

PENN-HARRIS-MADISON FORUM BYLAWS

ADOPTED October 1994

Amended January 1997, March 1999, May 2002, May 2004, February 2006,
Revised June 2007, Amended January 2008, September 2014, February 2022

MISSION

The mission of the Penn-Harris-Madison Forum (P-H-M Forum) is to foster and promote communication between schools, administration, and the community for the enrichment and support of our children's education.

OUR PURPOSE

To provide an opportunity for members of the P-H-M community to learn more about district initiatives, programs, and other pertinent information.

To enhance the educational experience of P-H-M students by the sharing of ideas and information in a spirit of cooperation.

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be Penn-Harris-Madison Forum (also referred to as P-H-M Forum). P-H-M Forum is chartered as a 501 (c) (3) under the bylaws of the Penn-Harris-Madison Non-Profit Organization (P-H-M NPO).

ARTICLE II – PURPOSES

Section 1. To provide an opportunity for members of the P-H-M community to learn more about district initiatives, programs, and other pertinent information.

Section 2. To enhance the educational experience of P-H-M students by the sharing of ideas and information in a spirit of cooperation.

ARTICLE III – BASIC POLICIES

Section 1. The name of the P-H-M Forum or the names of any members in their official capacity shall not be used for any commercial, partisan, or sectarian purpose.

Section 2. Verbal or written communications concerning the P-H-M Forum, should further the mission of the Forum and shall portray respect for the views and feelings of others. When sensitive issues are discussed, discretion and confidentiality must be practiced.

Section 3. Forum representatives shall agree they will not talk to the press as Forum representatives. Only Executive Board members, committee chairs, and/or designated spokespersons may speak to the press in promotion of the sponsored events.

Section 4. Any communications, concerning P-H-M Forum, which are to be distributed through students, is at the discretion & review of PHM school administration including the school's principal.

Section 5. This Forum may cooperate with other organizations in activities that support the P-H-M Forum mission.

Section 6. The business and program portions of the P-H-M Forum meeting agendas shall be determined by the Executive Board with input from the membership. Opportunities to add to agenda items and discussion of new items shall be given at each meeting.

Section 7. The P-H-M Forum shall be a non-political organization. It shall not endorse or promote any candidate for office. Members shall not campaign during meetings or use their affiliation with the Forum in support of a candidate, nor shall the officers use their title in promoting a candidate. However, they should not be precluded from supporting a candidate as an individual citizen. Candidates who attend Forum meetings shall do so solely as parents in the P-H-M school community and not as candidates.

Section 8. The organization or members in their official capacities shall not, directly or indirectly, participate or intervene (in any way, including the publishing or distributing of statements) in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office; or devote more than an insubstantial part of its activities or attempting to influence legislation by propaganda or otherwise.

Section 9. In the event that an officer of the Forum runs for a political office, said officer shall be granted a leave of absence from the office during the campaign. The candidate may refer to their involvement with Forum (i.e. offices held, years served, committee involvement, etc.) When referring to their involvement, the candidate must include a disclaimer indicating that Forum does not endorse any political candidates.

Section 10. In adherence to Article II, the Forum shall assume no supervisory function over the local school parent organizations.

Section 11. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the P-H-M Forum shall not carry on any other activities 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 by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Section 12. Upon the dissolution of the P-H-M Forum, after paying or adequately providing for the debits and obligations of the organization, the remaining assets shall be distributed to one or more nonprofit funds, foundations, or organization that have established their tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

Section 1. One parent-teacher organization (PTA, PTO, or similar group) from each school in the P-H-M School Corporation who is interested in the mission of the P-H-M Forum and is willing to abide by the bylaws may become a member by paying annual dues. Member groups will be represented as hereinafter provided.

