



# PTA Handbook

2022-2023

# Parent Teacher Association Mission

The PTA is a group of parent volunteers who dedicate their personal time and talents to supporting school and community activities.

The Association of Parents and Teachers (PTA) of the International School of Panama (ISP) works with joy throughout the year to build and strengthen connections within our community by supporting events and activities that belong to the day-to-day of the community, strengthening communications between the administration and the parent community, respecting the school administration's alignments.

## PTA Challenges

The PTA must adapt itself to the forms and uses of ongoing administration and respect the alignments that define the path of each school.

The PTA should endeavor to support school activities for which it is called to respect the ISP Values.

In times of COVID, the PTA must adapt to the situation and focus on enriching communication between parents and the school, with Class Representatives being a fundamental pillar for this objective.

Another challenge of COVID is understanding that the community has information and social interaction needs and, at the same time, the majority of the community is suffering from excessive exposure to screens, so it is important to create a balance between both aspects.

Both in normal times and in COVID, the PTA must understand that interactions with school activities, such as Clubs, must be carried out with the authorization of the Directors of the relevant school and with the contact through the advisor of that activity. The PTA does not have the authority to intervene directly in school activities.

## ISP Mission and Values

As a committee of parents we use ISP's Mission and Values to help guide our decisions and aspire to model the values.

***Our mission is to inspire and challenge every learner to reach their full potential and become curious, independent, and compassionate citizens of the world.***

# Our Core Values



## Commitment to excellence

We tackle challenges willingly and persevere in order to succeed.



## Compassion and integrity

We care for, respect, and value one another. It's not about me. **It's about us.**



## Strength in diversity

We embrace our differences, enrich our community, and make meaningful connections, ensuring our global mindedness.



## Innovative spirit

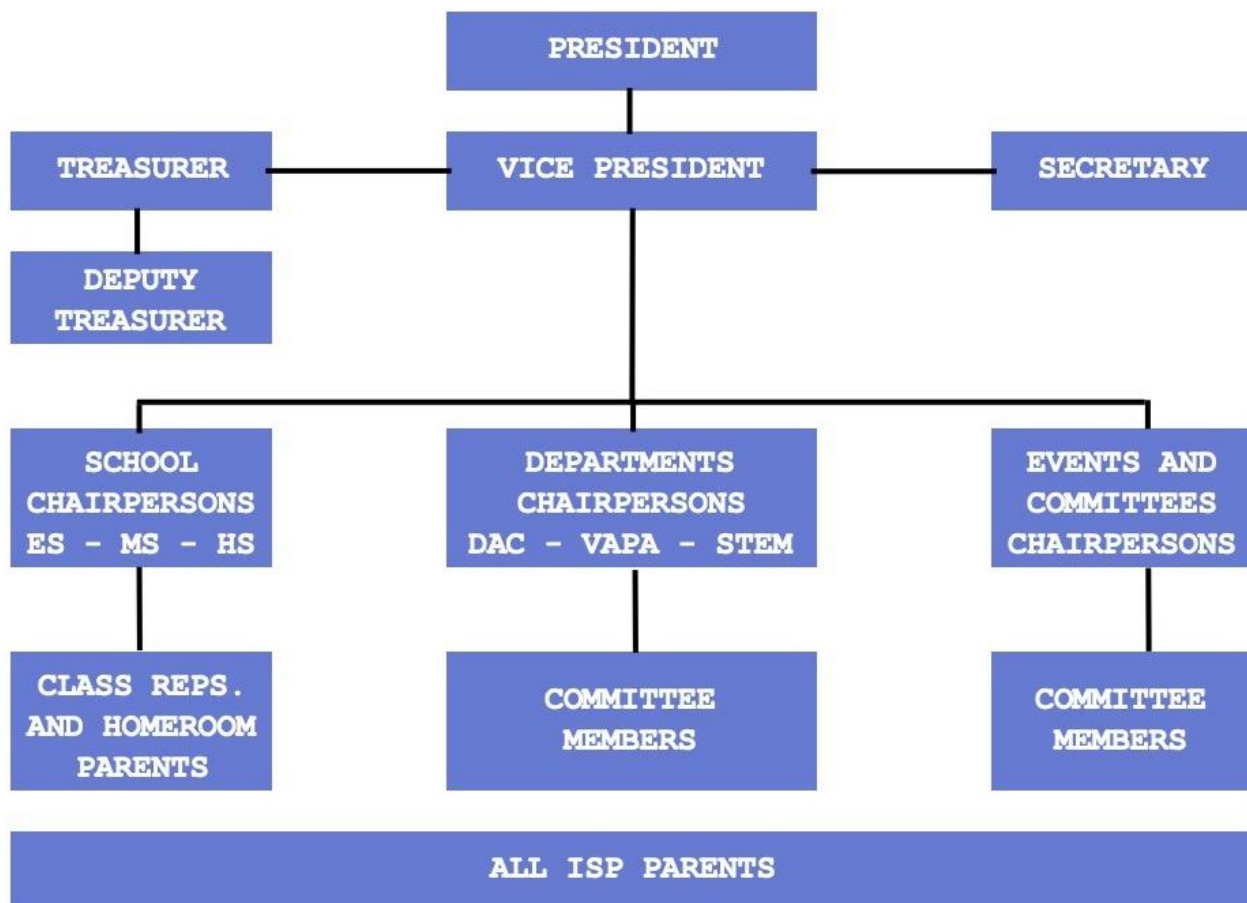
We are creative and curious learners, empowered to adapt to a rapidly changing world.



