

Guide Academy

Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) Handbook and Bylaws

2025-2026 Academic Year



GUIDE ACADEMY

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What is the PTO?

PTO stands for **parent-teacher organization**. A PTO is an organization whose purpose is to strengthen, enhance, and encourage the educational and social environment of the school. The PTO is a collaboration of parents, teachers, and staff to support and improve the school experience for all students.

Who is part of the PTO?

The PTO is comprised of the Executive Committee (or officers), parents (also known as parent members or volunteer members), the school principal, teachers (or teacher representative), and staff. The Executive Committee and parent members must have a child at the school. All parents are considered members of the PTO. Parent members who actively volunteer are known as volunteer members.

The PTO Executive Committee members are tasked with the organization, management, and administration of PTO responsibilities. Parent members who are not officers play an important role in supporting the PTO and volunteering their time to help with the goals and objectives of the PTO.

Executive Committee members and parents who participate in the PTO are not considered employees of the school; they receive no financial backing and are unpaid volunteers.

Goals of the PTO

The PTO is designed to encourage interaction and collaboration between the school and its families. Its goals are to complement the school curriculum and improve our students' education and social experience with additional opportunities for parents, teachers, and students, to learn, socialize, communicate, and grow.

PTOs work independently of any kind of national organization, and as a result, PTOs adhere to their own bylaws and focus their attention on issues directly related to their school. The PTO does not work independently of the school, but in parallel with the needs of the school.

Focus of the PTO

- Facilitating parent-teacher communication and collaboration
- Event planning, organization, and execution
- Fundraising events/programs
- Planning and contributing to extracurricular activities
- Supplying classrooms
- Coordinating volunteers
- School maintenance
- Community outreach



Objectives of the PTO

- Establish and maintain a working relationship between parents, teachers, staff, and the community at large
- Assist in developing extracurricular programs and projects that will support or enrich the school environment
- Executing new initiatives in collaboration with school administration and with the oversight of the school board (see the School Organizational Chart)
- Identifying areas of need/improvement in the school and brainstorming solutions
- Support school improvement through:
 - Volunteering to organize school events, programs, and activities
 - Volunteering to help teachers and staff maintain classrooms and building amenities
 - Procuring supplies, equipment, and technology as needed
 - Fundraising to help raise funds for school supplies and programs that fall outside the school budget
 - Promoting the school
 - Community outreach
 - Assisting financially where possible
 - Enhancing student safety and security

Examples of Support and Involvement:

- Hold extracurricular activities such as spelling bees, science fairs, and art competitions in coordination with teachers and staff
- Organize fundraising events to support specific programs or for the school in general
- Plan and execute teacher appreciation week
- Organize and arrange school picture day and photography sessions
- Assist in school events such as field trips, open house programs, graduation
- Organize community events for parents (picnic) or outreach to community & neighbors of the school (free food, soup kitchen programs)

Parent Engagement

The PTO Executive Committee will be assisting the school in notifying parents and following parent attendance at mandatory school events (e.g. orientation, parent/teacher conferences, etc.), checking parent volunteer hours, and collecting any dues from parents who are unable to volunteer their time. The PTO is on a voluntary basis. As such, parents are encouraged to participate and play an active role in the enhancement of their child's educational experience and betterment of the school. All parents are members of the PTO and pay a \$60 PTO fee. However, not every parent is expected to play an active role. Based on school policy, parents must volunteer 30 hours a year. If they are unable to meet that request, a \$250 due will be collected at the end of the year.