Section 2. All representatives to P-H-M Forum shall be designated in the following manner:

- A.** Membership terms will be August 1 to July 31
 - i.** Each member in attendance shall be permitted to cast one vote unless stated otherwise in the bylaws.
 - ii.** The immediate past President may be a non-voting member at-large providing he/she has a child that is a student in the P-H-M district.
- B.** Each elementary school shall name two representatives to serve on the P-H-M Forum for a one-year term; an alternate may be named to serve in the absence of a representative.
- C.** Each middle school shall name three representatives to serve on the P-H-M Forum for a one-year term and an alternate may be named to serve in the absence of a representative.
- D.** The high school shall name four representatives to serve on the P-H-M Forum for a one-year term and an alternate may be named to serve in the absence of a representative.
- E.** Each school's organization must provide the P-H-M Forum's Secretary the names of their representatives, any alternates, and the yearly dues prior to the November meeting. Any changes throughout the year must be reported directly to the secretary. Failure to notify the secretary may null and void a school representative's vote.
- F.** Alternates described in above E. may only vote as a proxy for their school's member. They are not permitted to vote as a proxy in elections. (see Article V, Section 5, D ii a)

Section 3. Each representative or proxy alternate (as described in Section 2) above shall be permitted to cast one vote.

Section 4. Annual dues of membership shall be determined by a majority vote of the P-H-M Forum in May of each year, and Forum representatives will communicate these dues to their respective PTOs by May 31st. Dues will be collected by Sept. 15 of the new school year.

Section 5. Any member group who has less than \$100.00 projected income for the fiscal year may have the dues requirement waived by a majority vote of the P-H-M Forum in the fall of each year.

Section 6. Conduct Review

- A.** All members shall promote the purposes of the P-H-M Forum and abide by the bylaws. Failure to do so may result in suspension of membership when the best interests of the P-H-M Forum shall be served by revocation of membership. Suspension of membership is rendered by either a judgment of the Executive Board, through a specially elected committee (a.k.a. a Conduct Review Committee or CRC), or by a majority vote of the membership at a regular meeting.
- B.** When an alleged infraction of a bylaw occurs, the concerned person should notify the Executive Board in writing to describe the nature of the infraction, the person(s) involved, the date of the infraction, and a request that the Executive Board either investigate the situation or that a CRC be elected to investigate the alleged infraction. The Executive Board shall respond in writing to the concerned person within 5 business days of receiving the request for investigation or formation of a CRC. If the concerned person requests that a CRC be convened, the Executive Board shall put the formation of a CRC to a vote at the next regularly scheduled meeting.
- C.** When the Executive Board receives a request for investigation of Bylaws infraction, the Executive Board shall investigate and render a decision regarding the alleged violation within 10 business days of receiving the request for investigation. The Executive Board may elect to convene a CRC if deemed necessary by a majority of Executive Board members or if a conflict of interest of a board member(s) exists.
- D.** When a member or the Executive Board requests that a CRC be convened, a motion and a second from the membership must be obtained. The motion must be passed by a majority vote of the members present at a regular meeting. The persons serving on a CRC must be a total of five members and must be nominated and elected by the membership.
- E.** If it is determined that an infraction of a bylaw occurred, the Executive Board or CRC shall employ a fair and reasonable suspension procedure that proceeds through the following steps:
 - i.** The member shall receive a written notice upon the first offense of any bylaw infraction(s).
 - ii.** The member and the Executive Board of the member's parent organization shall receive a written notice upon any second bylaw infraction(s).
 - iii.** If the member continues to violate the bylaws, the member may be suspended by the Executive Board with 100% agreement, by a written majority vote of the CRC, or by a written majority vote of the membership with the following stipulations:
 - a.** If the Executive Board deems that suspension of membership is appropriate without a CRC being formed, 100% agreement of the Executive Board in favor of suspension is required for membership suspension.
 - b.** If the Executive Board renders a decision of member suspension, the member may request in writing, within 5 business days of the imposed suspension, that a CRC be

formed to appeal the Executive Board decision for suspension.

