

**BY-LAWS OF THE VAN ANTWERP MIDDLE SCHOOL
PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)**

**Van Antwerp Middle School, Niskayuna Central School District
2253 Story Avenue, Niskayuna, New York 12309**

ARTICLE I: NAME AND LOCATION

The name of this organization is the Van Antwerp Middle School Parent Teacher Organization. The Van Antwerp Middle School PTO is located at 2253 Story Avenue, Niskayuna, New York 12309.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The purposes of the Van Antwerp PTO are:

- A. To promote the welfare and education of children in the home, school, and community.
- B. To foster communication among parents, guardians, caregivers, teachers, support staff and administrators so that they may cooperate:
 - 1. in providing the highest educational advantages for every child;
 - 2. in providing the best educational environment for every child; and
 - 3. in enhancing their ability to guide, support, and nurture every child.

ARTICLE III: GENERAL POLICIES

- A. To implement the purposes of this Organization, the Van Antwerp PTO shall coordinate and arrange programs and activities for the Van Antwerp Middle School community.
- B. This Organization shall not attempt to direct or control the administrative activities or policies of the school. It should only act as a conduit of information among the council, district and school.
- C. This Organization may cooperate with the other organizations and agencies active in child welfare and education.

- D. This Organization shall be non-commercial, non-sectarian and non-partisan. It shall not endorse any commercial enterprise or political candidate. Neither the name of this Organization nor the names of any members in their official capacities shall be used by anyone in connection with any commercial or sectarian enterprise or partisan interest, or for any purpose other than the regular work of the Organization in carrying out the purposes stated in Article II.
- E. No substantial part of the activities of the Organization shall be for the purpose of attempting to influence legislation, and the Organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.
- F. The Organization shall comply with all Niskayuna School District Board of Education policies, rules, and regulations.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP, CALENDAR AND MEETINGS

- A. Membership in this Organization is open to all parents, guardians, and caregivers of students at Van Antwerp Middle School, and to all faculty, support staff and administrators at Van Antwerp Middle School who:
 - 1. subscribe to the purposes stated in Article II, and
 - 2. uphold the policies stated in Articles III, IV and V, and comply with these by-laws.
- B. An annual enrollment of dues paying members shall be conducted. Additional members may be enrolled at any time. Membership identity and contact information shall be used only for the purposes stated in Article II.
- C. The membership year shall be from July 1 to June 30.
- D. There shall be a minimum of four meetings of the membership during the school year. Members have the right to vote on any motion presented to them at any meeting of the membership.
- E. Meeting dates will be posted on the Niskayuna School District Calendar and shall be published electronically or by hardcopy, by September 15 as practicable. Special meetings may be called at the request of the Executive Board. Special meetings and any changes to previously scheduled meetings shall be published electronically or by hardcopy, as practicable.
- F. The agenda for each regularly scheduled meeting along with draft(s) minutes from previous meetings not yet approved should be published prior to the meeting, electronically or by hardcopy, as practicable. The Executive Board

shall strive to publish the agenda at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting.

- G. A quorum at any meeting of the membership shall consist of a minimum of 5 members, at least two of which shall not be members of the Executive Board. Except where otherwise provided in these by-laws, decisions shall be made by majority vote.
- H. Meeting minutes shall be published, electronically or by hardcopy, as practicable, after they have been approved by the membership at the next scheduled meeting.
- I. The rules contained in the “Roberts Rules of Order - Revised” shall govern this Organization in all cases in which they are applicable and practicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these by-laws.

ARTICLE V: FISCAL POLICIES

A. Policy Overview

1. The purposes of this Organization shall be financially supported through fund-raising activities, donations and contributions.
2. No part of the net earnings of the Organization shall inure to benefit of any member or officer of the Organization, or to any private individual except for the reasonable compensation for goods and services rendered to or for the Organization; and no member nor officer of the Organization nor any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any assets upon dissolution of the Organization.
3. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, the PTO shall not carry on any other activities that are not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or any corresponding section of any future federal tax code.
4. By the end of each fiscal year, the Co-Presidents will have appointed up to three individuals to review the financial records of this Organization; such individuals may be members, but not officers or chairpersons of the fundraising committee of this Organization. These individual(s) will form the Fiscal Review committee. The review of the financial records shall be scheduled with the Treasurer and a report of the review will be provided back to the Co-President’s within 30 days of the review.