Guidelines of the PTO

The PTO <u>DOES</u>	The PTO does <u>NOT</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support the educational programs and extracurricular activities of the school• Encourage parents' involvement in their individual children's lives, education, class, and school• Maintains the line of communication between parents, teachers, and administration open• Coordinate programs and projects that will support or enrich the school curriculum (e.g. Spelling Bee, Science Fair, Art competitions, etc.)• Encourage/fund the increased exposure of students to technology• Provide feedback/assist with increased awareness of school safety and security issues• Organize fundraising efforts to support some additional programs, equipment, and services not covered in the school budget• Support the educational goals of the school and assist with attaining those goals (on the Strategic Plan) through parent and community volunteerism• Recruit volunteers and coordinate volunteer efforts to staff PTO functions and assist with school programs• Stay aware of legislation and political issues that may impact education and schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Run the school• Force parents to participate in the PTO and/or school activities• Set policy regarding school programs• Define or change the school's curriculum• Dictate the technology/software use and/or building structural platforms used by the school• Define or interfere with the school's security programs and policies• Control the school's budget• Set the educational goals, testing requirements, or compliance factors• Have jurisdiction or authority over school equipment/resources, staff, teachers, and other employees• Endorse a particular political candidate or commercial concern• Make major decisions/inform parents on major decisions without discussing and receiving approval from the administration and board



PTO Executive Committee Roles and Responsibilities*

Depending on the size of the parent body, these roles and responsibilities may vary. If there are not enough members to fill all the positions, PTO officers can take on more roles and responsibilities.

President

1. Works with the administrative officer and teachers on common goals for student support, parent education, communication, transparency, and awareness
2. Presides at all regular and special meetings of the PTO Executive Committee, and all PTO meetings to provide updates
3. Selects meeting times and dates ($\frac{2}{3}$ of the PTO needs to agree to the meeting date and time), and chairs the meetings
4. Advocates for the PTO
5. Motivates the PTO and holds PTO members accountable for assigned tasks and volunteering roles
6. Assists in mobilizing parents to assist with a particular event with the help of other PTO members and staff
7. Reports parent volunteer hours to school administrator to be counted toward parent volunteer hours
8. Oversees use of funds and fundraising programs

Vice President

1. Takes the president's place when he/she is not present or is unavailable
2. Works alongside the administrative officer in PTO in implementing agreed upon programs and activities for students and parents
3. Is responsible for PTO funds and can take on the role of treasurer depending on load and need
4. Works alongside the fundraising coordinator to assess the needs for funds and jointly propose plans to PTO members
5. Works with the school communication and administration team to solicit nominations and hold elections for the incoming PTO team
6. Works on behalf of the PTO for a smooth transition to the new PTO board after the PTO election is concluded
7. Assists in coordinating and mobilizing parents for assigned tasks and volunteering roles

*Please see bylaws for more details as well as information on nominating and electing Executive Committee members.



Recording Secretary

1. Creates the agenda for every meeting based on the input from PTO members
2. Takes meeting minutes and shares them with PTO members and ensures they are recorded and placed in the PTO folder
3. Provide copies of minutes for all meetings after consultation with the president and principal upon request
4. Works with the event coordinator to create flyers
5. Keep a record of all incoming and outgoing mail
6. Report the previous month's activity to the PTO Executive Committee
7. Coordinates with those in charge of the school distribution lists (WhatsApp, email, etc.) to make sure communication is maintained

Treasurer/Fundraising Coordinator*

1. Works with school to collect PTO dues from parents as stated in the student handbook
2. Be responsible for maintaining and reconciling of the PTO account and keeping correct and accurate records of all deposits and withdrawals
3. Report to the PTO Executive Committee at each regular meeting
4. Helps to organize and execute fundraising events
5. Works with the school to pay for items needed for events, classrooms, programs, and activities
6. Maintain the PTO's bank accounts and financial records: creates an excel spreadsheet explaining where money is going in and out of the PTO, if/when applicable
7. Works with Event Coordinator and Vice President to come up with creative ways to raise money
 - a. Propose ideas via email or set up a meeting time via zoom
 - b. Set up a plan of action regarding what needs to be done, when, and by whom
 - c. If $\frac{2}{3}$ of PTO agree go forth with the fundraising idea