## Lasting impact

We contribute to a sustainable future by taking care of our planet and leaving our environment better than we found it.

## PTA Organizational Structure



## PTA Elected Officer Responsibilities

### PTA President

- ☐ Responsible for overseeing that all activities take place
- ☐ Responsible for directing PTA Assembly meetings
- ☐ Responsible of communicating with the Head of School
- ☐ Responsible for the Family Fun Fair Coordination

### PTA Vice-President

- ☐ Responsible for supporting the PTA President in overseeing all activities
- ☐ Responsible for directing PTA meetings in the absence of the President
- ☐ Responsible for the Grants Coordination

### PTA Treasurer & Deputy Treasurer

- ☐ Responsible for providing financial reports on all PTA activities
- ☐ Responsible for handling the currency in all PTA activities
- ☐ Responsible for processing all payment, reimbursement and collection forms
- ☐ Responsible for communicating with the finance department

### PTA Secretary

- ☐ Responsible for minutes of all PTA meetings
- ☐ Responsible for supporting President and Vice President with any communication to the school via School Chairpersons/Representatives
- ☐ Responsible for supporting the marketing and communications team regarding posts to the Dolphin Dispatch

## PTA School Chairpersons

Each school has a chairperson see organizational chart below.

They are responsible to feed the information to the school representatives of each school.

For example, the chairperson of the High School will have its own chat called PTA HS Rep 2020/2021. The information is sent first to this chat asking the reps of High School

to share the following information to each of their grades. The information must already be approved by the PTA President approval.

## PTA Class Representatives and Parents Chats

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE

In the Elementary School there is an Elementary Representative, volunteer and appointed by the PTA President, who coordinates the Homeroom Parents of each classroom and the communications of their WhatsApp groups.

The Elementary Representative has the responsibility to look for the parents' volunteers in each class room to be the Homeroom Parent responsible for the communications between parents and their teacher and to spread the information requested by the Elementary representative and the PTA President.

### MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL CLASS REPRESENTATIVES

In The Middle and High School the Class Representative is a parent representative of each grade, volunteer and appointed by the PTA President.

Their responsibilities is, through WhatsApp groups, coordinates the communications between parents and the school with the guidance of the PTA President.

They participate in monthly meetings with the Principal of their school.

### PARENTS WHATSAPP GROUPS

We are all PTA through class chats where information and communications from both the PTA and those that the school asks to support its dissemination are channeled.

WhatsApp groups are a great communication tool to discuss issues related to school life and for the PTA to keep the parent community informed about news and activities. At the same time, the WhatsApp groups serve to support the dissemination of some communications sent by the school.

