

Running Your PTA during these Unusual Times

Membership Related FAQs & Answers from New Mexico PTA

Dear PTA Leaders,

April 8, 2020

The New Mexico PTA Board of Directors wants to thank you, in advance, for your efforts regarding the continuation of the work of your PTA and your advocacy for your students in these real and ever-changing circumstances. We appreciate your flexibility, creativity, and positive attitudes as we all face new hurdles daily. The last 3 months of this school year will look very different than spring times past. You all have questions and NMPTA will try to answer them here and in postings to come. Please check in with us through our e-newsletter, our website, or follow us on Twitter and FB for the latest information and updates.

Answers to frequently asked questions will be divided into Membership, Financial, and Miscellaneous areas to start. Please don't hesitate to contact us with other questions as they arise. We understand that you will do the best job you can to advocate for your students, school, and community through these difficult and stressful times. We're with you and available via email at nmpta@newmexicopta.org.

Stay well, stay strong, and stay in touch!

MEMBERSHIP FAQs

Question: How do we hold PTA meetings?

- Due to the current extraordinary circumstances, all efforts to follow your bylaws should be made but understand that some exceptions may arise.
- General membership meetings of your PTA should still be held even though school buildings have been closed. Important votes regarding new officers and next year's budget usually happen at the end of the school year. Meetings can be held electronically – either using a video conferencing platform or conference call. There are free video conferencing platforms that allow limited time meetings. Please be aware of privacy and security policies. Conference calls can also be held using a service such as [freeconferencecall.com](https://www.freeconferencecall.com).
- Whether a video conference or conference call remember to record in your meeting minutes the list of attendees.
- If you need to change the date or time of a regularly scheduled PTA meeting, check your bylaws, **ARTICLE XI: GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**, to find out how many days' written notice needs to be given to your members of that change. In that same article you can find how many days' written notice needs to be given to call a special meeting of your membership (a meeting that was not previously scheduled). Remember, that quorum rules still apply in an electronic meeting.
- Do your best to publicize your meeting and let members know the important topics to be addressed.
- If you need further guidance, please email membership@newmexicopta.org. New Mexico PTA has been consulting with a Registered Parliamentarian to better understand available options covered by bylaws.

Question: Should we continue to ask new people to join our PTA?

- Yes, Your PTA membership year continues through June 30, 2020. You will want to try and recruit new members this spring, especially those new to your school that will look to your PTA for guidance about all things school related. You'll need to "think outside the box" as to how to contact incoming members of your community and let them know the benefits of joining your PTA.
- Please continue to send your **Membership Reporting Forms** and dues checks to the PO Box listed on the form. You will need to utilize the postal service to accept membership forms and payments since in-person meetings are currently prohibited.

Question: How do we hold elections of new officers for the 2020 – 2021 school year?

- Your officer elections should take place at a general membership meeting. (Please see the answer above about how to hold meetings). If you have more than one person running for any officer position, you can hold a meeting for candidates to give speeches and then send out a **Survey Monkey** or something similar that allows members to vote. Results of the election can be published via email, web page, or newsletter. Remember that only paid PTA members can vote.
- Candidates running for an elected position in your PTA need to be a paid member of your PTA. Check your Bylaws, ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP AND DUES, to see how many days need to pass from when dues are paid before full voting privileges are in effect. Prospective candidates will need to mail their dues and membership form to your local PTA membership chair prior to your meeting/elections.

Question: What if we don't have a full slate of prospective officers?

- If you do not have a full slate of prospective volunteers yet – don't worry! Use your nominating committee. Make personal contacts. Use all methods of communication to let your community know about the need. If you don't have all officers by the time you hold your election, just elect those that you do have, and then keep looking. Officers can be elected at any time; the sooner they are identified and elected, the sooner they can begin training, but don't stop looking!

Question: How do we go about training new PTA leaders?

- Any PTA member who is interested in joining your PTA leadership team or just has general questions about leadership roles in PTA should be encouraged to take any number of e-learning courses offered on the National PTA website www.pta.org/elearning . This is a great time to look into those 20 to 40-minute courses and learn more about the role of PTA's leadership and advocacy efforts across the country.

Question: Is the New Mexico PTA Office still open?

- As the NMPTA Office is located on a school campus in Albuquerque, it will remain closed until further notice. But, our Office Manager is still checking emails and phone messages regularly and retrieving mail from our Post Office box weekly. So, keep those documents and your questions coming! NMPTA is here to support you and the children of New Mexico. We couldn't do it without you!

Question: Should we still be sending in our Standards of Affiliation documents for 2019-2020 to NMPTA?

- Absolutely! If you still owe NMPT copies of your Proof of Insurance, 2018-2019 Audit, 2019-2020 Budget, 2018-2019 990 tax form, updated Bylaws or elected officers' e-learning certificates of completion you should send them to nmpta@newmexicopta.org now. We will be calling you to remind you of missing documents. Please update your Officer List also if you've had any recent changes.

For additional information about PTA Membership and Bylaws please contact Tami Baker, NMPTA VP for Membership at vp.membership@newmexicopta.org .Thank you!