*Can be distinct or combined roles depending on load and need

Event Coordinator

1. Locks in the date with school for the proposed event
2. Creates sign-up sheets for tasks that are needed
3. Uses old or creates new templates for items such as number of volunteers needed, describes what volunteers will be doing, what items are needed (chairs, tables, etc.)
4. Will be the lead during the event, but will be supported by other PTO members and guided by school staff



Room Parent Coordinator

1. Responsible for managing and coordinating all the room parents for the different classrooms/grades in the school
2. Acts as a liaison between teachers, parents, and PTO to ensure that all classroom events and activities run smoothly
3. Responsible for recruiting room parents for each classroom
4. Attends PTO meetings to report on classroom activities and events.
5. Provides updates on the needs of teachers and students, and communicates the priorities and goals of the PTO to the room parents
6. Helps facilitate events and programs and works closely with the fundraising coordinator and event coordinator

Parent Member Roles and Responsibilities

Parents are encouraged to participate and play an active role as members of the PTO. Parents play a vital role in their child's education and development. Parental involvement is important to student success.

Parental roles may include any of the following:

- Checking in with the PTO at the beginning of the year and throughout the year to see how you can help
- Communicating any ideas, improvements, concerns, and suggestions specifically for programs/activities/events to the PTO
 - All forms of communication will need to be done to the PTO in writing via email
- Volunteering to be a committee member
- Participating in school events, activities, and programs
- Volunteering to help make sure events/programs run smoothly
- Serving as a room parent or working with the teachers to help coordinate classroom activities
- Volunteering, volunteering, volunteering

Parents are open to express their interest in volunteering, donating supplies, or assisting with specific events or classroom needs. Parents interested in helping teachers should communicate directly with the PTO officers first, either by attending scheduled PTO meetings or reaching out via email or designated communication channels. These requests will be discussed with the respective teacher(s) and principal for approval. It's helpful for parents to specify availability, areas of interest, or particular skills (e.g., organizing, crafting, event planning) so the PTO can match support where it's most needed.



PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

TITLE

The name of this organization shall be the **Guide Academy Parent-Teacher Organization**, hereinafter referred to as “**PTO**.” It will be established and continued at the discretion of the school principal with the approval of the school board.

ARTICLE II

ADVISORY CAPACITY

In view of the responsibilities imposed on the principal of Guide Academy, the PTO and its Committee as described above will solely be advisory and voluntary in nature.

The PTO and its members will function in accordance with these bylaws that shall comply with all provisions of the policies of the Guide Academy. All recommendations and actions of the PTO are subject to the established Guide Academy school regulations and policies.

ARTICLE III

PURPOSE

The purposes of the PTO are to:

- Promote open communication among the parents, teachers and administration
- Provide support for the principal in his or her role as the administrator of the school
- Promote goodwill and cooperation between and among parents, faculty, and administration
- Assist the school in coordinating discussions and solutions about issues that parents may have regarding school policies, student welfare, academic programs, and other relevant matters
- Direct and coordinate parental support through parent education activities and social functions that build community
- Help build and enhance the community outreach and reputations of Guide Academy
- Raise funds for the school
- Coordinate the service and volunteer programs

In addition, the PTO exists to support the principal and staff in their endeavors to provide quality, Islamic education for all students. The PTO also aims to support parents and teachers develop a mutual understanding of and appreciation for the ideals of the Islamic faith, and the Montessori & International Baccalaureate (IB) method of education.



ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the PTO shall be drawn entirely from the following:

- The principal of the school
- The teachers and staff of the school
- The parents and/or legal guardians of students currently enrolled in Guide Academy

ARTICLE V ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

The principal shall serve as the administrative officer of the PTO.

ARTICLE VI FINANCIAL ISSUES

Subject to the rules and regulations of Guide Academy, the principal and board members shall have the responsibility for all budgetary and financial decisions affecting the school, including PTO funds and fundraising, tuition charges, and salaries, and may not delegate such responsibilities.

