

BY LAWS

OF THE

Parent-Teacher Association of the High School of American Studies at Lehman College

APPROVED BY THE MEMBERSHIP ON NOVEMBER 17, 2008

Co-President, Carmen DeValle _____

Co-President, Beth Forrest _____

Recording Secretary, Lisa Rosenthal _____

Article I - Name

The name of the association shall be: The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) of the High School of American Studies at Lehman College (HSAS).

Article II – Objectives

1. To provide support and resources to the school for the benefit and educational growth of our children.
2. To promote and help develop a cooperative working relationship between the parents and staff of our school.
3. To foster and encourage parent participation on all levels.
4. To provide opportunities and training for parents to participate in school governance and education decision-making.

Article III - Membership

Section 1. Eligibility

Membership in the association shall be limited to parents, legally appointed guardians, and persons in parental relation to students currently attending HSAS. Parents, legally appointed guardians, and persons in parental relation to students currently attending HSAS are automatically members of the PTA; no membership form is necessary. In the beginning of each school year, a welcoming letter from the association shall inform parents of the PTA and shall encourage their participation. Membership shall be open to all teachers currently employed at HSAS.

Section 2. Donations

Donations are not a requirement for membership, voting or running for office. For budgetary purposes, the Executive Board, subject to the approval of the General Membership, may establish a suggested annual dues donation amount.

Section 3. Voting Privileges

Each parent, legally appointed guardian or person in parental relation of a child/children currently enrolled in HSAS shall be entitled to one vote. Each teacher currently employed at HSAS shall be entitled to one vote.

Article IV - Officers

Section 1. Titles

The officers of the association shall be: two co-presidents, vice president, recording secretary, membership secretary, fundraiser, treasurer and 3-4 members at large. The executive board shall not exceed 11 in number. The PTA must elect the mandatory core officers of president, secretary and treasurer to be a functioning PTA. In the event that two eligible parent members are not interested in running for the positions of co-presidents, the association may take nominations for the position of sole president as outlined below. The term of office for co-presidents shall be for one year as outlined below. Hereafter the term "president" shall include co-presidents when elected.

Section 2. Term of Office and Term Limits

The term of office shall be from July 1 through June 30. PA elections must be held between the third Wednesday in May and the third Wednesday in June for a one-year term beginning July 1. Term limits for each officer position of the association shall be two (2) consecutive one (1) year terms in the same office, unless no other interested candidates for said office are nominated and a majority present at the April membership meeting votes to allow the nomination, in which case, the officer may be nominated for two (2) additional one (1) year terms. Eligibility for office is limited to parents, legally appointed guardians or persons in parental relation of students currently attending HSAS who are not employed at HSAS.

Section 3. Duties of Officers

- 3.1 President: The president shall preside at all meetings of the PTA and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee. The president shall provide leadership for its members. The president shall appoint chairpersons of PTA committees with the approval of the Executive Board. The president shall delegate responsibilities to other PTA members and shall encourage meaningful participation in all parent activities. The president shall attend all regular meetings of the presidents' council or high school federation and shall be a core member of the school's leadership team. The president shall meet regularly with the Executive Board members in accordance with these bylaws to plan the agendas for the general membership meetings. The president shall be one of the signatories on checks, or if there are co-presidents, they shall be two of the signatories on checks. The president or his/her designee shall represent the PTA on district/regional committees. The president shall assist with the June transfer of PTA records to the incoming Executive Board. If co-presidents, they shall have broad discretion in determining how to apportion the duties of co-president between themselves. In the event that the co-presidents are unable to act in unison to carry out their responsibilities, the issue shall be decided by vote of the Executive Board.

