

Officer Elections: What To Do If....

In many cases, the Nominating Committee (NC) and Officer Election process at our schools runs exactly as it should – the NC is elected at least one month before the election meeting, viable candidates are identified for every position and the election meeting goes smoothly with a quorum present. Sometimes, though, things don't go quite that smoothly. Here are some common "what if" scenarios...

What If... your Nominating Committee was not able to find a viable candidate for an officer position?

The slate must be posted **10** days before the election meeting in order to give proper notification to your membership. (For Councils, slate is publicized 15 days.) If a position has no viable candidate, the NC posts the slate with "Vacant" for that position. This is preferred over simply filling in a name just for the appearance of a full slate which can create issues in the future. The NC continues to search for a candidate during this time.

Here are a few tips to help your Nominating Committee find candidates beyond the normal recruitment tactics:

- Contact "non-traditional" volunteers – teachers, community leaders, other staff members, grandparents, etc. All candidates must be a PTA member, understand the purposes of PTA and have a desire to serve.
- Touch base with staff members at school who interact with various groups of parents (e.g. ASP coordinator, counselors, front office staff, etc.) and ask for potential candidates.
- Send a flyer/Interest Form home with students.
- Use electronic messaging and social media to communicate openings. Recently, a NC for a high school in 9th District was unable to identify anyone for PTSA president. The principal sent a personal message out via the school's e-blast system speaking to the positive impact of PTA on the school, the benefits to the students and what the consequences would be if the PTSA was without a leader. Two parents responded and a father was elected as the PTSA president!

If the slate does contain an open position, nominations from the floor are called for at the election meeting and the candidate will then run from the floor.

What If... your slate has been posted and a candidate then decides to withdraw his/her name?

Your NC reconvenes; its job is not over until balloting begins at the election meeting. Ideally, the NC will select another candidate who can run from the floor at the election meeting.

What if... an officer resigns after the election?

Even if they have not yet assumed office, this creates a vacancy in the office. The vacancy is then filled according to your bylaws, which essentially states that the current Board of Directors looks to fill the position. The Nominating Committee's work is complete after elections. As a courtesy, the current Board would consult with the newly elected officers, since the search is for someone who will be a part of the next team. If the current Board cannot identify and vote on a

candidate before the end of the school year, then the newly appointed Board of Directors would conduct the search.

What if... we have no incoming officers for the new school year?

If elections did not take place last year, the current officers are still in office per Article VI, Section 6 of local unit Bylaws that reads "...or until their successor is elected". The current Board of Directors treats the positions as vacancies and - assuming that there are qualified candidates for office - votes to fill the vacant positions as per Article VI, Section 7 of the Bylaws ("...elected by a majority vote of the Board of Directors, notice of such election having been given to the Board of Directors.")

If there is not a viable Board, then it is recommended that PTA members vote on the candidates at a general membership meeting in order to be as open and transparent as possible. Give notice that an election will occur at the general membership meeting scheduled for (*month*), (*date*), 2013. Explain to the membership why there is no slate and why the election is being run in this manner. Candidates will run from the floor and should be prepared to share a few words with the members as to their qualifications. Council and District Officers can run the election meeting upon a request from the Principal or Local Unit Officers.

If there are no candidates, then a Nominating Committee should be formed and the process started from the beginning.

What if... we do not have a quorum at our election meeting?

No official business can take place if a quorum is not present. Only current academic school year members of the local unit PTA are permitted to vote. It is important to maintain a membership list in order to verify membership. *A crowd of people does not constitute a quorum!* If attempts to establish a quorum are not successful, a special-called meeting will probably need to be arranged. Consult your bylaws for notice requirements.

What if... one position is contested, but the others are non-contested?

This is a situation when both a voice vote and ballot vote is used. The presiding officer asks permission of the body to handle the uncontested positions first and follows the script. Then, the contested position is handled a separate vote, with ballots.

Resources for other "what if" scenarios are listed below and are available on the GA PTA website, including a script for contested elections and guidelines for tellers. Your Council and District teams are available to lend assistance as well.

[PTA Nominating Committee and Elections Guide](#)
[Quick Tips about Conducting Elections of PTA Officers](#)
[Quick Tips about Filling a PTA Officer Vacancy](#)

And more... <http://www.georgiapta.org/leadership-resources.html>

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