

# Leadership Town Hall Membership FAQ's

- 1. My principal has encouraged our unit not to fundraise or gather membership next school year. Our demographic is more than 50% low income and due to unemployment she does see how we can do that and honestly I agree. Is it possible to gather min. memberships needed from staff and exec board members and extend the current membership thru 2021?**

Membership is set by your bylaws and is effective as soon as dues are paid and expires October 31 the next fiscal year. Membership is important, and as only members have the right to vote at meetings, your school community will want to have a voice in what the PTA does and how it spends its money. We would like the opportunity to discuss some potential options for your membership campaign so please send an email to [membership@capta.org](mailto:membership@capta.org).

- 2. Is GA approval required for prior to setting up TOTEM?**

Approval is not required by the association. TOTEM is optional and there is no cost to the unit or a program, so there is no requirement for a vote. I know that this is correct but I don't know if we ever added this anywhere in print in case the folks want to know why we didn't consult our associations first. Did I miss somewhere this was added? Probably not in print. Carol is not online today, but it might be in an electronic membership task force minutes.

- 3. Are there instructions on how/when to change the bank owner? How do you know the person that is the bank owner?**

- a. You can see who connected and who confirmed the bank account in your Dashboard. Click on Settings > Banking and under the Active Account you will see the names of the leaders there.
- b. The time to change the bank owner is when one or both of the leaders who set up the account have left their positions. For example, when a new treasurer is elected, they should update the bank account owner to the new treasurer before they leave at the end of their term.
- c. There is a very detailed FAQ on changing the bank owner here:

<https://help.jointotem.com/support/solutions/articles/43000531076-how-to-change-the-bank-account-owner>

- 4. Is totem thinking of waiving fees for the starting of the year?**

There are fixed costs that TOTEM has to pay for every transaction, there are no plans to waive fees.

- 5. I have a council asking if there is any way for their units to directly cover the \$1 TOTEM fee. I told them not that I am aware of but would check with CAPTA.**

The system is currently not set up for that option but is something we could explore for the future.

**6. Does Totem offer online registration in Spanish? We have so many parents who only speak Spanish.**

Yes, in fact TOTEM has been designed to work in the most popular languages in the state: English, Spanish, Arabic, Farsi, Armenian, Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Chinese.

**7. Is there an annual fee to use Totem?**

No. There are no fees to any PTA for using TOTEM. It is entirely supported by the \$1 membership fee and 5% donation fee.

**8. Why does it link to the bank account? Is there an annual fee to use the platform? or does it automatically deduct your portion of dues when people sign up electronically?**

- a. As an electronic membership system, TOTEM collects the payments but they must be deposited into a PTA bank within a month of payment. All PTAs who wish to use TOTEM must connect a bank account to their TOTEM account so that they can collect the membership fees due to them.
- b. There is no annual (or other) fee for any PTA to use TOTEM.
- c. TOTEM was designed specifically for the California State PTA to automatically distribute membership fees to Units, Councils, Districts, and the State PTA when members sign up electronically. The unit will receive their share of membership money and donations monthly into their bank accounts, and Councils, District, and the State PTA will receive the proper per capita payments as well.

**9. If people want to join PTA on a paper form, can the membership chair enter that info into Totem, or is it totally online only?**

Yes, the membership chair (and their committee) may enter memberships manually through TOTEM. Each member will require an email address, but if a family joins manually all of the members can be entered under one master email address if they prefer.

**10. Is totem thinking of waiving fees for the starting of the year?**

There are fixed costs that TOTEM has to pay for every transaction, there are no plans to waive fees. plan to waive fees.

**11. Are there any plans for TOTEM to be available in Armenian?**

It already does support Armenian. In fact, TOTEM has been designed to work in the most popular languages in the state: English, Spanish, Arabic, Farsi, Armenian, Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Chinese.

**12. Is there something TOTEM can do or upgrade, I have a lot of members that the emails go to junk mail including myself?**

If you could please send an email to [emembership@capta.org](mailto:emembership@capta.org) and let us know more details, we can forward that to them. Sometimes it is one email provider (like AOL) that has the problem, and solving it for one person fixes it for everyone across the state.

**13.** I have a council asking if there is any way for their units to directly cover the \$1 TOTEM fee. I told them not that I am aware of but would check with CAPTA. The system is currently not set up for that option. This is the same question as number 5.

**14. What kind of new companies is the state working with for membership incentives? Really looking for some companies that members use more regularly.**

This is something that the California State PTA committee looks at on a regular basis but is always looking for suggestions or contacts to reach out to. If you have any suggestions, please send an e-mail to [membership@capta.org](mailto:membership@capta.org)

**15. is there an auto Totem email set to go out in July and if so can that be changed to a later date?**

There are reminder emails set to go out in early July just prior to the new membership year that will inform the member that their membership will be expiring and that they can easily join again. Credit cards will not be automatically charged so there's no worry that our members will be charged when they may not be ready for it this year.