- 3.2 Vice President: The vice president shall assist the president, or the co-presidents, as the case may be, and shall assume the co-presidents' duties in their absence or at the co-presidents' request. The vice president shall be coordinator of all committee activities and shall see to their smooth functioning. The vice president, in the absence of the president or co-presidents, as the case may be, shall be one of the signatories on checks. The vice-president, in case of temporary absence, shall assume the duties of the recording secretary in his/her absence.
- 3.3 Recording Secretary: The recording secretary shall maintain the official record of the PTA, will submit a letter of acknowledgement upon receipt of the association's records and reports to the Executive Board. The secretary shall sign and incorporate all collected monies to the treasurer with the June transfer of all PTA records to the incoming executive board. The secretary shall prepare and make the minutes of each association meeting available upon request. The secretary shall be responsible for reviewing, maintaining and responding to all correspondence regarding the association and for sending out agendas to the General Membership for upcoming meetings, whether by U.S. mail, email, or school website.
- 3.4 Membership Secretary: The membership secretary shall keep an accurate list of the members of the PTA, will send a letter of acknowledgement upon receipt of donations, keep attendance at the general membership meeting and all executive board meetings and turn over all collected monies to the treasurer. The responsibilities shall include notices, agendas, sign-in sheets and material distributed. The membership secretary shall notify Executive Board Members of Executive Board meetings. The membership secretary shall be responsible for issuing all notices required by these Bylaws to the Membership.
- 3.5 Treasurer: The treasurer shall be responsible for all financial affairs and funds of the association. The treasurer shall also be responsible for maintaining an updated record of income and expenditures and shall be one of the signatories on checks. The treasurer shall adhere to and implement all financial procedures established by the association. The treasurer shall keep a record of the deposit of monies collected by the membership for the association. Records will include the reason and amount of the deposit. The treasurer shall disburse the funds of the PTA as authorized by the Annual Budget adopted by the Membership, taking proper vouchers for such disbursements. All such disbursements will be signed by two signatories, one of which shall be the treasurer, or in his/her absence, the president and will be accompanied by a voucher receipt that gives details of the expenditure and the minutes approving the expenditure by membership. The treasurer shall be prepared to present and provide copies of financial reports at all association meetings. The treasurer shall also prepare and provide the January 31st interim and June annual accounting reports. He/she shall make available all books or financial records for viewing by members upon request and for audit. The treasurer shall prepare and assist the recording secretary with the June transfer of all PTA records to the incoming executive board.

- 3.6 Fundraiser: The fundraiser shall be responsible for all fund raising activities, including but not limited to chairing the fundraising committee, and developing and implementing all fundraising activities.
- 3.7 Trustee(s): The trustee(s) shall see to it that the bylaws are faithfully followed. The trustee, or if more than one trustee, a trustee designated by the Executive Board, shall serve as Parliamentarian, and must be familiar with *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* and these Bylaws. He/she shall be the final authority at all meetings when issues of procedure arise. In the absence of the designated trustee from a meeting, the president will appoint a parliamentarian *pro-tem* for that meeting. The trustee shall also serve as executive board member of the Special Auditing and Budget Committee as described in Article VII, Section 5. The trustee shall be responsible for the investigation and implementation of impeachment proceedings.
- 3.8 School Leadership Team Membership: No other executive board member except a co-president shall automatically serve as a core member of the school leadership team. Candidates for co-president must disclose prior to the election, which co-president will assume the school leadership team position reserved for the president. The other co-president is eligible for election to the school leadership team in his/her own right. If the president or both co-presidents are unable to serve as member to the school leadership team, another elected Executive Board member may be selected by the Executive Board as a replacement member of the school leadership team, subject to approval of the General Membership. Two other parent member representatives shall be elected by the General Membership during the general election meeting and one parent member in October in accordance with school leadership team by-laws. No person employed in HSAS shall be eligible to serve as a parent member representative on the school leadership team.

It is the responsibility of the school leadership team members to solicit issues and ideas from the Executive Board and the General Membership, to attend school leadership team meetings, to report back to the board and the membership on the activities and progress of the school leadership team.

