

## **BYLAWS OF RICHMOND WALDORF SCHOOL PARENTS ASSOCIATION**

### **MISSION:**

To infuse our school community with vitality through social gatherings, education, special events and fundraising that supports the vision of the Richmond Waldorf School to enrich the lives of our children and ourselves.

### **VISION:**

The Parents Association (PA) serves as a strong voice for the parent community and works in partnership with the Board of Trustees (BOT), Faculty, and Administration.

### **PURPOSE:**

The Parents Association is the community building organization of the Richmond Waldorf School. The PA serves as the vehicle for full parental, guardian, and family involvement in the life of the school community. The PA actively supports the work of the BOT, College, and faculty on behalf of our children and contributes to the intellectual, physical, and social climate of the school community. To that end, the PA will:

- ❖ Invigorate and organize volunteer efforts by parents in such a way that nourishes, respects, and supports the volunteers.
- ❖ Provide educational opportunities for parents that deepen the understanding and appreciation for Waldorf Education, and strengthens our community and culture.
- ❖ Provide a forum for parents to communicate and discuss issues and ideas.
- ❖ Support endeavors of the school.
- ❖ Use Special Funds for improvements that directly support Richmond Waldorf School, to include (but not limited to): physical improvements to the buildings and grounds, equipment, support for diversity, inclusion, and equity, community education, and grants for initiatives that have been generated by the PA that are in alignment with needs of the school.

### **ARTICLE I: REGULATIONS AND TECHNICAL DEFINITIONS**

1.1. The Parents Association of Richmond Waldorf School of Richmond, Virginia (also referred to as the “Parents Association” or the “PA”) is an unincorporated association created for the purpose of supporting Richmond Waldorf School.

1.2. The Parents Association shall remain distinct from the Board of Trustees and Faculty of Richmond Waldorf School in operation and funding.

1.3 Special Funds is defined as monies that are earned from the Free Fundraising programs that are overseen by the PA (Kroger Rewards, Publix Community Rewards, Amazon Smile, Box Tops, Scrip

Gift Card Program, School Photography, etc), and monies carried over from the previous year's budget in excess of \$2,500 on August 1 of each year.

## **ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP**

2.1. All parents and guardians of students currently enrolled in Richmond Waldorf School have automatic membership in the Parents Association and will pay annual dues.

2.2. All grade and early childhood classes shall have a class representative who attends the PA meetings, and a designated co- or alternate class representative who can fill in when the primary representative is unable to attend. Class teachers will be asked to help identify representatives if there is no volunteer.

2.3. All members of the Parents Association are encouraged to attend PA meetings and participate fully in the work of the PA and its committees, discussions, and voting.

2.4. There will be a staff representative in attendance at all meetings to help field questions and guide discussion as it affects the school and its programs.

## **ARTICLE III: MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERSHIP**

3.1. Time and Place. Monthly meetings for the school year will be set by the officers of the Leadership Team, and put on the school calendar by September 1 for that school year.

3.2. Special Meetings. A special meeting of the Parents Association may be called by the Moderator(s) or at least 25% of the membership. Notice of a special meeting and agenda will be given no less than 5 days and no more than 30 days prior to the time of the meeting.

3.3. Agenda. The Leadership Team is responsible for setting the agenda. The agenda will be e-mailed to all class representatives and published in the school's newsletter in advance of the monthly meeting.

3.4. PA members are invited to contribute agenda items in advance of the meeting. If the agenda is full, the item for discussion will be prioritized at the following month's meeting. Agenda items may be discussed during "open discussion" if time permits.

3.5. Special Meetings. A special meeting of the Parents Association may be called by the Moderator(s) or at least 25% of class representatives. Notice of a special meeting and agenda will be given no less than 5 days and no more than 30 days prior to the time of the meeting.

3.6. Order of Business. Regular meetings of the Parents Association will have an opening meditation, followed by reports, in person or by proxy, from:

1. Faculty/Staff
2. Board of Trustees
3. Event/Committee Chairs
4. Treasurer
5. Class Representatives

Remaining time will be dedicated to member agenda items and open discussion.

## **ARTICLE IV: DECISION MAKING**

4.1 Consensus Based Model. The Parents Association will conduct its business in the spirit of collaboration and strive for transparency in its processes and decision-making. Decision-making follows a consensus-based model. Members agree to maintain a positive attitude toward one another during meeting discussions.

It is our preference to reach consensus. If it cannot be reached within 30 minutes, the issue can be decided by a majority vote of the members present, or can be tabled for one month, unless a decision must be reached at that time. Issues cannot be tabled for more than one month.

4.2. Quorum Definition for PA meetings. Decisions and budget expenditures require a quorum, which is reached when:

1. At least two PA Leadership Team members are present
2. A majority of class representatives are present
3. In the case of decisions put forth to the parent body at large, at least 30 votes must be received in order to be valid.

4.3. Voting. All parents shall be included in the quorum vote. (They do not have to be a class rep). A parent may be counted towards the quorum as representing more than one class, but may only have one vote.

