

**BYLAWS**

**OF**

**NEST+m Parent Teachers Association Inc.**

**Updated March 2014**

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**Michelle Buffington, Co-President**

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**Judy Scherzer, Co-President**

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**Ellen Whirley, Co-President**

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**Rena Amitay, Treasurer**

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**Molly Brennan, Co-Recording Secretary**

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**Tara Pyne, Co-Recording Secretary**

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**Article I - Name**

The name of the association shall be: NEST+m Parent Teachers Association Inc.

**Article II - Objectives**

1. To provide support and resources to the school for the benefit and educational growth of the children.
2. To promote and help develop a cooperative working relationship between the parents and staff of our school.
3. To foster and encourage parent and teacher participation on all levels.
4. To provide opportunities and training for parents and teachers to participate in school governance and education decision-making.

**Article III – Membership**

**Section 1. Eligibility**

Membership in the association shall be limited to parents, foster parents, guardians, and persons in parental relations legally appointed to students currently attending NEST+m. In the beginning of each school year, a welcoming letter from the association shall inform parents of the PA and shall encourage their participation. Membership shall be open to all teachers currently employed at NEST+m.

**Section 2. Donations**

There shall be no requirement that a member of the PTA make a donation in order to be a member, to vote or to run for office.

**Section 3. Voting Privileges:**

Each parent, step-parent, foster parent, legally appointed guardian and person in parental relation to a child / children currently enrolled in NEST+m shall be entitled to one vote. Each teacher currently employed at NEST+m shall be entitled to one vote.

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## **Article IV - Officers**

### **Section 1. Titles**

The officers of the association shall be: President or Co-Presidents, Executive Vice President, Secretary or Co-Secretaries, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer (if position is filled), and Vice Presidents, as needed.

### **Section 2. Term of Office**

The term of office shall be from July 1 through June 30 for all officers except for the Members at Large, whose term of office shall be from the date of the regularly scheduled October meeting (when they are elected) through June 30. Officers shall be elected for a one-year term beginning July 1. Elections shall be scheduled to occur between the fourth Monday in May and the second Friday in June. Eligibility for office is limited to parents, legally appointed guardians, step-parents, foster parents or persons in parental relation to children currently attending the school and who are not employed at NEST+m. Term limits for each specific officer position for the association shall be three (3) consecutive one year terms. A candidate who has served the maximum number of terms in a specific officer position may be elected to serve an additional term in such position provided no other interested candidate is nominated and is willing to serve. Note that there are no limits on the number of terms a person may be elected to serve in differing officer positions for the association.

### **Section 3. Duties of Officers**

**3.1 Co-Presidents:** The co-presidents shall preside at all meetings of the association and shall be ex-officio members of all committees except the nominating committee. The co-presidents shall provide leadership for its members. The co-presidents shall appoint chairpersons of PTA committees with the approval of the Executive Committee. The co-presidents shall delegate responsibilities to other PTA members and shall encourage meaningful participation in all parent activities. The co-presidents or their designee shall attend all regular meetings of the presidents' council and shall be a core member of the school's leadership team (SLT). The co-presidents shall meet regularly with the Executive Committee members in accordance with these bylaws to plan the agendas for the general membership meetings. The co-presidents shall be one of the signatories on checks. The co-presidents or their designee shall represent the PTA on Department of Education committees.

**3.1.1** A minimum of two and up to three people shall run as a team for the office of Co-Presidents, so long as any and every team running for such office shall include a parent of a Lower School student, a parent of a Middle School student and a parent of an Upper School student (if one parent has children in two different schools at NEST+m (e.g. Middle and Upper), then that parent may run with just one other parent (e.g. parent of a child in Lower School) for the position of Co-Presidents), with the intent that the Co-Presidents shall jointly share responsibilities as they deem appropriate.

