

GUIDELINES 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 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 College, and Administration of Richmond Waldorf School.

PURPOSE:

The PA is the community building organization of 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, Faculty College, and Administration 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 strengthen 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, faculty and staff support, 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 PA shall remain distinct from the Board of Trustees and Faculty College 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 , and monies carried over from the previous year's budget in excess of \$2,500 on July 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 PA and will pay annual dues.

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

2.3 All members of the Richmond Waldorf School community 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 PA 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.* Regular 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 PA may be called by the Chair(s) or at least 25% of the membership. Notice of a special meeting and agenda will be given no less than five days and no more than 30 days prior to the time of the meeting.

3.3 *Agenda.* The PA Leadership Team is responsible for setting the agenda. The agenda will be e-mailed to all PA representatives and published in The Messenger in advance of the monthly meeting.

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.

3.4 *Order of Business.* Regular meetings of the PA will have an opening verse, followed by reports, in person or by proxy, from:

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

Remaining time will be dedicated to member agenda items and open discussion before ending with a closing verse.

ARTICLE IV: DECISION MAKING

4.1 Consensus Based Model. The PA 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 members of the PA Leadership Team are present
2. A majority of PA representatives are present

4.3 Voting. All parents shall be included in the quorum vote. (They do not have to be a PA 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 PA will be brought to the parent body as a whole for discussion and vote. These include but are not limited to: electing the PA Leadership Team, expenditures equal to or greater than \$1,000, and changes to the PA Guidelines.

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 Chair, 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 PA representatives, private RWS community social media (such as Facebook), and official school publications such as The Messenger. The proposal should be stated (with rationale if needed), as well as the method of submitting feedback and due date. Community members should have between seven to ten 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 in order for a vote to be considered valid.

4.7 Implementation of Decision. Decisions should be adopted by the BOT and/or Faculty College unless new information becomes available which indicates a necessity for the PA to reconsider. Questions regarding a decision or recommendation should go first to the PA Chair(s). Concerns or questions about the PA Leadership Team should go to the BOT.

ARTICLE V: LEADERSHIP TEAM ORGANIZATION AND DUTIES

5.1 *Officers.* The Parents Association will have officers, including a Chair (or two Co-Chairs), a Treasurer, a Secretary, and an optional Social Chair. The officers comprise the Leadership Team of the PA. Officers should strive to serve in their position for two-year terms and provide mentorship to their successors. The officers will be nominated and elected by the membership annually at the May meeting and will begin their duties on July 1 of that year.

5.2 *Chair.* The Chair (or Co-Chairs) facilitates PA business, setting meeting agendas, the calendar, and acting as a resource and support to the PA members working on ongoing projects. The Chair also presides over PA meetings and facilitates the work of the Leadership Team. The Chair will serve as an ex-officio member of the BOT, attending all meetings and representing the parent community with the Administration and Faculty College.

5.3 *Treasurer.* The Treasurer keeps correct and complete records of the PA budget. The Treasurer works in concert with the school finance staff to follow the PA budget, and monitor the PA Treasurer 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 tracks PA income, including all dues and all fundraisers, and ensures it is reflected in the PA budget within seven 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 presents a report detailing all expected income for dues and established fundraisers for the upcoming year. During the year the Treasurer tracks all income and expenses according to budget category and maintains records of budgets and financial reports. At the end of term, the Treasurer presents a final report summarizing the actual income and expenses for the year.

5.4 *Secretary.* The Secretary records attendance at meetings, and takes accurate and complete minutes of each meeting. The Secretary distributes minutes as outlined in Article VIII below, and ensures that minutes are made publicly available to the parent body. The Secretary is also responsible for maintaining all records and documents relevant to preserving the history of the Parent Association. This will include: PA Guidelines, documents detailing the description and structure of the PA, PA officer descriptions, agendas and minutes from PA meetings. This is done primarily via the password protected Parents Corner of the RWS website.

5.5 *Social Chair.* The Social Chair is an optional member of the Leadership Team who organizes and coordinates PA-sponsored community events and supports newly engaged members of the PA. In collaboration with the Leadership Team and PA reps, the Social Chair is responsible for developing the PA social calendar for the school year and for scheduling events in collaboration with the RWS Administration and Faculty College. The Social Chair will ensure that PA-sponsored social events are communicated with the entire RWS community via as many channels as possible (including The Messenger, private RWS Facebook page, and school chalkboards).

5.6 *Vacancies and Removals.* Any vacancy occurring in any office may be filled at a regular or special meeting of the PA. 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 *Standing Committee.* There will be one standing committee of the PA – the Leadership Team, which is composed of the officers of the PA.

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 PA officer email accounts.

The Leadership Team will meet prior to the start of each school 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 *Additional 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 will 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 PA. This committee will be responsible for guidelines, budget, fundraising, and communications needs. Supplementary parent educational programming and parent study groups will also 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 events, welcoming and hospitality opportunities, environmental sustainability, and community care initiatives.

6.6 *Hands.* The Hands Committee will carry out the intentional life of the PA. 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*. Subcommittees may be formed within committees on an “as needed” basis for special events or projects, such as teacher appreciation week, festivals, fundraisers, etc.

6.8 *New Committee Formation*. Parents with additional interests can approach the Chair about forming new committees at any time. These requests will be submitted to the Leadership Team and/or discussed at a PA meeting.

ARTICLE VII: CLASS REPRESENTATIVES

7.1 *PA Representatives*. Each grade and early childhood class shall have one PA representative and one designated alternate.

7.2 *PA Representative and Alternates*. PA Representatives represent their class in the PA, and serve as a conduit in sharing information between the PA and their classes’ families regarding school-wide activities. Alternates assist PA Representatives as needed with attending meetings and sharing information.

7.3 *Duties of PA Representatives*:

- Attend all PA meetings or arrange for a substitute from the class
- Serve as a conduit between the PA and class families
- Bring class input and updates to PA Meetings
- Forward PA meeting summary and minutes to the class within three days of receiving them from the PA Secretary.
- Encourage volunteers from 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 PA meeting, the Secretary will send a copy of the minutes to the Chair and/or Leadership Team for review and corrections. Corrections will be completed within an additional two days.

8.2 Within seven days following the PA meeting, the Secretary will send approved minutes to the PA representatives and a summary of the meeting to be published in The Messenger and posted on the Parent’s Corner of the website.

8.3 PA Representatives are responsible for providing a summary of the meeting and a copy of the minutes to their respective classes within three 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 parent body membership and fundraisers conducted by the PA. The PA conceives of and engages in fundraising events to support PA events and initiatives. Fundraisers may include community events/shows, bake sales, book faire, 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 Community Rewards, Raise Right, Box Tops, School Photography, the SCRIP gift card program, etc.. Community members may 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 GUIDELINES

10.1 These guidelines may be amended by a vote of the parent body 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. 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 guidelines will be included in the subsequent issue of The Messenger

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