

**BYLAWS**  
OF

**THE BROOKLYN SCHOOL OF INQUIRY  
PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION  
(BSI PTO)**

APPROVED BY THE MEMBERSHIP ON

**20 JANUARY 2022**

Heather Trovato

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CO-PRESIDENT'S NAME



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CO-PRESIDENT'S SIGNATURE

2/1/2022

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DATE

Karah Woodward

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CO-PRESIDENT'S NAME



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CO-PRESIDENT'S SIGNATURE

2/1/2022

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DATE

Alina Lewis  
RECORDING SECRETARY NAME



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RECORDING SECRETARY SIGNATURE

2/3/2022

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## **Article I - Name**

The name of the organization shall be the Brooklyn School of Inquiry Parent Teacher Organization or the BSI PTO.

## **Article II – Objectives**

The BSI PTO is an independent body open to families of all children attending and to all teachers employed at the Brooklyn School of Inquiry (BSI) PS/IS 686.

Our primary mission is to be involved in, enrich, and improve the educational, emotional, and social aspects of BSI's students, faculty, and staff. We will be an advocate for our children's needs as we assist them in reaching their full potential. Our mandate celebrates inclusion, openness, collaboration, and frequent forums for discussion.

Additionally, we aim to provide support and resources to the school for the benefit and educational growth of the children; to develop a cooperative working relationship between the parents and staff of our school; to develop parent leadership and build capacity for greater involvement; to foster and encourage parent participation on all levels; and to provide opportunities and training for parents to participate in school governance and decision-making.

We achieve our mission via the following:

- Regular meetings open to and devised for all members of the BSI PTO, no fewer than nine (9) per school year
- At least two (2) major fund-raising efforts per school year
- Regular written or email communication with all members of BSI community

## **Article III - Membership**

### **Section 1 Eligibility**

Parents of students currently attending the Brooklyn School of Inquiry are automatically members of the BSI PTO. Parents include parents by birth or adoption, step-parents, legally appointed guardians, foster parents, and persons in parental relation to a child currently attending the Brooklyn School of Inquiry. Parents of a child who is attending the Brooklyn School of Inquiry full time while on the register of a citywide program are automatically members of the BSI PTO. A parent of a student who attends a non-citywide school full time while on the register of a citywide program, specifically BSI, must choose whether to be a member of the PA/PTA in the school that his/her child attends or of the school where the student appears on the register. At the beginning of each school year, the BSI PTO shall send a welcome letter to inform parents of their automatic membership status and voting rights. A parent may not designate another individual to serve in his/her place as a member of the BSI PTO and may not extend membership to individuals who are not otherwise qualified for membership such as honorary members, former members, former officers, mentors or students.

Membership shall be open to all teachers currently employed at the school. Supervisory staff (principals, assistant principals, and supervisors) and parent coordinators are not eligible to become members of the BSI PTO even if they have a child in the school. All other categories of school staff are eligible for membership.

School staff are not eligible to serve as members of the executive board or nominating/election committee of the BSI PTO even if they have a child in the school. Individuals whose employment is located at the school, but who are paid by a non-DOE funding source for a program that is not part of the regular school day are exempted from this restriction.

**Section 2      Membership Dues / Donations**

Donations are not a requirement for membership, voting, or candidacy. Each BSI PTO member shall be requested to make a voluntary annual donation of \$5.00.

**Section 3      Voting Privileges**

Each parent of a child currently enrolled at the Brooklyn School of Inquiry shall be entitled to one vote. All voting must be done in person, or using a virtually report platform (VRP) polling feature. Proxy voting or absentee balloting is prohibited. Voting by email or conference call is explicitly prohibited. Each teacher currently employed at the school shall be entitled to one vote. The right of a member to vote may be limited by the Conflicts of Interest restrictions outlined in Chancellor's Regulation A-660 (CR A-660). While BSI PTO may provide for the participation of certain categories of persons not otherwise qualified for membership, such as caretakers and non-custodial family members, provided they are not permitted to serve as BSI PTO officers or committee chairs, or to vote.