ARTICLE VII EMPLOYMENT OF MEMBERS AND STAFF

With the approval and oversight of the principal and the board, the PTO president shall have the responsibility for approval, supervision, and if required, termination of any PTO member that does not comply with this manual and the PTO bylaws. The principal, with the approval of the school board shall have the responsibility of overseeing the role and responsibilities of the PTO president. The PTO president must comply with all school policies along with the PTO bylaws. The responsibility for approval, supervision, and termination of the PTO president will lie with the principal and school board.

ARTICLE VIII FINANCES

Financial operation of the PTO shall be governed by the following regulations:

- The PTO may have a bank account separate from that of the school; however, at the close of each fiscal year, funds shall be transferred to the school bank account so that the PTO bank account balance does not exceed \$1000.00
- All monies received by the PTO through membership dues and fundraising activities are to be deposited into the PTO account within five (5) to seven (7) days after receipt
- All monies (cash and check) received shall have a corresponding receipt which is given to the donor
- All expenses incurred by the PTO are to be paid from the PTO account



- A detailed financial report of the account shall be provided to the principal and PTO Executive Committee on a monthly basis
- The signatures of the principal and the treasurer will be on the PTO account
- Two signatures, one of which is that of the principal or treasurer will be required for all expenditures over \$200.00
- All monies in excess of membership dues should be transferred quarterly to the school bank account
- The treasurer shall maintain all statements, records, and books of original entry at a designated secure site at the school

ARTICLE IX OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PTO

Officers of the PTO shall be the president, vice president, recording secretary, treasurer, fundraising coordinator, event coordinator, and room parent coordinator. The principal shall serve as an administrative officer. All parents are members of the PTO and those who volunteer their time are considered volunteer members of the PTO. Any parent with a student at the school may be nominated to be part of the Executive Committee. Only one parent per family may hold an Executive Committee role, unless the PTO is short staffed, and volunteers are limited.

ARTICLE X MEMBERSHIP OF THE PTO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Officers of the PTO Executive Committee shall include the president, vice president, recording secretary, treasurer, fundraising coordinator, event coordinator, room parent coordinator, and administrative officer (the principal). As needed and dependent on the load of tasks, the secretary, treasurer and/or fundraising coordinator roles can be merged or divided. Parents who want a seat on the PTO Executive Committee must be nominated and elected by the parent body. Membership to the PTO Executive Committee may have a membership fee, however at this time, no executive committee membership fees are being collected. All parents must pay a \$60 PTO fee which is collected as part of the student's tuition. This fee is considered part of a parent's PTO membership fee, and the funds will be used for school events and activities.

ARTICLE XI NOMINATION OF PTO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Nominations for Executive Committee positions shall be held in the spring of the preceding school year. If sufficient candidates are not available to fill specific roles, nominations may be reopened at the start of the new school year. Candidates may be nominated by the general membership (parents, teachers, staff) or through self-nomination. When more than one candidate is nominated for a position, an election shall be held and voted on by the general membership. Officers shall assume office at the August meeting of the Executive Committee and shall serve a one-year term. Officers may be reappointed to additional terms and are expected to fulfill their commitment for the full academic year.



ARTICLE XII REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Regular planning meetings of the PTO Executive Committee shall take place monthly during the school year, or as needed. Special meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the president, principal, or as requested by the teachers and staff.

Quorum: For the purpose of transacting official business, it shall be necessary that a two-thirds majority of total members of the Executive Committee be present.

A simple majority of those present and voting shall carry a motion.

A written record of all acts of the Executive Committee shall be maintained and preserved by the Recording Secretary. They shall be available for inspection or reference by members of the PTO at any time in the school office.

ARTICLE XIII CONDUCT OF MEETINGS OF THE PTO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Whenever an agenda item is presented for action at an Executive Committee meeting, the members will attempt to reach a consensus after careful consideration and discernment in a spirit of cooperation and respect.