Section 4. Election of Officers/School Leadership Team Parent Members

The yearly election of officers of the association must be held between the third Wednesday in May and the third Wednesday in June. One or two members at large positions shall be left vacant for a Fall election. At least one incoming 9th or 10th grade parent, legally-adopted guardian or person in parental relation to a student shall fill this vacant position(s). This election will be held at the October meeting. Any timeline established by the PTA to complete the nominations and election process must adhere to this timeframe. The principal must be notified of the date of the election two weeks prior to the second Wednesday in May. One parent member shall be elected at the October meeting to allow new parents to be represented on the School Leadership Team.

4.1 Nominating Committee

a) The nominating committee shall consist of three to five (3-5) members, the majority of whom shall be elected by the membership at the February general membership meeting. One member must come from the Executive Board. If a three member nominating committee cannot be formed, then the remaining members of the nominating committee shall be selected by the president, or co-presidents, as the case may be, subject to the approval of the Executive Board. The nominating committee shall choose one of its members to serve as chairperson. No person employed in HSAS shall be eligible to serve on the nominating committee.

b) Members of the nominating committee are not eligible to run for any office. An eligible member of the nominating committee may be considered as a candidate if she/he immediately resigns from the nominating committee in writing.

c) The nominating committee shall seek out the membership in writing, in English and other languages as appropriate, for recommendations of candidates for all offices. The nominating committee will also be responsible for conducting the election process. This includes the following:

- Preparing the distributing all notices regarding this process in English and language spoken by parents, wherever possible (i.e. meeting notices, agendas, reminder notices, tear-off applications, etc.);
- Canvassing the membership for all eligible candidates;
- Preparing ballots, attendance sheets, ballot box, tally sheets and all other materials pertaining to the election;
- Determining and verifying the eligibility of all interested candidates, prior to the election;
- Reporting the names of nominated candidates during the April meeting;
- Ensuring that an opportunity is provided to all members allowing for nominations (this includes self-nomination) to be taken from the floor during the April meeting;
- Officially closing the nominations process during the April meeting;
- Reporting the names of all eligible candidates and the positions they are seeking, to the membership at least two (2) weeks prior to the election;
- Notifying the principal of the date of the election two weeks prior to the second Wednesday in May;
- Ensuring that only eligible members receive a ballot for voting;
- Conducting the election during the general membership meeting between the third Wednesday in May and the third Wednesday in June.

d) If a nominating committee is not/can not be formed, the executive board must communicate that the nominations process will proceed under the direction of at least two members of the association who are not running for office. One member must be from the executive board, and one member from the general membership. Neither member is eligible to run for office. Both members will be selected to serve in this role by vote of the general membership. They shall perform the responsibilities and adhere to the timeframe outlined above. They may also seek assistance in conducting an election from the school's parent coordinator, the appropriate presidents' council, or the district or regional superintendent or his/her representative.

- e) If two members of the association who are not running for office are not/can not be identified to conduct the nominations and elections process, the process will be conducted by the appropriate presidents' council and/or the district or regional superintendent or his/her representative. They will have the same roles and responsibilities as the nominating committee, as stated above.

4.2 Additional Nominations

At the April membership meeting, the nominating committee shall request additional nominations from the floor. The nominating committee may also utilize tear-off applications to reach additional eligible candidates. Tear-off applications must include a cut-off date not less than ten (10) days from the date of distribution.

4.3 Notices

The meeting notice and agenda for the general membership election meeting held between the third Wednesday in May and the third Wednesday in June shall be distributed not less than ten (10) calendar days prior to the date. All meeting notices and agendas shall be available in English and translated into applicable languages, where possible. The distribution date shall appear on all notices. It shall list all candidates in alphabetical order under the office for which they were nominated.

4.4 Voting Requirements

There shall be one vote per member for the child/children currently attending HSAS. Each teacher currently employed at HSAS shall be entitled to one vote. Voting by proxy or absentee ballot is prohibited.