**Article IV – Officers**

**Section 1      Titles**

The officers of the BSI PTO shall be:

- President (one position, may be shared); *[mandatory]*
- Executive Vice President; Parliamentarian;
- Vice President of Communication (one position, may be shared);
- Vice President of Parent Involvement (one position, may be shared);
- Vice President of Fundraising (three positions, maybe shared);
- Vice President of Community Building Events (one position, may be shared);
- Recording Secretary (one position, may be shared); *[mandatory]*
- Treasurer; *[mandatory]*
- Assistant Treasurer (one position, may be shared).

Co-officers must run together as a slate in order to serve together. Upon the resignation or removal of a co-officer, the remaining co-officer must choose whether to serve alone for the remainder of the term or resign so that the position can be filled by succession or expedited election.

The BSI PTO must elect the mandatory core officers: president, recording secretary, and treasurer, in order to be a functioning PTO. There shall be no qualifications for any office other than to be a parent or guardian of a child attending the Brooklyn School of Inquiry. To accomplish the Board's goals of avoiding conflicts and maintaining transparency in its actions and decision making, members of the same family should not serve on the PTO Board for the same term.

**Section 2      Term of Office and Term Limits**

The term of office shall be from July 1st through June 30th. All parent members are eligible to run for any office. Term limits for each officer position for the BSI PTO

shall be two consecutive one-year terms. The candidate who has served the maximum number of terms in a specific officer position may be elected to serve an additional term provided there is no other interested candidate nominated and willing to serve.

### **Section 3      Duties of Officers**

**Presidents:** *[mandatory]* The position of PTO President may be a shared position with two persons designated as co-Presidents. The co-presidents shall be the chief executive officers of the BSI PTO and shall have the general powers and duties of supervision and management, including authorization to expend BSI PTO money within the limits set by the BSI PTO discretionary account, **with the approval of the Executive Board.** The co-presidents shall have the authority to negotiate and execute agreements on behalf of the BSI PTO when so authorized by the general membership. The co-presidents shall preside at all meetings of the BSI PTO and shall be ex-officio members of all committees except the nominating committee. The co-presidents shall appoint chairpersons of BSI PTO committees with the approval of the executive board. The co-presidents shall delegate responsibilities to other BSI PTO members and shall encourage meaningful participation in all parent and school activities. The co-presidents shall attend all regular meetings of the presidents' council and shall be a mandatory member of the school leadership team. The co-presidents shall meet regularly with the executive board members in accordance with these bylaws to plan the agendas for the general membership meetings. The co-presidents shall be one of the eligible signatories on checks. The co-presidents shall attend **FACE** (formerly OFEA, now Division of Family and Community Engagement) professional development seminars relating to BSI PTO leadership. The co-presidents shall assist with the June transfer of BSI PTO records to the incoming executive board.

The remaining executive board members in consultation with the BSI PTO will determine which co-president will serve as the core member on the school leadership team. One of the co-presidents or his or her designee shall represent the BSI PTO on region/district committees and as the school's representative to the region/district presidents' council.

**Executive Vice President:** The executive vice president shall assist the President and shall assume the President's duties in his/her absence or at the President's request. The executive vice president shall have the authority to sign checks on behalf of BSI PTO in accordance with Article VIII Section 2 of these by-laws. The executive vice president shall assist with the June transfer of BSI PTO records to the incoming Executive Board. The executive vice president shall oversee all BSI PTO committees and when necessary, present committee meeting minutes at executive board meetings and at general membership PTO meetings. The executive vice president shall also be in charge of community affairs, such as the coordination of building-wide events where the three schools are involved.

**Parliamentarian:** The PTO Parliamentarian will assist the PTO co-Presidents and other officers with interpreting DOE Regulations as they affect the PTO activities, assist at PTO Board and General meetings with *Robert's Rules of Order* for the conduct of the PTO meetings and votes, (these *Rules* are specified for the conduct of PTO meetings in the DOE Regulations), help to update the PTO By Laws annually,

and help to represent the PTO Board at District 20 and other DOE meetings as requested by the PTO President. The Parliamentarian shall incorporate all amendments into the bylaws and shall ensure that signed copies of the bylaws with latest amendments are on file in the Principal's office. Together with the Executive Vice President, the Parliamentarian will facilitate formation of Nominating Committee in accordance with regulations. Parliamentarian will consult with the Chair of Nominating Committee and Vice President of Communication to ensure the information relating to upcoming BSI PTO meetings regarding vacancies for BSI PTO officers is disseminated in a timely manner to the parent body.