The PTA President is the one who leads the decision of what information is shared in the chats, although each Class Representative has autonomy to determine the information needs of their group.

WhatsApp groups belong to the parents, so the school does not intervene in how they are managed and to support the work of the Class Representatives there is a flyer

with the WhatsApp Etiquette that are simple rules for the way of working communication.

#### ❑ MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

Each grade has their own whatsapp group, led by their class representative.

Normally the WhatsApp group is maintained and changes its name from one year to the next (Ex. 6th 2020/2021 to 7th 2021/2022)

To add new parents at the beginning of each school semester, the Admissions office is requested to provide this information.

When the school year is over, the PTA President should create the 6th grade chat by uniting 5th grade classroom parents into a single whatsapp group.

#### ❑ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

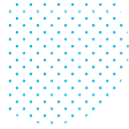
Each classroom has its own WhatsApp group led by its Homeroom Parent.

Each Homeroom Parent belongs to a WhatsApp group led by the Elementary Representative and the PTA President. Issues of school life are discussed and the communications that should be shared in each WhatsApp group are reported.

The PTA President should create each WhatsApp group at the beginning of the school year, with the help of the Admissions Office or the Elementary Office to send the group invitation link to the parents of each class. After each class has its Homeroom Parent assigned, both the PTA President and the Elementary Representative leave each group and only stay in the Elementary Homeroom Parents coordinating group.

To add new parents at the beginning of the second school semester, the Admissions office is requested their support to share with them their link invitation.





# WHATSAPP ETIQUETTE

WE ENCOURAGE



- THE PURPOSE OF THE CHAT IS SUPPORT OR STRENGTHEN COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION FROM THE SCHOOL AND TO SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT PTA
- BEST TIME FOR REGULAR COMMUNICATION IS FROM 6AM TO 9PM
- ASK FOR CLARIFICATION OF SCHOOL ALERTS, NEWS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS
- AVOID SHARING PERSONAL INFORMATION OR INFORMATION NOT RELATED TO ISP OR SCHOOL ISSUES
- FOR 1 TO 1 CONVERSATIONS IT IS RECOMMENDED TO USE A PERSONAL CHAT
- THE CLASS REP. IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE REGULATION OF THE CHAT



PTA@ISP.EDU.PA



# Communications

We are all PTA through class chats where information and communications from both the PTA and those that the school asks to support its dissemination are channeled.

However, there are other communication channels that the PTA can use to enhance communication in the community. All of these are the responsibility of the PTA President.

1. Social media need to have the authorization of MARCOMM (ISP marketing and communications) so they can ensure that communicational alignments are fulfilled and give continuity of the pages or profiles when those in charge move or change. Currently the PTA has a sales page on facebook, so far this is the only interaction of the PTA in social networks, it is a private group and with access control to be part of it.

PTA have 2 groups in Facebook:

- [ISP PTA Buy/Sell/Recommend](#) This group aims to support the community to sell items, food, services, etc. interactively.

The PTA President is the administrator along with MARCOMM.

The privacy of the members must be complied with and it must be verified that those who are accepted are part of the ISP community. The target audience are parents, students, administrators, teachers, alumni.

- [ISP PTA Intercultural Group](#) This group was created to collect the experiences of the Intercultural Group, led by its Coordinator who is responsible for the content of the posts.

The Intercultural group Coordinator is the administrator along with MARCOMM.

The privacy of the members must be complied with and it must be verified that those who are accepted are part of the ISP community.

2. Dolphin Dispatch, the PTA can share a publication in each DD issue by sending it to MARCOMM.

3. General Emails, The PTA can send a general email to all parents, to communicate essential matters, this must be discussed with both the Principal and MARCOMM in advance for their authorization.

## PTA Calendar

The main objective of the ISP PTA is to support school events with a person in charge who belongs to one of the schools of the college. Therefore, it is important that the PTA President verify the validity of the event, the person in charge and the way in which PTA will support the activity. Subsequently, the event support committee is created.

When the event belongs to the PTA, the President must verify with the Director of the School the approval, date and logistics. Create the event in ISP Calendar and create or open the committee.