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**3.2 Recording Secretary or Recording Co-Secretaries:** The secretary shall maintain the official record of the proceedings and actions of all association meetings in hard copy and on computer disc. The secretary shall prepare and read the minutes of each association meeting and shall make minutes available upon request. The secretary shall incorporate all amendments into the bylaws and shall ensure that copies of the amended bylaws are on file in the principal's office. The secretary shall assist the treasurer with the June transfer of all PTA records to the incoming executive board. The responsibilities shall include notices, agendas, sign-in sheets and material distributed. The secretary will oversee all permit applications for space usage. He/she shall maintain custody of the association's records, reports, and permits.

**3.2.1 – Secretary of Reporting and Data Management –** The Secretary of Reporting and Data Management shall maintain and update data with respect to the parent e-mail correspondence system in use by the PTA, prepare and maintain reports and report to event leaders with respect to online purchases by NEST+m families through the PTA website, update the PTA website when needed to create or manage online purchases and events, and manage and assist with other reporting and data tasks that may arise. This position may be held by one or two people who agree to jointly share responsibilities thereby acting as Co-Secretaries.

**3.3 Treasurer:** The treasurer shall be responsible for all financial affairs and funds of the PTA. The treasurer shall also be responsible for maintaining an updated record of income and expenditures and shall be one of the signatories on PTA checks. The treasurer shall adhere to and implement all financial procedures established by the association. The treasurer shall present financial reports at all PTA general meetings. The treasurer shall also prepare and provide the January 31 interim and June 30 annual accounting reports (Chancellor's Regulations Form A660). The treasurer (or his/her designee) shall be the head of the budget committee and shall make all books and records available for audit when necessary. The treasurer shall prepare and assist the Recording Secretary with the June transfer of all PTA financial records to the incoming Executive Committee.

**3.3.1. Assistant Treasurer:** The Assistant Treasurer shall be responsible for assisting the Treasurer with any and/or all of her/his duties, and shall be one of the signatories on the checks.

**3.4 Vice Presidents:** The following positions of Vice President shall each be a voting member of the Executive Board. Each of these positions may be filled by one parent or two people who agree to jointly share responsibilities thereby acting as Co-Vice Presidents. The responsibilities of each Vice President are listed next to the position:

**a. Fundraising -** Responsibilities include, but are not limited to planning and managing fundraising activities and events throughout the school year; acting as head of the General Fund; and acting as supervising chair of the General Fund subcommittees for each of the Lower, Middle and Upper schools, with each of those subcommittees having its own chairperson.

**b. Volunteers, Class Parents and Committees -** Act as liaison between PTA and Class Parents throughout the school. Work to get parents involved in various events and fundraising activities. Work with school administration's schedule to coordinate refreshments and hospitality for teachers and parents, i.e., Parent-

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Teacher Conference days, Curriculum Night, Principal's coffees, arts performance days. Supervise the active committees of the PTA, meet with the chairs of the respective committees to discuss budgeting and event planning, report to the Executive Board and general membership about activities of committees.

**c. Communications** - Prepare notices, announcements and memoranda to be distributed to the general membership, work with the school administration and PTA to facilitate communications between the school and parents via the school website, email and flyers.

**d. Lower School** - Act as liaison between PTA and parents and caregivers of the Lower School, handle various matters and projects related to Lower School activities, and assume the duties of the Co-President whose child or children are in the Lower School in his/her absence or at that Co-President's request.

**e. Middle School** - Act as liaison between PTA and parents and caregivers of the Middle School, handle various matters and projects related to Middle School activities, and assume the duties of the Co-President whose child or children are in the Middle School in his/her absence or at that Co-President's request.

**f. Upper School** - Act as liaison between PTA and parents and caregivers of the Upper School, handle various matters and projects related to Upper School activities, and assume the duties of the Co-President whose child or children are in the Upper School in his/her absence or at that Co-President's request.

**g. Grants** - Research grant opportunities from corporations, foundations and government representatives, apply for available grants, and assist administration and teachers in preparing grant applications.