5. The fiscal year shall be from July 1 through June 30.

B. Budgeting

1. Membership dues and/or class dues for the upcoming school year shall be approved at the last meeting of the school year.
2. The Executive Board shall prepare an annual budget. The membership shall approve the budget at the first meeting of the school year.
3. The membership shall approve all expenditures greater than \$300.00, which were not previously included and approved in the annual budget.
4. The Executive Board shall determine the reasonable balance that should be carried over from one year to the next. The balance should be sufficient to cover delayed expenses and foreseeable contingencies, yet not large enough to compromise the use of funds each year to support the Organization's purpose. A reasonable balance could be 50 percent of your total expenses for the following year.
5. There shall be no deficit spending or borrowing.

C. Income

1. Immediately following all PTO-sponsored events, programs and activities at which money is received, at least two people shall count all checks and cash received and sign off on a deposit sheet. Such amount shall be submitted to the Treasurer as soon as possible, but no later than five days after such amount is received. The above should apply to any cash received that totals more than \$250.
2. All money transactions shall be accompanied by a signed receipt between the treasurer and committee chairperson, and such receipt shall remain with the treasurer's records.
3. All funds received by this Organization shall be deposited in a bank account maintained by this Organization. The treasurer shall be authorized to sign checks drawn on the account. Either Co-President shall be authorized to sign checks if the treasurer is unable to do so.

D. Reporting

1. There shall be a monthly filing of all monthly bank statements (front and back), Excel spreadsheets of check register, bank reconciliation and income/expense worksheets for all accounts.
2. A review of the financial records of this Organization will be scheduled with the Fiscal Review committee during the fiscal year.

E. Treasurer Duties

The Treasurer shall:

1. be responsible for all financial assets of this Organization;
2. keep accurate records of receipts and expenditures;
3. pay all bills incurred and approved by the Organization;
4. present a financial report at each business meeting and at other times when requested by the Executive Board;
5. prepare a monthly report to include all monthly bank statements (front and back); Excel spreadsheets of check register; and bank reconciliation and income/expense worksheets for all accounts by the 20th of each month;
6. prepare a year-end financial report which shall be submitted to the Fiscal review committee no later than July 31st.
7. assist and advise the Executive Board in preparing the annual budget.

ARTICLE VI: ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- A. Officers shall be elected annually at a regular membership meeting, but no later than June 30.
- B. Nominations of Executive Officers shall be made by a Nominating Committee of at least two members.
- C. The Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Board by January 15. If there are no members willing to serve on a Nominating committee, the Executive Board shall serve as the Nominating Committee for the election of the next school year's Executive Board.

- D. At least 10 weeks before the election, the Nominating Committee, through written and/or electronic notice, shall:
 - 1. announce that the Nominating Committee is soliciting and accepting nominations for all offices being vacated with the description of each office.
 - 2. state that the consent of each candidate must be obtained before the candidate is nominated; and
 - 3. state the date by which nominations are due.
- E. After careful consideration of the qualifications of each nominee, and consultation with the President(s) and the principal, the Nominating Committee shall at least two weeks before the election, through written and/or electronic notice:
 - 1. inform the membership of the slate of officers;
 - 2. state the date, time, and place of the election; and
 - 3. state that officers shall be elected by a majority vote of those present at the meeting.
- F. Each candidate must consent before the candidate's name is placed in nomination.
- G. Mid-year vacancies in Executive Offices shall be filled by majority vote of the remaining Executive Officers, and be subject to the approval of the membership by majority vote at the next regular meeting of the Organization.
- H. Officers may be removed from office for good cause by a majority vote of the membership at a regular or special meeting of the membership. The membership shall be given two weeks' notice that a vote to remove an officer has been scheduled.

ARTICLE VII: AMENDMENTS

- A. These by-laws may be amended at any regularly-scheduled meeting of the membership of this Organization by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting. The Executive Board, through written notice, shall inform the members of the proposed amendment. The proposed amendment shall be presented and discussed at a meeting of the membership at least three weeks prior to the meeting of the membership at which the vote is to be held.

- B. Proposed amendments to these by-laws shall be reported in writing or electronically before becoming effective.

ARTICLE VIII: DISSOLUTION

- A. The Organization may be dissolved only by a two-thirds vote of the members present or due to the closing of this School or merging of this School with another School. The determination of the Executive Board shall inform the general membership as expressed at a regular meeting, or, if necessary, a special meeting upon at least two weeks' as practicable written or electronic notice. In the case of either event, the Organization shall dissolve effective June 30 of that year.
- B. In the event of the dissolution of the Organization, all funds and assets of the Organization, including but not limited to all monies held in the Organization's bank accounts as of the dissolution, shall be distributed to another tax-exempt entity determined by the Executive Board and with the approval of the school principal and in consultation with the Superintendent and District Director for Business and Finance. All dissolution plans should be communicated to the PTO Council.
- C. In the event that the school is not closed, but continues to be a school within the Niskayuna Central School District serving a different population than previously, this PTO shall continue to provide programs and activities to further the mission of the organization regardless of the age and grade level of the students educated at the school. To that end and notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Article, any amendment to these by-laws for the purpose of changing the organization's name to reflect a change in the use of Van Antwerp Middle School by the Niskayuna Central School District may be made by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

