

Gavel to Gavel – Parliamentary Procedure

COMMON PARLIAMENTARY MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

For each of the following statements, circle T (True) if you believe the statement is true; circle F (False) if you believe the statement is false.

1. T F The parliamentarian may not vote, make motions, or participate in discussions.
2. T F The president appoints members to all committees except the nominating committee.
3. T F Bylaws may be amended at any executive board meeting by a unanimous vote.
4. T F A treasurer's report is adopted by a majority vote.
5. T F A member may be a candidate for more than one office.
6. T F The person that offers a second to a motion always supports the motion as presented.
7. T F Proxy voting is permissible in inclement weather.
8. T F Ideally, the parliamentarian should instruct the nominating committee of their responsibilities and then stay with the committee to assist as needed.
9. T F If the affirmative vote is overwhelmingly in support of adopting a motion, the chair does not need to call for the negative vote.
10. T F A majority vote is defined as "one more than half the number of votes cast."
11. T F The presiding officer votes only on ballot votes.
12. T F To save time, minutes do not have to be presented to the membership and can be filed in a loose-leaf notebook.
13. T F Only executive board members are entitled to a copy of the bylaws.
14. T F Members of a nominating committee may be nominated for office.
15. T F At the annual meeting, the president always turns the meeting over to the parliamentarian to conduct the election of officers.
16. T F The president is a member of all committees by virtue of the election to president.
17. T F A single member may demand that the inconclusive voice vote be verified by a standing counted vote.
18. T F If any member requests a ballot vote on a specific motion, the chair must place the motion to vote by ballot on the floor.
19. T F PTSA student members are not permitted to hold office.
20. T F Once approved, minutes may not be altered even by unanimous vote.
21. T F The principal serves in an advisory capacity at all executive board meetings.
22. T F Executive board and association meetings may be combined since they include the same members.
23. T F Updated membership lists with addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers are distributed only to PTA members.
24. T F **Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised** supersedes all unit and council bylaws.
25. T F Any action taken, contrary to the unit or council's bylaws is null and void and should be so stated when discovered.
26. T F Elections cannot be contested.

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COMMON PARLIAMENTARY MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS, ANSWERS

1. T F The parliamentarian may not vote, make motions, or participate in discussions.
False – All PTA officers, including the parliamentarian, have the same voting privileges as other members. (*Toolkit, Voting Rights of Officers*, and Bylaws Article VI, Section 10)
2. T F The president appoints members to all committees except the nominating committee.
True – Bylaws state the nominating committee is elected by the membership at an association meeting at least two months prior to the annual election meeting. (Bylaws, Article V, Section 3b; and *Toolkit, Electing the Nominating Committee*)
3. T F Bylaws may be amended at any executive board meeting by a unanimous vote.
False – A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the district, council or unit voting body or association is required to adopt any amendments to the bylaws. (Bylaws, Article XVI, Section 3, and *Toolkit, Changing Bylaws*)
4. T F A treasurer’s report is adopted by a majority vote.
False – Financial reports are just filed for audit – no motion is needed. (*Toolkit, Running Your PTA, Sample Agenda*)
5. T F A member may be a candidate for more than one office.
True – However, a member can serve in only one capacity at a time. If the person is elected to two or more offices, they must choose which office to accept. (*Toolkit, The Election*)
6. T F The person that offers a second to a motion always supports the motion as presented.
False – The second shows that more than one person is interested in bringing the business before the group for discussion. (*Toolkit, Eight Steps to Making a Motion, #4*)
7. T F Proxy voting is permissible in inclement weather.
False – Voting by proxy is PROHIBITED. (Bylaws, Article VIII, ***Section 8, and *Toolkit, Parliamentary Procedure, sidebars*)
8. T F Ideally, the parliamentarian should instruct the nominating committee of their responsibilities and then stay with the committee to assist as needed.
False – The Parliamentarian provides instruction, conducts the election of a chairman and explains their responsibilities, provides materials and leaves a phone number to be reached to answer any question. The parliamentarian participates only if elected to serve. (Bylaws, Article VI, Section 10b, and *Toolkit, The Role of the Parliamentarian*)
9. T F If the affirmative vote is overwhelmingly in support of adopting a motion, the chair does not need to call for the negative vote.
False – The chair must always call for the negative vote, no matter how nearly unanimous the affirmative vote may appear. (*Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, The Handling of a Motion.*)
10. T F A majority vote is defined as “one more than half the number of votes cast.”
True – By “more than half” of the members present and voting on the particular matter. (*Robert’s Rules of Order*)
11. T F The presiding officer votes only on ballot votes.
False – May vote when voting is by ballot. In other cases, may cast a vote to create or break a tie if the result is in the best interest of the association. (National PTA’s *President Quick Resource Guide; Toolkit, Voting Rights of Officers; and Robert’s Rules of Order*)
12. T F To save time, minutes do not have to be presented to the membership and can be filed in a loose-leaf notebook.
False – Minutes are entered in a bound book, hand written in permanent ink, or typed with the original copy pasted into the bound minute book. Minutes may also be permanently bound at the term end. Copies can be distributed or with the approval of the association, a committee may be appointed to read the minutes and report. Copies may only be included in the PTA newsletter when the newsletter is distributed to members only. (*Toolkit, Secretary and Job Description for Secretary*)
13. T F Only executive board members are entitled to a copy of the bylaws.
False – Members may request a copy of the bylaws. (Bylaws for Local PTA/PTSA’s Units, Standing Rules, #1)
14. T F Members of a nominating committee may be nominated for office.
True – Members of the committee are not excluded from becoming nominees for elected office. If a committee member is being considered, they should be excused during the discussion regarding that office, but may return for the vote which shall be by ballot. (*Toolkit, Responsibilities of the Committee*)
15. T F At the annual meeting, the president always turns the meeting over to the parliamentarian to conduct the election of officers.
False – The president presides at the election meeting. (*Toolkit – The Election*)
16. T F The president is a member of all committees by virtue of the election to the office of president.
False – Except the nominating committee. For incorporated PTAs, when there is an audit committee, the president is also excluded. (Bylaws, Article VI, Duties of Officers, Section 1c)
17. T F A single member may demand that the inconclusive voice vote be verified by a standing vote.
True – Any member (without a second and without a vote) has a right to require that a voice vote be retaken as a rising vote. (*Robert’s Rules of Order, Division of the Assembly*) The request for a counted vote requires a motion and assembly approval, unless the chair self-elects to use the counted vote.