**3.5. Members at Large:** At the regularly-scheduled general PTA meeting in October, the following three Members at Large will be elected, who shall each serve as a voting member of the Executive Board. Each of the positions may be filled by only one parent.

i. Member at Large Lower School – shall be a parent/guardian of a Kindergarten student, and shall be responsible for working with the PTA VP Lower School to handle various matters and projects related to Lower School activities.

ii. Member at Large Middle School: shall be a parent/guardian of a 6<sup>th</sup> grade student, and shall be responsible for working with the PTA VP Middle School to handle various matters and projects related to the Middle School;

iii. Member at Large Upper School: shall be a parent/guardian of a 9<sup>th</sup> grade student, and shall be responsible for working with the PTA VP Upper School to handle various matters and projects related to the Upper School.

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**3.6 School Leadership Team Membership:** No other executive board member except the president shall automatically serve as a core member of the school leadership team unless he/she is the president's permanent designee. All other parent member representatives shall be elected by the general membership. No person employed in NEST+m shall be eligible to serve as a parent member representative on the school leadership team.

#### **Section 4. Election of Officers**

##### 4.1 Nominating Committee

a) The nominating committee shall consist of three to five (3-5) members to be elected by the membership at the March meeting. The majority must come from the membership. The nominating committee shall choose one of its members to serve as chairperson. No person employed in NEST+m shall be eligible to serve on the nominating committee.

b) Members of the nominating committee are not eligible to run for office. An eligible member of the nominating committee may be considered as a candidate if she/he immediately resigns from the committee in writing.

c) The nominating committee shall seek out the membership in writing, in English and other languages as appropriate, for recommendations of candidates for all positions. The nominating committee will also be responsible for conducting the election process. This includes the following:

- \* Preparing and distributing all notices regarding this process in the applicable languages, where possible (i.e., meeting notices, agendas, reminder notices, tear-off applications, etc.)
- \* Canvassing the membership for all eligible candidates.
- \* Determining and verifying the eligibility of all interested candidates.
- \* Reporting the names to date of those candidates during the April meeting.
- \* Ensuring that an opportunity is provided to all members allowing for nominations (this includes self-nomination) to be taken from the floor during the May meeting.
- \* Officially closing the nominations process.
- \* Reporting the names of all eligible candidates and the positions they are seeking, to the membership at least two (2) weeks prior to the May or June election.
- \* Ensuring that only eligible members receive a ballot for voting.
- \* Conducting the May or June election.
- \* The election process may not be completed prior to the first Monday in May.

4.2 Additional Nominations. At the April membership meeting, the nominating committee shall request additional nominations from the floor. The nominating committee may also utilize tear-off applications to reach additional eligible candidates. Tear-off applications must include a cut-off date not less than ten (10) days from the date of distribution.

4.3 Notices. The meeting notice and agenda for the May general membership election meeting shall be distributed not less than ten calendar days prior to the date. All meeting notices and agendas shall be

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available in the applicable languages, where possible. The distribution date shall appear on all notices. It shall list all candidates in alphabetical order under the office for which they were nominated.

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4.4 Voting Requirements. There shall be one vote per parent, legally appointed guardian, step-parent, foster parent or persons in parental relation to the child / children currently attending NEST+m. Each teacher currently employed at NEST+m shall be entitled to one vote.

4.5 Election and Use of Ballots

- a) The nominating committee shall be responsible for conducting the election.
- b) Voting shall be by written ballot in accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-660. Written ballots are required for contested elections having more than one nominated candidate for any office or offices.
- c) Names of candidates shall appear on the ballot in alphabetical order under the title of the office for which they were nominated.
- d) Ballots shall be printed with instructions in English and other languages, as appropriate, where possible.
- e) Ballots shall be distributed following a member's signing the verification sheet.
- f) Ballots shall be counted immediately following the election and in the presence of the members.
- g) Ballots shall be retained for six months by the chairperson of the nominating committee. If he/she will no longer be an eligible member after June 30, the ballots shall be turned over to the incoming Secretary.
- h) The elections shall be scheduled at a time that encourages maximum member participation. This will require at least an evening session.
- i) The elections for the school's leadership team parent member representatives shall be held in accordance with the team's bylaws. No person employed in NEST+m or serving as a Community District or Citywide Council member shall be eligible to serve as a parent member representative on the school's leadership team.