4.4. Community Wide Decisions. Issues that affect the entire Parents Association will be brought to the Parents Association as a whole for discussion and vote. These include but are not limited to: Annual Budget, electing PA Leadership, expenditures equal to or greater than \$1,000, and changes to the bylaws.

4.5. Method for putting a proposal forward to the community for a vote.

A motion is made at a PA meeting where quorum is achieved. The motion receives a “second” by another member. The motion is re-stated by the Moderator, and a vote is taken. Of note, all members of the PA who are present at a meeting may vote. If the majority is in support of the proposal, it is then put forward to the parent body.

4.6 Putting a vote forward to the parent body. Decisions that are being put forward to a vote from the parent body must be distributed through multiple channels, such as through class representatives, private RWS community social media (such as Facebook), and official school publications such as the weekly Messenger. The proposal should be stated (with rationale if needed), and method of submitting feedback and due date clearly stated. Community members should have between 7-10 days to submit their vote. A survey (such as survey monkey) is preferable for gathering votes/feedback to maximize participation and document receipt of parent input. At least 30 votes must be received for a vote to be considered valid.

4.7 Implementation of Decision. Decisions should be adopted by the Board and/or College unless new information becomes available which indicates a necessity for the Parents Association to reconsider. Questions regarding a decision or recommendation should go first to the PA Moderator. Concerns or questions about the Parents Association Leadership Team should go to the Board of Trustees.

## **ARTICLE V: LEADERSHIP TEAM ORGANIZATION AND DUTIES**

5.1 Officers. The Parents Association will have officers, including a Moderator (or two Co-Moderators), a Treasurer, a Secretary and a Historian. The officers will be nominated and elected by the membership annually at the May meeting and will begin their duties in July of that year. The Officers comprise the Leadership Team of the Parents Association. Officers should strive to serve in their position for two terms and provide mentorship to their successors.

5.2. Moderator. The Moderator (or co-moderators) facilitates the Parents Association, sets meeting agendas, calendar, and acts as a resource and support to the PA members working on ongoing projects. Presides over Parents Association meetings, and facilitates the work of the Leadership Team. The Moderator(s) will serve as an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees, attending all meetings and representing the parent community with the school leadership.

5.3. Treasurer. The Treasurer will keep correct and complete records of the PA bank account. The Treasurer must obtain access to electronic banking to follow the account in real time, and follow the PA email account to receive notifications of when fundraiser monies are being deposited into the account or when a paper check is being mailed to the school. The Treasurer will track PA income, including all dues and all fundraisers, and ensure it is deposited into the bank account within 3 days of receipt. All deposits should be witnessed/verified by a member of the school finance staff. At the beginning of the school year, the Treasurer will present a report detailing all expected income for dues and established fundraisers for the upcoming year. During the year, they will track all income and expenses according to budget category. At the end of term, the Treasurer will present a final report summarizing the actual income and expenses for the year. The Treasurer will pay all debts, invoices or obligations of the Parents Association by writing checks from the PA checkbook. The Treasurer witnesses the signature of the Director of Administration or a designated account signatory upon the check. The Treasurer will keep records of all receipts and invoices and the budget category under which the expense was applied.

5.4. Secretary. The Secretary records attendance at meetings, and takes accurate and complete minutes of each meeting. The Secretary will distribute minutes as outlined in Article VIII below. Ensures that minutes are posted on the Parents Corner of the website and are published in the school's weekly newsletter.

5.5. Historian. The Historian is responsible for maintaining all records and documents relevant to preserving the history of the Parent Association. This will include: Parents Association bylaws, documents detailing the description and structure of the Parents Association, job descriptions, agendas and minutes from PA meetings, as well as records of budgets and financial reports. This is done primarily via the password protected Parents Corner of the RWS website.

5.6. Vacancies and Removals. Any vacancy occurring in any office may be filled at a regular or special meeting of the Parents Association. Any one or more of the officers may be removed by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at any meeting. Any officer must be given at least five days notice that a vote will be taken at a designated meeting on his/her removal from office.

## **ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES**

6.1. There will be one standing committee of the PA – the Leadership Team, which is composed of the officers of the Parents Association.

All members of the Leadership Team work collaboratively to coordinate PA activities, set meetings agendas and serve as a resource and support to parents. They also coordinate planning, supporting volunteer needs, sharing pictures and information about events on social media, submitting announcements in the Messenger, and checking and responding to messages from the PA email account.

An additional role of this committee will be to allocate funds (not to exceed \$200 in any given month) for expenses incurred by the Parents Association between regular meetings. Expenses must fall within the previously established budget categories for the year. The expenditures of this committee will not exceed \$1000 in any given fiscal year.

The Leadership Team should meet prior to the start of the year, and then at least quarterly to discuss administrative issues, such as drafting the budget, setting schedules, fundraising, and ensuring tasks are equitably divided.