- c. If the CRC renders a decision of member suspension, the member may request in writing, within 5 business days of the imposed suspension that the membership be asked to vote regarding the suspension at its next regular meeting. The decision of the membership vote is final and not subject to appeal.
- d. The Executive Board or CRC may deem it necessary to call for a membership vote to ask for suspension of the member involved. If a vote for suspension is called for, the member must be given an opportunity to be heard orally or in writing prior to the vote suspension. A vote for suspension is to be done using a written vote and requires a majority vote of those members present at a regular meeting.
- e. The member may resign from the P-H-M Forum at any time by giving written notice to the Executive Board and the President of their parent organization. Such notice is effective upon receipt unless stated otherwise in the resignation notice and acceptance of the resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.
- f. The Executive Board or the CRC reserves the right to waive the first and second warnings (outlined in procedures i. and ii.) if the severity of the infraction or the chronic behavior of the member warrants immediate discipline or member suspension.

ARTICLE V – OFFICERS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. The offices of the P-H-M Forum Executive Board shall consist of president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. The offices of secretary and treasurer may be combined as needed with the majority vote of the membership.

Section 2. Officers shall assume their official duties in the month of August and shall serve a term of two years ending on July 31st or until their successors take office.

Section 3. Officers may be eligible for the same office for additional terms if approved by a two-thirds vote of the P-H-M Forum at a given meeting.

Section 4. To be eligible to hold office in the following year, a representative must:

- A. Be a representative on the P-H-M Forum for the current year,
- B. Have attended a majority of the meetings, and
- C. Have demonstrated a commitment to the objectives of the P-H-M Forum.
- D. The above requirements may be waived by the majority of membership under extenuating circumstances (i.e. unable to attend meetings for maternity leave, caring of sick family member, etc.)

Section 5. If more than two representatives are interested in the same board position, The Election Committee is to oversee the election process as follows;

- A. At the May meeting, the Executive Board shall take names of those interested in participating on the three (3) person Election Committee. If

less than three names have been submitted, the Executive Board may appoint members to fill the vacant Election Committee seats.

- B.** By May 31, at a special meeting that may be held in person or virtually
 - i.** The Executive Board shall announce the Election Committee members and the membership shall take a majority vote to approve the committee as a whole.
 - ii.** The Election Committee will have 3 weeks to draft a ballot of qualified interested individuals for each office.
- C.** During June, at a special meeting that may be held in person or virtually
 - i.** The Election Committee submits the drafted ballot to the membership and additional nominations are taken from the floor. The Election Committee shall verify the eligibility of the additional nominations.
 - ii.** After nominations are closed, the Election Committee shall create the final electoral ballot of candidates and provide copies to the membership by June 30th.
- D.** During July, at a special meeting to be held virtually or in person
 - i.** The officers shall be elected using a majority or plurality vote by using the final election ballot that was created in June. A quorum of at least a total of 10 schools represented must be in attendance or have had submitted an absentee ballot for a majority or plurality vote to be in effect.
 - ii.** To be eligible to vote in the officer elections, a representative must:
 - a.** Be a representative on the secretary's official roster for the current school year as stated in Article IV., Section 2, E & F. Alternates are not eligible to vote in elections.
 - b.** Have attended a majority of the meetings, and
 - c.** Have demonstrated a commitment to the objective of the P-H-M Forum
 - d.** The above requirements may be waived by a majority vote of the membership (see Article IV., Section 2.) under extenuating circumstances (i.e. unable to attend meetings for maternity leave, caring of sick family member, etc.)
 - iii.** Members of the Election Committee shall count the ballots and report the election results to the membership.
- E.** In the event that a member is unable to attend the election meeting, an absentee ballot may be requested from the Election Committee.
 - i.** The member must request a copy of the official electoral ballot that was supplied in June or use the ballot that they received in June.
 - ii.** The absentee ballot must be submitted in a sealed envelope with the member's printed name and signature on it to the

Election Committee at least 5 minutes before the official start of the election meeting. The ballot may be mailed to the Election Committee c/o the ESC, if the member assumes all responsibility for ensuring that the Election Committee has received their ballot.

- iii. The Election Committee will keep the absentee ballots sealed until the official count of the vote takes place and then include those votes with the ones cast at the meeting.
- iv. Absentee ballots are null and void if the member fails to complete any of the above steps or if the member casts their vote in person at the election meeting.