PTA Calendar Dates from 2020/2021

EVENT	DATE	TIME	RESPONSABLE
ISP Welcome Back Dolphin Breakfast & 3K Fun Run, Walk, etc.	Beginning of the first semester	8:00 - 11:30	PTA
HS Yearbook Photos	September		PTA with HS Office
MS Yearbook Photos	September		PTA with MS Office
ES Yearbook Photos	September		PTA with ES Office
PTA GM - VIRTUAL	September 15	4:00 pm	PTA
PTA GM - VIRTUAL	October 20	4:00 pm	PTA
Artsfest			VAPA

PANAMUN (HS)			HS - Mrs.Mooney
Fall Social Event			PTA
International Day			?
MS/HS Musical			?
PTA GM - VIRTUAL	November 24	4:00 pm	PTA
MS Mes de la Patria			MS Office Panamanian studies teachers
HS Mes de la Patria			HS Office Panamanian studies teachers
PK-5 Mes de la Patria			ES Office Panamanian studies teachers
Holiday Shop			PTA
Dolphins Appreciation	December 9		PTA
Holiday Gathering			PTA
PTA GM Virtual	December 15	4:00 pm	PTA
New Family Welcome			
PTA GM Virtual	January 26	4:00 pm	PTA
PTA GM Virtual	February 23	4:00 pm	PTA
ES Yearbook Photos			PTA with ES Office
MS Yearbook Photos			PTA with MS Office
HS Yearbook Photos			PTA with HS Office
Family Fun Fair	March		PTA

ES Musical			
PTA GM	March 23	4:00 pm	PTA
PTA GM	April 20	4:00 pm	PTA
Teacher Appreciation	May 4		PTA
Pink Shirt Day	May 4		
PTA GM	May 25	4:00 pm	PTA
PTA EOs Virtual Elections	May 26	8:00 am to 8:00 pm	PTA
Athletic Gala			Athletics

Due to the COVID situation during the 2020/2021 school period, there were no activities at the school, so there are no dates or details of most of the events.

For the 2021/2022 PTA team will need to determine what events to be held and supported based on the situation of the pandemic at the time of the event.

#### [LINK TO REQUEST CREATION OF EVENT IN ISP CALENDAR](#)

[This link](#) is the form by which it requests the creation of the event in the ISP calendar. The ISP Calendar Committee will review it and approve or not the opening of the event.

It is important that the PTA President has previously arranged the authorizations with the School Director and / or the Schools Principals, when applicable, before requesting the creation of the event.

## Events

The PTA has 2 types of events: its own events and events that belong to a school and are supported.

After COVID a challenge of the next PTA EOs will be to start with events in the school, adapting the alignments and practices to the new normal.

The PTA will make sustainable & healthy choices (New in 2019)

ISP has been supporting the school to obtain ECO (Green Flag) certification for several years and the PTA has also deliberately moved in this direction. We have many passionate members to help focus these efforts and ensure that at all of our events we are thinking with a healthy and sustainable mindset.

In practice it means buying biodegradable or eco-friendly items and always considering healthy food and snack options.

In relation to food, it is important to consider having gluten-free, vegetarian and vegan options.

About PTA events:

They are events that are created and organized from the PTA, in this case, it is important to determine the event, the date and the logistics.

The President of the PTA must manage the authorization of the event with the Director of the School.

After having the authorization, the event is created in the ISP Calendar through the link of the ISP calendar committee.

About the events that are supported:

They are events that belong to a department, school or college club and that have requested support from the PTA, normally, it is food support, but the needs may vary depending on the event.

Support requests should always be received to PTA email from a teacher or the school office.

If a student committee approaches the PTA, it must be through their Advisor or the PTA seek the advisor for that activity. The PTA cannot decide or seek to support activities or events without authorization of a teacher, advisor or school director.