**Section 5. Vacancies**

A vacancy occurring in the office of president shall be filled by the Executive Vice-President for the remainder of the term of office. A vacancy occurring in any other position shall be filled by a special election process. Officers who wish to resign their positions once an election has been certified, must do so in writing to the secretary, and at that time, shall turn over all records to the secretary. In the event of the resignation of the secretary, he/she must resign and transfer records to the president. In the case of Co-officers, in the event one co-officer resigns, the remaining co-officer may choose to continue acting alone for the remainder of his/her term, or may serve as a co-officer with someone who is duly elected to serve in that position.



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### **Section 6. Disciplinary Action**

6.1 Any officer who fails to attend three (3) consecutive executive board meetings without good cause following written notice from the executive board, shall be removed from office by recommendation of the executive board or motion from a member and two-thirds vote of the membership present. The association's notice and agenda must cite that a vote will be taken by the membership as a disciplinary action against an executive board member.

6.2 Officers and executive board members accused of misconduct or neglect of duty may be removed only after:

- a) A motion is presented by any PTA member during any meeting of the PTA assembly to appoint a review committee. The motion must be approved by vote of the general membership.
- b) The majority of the review committee must be comprised from the general membership. Executive board members against whom charges are being contemplated may not serve on the review committee.
- c) The review committee must investigate, examine and obtain all relevant documents, interview all pertinent witnesses, etc., in order to conduct their fact-finding review. All pertinent facts and information must be considered by the committee. The officer(s) against whom charges are being contemplated has the right to present relevant facts, documents and witnesses.
- d) The committee must present its findings and recommendations during a general membership meeting within a period not to exceed sixty (60) calendar days from the date of the establishment of the review committee. The association's notice and agenda must cite that a vote will be taken by the membership regarding disciplinary action. The general membership shall then vote to remove or absolve the officer(s).

### **Section 7. Integrity of the Executive Committee**

7.1 High Standards. The NEST+m PTA requires Executive Committee (EC) members and volunteers to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As representatives of the NEST+m PTA, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

7.2 Reporting Responsibility. This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable anyone to raise serious concerns internally so that the NEST+m PTA can address and correct inappropriate conduct and actions. It is the responsibility of all EC members and volunteers to report concerns about violations of the NEST+m PTA's code of ethics or suspected violations of law or regulations that govern the NEST+m PTA's operations.

7.3 No Retaliation. It is contrary to the values of the NEST+m PTA for anyone to retaliate against any EC member or volunteer who in good faith reports an ethics violation, or a suspected violation of law, such as a complaint of discrimination, or suspected fraud, or suspected violation of any regulation

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governing the operations of the NEST+m PTA. A representative who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of office.

7.4 Reporting Procedure. The NEST+m PTA has an open door policy and suggests that others share their questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints with the EC or representative of the EC. The EC is required to report complaints or concerns about suspected ethical and legal violations in writing to the Co-Presidents (or an EC member designated by them in writing), who has the responsibility to investigate all reported complaints.

## **Article V - Executive Board**

### **Section 1. Composition**

The Executive Board shall be composed of the elected officers of the association. No person employed in NEST+m shall be eligible to serve on the Executive Board or as a parent member representative on the school's leadership team. Officers shall be expected to attend all Executive Board meetings and shall be subject to removal under Article IV, Section 6 unless a good and valid reason is rendered in writing.

### **Section 2. Meetings**

Regularly scheduled meetings of the Executive Board shall be held on schedule of the Executive Board. Meeting dates shall be prepared by the board and distributed at the first general membership meeting of the school year.

### **Section 3. Voting**

Each member of the Executive Board shall be entitled to one vote.