6.2. All other committees – There will be variation from year to year in the presence and implementation of committees and subcommittees according to the availability of volunteer support and community needs.

Some committees will need to meet regularly and others will be able to coordinate the majority of their efforts through conversations, phone calls and email. Some committees may have support roles that do not require meeting attendance. While it may require the work of multiple committees to accomplish a PA-sponsored event, primary responsibility will be given to one committee to organize each event.

6.3. Committee Chairs. When in place, the following committees each have a Committee Chair who coordinates their activities with the Leadership Team regarding each committee's goals, progress, future visioning, and budgetary needs. The Committee Chair facilitates meeting times and the work of each committee.

6.4. Heads. The Heads Committee works with the thinking life of the school and will focus on the organizational aspects of the Parents Association. It will be responsible for bylaws, budget, fundraising, and communications. Parent educational programming and parent study groups will fall under this committee.

6.5. Hearts. The Hearts Committee will be responsible for nurturing the emotional life of the school community. This committee will organize parent social events, teacher appreciation, welcoming, hospitality, environmental sustainability, and community care initiatives.

6.6. Hands. The Hands Committee will carry out the intentional life of the Parents Association. This includes coordination of volunteer work for festivals and school events and any parent involvement in the building, grounds and beautification needs of the school.

6.7. Subcommittees are formed on an “as needed” basis for special events or projects, such as Teacher Appreciation, Festivals, Fundraisers, etc.

6.8. Parents with additional interests can approach Committees Chairs about forming new committees at any time. These requests will be submitted to the Leadership Team and/or discussed at a PA meeting. We are interested in helping parents find avenues to bring their talents, interests and energy toward helping our school community.

## **ARTICLE VII: CLASS REPRESENTATIVES**

7.1. Class Representatives. Each grade and early childhood class shall have one class representative and one designated alternate for the Parents Association.

7.2. Responsibilities of Class Representative and Alternate. The role of a Class Representative is to represent their class in the Parents Association, and to serve as a conduit in sharing information between the PA and class parents regarding school-wide activities. Alternates assist the Class Representative as needed with attending meetings and sharing information.

Many parents are not aware of all the opportunities to participate in events that make a big difference in the life of the school, including things that often require a very small time commitment. The Class Representatives are the best way for the PA to disseminate information about and engage volunteers for school-wide events.

7.3. Duties of Class Representatives.

- Attend all PA meetings or arrange for a substitute from your class
- Serve as a conduit between the parents in their class and the PA
- Serve the interests and represent the opinions of the parents in your class
- Bring class input and updates to PA Meetings
- Forward PA meeting summary and minutes to your class within 3 days of receiving them from the Secretary.
- Encourage volunteers from their respective classes to support the vitality of the school by participating in and volunteering for festivals, social gatherings, community events, and fundraising.

## **ARTICLE VIII: CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION**

8.1. Within three days following a Parents Association meeting, the Secretary will send a copy of the minutes to the Moderator and/or Leadership Team for review and corrections. Corrections will be done within an additional two days.

8.2. Within seven days following the Parents Association meeting, the Secretary will send approved minutes to the class representatives and a summary of the meeting to be published in the weekly school newsletter and posted on the Parent’s Corner of the website.

8.3. Class Representatives are responsible for providing a summary of the meeting and a copy of the minutes to their respective classes within 3 days of receiving them.

## **ARTICLE IX: FUNDRAISING**

9.1. Sources of funds. The PA's primary source of funding is through annual dues of the membership and fundraisers conducted by members. The PA conceives of and engages in many fundraising events to support PA events and initiatives. Some of these include Contra Dance, school calendar, community events/shows, bake sales, book fair, and vending at festivals. These funds supplement PA dues and can be used to support any project or event chosen by the coordinator of the fundraiser and/or by the PA membership.

9.2. Special Funds. The PA supports Richmond Waldorf School by overseeing several Free Fundraising programs. Families participate in shopping programs such as Kroger Rewards, Publix, Amazon Smile, Box Tops, School Photography, and the SCRIP gift card program. Community members enroll and participate in these programs, and a percentage is donated back to the PA from each vendor at no additional cost to the participant. These funds are used to give back to the school through supporting: needed equipment, grounds and building improvements, and educational program support. Specific projects are chosen in collaboration with the needs of the school and priorities of the parent body. Grants that are supported with Special Funds must be utilized and have submitted a receipt for reimbursement by June 30. Grants that have not been utilized expire on July 1, and the monies will be put toward the next year's needs and projects.

## **ARTICLE X: AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS**

10.1. These bylaws may be amended by vote of the parent membership. A motion must be put forth and voted on at a regular meeting. If it passes, the vote is put forth to the parent body through appropriate channels. At least 30 votes must be received in order for a vote to be considered valid. Proxy votes can be accepted either verbally or written. Changes must be submitted in writing to the membership at least 10 days before the meeting where they are to be considered. All changes to the bylaws will be included in the subsequent issue of the school's weekly newsletter.

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