**Recording Secretary:** *[mandatory]* The recording secretary's (or co-recording secretaries') responsibilities shall include the preparation of notices, agendas, sign-in sheets and materials for distribution for General PTO meetings. The recording secretary shall prepare and read the minutes of each BSI PTO meeting and shall distribute copies of the minutes at the next scheduled meeting for review and approval by the general membership. The secretary shall maintain custody of the BSI PTO's records on school premises. The secretary shall be responsible for reviewing, maintaining and responding to all correspondence addressed to the BSI PTO. The secretary shall assist with the June transfer of all BSI PTO records to the incoming executive board. Maybe a shared position.

**Treasurer:** *[mandatory]* The treasurer shall be responsible for all financial affairs and funds of the BSI PTO. The Treasurer position must be one position, with assistants, no co-treasurer. Treasurer will serve as an Administrator of the PTO records in QuickBooks or subsequent systems. The treasurer shall be responsible for maintaining an updated record of all income and expenditures on school premises and must be one of the signatories on checks. The treasurer shall adhere to and implement all financial procedures established by the BSI PTO. The treasurer shall be prepared to present and provide copies of financial reports at all BSI PTO general meetings. The treasurer shall also prepare and provide copies of the December 31 (due January 31) interim and June 30 (due July 15) annual financial reports. The treasurer shall make available all books or financial records for viewing by members upon request and for audit. The treasurer shall attend FACE professional development seminars relating to financial affairs. The treasurer shall assist with the June transfer of all BSI PTO records to the incoming executive board and will reset the QuickBooks password annually during the June transfer of records.

**Assistant Treasurers:** The assistant treasurers shall assist the treasurer with all duties under the direction of the treasurer. Examples of these duties include monitoring that all proper documentation is filed for BSI PTO records, e.g., Cash donation receipts, Reimbursement Forms, etc., counting and depositing funds into BSI PTO's checking account, assisting in preparation of Monthly, Interim and Annual financial reports. The assistant treasurers will be authorized to represent the Treasurer at BSI PTO meetings if the Treasurer is absent for any reason. Maybe a shared position.

**Vice President of Communications:** The vice president of communications or co-vice presidents of communications shall: (a) assume the duties of recording secretary in their absence or at the President's request; (b) prepare and distribute electronic notices of all BSI PTO meetings and other BSI PTO communications to the Membership; (c) oversee the BSI PTO's efforts to share information with school

families and to publish written materials, and specifically, to ensure (i) the maintenance and updating of an BSI PTO school website; (ii) the appropriate use of e-mail systems for communication with the parent body. Maybe a shared position.

**Vice President of Parent Involvement:** The vice president of Parent Involvement or co-vice presidents of Parent Involvement shall: (a) oversee the BSI PTO's efforts to engage parents as volunteers, specifically, select one parent who will serve as the grade representative\* from each grade to assist and support initiatives of the VP for Parent Involvement and the BSI PTO. Volunteers will be solicited in September each year. (This is a different position from the "class parent" who is usually chosen by the class teacher. However, the grade representative may also serve as a class parent.); (b) oversee the establishment of sufficient committee structures to ensure that the BSI PTO is able to reach out to parents to learn their particular interests and their areas of expertise, and encourage them to become members of the BSI PTO and to volunteer their time or services to the school; (c) collaborate with the BSI PTO Membership committee; (d) help the BSI parent coordinator with all new parent orientation efforts; (e) maintain records or a database of school-wide volunteers and make these records and/or database available to all fundraising and event chairs and other members of the BSI PTO as necessary; (f) Coordinate preparation of the New Parent Information Packet with the BSI Parent Coordinator and the PTO Membership Committee; (g) Keep the BSI PTO's bulletin board current. Maybe a shared position.