### **Section 4. Quorum**

A majority of the members of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum, allowing for official business to be transacted.

## **Article VI - Meetings**

### **Section 1. General Membership Meetings**

1.1 A schedule of proposed general membership meeting dates stating when and at what time these meetings are held shall be prepared by the Executive Board for distribution at the first general membership meeting of the school year. Written notice of each membership meeting, including an agenda, shall be distributed at least ten days prior to the scheduled meeting.

1.2 All eligible members may attend and participate during general membership meetings, and may speak to agenda items subject to restriction in these bylaws.

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1.3 Invited observers may speak and otherwise participate, if acknowledged by the chair.

**Section 2. Order of Business**

The order of business at meetings of the association, unless changed by the Executive Board shall be:

- A. Call to order
- B. Reading & Approval of minutes
- C. President's Report
- D. Treasurer's Report
- E. Principal's Report
- F. School's Leadership Team Report
- G. Committee reports
- H. Old Business
- I. New Business
- J. Adjournment

**Section 3. Quorum**

A quorum of 20 members shall be required to vote on PTA business. Quorum shall include at least two members of the Executive Board and six members of the general membership.

**Section 4. Minutes**

Minutes of the previous general or special membership meeting shall be available in written form and read for approval at the next general membership meeting. The minutes must be made available upon request to any member. Draft minutes of meetings may be posted on the school website for review by the PTA membership before they are finalized and approved by the membership to allow for more timely review in advance of the next general membership meeting.

**Section 5. Special Membership Meetings**

5.1 A special membership meeting shall be called to deal with a matter(s) of importance that cannot be postponed until the next general membership meeting. The president may call a special membership meeting with a minimum of forty eight (48) hours written notice to members stating precisely what the topic of the meeting will be.

5.2 In addition, upon receipt of a written request from ten (10) association members, the president must call a special membership meeting within five school days of the request and with forty-eight (48) hours written notice to parents, provided, however, that if a regularly scheduled PTA General Meeting is scheduled to occur within 7 school days of the request for a special membership meeting, then the special membership meeting may be scheduled to occur immediately before or after the General Meeting.

**Section 6. Parliamentary Authority**

All procedural questions not covered by these bylaws shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, latest revision, provided they are not inconsistent with law, policy, regulation and these bylaws.

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**Article VII – Committees**

**Section 1. Ad Hoc Committees**

1.1 Active Committees: The following committees will be formed and remain active as the need arises during the school year and from year to year: After School, Arts, Audit, Back to School Event, Book Fair, Brooklyn Nesters, Building Capacity, Clothing Exchange, Community Service, Transportation, Facilities, Foreign Language, Fright Night, Gala, Garden, Graduation, Health, Library, Picture Day, Spring Fair, Sports, Technology, Yearbook, and Class Parents and others as the need arises will be formed. The President of the PTA shall appoint each Committee chair or co-chairs, with the approval of the Executive Board.

1.2 Creation of New Committees: In the event PTA members wish to create a new committee, the members shall present the matter to the Executive Board for approval.

1.3 Communication: When active, committees may make reports at monthly PTA meetings. Members of committees should make all efforts to communicate with the Vice President of Committees on a regular basis as to the Committee's activities, including scheduling of events. Information to be disseminated to the general membership via students' backpacks must be approved by the Vice President of Committees and the administration prior to distribution.

1.4 Dissolution of Committees: When the need for a particular committee no longer exists, then upon the majority vote of the Executive Board, the Committee shall be dissolved.

**Section 2. Audit Committee**

2.1 Upon the request of any member of the Executive Board, or the written request of at least ten (10) members, an audit committee shall be formed to review the PTA's financial records. An audit committee shall not be formed more than one time per school year.

2.2 The President shall request volunteers to form an audit committee of three to five (3-5) persons. The majority of the committee shall be from the General Membership. Executive Board officers may serve on an audit committee provided they are not check signatories.