Only parents, legally appointed guardians, and persons in parental relation to students currently attending HSAS may vote on any determination about extending membership to staff, continuing staff membership, or restricting membership to parents in the association.

4.5 Election and Use of Ballots

- a) The nominating committee shall be responsible for conducting the election.
- b) Voting shall be by written ballot in accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-660.
- c) Written ballot shall be used in all contested elections.
- d) Names of candidates shall appear on the ballot in alphabetical order under the title of the office for which they were nominated.

- e) Ballots shall be printed with instructions in English and other languages, as appropriate, where possible.
- f) Ballots shall be distributed once voter eligibility has been established.
- g) Ballots shall be counted immediately following the election and in the presence of the members.
- h) Ballots shall be retained for six months by the chairperson of the nominating committee or if there is no nominating committee, by an officer. If he/she will no longer be an eligible member after June 30, the ballots shall be turned over to the incoming secretary.
- i) The elections shall be scheduled at a time that encourages maximum member participation. This will require at least an evening session.
- j) In uncontested elections, members may vote by show of hands or by acclamation to accept the slate of incoming officers.

The elections for the school's leadership team parent member representatives shall be held in accordance with the team's bylaws. No person employed in HSAS or serving as a community education council member shall be eligible to serve as a parent member representative on the school's leadership team.

Section 5. June Transfer of Records

The outgoing PTA Executive Board shall arrange for the orderly transfer of records and information of the PTA, which shall include an overview of PTA transactions for the school year, to the incoming Executive Board. One executive board meeting will be scheduled during the month of June for this purpose. Any members of the Executive Board may request the assistance of the district or region presidents' council during this process.

Section 6. Certification of the Election

The results of the election shall be announced by the chairperson of the nominating committee or by a member selected to conduct the nominations and election process. The principal is required to complete and sign the Election Certification form provided by the Department of Education. Copies of the Election Certification form must be forwarded to the appropriate Superintendent and the Office of Parent and Community Engagement. A copy must also be provided to the association. The original copy of the form remains on file in the principal's office.

Section 7. Vacancies

All officer vacancies must be filled by succession of the next highest ranking officer. For example, a vacancy in the position of president will be filled by the vice-president or next highest ranking officer. In the event that the core mandatory offices (president, secretary and treasurer) cannot be filled through succession, a special expedited election must be held to fill those vacancies. Officers who wish to resign their positions once an election has been certified, must do so in writing to the recording secretary, and, at that time,

shall turn over all records to the secretary. In the event of the resignation of the recording secretary, he/she must transfer records to the co-presidents.

Section 8. Special Expedited Election Process

Special Expedited elections shall be held to fill vacancies of the mandatory offices (president, secretary and treasurer) in the event they cannot be filled through succession. The Executive Board shall be responsible for announcing vacancies in any or all of the core mandatory officer positions. Vacancies must be announced to the general membership at least forty-eight hours prior to holding special election process to fill the vacancy. Officer vacancies can be filled at a special meeting provided there has been at least a five calendar day written notice to the membership.

Section 9. Disciplinary Action

- 9.1 Any officer who fails to attend three (3) consecutive executive board meetings without good cause following written notice from the executive board, shall be removed from office by recommendation of the executive board or motion from a member and two-thirds vote of the membership present. The officer shall be given the opportunity to submit in writing an explanation showing good cause which explains his/her reason for not attending these meetings for the Board's consideration. In all instances, the association's notice and agenda must cite that a vote will be taken by the membership as a disciplinary action against an executive board member.
- 9.2 Officers and executive board members accused of misconduct or neglect of duty may be removed only after:
 - a) A motion is presented by any PTA member during any meeting of the PTA assembly to appoint a review committee. The motion must be approved by vote of the general membership present.
 - b) The majority of the review committee must be comprised from the general membership. Executive board members against whom charges are being contemplated may not serve on the review committee.
 - c) The review committee must investigate, examine and obtain all relevant documents, interview all pertinent witnesses, etc., in order to conduct their fact-finding review. All pertinent facts and information must be considered by the committee. The officer(s) against whom charges are being contemplated has the right to present relevant facts, documents and witnesses.
 - d) The committee must present its findings and recommendations during a general membership meeting within a period not to exceed sixty (60) calendar days from the date of the establishment of the review committee. The association's notice and agenda must cite that a vote will be taken by the membership regarding disciplinary action. The general membership shall then vote to remove or absolve the officer(s).

