

**American Heritage and Academy Upper School  
Parent -Teacher Organization**

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**Constitution and Bylaws  
February, 2002- (Updated May, 2006)**

**Article I: Organization**

**Section 1:** The name of this organization shall be the American Heritage and Academy Upper School Parent -Teacher Organization, an unincorporated, non-profit organization, to be known herein as The Upper School PTO. This organization includes 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade parents and staff in both the Academy and Heritage, unless otherwise noted.

**Section 2:** The office and mailing address of the PTO will be in care of American Heritage School, 12200 W. Broward Blvd., Plantation, FL 33325, Broward County, Florida. General and Board meetings shall be held on the school campus; however, the organization may also hold meetings at other places as the organization may require.

**Section 3:** The organization's fiscal year will be: **July 1<sup>st</sup> – June 30<sup>th</sup>.**

**Article II: Purpose**

**Section 1:** The purpose of this organization shall be as follows:

- A.** To create a closer relationship between the home and the school by communication and by providing educational and social activities for the students, families, and faculty.
- B.** To support the improvement of education at the school in ways that will not interfere with administration or the daily educational routine.
- C.** To provide a volunteer base that helps enhance the quality of education at the school and to work toward increasing that volunteer base.
- D.** To use funds for the enrichment of our students and staff, including but not limited to cultural activities, social events, and educational aids.
- E.** To abide by all of the regulations in the American Learning Systems' charter.

**Article III: Membership and Dues**

**Section 1:** Membership includes families of Upper School American Heritage/Academy students (7th. - 12th. grade) and is open to the staff of the Upper Schools of American Heritage/Academy. An active member shall be one who has paid the annual dues in this organization.

**Section 2:** The annual dues for members shall be \$10 per student/teacher. The dues shall be \$10/student and be included in the school activity fee.

#### **Article IV: Meetings**

**Section 1:** General meetings shall be held one/month from September through May of each school year and each meeting shall be open to all members. The general meetings shall be held on the second Thursday of the month, when possible.

**Section 2:** In case of scheduling conflicts, the President and the Upper School Principal shall make adjustments to the calendar.

**Section 3:** The Executive Board shall meet with the Administration before each general meeting as determined by the Administration and the current board.

**Section 4:** Any Executive Board member may call for a special Executive Board meeting with the approval of the President of the organization.

#### **Article V: Voting**

**Section 1:** A majority of those present at any given meeting shall constitute a quorum.

**Section 2:** A two-thirds vote of the members present shall be necessary to transact business at a general meeting. In the case of a tie, the President's vote is the deciding vote.

**Section 3:** Active members shall be eligible to vote on all issues concerning the organization.

**Section 4:** Only one representative per family is allowed to vote.

#### **Article VI: Officers and Their Election**

**Section 1:** The Executive Board shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Lower School Liaison, and the immediate Past-President. The President shall be elected for a term of one year and not be eligible for more than two consecutive years in the same office. The Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Lower School Liaison shall be elected for a term of one year and shall not be eligible for more than three consecutive years in the same office. The Past-President shall serve for one additional year immediately following his/her term.

**Section 2:** Qualifications for election of office include:

**President and Vice-President:** An active, attending member of the Upper and/or Lower School PTO for at least one school year who has all of his/her junior high and high school children attending American Heritage and /or American academy.

**Treasurer:** An active, attending member of the Upper and /or lower school PTO for at least one school year.

**Secretary and Lower School Liaison:** A member of the general organization.

**Section 3:** Nominations will be accepted from the membership at the April general meeting.

**Section 4:** The officers are elected at the May general meeting by secret ballot or hand vote. If there is but one nominee for any office, the nomination stands as the elective vote for the nominee.

**Section 5:** Officers' terms shall run from the close of one school year to the close of the next.

**Section 6:** Vacancies during the school year will be filled by appointment by the President with the approval of the Executive Board and the Upper School Principal.

## **Article VII: Duties of the Officers**

- Section 1:** The President presides at all the meetings of the PTO and its Executive Board; serves actively or in an advisory position on all committees except the Nominating Committee; coordinates committee actions, but has no vote on matters before any committee, except in the case of a tie; shall appoint special committees, and shall be a contributing member of the Budget-Finance Committee and the Bylaws Committee. The President shall be responsible for the agenda at all general and Executive Board meetings and for obtaining approval from the Administration for any articles, flyers, or letters before their publication. The President is responsible for submitting the articles for the Patriots' Update.
- Section 2:** The Vice-President shall, in the absence of the President, assume the duties of that office. The Vice-President shall be a contributing member of the Budget-Finance Committee and the Bylaws Committee.
- Section 3:** The Secretary shall keep a record of all meetings of the organization and of the Executive Board. The minutes of the previous meeting shall be posted OR read for approval at the general meeting. The Secretary will forward the current month's minutes to the US PTO website. The Secretary shall conduct all correspondence and prepare documents as necessary. He/she shall be a contributing member of the Budget-Finance Committee and the Bylaws Committee.
- Section 4:** The Treasurer shall request membership dues from American Learning Systems; will receive all other money due to the organization and shall pay all approved bills. The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining the bank account and shall render a Treasurer's report at every meeting. He/she shall be a contributing member of the Budget-Finance Committee and the Bylaws Committee.
- Section 5:** The Lower School Liaison shall attend both the Upper and Lower School PTO meetings and keep the Upper School informed of the Lower School's calendar and activities. This person will coordinate any joint activities between the two organizations and will chair the Spring Fling committee.
- Section 6:** The Past-President shall serve as an advisor to the Executive Board and to the general membership.