APPENDIX A: OFFICERS AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS

- A. The Executive Officers of the Organization are as follows:
 - 1. a President or two Co-Presidents;
 - 2. a Recording Secretary;
 - 3. a Treasurer; and
 - 4. a Teacher Representative
- B. The term of office for Executive Officers is one or two years, from July 1 to June 30. Executive Officers of the same position shall serve staggered terms, such that only one vacancy at such position naturally occurs per year. No person shall serve more than two

consecutive terms in the same office. No person shall serve more than five years as an Executive Officer.

C. The duties of Executive Officers are as follows. The Executive Officers of the organization and the principal of the school shall constitute the Executive Board. It shall have the power to act in an emergency between meetings of the membership. Emergency actions so taken shall be reported to the membership at the next meeting of the membership. Each year, the Executive Board shall issue the Duties of Officers described herein.

1. The President or two Co-Presidents shall:

- a. preside at all meetings of the membership of the Organization and at all meetings of the Executive Board, and prepare the agendas for each meetings in consultation with the principal of the school;
- b. appoint the chairpersons and members of all standing committees and special committees, as needed to carry out the purposes and policies of the organization;
- c. be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee;
- d. be signatories to the bank account(s) of the Organization and have the authority to sign checks if the Treasurer is unable to do so;
- e. authorize Organization expenditures as budgeted, or up to \$300.00 in discretionary Organization expenditures;
- f. represent the Organization on the PTO Council of the Niskayuna Central School District; and
- g. relay communication to and from the District Office, or the principal, as requested.

2. The Recording Secretary shall:

- a. make and keep a record of the minutes of all meetings of the Organization and of the Executive Board;
- b. prepare and distribute the minutes of all such meetings, and make copies available to the membership;
- c. maintain the archive of past meeting minutes;
- d. provide notice of special meetings; and
- e. prepare and maintain the correspondence of the Organization.

3. The Treasurer shall:

- a. SEE ARTICLE V SECTION E

4. The Teacher Representative shall:

- a. serve as a knowledgeable teacher ambassador to the parents of the Van Antwerp Middle School;
- b. provide a monthly report at the monthly PTO meetings.

- c. convey ideas and concerns of teachers to the Executive Board as appropriate.
- d. be an ex-officio member of committees pertaining to the education of the students at Van Antwerp Middle School (see attached chart).

APPENDIX B: COMMITTEES

A. The standing committees are as follows:

- 1. School Services: includes any PTO member providing a service for Van Antwerp by written word in order to get information out to the school community. Would be chaired by the Secretary in order to facilitate coordination with taking of the official PTO minutes and the spreading of that information. School Service Committees are:

- Newsletter
- Directory
- Webmaster

- 2. Community Services: includes any PTO member who sits as a liaison or parent representative on a different organization in the Niskayuna community. Also includes event that provide a service to the Parent and Teacher members of the Van Antwerp Community. Would be chaired by the second year Co-President, in order to pass any knowledge or experience about these positions or events from prior years on the PTO. Community Service Committees are:

- N-Cap
- Friends of Music
- Staff Appreciation
- Mother's Day Plant Sale

- 3. Financial Services: includes any PTO member involved in fundraising for the PTO or bringing in money in exchange for product. Would be chaired by the Treasurer in order to hold accountability per PTO Council policies. Financial Committees are:

- Fundraising

- 4. Social Services: includes any member of the PTO that plans or carries out plans for an event meant to bring the student community together socially. Would be chaired by the First year Co-President in order to provide support, advice, and accountability to the committee members and PTO at-large members. Social Service Committees are:

- 6th Grade Social
- Halloween Social
- Winter Social

Moving Up Event

5. Academic Services: includes any PTO member that is involved in an event that happens with direct coordination with the faculty of the school. Would be chaired by a member of the faculty who sits on the PTO executive board, in order to easily facilitate coordination with other faculty, and to provide support, advice, and accountability to the committee members and PTO at-large. Academic Service Committees are:

Ice Cream Social

Book Fair

Earth Day

Teacher Grants

- a. The chairperson(s) of the standing committees shall be appointed by the nominating Committee except when otherwise stated.
- b. The continued need for these committees will be reviewed annually.
- c. The Executive Committee and the Committee chairpersons shall submit an annual report. These reports shall contain a record of the work of the committee or office, the results of that work, financial information of the committee, and recommendations for next year's committee.
- d. It is suggested that whenever possible Co-Chairs and Co-Officers be a representative of each of the feeder schools for Van Antwerp Middle School.