measure not exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100.00) may be approved by the President after consultation with the Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary by telephone, conference call, fax, text or email. There must be a concurrence of a majority of these Officers, and such action shall be noted in a special memorandum placed in the minutes book and signed by the person obtaining such concurrence and shall be reported in the minutes of the next scheduled membership meeting.

Section 4. A request for reimbursement for expenditures on behalf of the SHSPTO shall be made in a timely fashion, but in no case shall exceed sixty (60) days from the date that the

expense was incurred. All reimbursement requests must be filed prior to the end of the current fiscal year (August 31) to allow processing during the current fiscal year of the SHSPTO.

## **Article XII - AMENDMENTS**

Section 1. These bylaws may be amended at a general membership meeting by a two-thirds vote of the eligible voting members, provided the proposed amendments shall have been communicated to the members at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the meeting date or have been read at a previous membership meeting. The bylaws may also be amended by unanimous vote of the eligible voting members, if not distributed previously as normally required.

Section 2. Automatic, grammatical, punctuation and correlation corrections in the bylaws, which in no way alter the intent of the respective bylaws, shall be affected by an ad hoc committee and shall be subject to approval by the President and Vice President.

Section 3. These bylaws and/or any amendments thereto shall become effective upon adoption, unless otherwise specified.

## **Article XIII– PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

Section 1. The rules contained in the most current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order shall govern this organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and/or special rules of order the SHSPTO may adopt.

## **Article XIV - DISSOLUTION**

Section 1. To dissolve the SHSPTO, a motion must be presented to the members and a vote taken as to whether to dissolve or not.

Section 2. Upon dissolution, the members will decide upon a final project for the betterment of Somerville High School and to spend all remaining funds.

Section 3. Upon dissolution, all books and records pertaining to the SHSPTO shall be turned over to Somerville High School for future use, record keeping and/or archival purposes.