## **Article VIII: Standing Committees**

- Section 1:** The Chairpersons of Standing Committees shall be elected by the general membership. Vacancies during the school year shall be filled by appointment by the President with the approval of the Executive Board and the Upper School Principal. Chairpersons shall recruit their own committee volunteers.
- Section 2:** There shall be the following Standing Committees:
- 1. Cartridges for Kids:** The chairperson will collect used ink cartridges, cell phones, PDA's, and laptops and take them to be re-cycled as part of a year round fundraiser.
  - 2. College Fair / Jr. College Workshop:** The Chairperson will provide refreshments and organize the presence of volunteers at both events.
  - 3. Fund Raising Committee:** The chairperson will coordinate fund raising events and/or activities for the Upper School PTO.

- 4. History Day:** The chairperson will provide refreshments and organize the presence of volunteers at that event.
  - 5. Honors Breakfasts Committee:** The Chairpersons will plan, provide food, and assist with the 7th - 12th grade Honors Breakfasts held at the end of each of the first three quarters of the school year.
  - 6. Hospitality Committee:** The Chairperson will provide refreshments during the two Open House events and will provide breakfast to students during AP Exams.
  - 7. Lifesaver Committee:** The chairperson will be responsible for coordinating alcohol awareness activities before Home-coming and Prom nights, as well as other activities and / or events which help students make positive life decisions.
  - 8. Office Assistance Committee:** The chairperson shall be responsible for contacting the volunteers any time help is needed by the Heritage and Academy Upper School Offices.
  - 9. Parent Connection Committee:** The Chairperson is in charge of making welcoming phone calls to all new parents.
  - 10. Spring Fling Committee:** This Committee shall be chaired by the Lower School Liaison, who will assist the Lower School with their plan and implementation for the annual Spring Fling.
  - 11. Staff Appreciation Committee:** The Chairpersons will provide a luncheon for the Upper School staff during Teacher Appreciation Week.
  - 12. Student Enrichment Committee:** The chairperson will coordinate cultural activities and assemblies that will enrich the lives of Upper School students.
  - 13. Student Recognition Committee:** The Chairperson shall provide refreshments and organize volunteers for the two Upper School Awards Ceremonies and Graduation Reception.
  - 14. Thanksgiving Dessert-fest Committee:** The Chairperson will coordinate the volunteers and provide desserts for the Upper School students during one lunch the week before Thanksgiving.
  - 15. Welcome Committee:** The chairperson shall provide Breakfast and volunteers for the Welcome Back Teachers' Breakfast and PTO Welcome Breakfast at the beginning of the school year.
- Section 3:** New standing committees may be created by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a general meeting. Such committees shall be filled according to Article VIII, Section 1 of the Constitution and Bylaws.
- Section 4:** Each committee chairperson shall submit to the President a written report of the year's activities and recommendations for changes if needed.
- Section 5:** Committee reimbursable expenses shall typically be limited to fees for paid speakers or entertainers, admission fees for committee representatives to attend special, pre-approved workshops, and the actual purchase price of materials used directly by committees to carry out their duties. Members who volunteer for committee work donate their own time, effort, and transportation. The school building is available for committee meetings and committee work. Committee expenditures are budgeted and approved in advance. If a committee anticipates non-budgeted costs or costs outside those generally accepted, it should approach the PTO Executive Board for approval. Those expenses should be put to discussion and a vote by the Executive Board before they are incurred.

**Section 6:** Before a committee submits any notice for inclusion in the Patriots' Update, or before a committee prints or distributes any letters or flyers to students and/or parents, the committee must submit the notice, letter, or flyer to the PTO President for approval.

**Section 7:** No parent shall organize an event or meeting on campus, outside of those established by the Committee guidelines set in these Bylaws, without the express authorization of the Administration.

#### **Article IX: Select Committees**

Select committees may be created for a specific task or limited period of time by a two thirds vote of the members present at a general meeting. Such committees shall be filled by appointment by the President with the approval of the Executive Board and Principal.

#### **Article X: Special Committees**

- 1. Budget-finance Committee:** This committee shall consist of the current Executive Board (past-President is optional) and shall meet after the April meeting and whenever else its deemed necessary. The committee shall submit a proposed budget for the coming year. The budget shall be approved by the Board prior to the end of the fiscal year (June 30<sup>th</sup>).
- 2. Bylaws Committee:** This committee shall consist of the Executive Board (Past - President is optional) and a PTO member. Their purpose is to review and revise the Bylaws when necessary in April of each year. They shall then submit the changes in the Bylaws for general discussion and voting at the next general meeting.
- 3. Nominating Committee:** Nominations of the Executive Board and Standing Committee Chairpersons shall be made by the Nominating Committee. This committee shall consist of at least two non-board members appointed and approved by the Executive Board and Principal. This committee shall notify all PTO members of office and committee vacancies to be filled and shall be responsible for notifying membership of their slate at the May meeting when the regular election is held. The PTO votes on these candidates or other nominations from the floor with the consent of these nominees.

#### **Article XI: Amendments**

This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended at any general meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members present.

#### **Article XII: Procedure**

All questions of order not provided for in the Constitution and Bylaws shall be decided by parliamentary procedure as specified in Robert's Rules of Order.

**\*\*Legend:** Changes & Additions