Article V - Executive Board

Section 1. Composition

The Executive Board shall be composed of the elected officers of the association and chairpersons of standing committees. Designated persons and community school board members shall be ineligible to serve as an elected officer. No person employed in HSAS shall be eligible to serve on the executive board or as a parent member representative on the school's leadership team.

Officers shall be expected to attend all executive board meetings and shall be subject to removal under Article IV, Section 6 unless a good and valid reason is rendered in writing.

Section 2. Meetings

Regularly scheduled meetings of the Executive Board shall be held once every month August through June before the regularly scheduled general meeting.

Section 3. Voting

Each member of the Executive Board shall be entitled to one vote.

Section 4. Quorum

Three members of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum, allowing for official Business to be transacted.

Article VI – Meetings

Section 1. General Membership Meetings

1.1 The general membership meetings of the association shall be determined during the first PTA meeting of the year and will occur each month from September through June. Written notice of each membership meeting shall be distributed in all applicable languages, where possible at least ten calendar days prior to the scheduled meeting. The date of distribution shall appear on all notices.

1.2 All eligible members may attend and participate during general membership meetings, and may speak to agenda items subject to restriction in these bylaws.

1.3 Observers may speak and otherwise participate, if acknowledged by chair.

Section 2. Order of Business

The order of business at meetings of the association, unless changed by the Executive Board shall be:

- A. Call to order
- B. Reading and approval of minutes
- C. Co President's Report
- D. Treasurer's Report
- E. Principal's Report
- F. School Leadership Team Report
- G. Committee Reports
- H. Old Business
- I. New Business
- J. Adjournment

Section 3. Quorum

A quorum of 15 members of the association shall be required to conduct official business.

Section 4. Minutes

Minutes of the previous general or special membership meeting shall be available in written form and read for approval at the next general membership meeting. The minutes must be made available upon request to any member.

Section 5. Special Membership Meetings

- 5.1 A special membership meeting shall be called to deal with a matter(s) of importance that cannot be postponed until the next general membership meeting. The co-presidents may call a special membership meeting with a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours written notice to parents stating precisely what the topic of the meeting will be.
- 5.2 In addition, upon receipt of a written request from five (5) association members, the co-presidents must call a special membership meeting within five working days of the request and with forty-eight (48) hours written notice to parents.

Section 6. Parliamentary Authority

All procedural questions not covered by these bylaws shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, latest revision, provided they are not inconsistent with law, policy, regulation and these bylaws.

Article VII – Committees

Section 1. Standing Committees

- 1.1 The co-presidents will appoint standing committee chairpersons with the

approval of the membership. Ad-hoc committees shall be established by executive board approval. Only chairpersons of standing committees will be allowed to vote on executive board issues. The standing committees of the association are the following:

- a) Membership: The membership committee shall be responsible for encouraging parent participation, outreach and recruitment. The membership committee shall also prepare material for the HSAS web site, which contains (at a minimum) messages from the principal, co-presidents, list of executive board members, all PTA meeting dates, student and parent events, school policies, PTA budget and any other material deemed appropriate by the association. The committee shall also be responsible for maintaining a current list of members, which shall be available without home addresses at every membership meeting.
- b) Budget: The budget committee shall be responsible for drafting 1) a proposed budget each spring for approval by the membership, and 2) a written review of the prior year's budget, both of which must be presented for vote at the May membership meeting and 3) presenting the budget process. (See Article VIII, Section 3).
- c) Audit: The audit committee shall prepare an audit of all financial affairs of the organization. The treasurer shall make all books and records available to them. The audit committee shall prepare a written report to be presented to the membership at its May meeting or upon completion of their review and investigation, as applicable.
- d) Special Projects: The special projects committee shall be responsible for the coordination of special events and activities.