Section 6. Vacancies shall be filled as follows:

- A. In case of a vacancy in the office of president where the president has served more than one-half (1/2) of their term, the vice president shall become president for the remainder of the term.
- B. If the office of president has not served for one-half (1/2) of the term, the Executive Board may choose to hold special elections to fill the vacancy. The president-elect may choose either the office of presidency or to hold the president-elect position for the remaining year. The Executive Board members will then accept nominations for the vacancy and hold special elections to fill the vacant office.
- C. In the case of a vacancy in the office of the president-elect, secretary, or treasurer, the Executive Board may nominate a candidate. A majority vote of the membership at the meeting shall be required for the election of the candidate. In the event that more than half (1/2) of the term has been served, the Executive Board may choose to fill the position or not.

Section 7. Any Executive Board member may be removed from their office and/or their membership suspended according to the following procedure;

- A. The Executive Board may not review one of its members, thus a CRC will be created to investigate the alleged bylaw infraction(s),
- B. The CRC can impose removal from office if the best interest is served.
- C. The CRC can impose the suspension of membership as outlined in Article IV, Section 6.
- D. The involved Executive Board member may appeal the decision of the CRC by asking for a membership vote as outlined in Article IV, Section 6. The decision of the membership is final and not subject to appeal.
- E. The officer may resign from their office and/or membership at any time by giving written notice to the Executive Board and the president of their parent organization. Such notice is effective upon receipt unless stated otherwise in the resignation notice and acceptance of the resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

ARTICLE VI – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. The president shall

- A. Serve as chair of the Executive Board,
- B. Serve as an ex officio member of all committees except the nominating committee and CRC,

- C. Appoint chairs and members of committees not otherwise specified,
- D. Preside at Forum meetings,
- E. Coordinate the work of the officers and committees of the organization in order that objectives may be promoted, and
- F. Perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Board.

Section 2. The vice president shall

- A. Serve as a member of the Executive Board,
- B. Perform the duties of president in the president's absence or when the president is unable to perform these duties,
- C. Notify members of meetings, and
- D. Perform other duties as assigned by the president or the Executive Board.
- E. Hold the position of President in the following term unless unable to fulfill the duties.

Section 3. The secretary shall

- A. Serve as a member of the Executive Board,
- B. Record the minutes of all meetings of the organization and of the Executive Board,
- C. Report the minutes at the regular meetings, and
- D. Keep attendance records for P-H-M Forum meetings
- E. Maintain a current roster of members
- F. Perform other duties as assigned by the president or the Executive Board.

Section 4. The treasurer shall

- A. Serve as a member of the Executive Board,
- B. Have custody of all P-H-M Forum funds,
- C. Keep a full and accurate account of receipts and expenditures,
- D. Make disbursements as requested with the P-H-M Forum, Executive Board, or special committee,
- E. Present a financial at every meeting of the P-H-M Forum and at other times when requested by the Executive Board,
- F. Be responsible for the maintenance of such books of account and records as to conform to the requirements of the P-H-M Forum,
- G. Be responsible for the preparation and filing of tax returns for the local, state, and federal government,
- H. Release the books to be examined at the request of the Executive Board and/or annually by an auditor who, satisfied that the treasurer's annual report is correct, should sign the report. The auditor shall be appointed by the Executive Board*, and
- I. Perform other duties as assigned by the president or the Executive Board.

*An audit of the treasurer's accounts is for the protection of the treasurer. It is the only means of assuring everyone that the accounts are accurate and relieves the treasurer of responsibility except in the case of fraud.

Section 5. All officers shall release any P-H-M Forum books, records, or property within one (1) month of the end of serving their term. In case of removal or resignation, all records, books, funds, or other material relating to that office shall be turned over to the appropriate Executive Board member within five (5) business days.