About all events:

Although they are events owned by the PTA or that the PTA supports, there are some steps or logistics that are common:

- ❑ All events must be coordinated through the PTA President, who must confirm the logistics of the event with the responsible organizer to create or open the event support committee to coordinate the execution details.
- ❑ When organizing the logistics of each event, it is necessary to respect the operating hours of the school and the maintenance staff,
- ❑ When necessary, the organizer needs to send an email to maintenance and the corresponding school office, to reserve the room or area of the school where the event will take place.
- ❑ When it is necessary to send an email to maintenance with the requirements such as furniture, movement of boxes, cleaning, bottles of water, etc. Carefully describe what is required and preferably include a layout plan for the event. This email must be sent at least 48 working hours prior to the event:  
Currently, those in charge of maintenance are:  
Darwin Gonzalez [DGonzalez@isp.edu.pa](mailto:DGonzalez@isp.edu.pa)  
Jiny Rodriguez [jmrodriguez@isp.edu.pa](mailto:jmrodriguez@isp.edu.pa)
- ❑ When the event includes vendors, it is important to notify ISP Security.
- ❑ When the provider enters the school and will have direct interaction with the students during the event, it is necessary to sign the Child Protection form and send it to ISP Security.
- ❑ Remember to send the email to maintenance to request disarming the event and cleaning, with schedule and detailed instructions. This must also be sent 48 business hours.
- ❑ Weekend events need more planning in advance.

## Financing

Over the years, the PTA has managed to obtain various forms of financing both from ISP and generated by ourselves or supported by sponsors or partnerships.

- Support from ISP
- Sales
- Sponsors or Partnership

## Microgrants

The micro grants are the main objective of the resources that the PTA obtains. The goal is to support school projects.

[MICROGRANTS HANDBOOK](#)

On some occasions there may be support requirements for some school activities, these must be channeled through a link and must always come from the activity advisor since there are protocols that must be respected. The advisor would be responsible for previously managing the school office to which the activity belongs. Please email [pta@isp.edu.pa](mailto:pta@isp.edu.pa)

## Budget

The PTA EOs must deliver the budget for expenses for the following year, which must be respected, since the objective is to keep financial resources organized.

PTA accounting works directly with ISP's accounting department and the same college checking account is used to keep money safe.



The signatures of the PTA Elected Officers are registered by the ISP's accounting to support requests for reimbursement of expenses made, which must be accompanied by the invoice and the debit or credit card voucher.

Any PTA Officer that incurs expenses on behalf of the PTA, and expects to be reimbursed, they need to first check with the PTA Treasury team for approval and to ensure they are clear on the reimbursement procedure.

#### PTA TREASURY REPORT 2019-2020

Balance	
Balance BoY 2019/20	180,284
Balance Eoy 2019/20	187,563
Accounting Movements for the Period	7,279

PTA Account Balances	
PTA Account Balance BoY 2019/2020	180,284
Annual Dues	23,600
Account Balance without Dues	156,684
Income 2019/2020	44,551
Expenses 2019/2020	-31,497
Grants prior year, disbursed this year	-1,444
Total PTA 2019/2020	168,294
Governance - non PTA	-2,794
Annual Dues 2020/2021	22,060
PTA Account Balance Eoy 2019/2020	187,563

#### PTA Annual Budget 2020/2021

Events and Activities Funded by Annual Dues
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	Income	Expenses
Annual Dues	25,520	-
PTA Others	-	2,500
STEMC Others	-	2,000
VAPAC Others	-	1,200
PK & ES Representative	-	1,500
MS Representative	-	1,000
HS Representative	-	1,000
Sustainability Committee	-	1,000
Wellness	-	2,000
Welcome back BBQ	-	5,400
Panamun	-	2,500
New Parent Reception	-	1,500
Fiestas Patrias	-	2,500
Valedictorian Gift	-	250
Teacher Appreciation Lunch	-	6,000
Honor Roll Lunches	-	4,000
Volunteer Appreciation Token	-	1,000
Intercultural Project	-	672
Total	25,000	36,350

Events and Activities Funded by Own Income		
	Income	Expenses
Yearbook Photos	3,500	150
Holiday Shop Fest	5,500	1,500
Dolphin Appreciation	4,000	5,000

FamilyFunFair Sponsors	15,000	-
FamilyFunFair	35,000	30,000
Micro Grant Project	-	20,000
SWAG Purchases	4,000	2,000
PAC Stars	-	-
Total	67,000	58,650

Dolphin Athletic Committee		
DAC Others	-	1,000
5k Run	5,000	2,000
Total	5,000	3,000

Visual and Performing Arts Committee		
MS & HS Musical	7,000	7,000
ES Musical	8,500	8,500
Total	15,500	15,500

Total PTA	112,500	113,500
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# PTA Bylaws – Revised April 2019

Article I – Name The name of this organization is The International School of Panama, Parents and Teachers Association, or “ISP PTA.”