***\*Grade representatives:*** BSI PTO Grade Representatives will facilitate the communication between the executive board and the parents specifically by, but not limited to, a) Attending General PTO meetings, if possible. In the event Grade Representative cannot attend meetings, he/she will review minutes of meetings and follow up with VPs Parent Involvement with questions if needed; b) Participating in occasional conference calls with VPs of Parent Involvement and fellow grade representatives to discuss upcoming PTO needs and address questions; c) Assisting at PTO (social and fundraising) events as needed; d) Encouraging parent volunteers from their grade to help at PTO events; e) Sending emails to grade parents regarding upcoming PTO (social and fundraising) events and Direct Appeal; f) Coordinating grade-wide play dates to help build the grade community outside of the school.

**Co-Vice Presidents, Fundraising:** The Co-Vice Presidents of Fundraising shall: (a) assist the President and the Executive vice president; (b) jointly assume - together with any other available Vice Presidents - the duties of President in the President's absence or at the President's request; (c) oversee all fundraising activities of the BSI PTO, and, specifically, the establishment of a sufficient committee structure (see Article VIII, regarding the Fundraising Committee) to ensure adequate planning and execution of all BSI PTO fundraising events, such as the Annual Auction, Direct Appeal, and solicitations; (e) consult with the SLT regarding any curriculum-based initiatives for which fundraising would be appropriate and (f) work directly with the Vice President(s) for Parent Involvement to encourage each class to elect an auction representative and a class fundraising representative. The Co-Vice Presidents will split the duties of representation at committee meetings, Executive Board meetings and general BSI PTO meetings. Maybe a shared position.

**NOTE:** All BSI PTO vice presidents shall assist with the June transfer of BSI PTO records to the incoming executive board.

**School Leadership Team Membership:** The president or one co-president of BSI PTO shall automatically serve as a core member of the School Leadership Team. All other parent member representatives shall be elected by the general membership.

The core responsibility of the SLT is to develop the school's Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) aligned with the school-based budget. School Leadership Team members will select different roles on the team. Roles will be determined through volunteering and consensus. School Leadership Team members should report findings or recommendations to each group of constituents upon completion of a task. Parents and staff members will be kept informed of the School Leadership Team decisions through newsletters, meetings and posted notices. The PA/PTA president is responsible for communicating to the membership information discussed at SLT meetings, including the CEP and the public view of the budget from DOE's Galaxy budgeting system.

#### **Section 4 Election of Officers**

Elections must be conducted in-person or via Virtually Remote Platform (VRP). Conducting elections in a hybrid meeting is not permitted.

Officers shall be elected between the third Wednesday in May and the third Friday in June for a one-year term beginning July 1. Any timeline established by the BSI PTO to complete the nominations and election process must adhere to this timeframe. The principal must be notified in writing of the date of the election by April 1.

Members of any Community or Citywide Education Councils are not eligible to serve as elected officers of the BSI PTO. Employees of the school, including parent coordinators, may not serve as BSI PTO officers.

Candidates can address the membership prior to the election meeting, but after nominations have been closed. Candidates may compose written statements to be shared with the membership through PTO sponsored media or tables. At the elections meeting, candidates must be provided with an opportunity to address the membership prior to voting. If a candidate is not present, another member may read the candidate's statement. No materials in support of a candidate or a slate of candidates may be distributed or posted on school premises or on the school's website by any candidate, supporter, BSI PTO executive board, or committees

- 4.1 Nominating Committee:** A nominating committee must be established no later than the April general meeting. The nominating committee shall consist of three to five members. The majority of the committee members must come from the general membership. The remaining members of the nominating committee shall be selected by the president, subject to the approval of the executive board. The nominating committee shall choose one of its members to serve as chairperson. No person who is running for office may serve as a member of the nominating committee. No person employed at the Brooklyn School of Inquiry shall be eligible to serve on the nominating committee. A member of the nominating committee may be considered a candidate for office if he or she resigns immediately from the nominating committee in writing. The nominating committee shall solicit candidates from 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 meeting. This includes the following:

- canvassing the membership for eligible candidates,
- preparing and distributing all notices of any meeting pertaining to the nomination and election process, in accordance with CR A-660. Notices should be translated into languages spoken by parents in the school whenever possible,
- preparing ballots, attendance sheets, a ballot box, tally sheets and all other materials pertaining to the election,
- verifying the eligibility of all interested candidates prior to the election,
- ensuring that an opportunity is provided to all members for nominations, including self-nomination, to be taken from the floor and then officially closed during the April meeting,
- scheduling the election at a time that ensures maximum participation,
- ensuring that only eligible members receive a ballot for voting, and
- ensuring that the election is certified by the principal or his/her designee immediately following the election.

The appropriate Presidents' Council and/or FACE must conduct an expedited election if a nominating committee cannot be formed.

**4.2 Notices:** The meeting notice and agenda for the Spring general membership election meeting shall be distributed in accordance with CR A-660's notice requirements. All meeting notices and agendas shall be available in English and translated into languages spoken by parents in the school whenever possible. The distribution date shall appear on all notices. If nominations have been closed, the election meeting notice shall list all candidates in alphabetical order by surname under the office for which they are nominated.

**4.3 Contested Elections and Use of Ballots:**

- Written ballot shall be used in all contested elections. When there is more than one candidate for any office, voting must be by ballot. For in-person voting, ballots must remain in the meeting room (or in the principal's office with a documented chain of custody) until all the ballots have been counted and the election meeting has been adjourned. For VRP voting, a printed record of electronic ballots must be maintained among the records of the association and be made available upon request. Ballots must be counted immediately following the conclusion of voting and in the presence of at least three observers from the general membership.
- Names of candidates shall appear on the ballot in alphabetical order by surname under the title of the office(s) for which they were nominated. Names of candidates for the positions of co-presidents must be listed as a team.
- For in-person voting, ballots shall be printed with voting instructions in English and other languages spoken by parents in the school whenever possible. Ballots shall be distributed once voter eligibility has been established. Ballots shall be counted immediately following the election and in the presence of the members. 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 she/he will no longer be an eligible member after June 30, the ballots shall be turned over to the incoming secretary.

- 4.4 Uncontested Elections:** If there is only one candidate for an office, a member must make a motion for the recording secretary to cast the electing ballot for the entire assembly to elect the candidate to office. That action must be recorded in the minutes.
- 4.5 Officer Vacancies:** All mandatory core officer vacancies must be filled by succession of the next highest-ranking officer (see attached chart). For example, a vacancy in the position of president will be filled by the executive vice president or next highest-ranking officer. In the event that an office cannot be filled through succession, an expedited election must be held to fill the vacancy. Officers who wish to resign their positions once an election has been certified must submit their written resignation to the recording secretary and immediately turn over all BSI PTO records. The ranking of officers for succession purposes shall be according to the attached succession chart which is part of these BSI PTO Bylaws.
- 4.6 Expedited Election Process:** Expedited elections shall be held to fill vacancies in the event they cannot be filled through succession. The executive board shall be responsible for announcing vacancies and distributing written notice of the expedited election. All nominations must be taken from the floor, immediately prior to the election. If the election is contested, written ballots must be used in accordance with Section 4.3 of these bylaws.

**Section 5      Education Council Selectors**

In the case of co-presidents and co-recording secretaries, the remaining executive board members will vote to choose who will be the CEC (Community Education Councils), CCSE (Citywide Council on Special Education), CCELL (Citywide Council on English Language Learners), or CCHS (Citywide Council on High Schools) selectors.

**Section 6      June Transfer of Records**

The outgoing BSI PTO executive board shall arrange for the orderly transfer of records and information of the BSI PTO, which shall include an overview of all BSI PTO transactions for the school year, to the incoming executive board. At least one meeting will be scheduled during the month of June for this purpose. Any member of the executive board may request the assistance of the presidents' council during this process.

**Section 7      Disciplinary Action**

Any officer who fails to attend three (3) consecutive executive board or general membership meetings 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.