2.3 The audit committee shall prepare an audit of all financial affairs of the organization with the help of the Treasurer, who shall make all books and records available to the committee. The Executive Board may authorize the audit committee to seek outside assistance in performing the audit. If the cost of such outside assistance is greater than \$500, such expense must be approved by the general membership.

2.4 Additional duties of the audit committee may include the examination of all relevant financial statements, records of disbursements, verification of all PTA equipment and ensuring that By-Laws provisions for the expenditure of funds have been followed.

2.5 The audit committee shall prepare a written report and shall present the report to the general membership at the next scheduled general membership meeting after the completion of the audit committee's review.

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**Article VIII - Financial Affairs**

**Section 1. Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of the association shall run from July 1 through June 30.

**Section 2. Signatories**

The president, vice-president and treasurer, shall be authorized to sign checks. All checks require at least two signatures. Signatories shall not be related by blood or marriage.

**Section 3. Budget**

3.1 The budget committee shall consist of three (3) to five (5) persons and be chaired by the treasurer. The committee shall be responsible for the development and/or review of the budget process which includes:

- a) a timetable for adoption
- b) an authorization for making emergency expenditures
- c) a process for counting, securing and depositing all monies received
- d) minimal expenditures for executive board members, if applicable
- e) the process for the establishment of an audit committee and its responsibility

3.2 Presenting a written review of the prior year's budget for discussion at the June membership meeting.

3.3 Preparing a proposed budget for adoption by the membership at the June membership meeting

3.4 Presenting a budget process for membership approval which must be voted on by no later than the October membership meeting.

3.5 The budget can only be amended by vote of the general membership at any membership meeting.

**Section 4. Expenditure of Funds**

4.1 It is a conflict of interest for a PTA member to receive any financial or other benefit as a result of a contract with the PTA or expenditure of funds by the PTA. Therefore, if a PTA member or any member of the PTA member's family or household has a financial or other interest in a contract or other matter before the PTA, the member must disclose such interest before any vote on the matter. The PTA is prohibited from voting to approve a contract when a conflict of interest exists.

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4.2 Executive board may only utilize the minimal expenditures for operating expenses as stated in the bylaws and the amount spent and the reason for the expenditure must be reported at the next meeting.

4.3 The executive board is authorized to make an emergency expenditure not to exceed \$500 with a 2/3 approval by the Executive Board.

4.4 All expenditures not included in the budget at the time of its adoption must be approved for specific purposes by resolution of the membership.

4.5 Any donations to the PTA and fundraisers organized by the PTA which are targeted to a specific line-item/group other than the PTA General Fund (“targeted donations/fundraisers”) must be approved by a majority of the PTA Executive Committee and all fundraisers must be approved by the PTA at a regularly-scheduled PTA general meeting.

### **Section 5. Financial Accounting**

5.1 The association shall prepare an interim financial accounting by January 31 and an annual financial accounting by June 30<sup>th</sup> of all income and expenditures. A copy of the accounting or summary thereof must be filed in the principal's office.

5.2 The treasurer shall be responsible for all monies of the association and shall keep accurate records in a form consistent with these bylaws and applicable Regulations of the Chancellor. The treasurer, secretary, at least one other PTA officer, and additional persons as needed shall be designated and approved by the PTA executive board to collect, count, tally and record all orders and payments. The treasurer and at least one other PTA officer shall transport all funds to the bank and deposit slips shall identify the source of all monies deposited. All parties involved in these financial transactions shall initial the deposit slips. The treasurer shall make all authorized disbursements and shall, within the next banking day thereof, deposit all monies of the association in a responsible banking institution selected by the association. All records of the association including checkbooks, ledgers, canceled checks, invoices, receipts etc., shall be maintained and secured on school premises.

5.3 All collected monies for next day bank deposit must be secured on school premises.

## **Article IX – Amending the Bylaws**

### **Section 1. Amending the Bylaws**

1.1 The Bylaws can be amended by a 2/3 approval vote of a PTA quorum.