Article II – Purposes The purpose of the ISP PTA is to promote the education and welfare of the ISP community by fostering relationships between students, teachers and parents. At the same time, the ISP PTA will promote, organize, and implement scientific, recreational, literary, and artistic events and fundraising activities when necessary and follow the guidelines of the school.

## Article III – Basic Policies

The following are the basic policies of the ISP PTA:

- A. The ISP PTA shall be nonprofit, nonsectarian, and nonpartisan.
- B. The ISP PTA shall represent the parent community in any process affecting the welfare and education of the student body, recognizing the legal responsibility to make decisions has been delegated to the ISP Board of Directors “ISP BOD”.
- C. The ISP PTA will respect the guidelines of the school board and administration.
- D. No funds shall insure to the private benefit of any individual PTA member or representative.

## Article IV – Membership and Dues

Section 1. Membership in the ISP PTA shall be open, without discrimination, to any ISP Parent who supports the mission and purpose of the ISP PTA.

Section 2. Members of the PTA are invited to attend general meetings monthly, and vote in the annual election

Section 3. Annual dues, as determined by the ISP Board of Directors or “ISP BOD”, shall be credited from the account of each student to the PTA .

## Article V – Elected Officers

Section 1. The ISP PTA Elected Officers, “ISP PTA EOs”, shall be one (1) President, one (1) Vice-President, one (1) Secretary, one (1) Treasurer, and one (1) Deputy Treasurer.

Section 2. Once elected, the ISP PTA EOs will appoint chairpersons to lead committees, events, and teams, as determined by each year’s ISP PTA EOs, as detailed further in article VIII.

## Article VI – Elections

Section 1. ISP PTA EOs shall be elected annually in the following manner:

- A. At the May PTA General Meeting, prior to the election and Annual General Meeting “AGM”, positions and responsibilities will be reviewed. Interested parties will be asked to share their availability, interests, and competencies.
- B. To be included in the ballot for an elected position you must submit your name, in person or via email, to the PTA at least ten (10) days prior to the election. The EOs will share a short bio about each candidate and the position(s) they would like to run and as this ballot will then be published and shared with the ISP community.
- C. Active campaigning is discouraged.
- D. Encouraging members to attend the AGM and to vote is encouraged.
- E. Voting must be done in person and attendees are required to register in order to receive a voting ballot.
- F. A ballot box for pre-voting will be made available on campus at least 3 hours prior to the vote. This is for members who are unable to attend the meeting.
- G. At the AGM all candidates will be given 3 minutes to speak to the members as to why they feel they are the best candidate for their chosen position(s).
- H. Majority vote of members shall elect in the following order: President, VP, Treasure, Deputy Treasure, and Secretary.
- I. In the case of a tie candidates will share the elected officer role.
- J. A candidate who is not elected is eligible to run for election of subsequent positions should they so choose. They will not be given a second opportunity to speak.

- K. When there is only one candidate for any office that election may be held by voice vote

Section 4. Elected officers shall take office one week after the election and shall serve a term of one (1) year, or until their successors take office.

Section 6. Resignation by any officer must be signed and sent in writing to pta@isp.edu.pa.

#### Section 7. Vacancies

- A. In the case of a vacancy in the presidency, the vice-president will assume the position and will finish the term through to the next AGM and election.
- B. A vacancy in any other elected officer positions shall be filled at the next general monthly meeting and these EOs shall serve for the rest of the term.
- C. The voting procedure shall be the same as that specified in Art. V, Section 3. C-K.
- D. Should no candidate run for the position, the election will be included in the agenda at the subsequent meeting until the position is filled.