18. T F If any member requests a ballot vote on a specific motion, the chair must place the motion to vote by ballot on the floor.
- True** – A single member may move that a vote be taken by ballot, by roll call, or by a counted standing vote. A vote by ballot can be ordered by a majority vote, or the chair may decide the ballot vote offers secrecy for members. When bylaws prescribe vote by ballot, this requirement cannot be set aside. Ballot vote is always used for elections when there are two or more candidates and disciplinary matters. (*Robert's Rules of Order, #8, Incidental Motions; and Voting by Ballot*)
19. T F PTSA student members are not permitted to hold office.
- False** – Students, upon payment of membership dues, have all membership privileges and responsibilities. According to California Corporations Code and civil law, a student may serve in any PTA/PTSA office. (Toolkit, Legal Issues to Consider When Involving Students)
20. T F Once approved, minutes may not be altered even by unanimous vote.
- False** – Corrections to minutes are made immediately following the reading of the minutes, or at any subsequent meeting when errors are discovered. Corrections must be dated and initialed in the minutes of the meeting. The minutes at which the corrections are approved should merely indicate that the minutes were approved “as corrected” without specifying the corrections. The group that created the minutes must correct them. (Toolkit, Job Description for Secretary; Bylaws, Article V, Section 11; *Roberts Rules of Order, Secretary*)
21. T F The principal serves in an advisory capacity at all executive board meetings.
- True** – The principal of the school or representative, although not an elected officer, serves in an advisory capacity with full voting privileges. (Bylaws for Local PTAs, Article VIII)
22. T F Executive board and association meetings may be combined since they include the same members.
- False** – The Executive Board is listed in Article VIII, Section 1 of the bylaws as to who may attend. For association meetings all members/delegates are invited and may attend. If both meetings are held on the same day, **the executive board meeting must follow the association meeting**, and each would be called to order and adjourned and must have separate minutes to be voted on by each separate entity. (Bylaws for Local PTA/PTSA Units, Articles VII, VIII; and Standing Rules ***3 and 6)
23. T F Updated membership lists with addresses and phone numbers are distributed only to PTA members.
- True** – The membership list/directory of the PTA/PTSA shall be for the exclusive use of the organization and shall not be available for distribution or purchase by any non-member, organization or commercial entity. (Standing Rules in Bylaws for Local PTA/PTSA Units)
24. T F **Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised** supersedes all unit and council bylaws.
- False** – In the event of any conflict between these bylaws and the articles of association, these bylaws shall govern. (Bylaws, Article XIII) *Robert's Rules* are the parliamentary text that governs PTA where the bylaws do not apply. Bylaws always take precedence over *Robert's Rules of Order*. (Toolkit, Parliamentary Procedure and Bylaws, Article XV)
25. T F Any action taken, contrary to the unit or council's bylaws is “null and void” and should be so stated when discovered.
- True** – No main motion is in order that conflicts with the bylaws or rules of the organization. (*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, Improper Motions*)
26. T F Elections cannot be contested.
- False** – With few exceptions, a challenge to procedures or outcome must be made during the election meeting. An election must be declared “null and void” whenever discovery is made that the individual elected did not meet the qualifications for office as stated in the bylaws. Refer to the *California State PTA Toolkit, Running Your PTA, Nominations and Elections, The Election and Ballot Vote* sections; and *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised, Contesting the Announced Results of an Election and Point of Order* sections.) For assistance contact the district PTA.