Article VIII – Financial Affairs

Section 1. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the association shall run from July 1 through June 30.

Section 2. Signatories

The co-presidents and treasurer shall be authorized to sign checks. All checks require at least two signatures. Signatories shall not be related by blood or marriage.

Section 3. Budget

3.1 The budget committee shall consist of five (5) persons and be chaired by the Treasurer. The committee shall be responsible for:

- a) The development and/or review of the budget process which includes:
 - a timetable for adoption
 - an authorization for making emergency expenditures
 - a process for counting, securing and depositing all monies received
 - minimal expenditures for executive board members, if applicable

- the process for the establishment of an audit committee and its responsibilities
 - b) presenting the budget process for membership approval which must be voted on by no later than the October membership meeting.
 - c) a written review of the prior year's budget for discussion at the May membership meeting.
 - d) preparing a proposed budget for adoption by the membership at the May membership meeting.
- 3.2 The budget may be amended by vote of the general membership at any membership meeting.
- 3.3 All expenditures not included in the budget at the time of its adoption must be approved by resolution of the membership.
- 3.4 Emergency expenditures of up to \$350 can be made by the unanimous approval of the executive board provided the funds will be used directly by HSAS.
- 3.5 Total maximum expenditures of the executive board shall not exceed the amount of \$50 per month. Said expenditures shall be reported to the general membership meeting at the next association meeting in writing by the treasurer. Allowable expenditures for reimbursement are carfare, meeting refreshments and office supplies.

Section 4. Audit

- 4.1 The co-presidents shall request volunteers to form an audit committee of three to five (3-5) persons. Executive Board members, if they are not check signatories, may serve. The majority of the committee should be comprised from the general membership.
- 4.2 The audit committee shall prepare an audit of all financial affairs of the organization with the help of the treasurer who shall make all books and records available to them.
- 4.3 Additional duties of the audit committee may include the examination of all relevant financial statements, records of disbursements, verification of all association equipment and ensuring that bylaw provisions for the expenditure of funds are complied with.
- 4.4 The audit committee shall prepare a written report to be presented to the membership at its May meeting or upon completion of their review and investigation, as applicable.

Section 5. Financial Accounting

- 5.1 The treasurer shall prepare and provide copies of the interim financial accounting report by January 31 and the annual financial accounting report

by the June meeting including all income and expenditures, to be presented and reviewed by general membership. Copies of these reports shall be provided to the Principal.

5.2 The treasurer shall be responsible for all monies of the association and shall keep accurate records in a form consistent with these bylaws and applicable Regulations of the Chancellor. The treasurer, secretary and additional persons as needed shall be designated and approved by the PTA executive board to collect, count, tally and record all orders and payments. The treasurer shall transport all funds to the bank and deposit slips shall identify the source of all monies deposited. All parties involved in these financial transactions shall initial the deposit slips. The treasurer shall make all authorized disbursements and shall, within the next banking day thereof, deposit all monies of the association in a responsible banking institution selected by the association. PTA financial records must be available for inspection by members, upon request and reasonable notice, and at a mutually agreeable time.

All collected monies for next day bank deposit must be secured on school premises.

Article IX – Amendments

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the association by a two-thirds vote of the members present, provided the amendment has been presented in writing to the membership at the previous meeting, and appears in the notice of the meeting at which it is to be amended. Amendments are effective once approved via this procedure. A thorough review of these bylaws shall be conducted every three (3) years.

These bylaws as set forth above have been voted on and approved by the Membership. The most recent amendment(s) were approved, in accordance with the provisions of Article X at the membership meeting hold on **November 17, 2008**.

Signed by :

Co-President

Co-President

Secretary