#### Section 8. Budget

The PTA budget must be approved by a majority vote at each AMG for the subsequent year based upon the previous year's activities and financials. This budget is established by the EOs and presented by the treasury team to the general assembly.

#### Section 9. Online Ballot

In the case of an extraordinary event that prevents the majority of the members to be able to vote in person, such as a pandemic, earthquake, flood among others, including, but not limited to, a state of emergency declared by the authorities in the country. The PTA Elected Officers can ask permission to the school Board and school Director to hold online elections.

## Article VII – Duties of Elected Officers

### Section 1. The president shall:

- A. Serve as chair of the ISP PTA EO committee.
- B. Serve as an *ex officio* member of all committees.
- C. Work in partnership with the vice-president.
- D. Appoint chairs and members of committees not otherwise specified.
- E. Perform other duties as assigned by the ISP BOD or as applicable to presidents of non-profit corporations.
- F. Guide, activate or close committees of the PTA and guide the activities respecting the guidelines of the school administration.

### Section 2. The vice-president shall:

- A. Serve as a member of the ISP PTA EO.
- B. Serve as an *ex officio* member of all committees.
- C. Work in partnership with the president.
- D. Perform the duties of the office of president in the president's absence or when the president is unable to perform these duties.
- E. Perform other duties as assigned by the president by the ISP BOD or as applicable to Vice-Presidents of non-profit corporations.

### Section 3. The secretary shall:

- A. Serve as a member of the ISP PTA EO committee.
- B. Prepare the agenda and report and keep the minutes of the ISP PTA general meetings and make these available to all PTA members.
- C. Organize and manage the calendar for the PTA.
- D. Share information and announcements to the community.
- E. Perform other duties as assigned by the PTA president.

Section 4. The Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer shall:

- A. Serve as a member of the ISP PTA EO committee and divide duties as a team amongst themselves and their committee.
- B. Track and report the financial status of the ISP PTA.
- C. Prepare bi-annual and annual reports to share with the PTA election body at the December monthly general meeting and the AGM.
- D. Perform other duties as assigned by the PTA president.

#### Article VIII – Committees

Section 1. The following shall be the standing committees of the ISP PTA:

- A. Schools : PK, Elementary, Middle, and High School.
- B. Departments : Athletics (DAC), VAPA, and STEM

Section 2. Standing committee chairpersons should provide a recommendation to the EOs for the chairperson for the subsequent year. This person can be themselves, or an active member of their committee.

Section 3. In addition to the standing committees, the ISP PTA EOs may establish, amend or eliminate special committees as deemed appropriate.

- A. The president shall appoint the chairpersons of the special committees, which are then approved by a majority vote of the committee. The ISP PTA EOs shall approve committee appointments.
- B. Once confirmed, Committee Chairs shall therein be considered officers of the ISP PTA.
- C. Committee chairs may propose assistant committee chairpersons for approval to the EOs. Once approved, these members shall therein be considered officers of the ISP PTA.

Section 4. Special committees may include but are not limited to the following: Graphic Design, Communication, Family Fun Fair, Honor Roll, UN Day, Intercultural Group, Decorations, Green Team, Gala, Wellness, Fiesta de la Patria, Welcome Committee, Grants, Service Work, and Yearbook Photos.



Any member who demonstrates an active interest and requests to participate will be given a position.

Section 5. Committee Leads, Chairpersons or assistant chairpersons shall:

- A. Serve as an officer of the PTA.
- B. Work in collaboration with the associate ISP Principal, director or teacher of their associated school or activities.
- C. Coordinate effective communication between the PTA, and parents, and teachers and parents when requested.
- D. Collaborate with other committees and chairpersons to enhance events.
- E. Vote on pertinent issues throughout the year, as proposed by the EOs.
- F. Perform other duties as assigned by the president or ISP PTA EOs.

#### Article IX - Amendments

These bylaws may be amended at the PTA AGM by a majority vote, provided that the following requirements have been complied with:

- A. The amendments have been provided to the ISP Board of Directors for review and approval.
- B. Amendments have been published at least thirty (30) days prior to the AGM.

Amended: April 2019

Amended: July 2020