Formal votes, employing proper procedure, may be utilized at the discretion of the president. A simple majority will carry motions. Meetings of the PTO Executive Committee should normally not exceed ninety minutes.

The agenda of meetings shall be:

1. Opening prayer
2. Calling of the roll
3. Overview and approval of minutes
4. Committee reports
5. Unfinished business
6. New business
7. Communications
8. Closing prayer
9. Adjournment

ARTICLE XIV BRIEF SUMMARY OF DUTIES OF OFFICERS

The president shall:

- Preside at all regular and special meetings of the PTO Executive Committee, and all PTO meetings
- Serve as the liaison between the PTO and principal



- Appoint all committee chairpersons with the approval of the principal
- Be the spokesperson of the PTO for parents and community members at all events and programs
- Keep board members informed about initiatives, deadlines, and expectations
- Communicate PTO goals and activities to align with the school's mission
- Address parent or teacher concerns related to PTO activities

The vice president shall:

- Work alongside the president and preside in the absence of the president
- Chair ad hoc committees as requested by the president
- Perform the duties of the president when the president is unable to do so

The secretary shall:

- Be responsible for recording the minutes of the PTO Executive Committee and general meetings
- Provide copies of minutes for all meetings after consultation with the president and principal
- Maintain a permanent record of all minutes and resolutions
- Forward a copy of all minutes to the PTO president and principal
- Keep a record of all incoming and outgoing mail
- Report the previous month's activity to the PTO Executive Committee

The treasure/fundraising coordinator shall:

- Receive the monthly fund statement or fund allowance from the principal and president
- Prepare monthly written reports concerning the finances of the PTO as may be requested by the principal and/or PTO Executive Committee
- Make available for inspection at the request of the principal and Executive Committee all statements and books of original entry
- Be responsible for receiving approval for all monies not budgeted for and expenditures in excess of \$200, and ensuring that all reimbursements are paid by check, with receipts or invoices as documentation
- Be responsible for acquiring all receipts, bills or invoices that account for disbursements, and for keeping an up-to-date file of all receipts, bills, and invoices
- Be responsible for organizing, monitoring, and coordinating all fundraising events

The event coordinator shall:

- Coordinate with the principal and teachers to lock in the event date with school for the proposed event
- Create sign-up sheets for tasks that are needed
- Will be the lead coordinator during the event, but will be supported by other PTO members, parent volunteers and guided by school staff



The room parent coordinator shall:

- Recruit room parents for each class at the start of the year
- Responsible for managing and coordinating the room parents for the different classrooms/grades in the school
- Clarify teacher needs and expectations for classroom activities, events, or celebrations
- Keep records of classroom activities and parent volunteer participation
- Provide feedback and suggestions to the PTO executive committee for improvements
- Ensure consistent messaging across all classrooms
- Helps facilitate events and programs and works closely with the fundraising coordinator and event coordinator

ARTICLE XVI SPECIAL COMMITTEES

New standing committees or special committees such as volunteer coordinator, communication coordinator, nominating committee, and/or hospitality committee can be put into place as needed to assist in the PTO roles and tasks. These committees shall be established by the president, with the approval of the principal and board. The president of the PTO shall appoint chairpersons for standing committees in May of each year, with the approval of the principal. Committee chairpersons shall serve annually and may be reappointed to additional terms.

ARTICLE XVII AMENDMENTS

Subject to all current provisions of Guide Academy's school policy, the bylaws may be amended by the PTO Executive Committee with a vote of two-thirds.

Amendments must be presented to the principal and board for approval.

Insofar as it complies with all current provisions of Guide Academy's school policy concerning the structure and operation of the Parent Teacher Organization, the foregoing bylaws are duly approved by the principal and school board. When executed by the principal, they shall become effective.

This PTO is organized exclusively for charitable, scientific, literary or educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code.