Section 6. Whenever an officer has a financial, personal, or political interest in any matter coming before the Executive Board or membership:

- A. The affected person shall fully disclose the nature of the interest and voluntarily withdraw from discussion, lobbying, and voting on the matter.
- B. When questions regarding an officer's conflict of interest arise, any majority of disinterested members may determine if it is in the best interest of the organization for the officer to withdraw. The minutes of the meetings at which such votes are taken shall record such disclosure, abstention, and rationale for approval.

ARTICLE VII-EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. The affairs of the P-H-M Forum shall be managed by the Executive Board.

Section 2. The members of the Executive Board shall be the president, vice president, the secretary, and the treasurer.

Section 3. The Executive Board shall

- A. Manage the affairs of the P-H-M Forum,
- B. Act on recommendations presented by the P-H-M Forum membership and its community,
- C. Create and appoint members for standing committees,
- D. Review and act on reports and recommendations of committees and members,
- E. Approve and budget,
- F. Approve Board and committee appointments as recommended by the president unless specified otherwise in these bylaws,
- G. Establish public policy and the legislative agenda,
- H. Establish organizational policy based on the yearly goals,
- I. Annually review the bylaws and may propose bylaw amendments and policies for the membership's consideration for adoption.
- J. Appoint qualified officer(s) member(s) to collaborate with other organizations to further the mission of the P-H-M Forum (e.g. P-H-M Education Foundation, P-H-M's group events, etc.)

Section 4. The Executive Board shall hold Executive Board meetings as needed to fulfill the duties of their office, but no more than 5 times throughout the school year.

- A. A quorum of the Executive Board shall be 100% of the members of the board then in office.
- B. Meetings of the Executive Board members may be called by the president, with notice to each member of the Executive Board.
- C. Executive Board Meetings may be conducted by conference call, teleconference, or other electronic media as permitted by applicable law and agreed upon by each board member.
- D. Executive Board meetings are not open to the public. It is up to the discretion of the Executive Board to admit anyone to attend these meetings.

Section 5. Between meetings of the Executive Board, the elected officers shall have and may exercise the powers of the Executive Board in the management of such affairs of the P-H-M Forum that in their judgment require immediate action. The Executive officer(s) shall take no action contrary to any decisions or actions previously made by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VIII – MEETINGS

Section 1. Meetings shall be held monthly from September through May. The month of June is optional if school is in session during this month.

Section 2. Notice of the time and place of each regular meeting shall be given in writing to each member at the first meeting. Subsequent updates will be provided at least 5 days prior to the upcoming meeting.

Section 3. The program portion of the Forum meetings shall be open to all. The business portion of the meetings shall be open to Forum members only. The Executive Board may grant exceptions when attendance by an individual who may or may not be a P-H-M parent/guardian is in the best interest of the Forum. No media personnel or use of personal recording devices will be permitted during the meetings. Exceptions may be granted with majority approval of the membership.

Section 4. When requested by a voting member and approved by the majority of the membership of those present, a twenty-four (24) hour delay in voting may be granted for representatives to return to their associations or parent body for voting direction. This policy does not apply when electing officers.

Section 5. Roll call or written vote may be taken on any motion and recorded in accordance and adherence to Robert's Rules of Order. Unless stated otherwise in the bylaws.

Section 6. Whenever a member has a financial, personal, or political interest in any matter coming before the Executive Board or membership,

- A. The affected person shall fully disclose the nature of the interest and withdraw from discussion, lobbying, and voting on the matter.
- B. When questions regarding a member's conflict of interest arise, any majority of disinterested members may determine if it is in the best interest of the organization for the member to withdraw. The minutes of the meetings at which such votes are taken shall record such disclosure, abstention, and rationale for approval.

ARTICLE IX – COMMITTEES

Committees shall be formed as needed by Forum representatives.

ARTICLE X – FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of this association shall begin July 1st and end on the following June 30th

ARTICLE XI – PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the organization in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not in conflict with these bylaws. This P-H-M Forum organization must also abide by local, state, and federal laws concerning non-profit organizations that are applicable.

ARTICLE XII – AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of this organization by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, provided notice of the proposed amendment shall be given at least one week preceding that meeting.