BSI PTO officers may also be removed for unsatisfactory performance by following the procedure outlined below:

- At any general membership meeting, a BSI PTO member may make a motion to begin the process of removing an executive board member for unsatisfactory performance.

- If the motion is approved by two-thirds of the assembled members, the BSI PTO must select a review committee by majority vote. Executive board members may not serve on the review committee.
- The review committee will gather relevant information and present its findings to the general membership to allow the members to make an informed decision about the motion. Findings must be presented in writing at a general membership meeting within 30 school days of the date the motion was presented. The BSI PTO's notice and agenda must indicate that a vote will be taken by the general membership regarding the removal of a BSI PTO executive board member.
- The result of the motion must be submitted in writing to the principal, which the principal must forward to the appropriate superintendent and the CFEO (Chief Family Engagement Officer).

## **Article V - Executive Board**

### **Section 1      Composition**

The executive board shall be composed of the elected officers of the BSI PTO. Employees of the Brooklyn School of Inquiry shall be ineligible to serve as elected officers of the BSI PTO. No DOE employees may serve as mandatory officers: president, secretary, and treasurer. Officers shall be expected to attend all executive board meetings. If a Board position is shared by two persons, as in the case of co-officers, both co-officers should attend Board meetings, however, at least one of the two co-officers must be present.

### **Section 2      Meetings**

Regularly scheduled meetings of the executive board shall be held monthly, September through June, on selected weekdays of every month agreed upon by the Board. Meetings should not be held on legal or religious holidays.

### **Section 3      Voting**

Each member of the executive board shall be entitled to one vote. All votes shall be decided by a majority vote of Board members present at the meeting. The Board may conduct votes by email on significant issues that arise between meetings. Following electronic discussion, a formal motion must be made by the presidents and seconded by a Board member for a vote. A majority of Board members must vote yes for the issue to be approved. The recording secretary will note the email vote and results. The resolution will be entered into meeting minutes at the next general meeting as part of the president's report. If the Executive Board is unable to reach a decision by voting because such voting has resulted in a tie, and if the Executive Board has made a good faith effort to resolve the deadlock by voting on the issue at least two times, the Executive Board shall submit the issue to the general membership of the BSI PTO.

### **Section 4      Quorum**

Five members of the executive board shall constitute a quorum, allowing official business to be transacted.

### **Section 5      Accounts and communications**

The BSI PTO email account, listserv, website, social media accounts, and any other mode of communication linked to the BSI PTO must be used exclusively for BSI PTO purposes.

## Article VI – General Membership Meetings

### **Section 1      General Membership Meetings**

- 1.1      At the beginning of the school year, the Executive Board shall establish a schedule of dates for BSI PTO General Membership meetings. The general membership meetings shall be held monthly, September through June, on selected weekdays of each month agreed upon by the Board. Written notice of each membership meeting shall be distributed in languages spoken by parents at the school, *whenever possible*. Notice must be sent at least ten **calendar** days prior to the scheduled meeting. The date of distribution shall appear on all notices.
  
- 1.2      Meetings may be held in-person, through a Virtually Remote Platform (VRP), or in hybrid format. In-person refers to on school premises. Virtually Remote Platform (VRP) refers to remote platforms used for meetings conducted online, including but not limited to Zoom, Webex or Google Meets. Hybrid refers to holding an in-person meeting that is simultaneously live streamed on a VRP. Under no circumstances are BSI PTO general membership meetings to be held in private residences or commercial venues (e.g., restaurants and private clubs).
  
- 1.3      All eligible members may attend and participate during general membership meetings and may speak to agenda items subject to restriction in these bylaws.
  
- 1.4      Observers may speak and otherwise participate, if acknowledged by the chair.
  
- 1.5      When regularly scheduled Executive Board meetings are held virtually, this will be announced to parents in advance and parents wishing to “attend” these meetings will be given the specific sign in or call-in directions to do so. In person attendance, including by VRP, is required to cast a vote.

### **Section 2      Order of Business**

The order of business at meetings of the BSI PTO, unless changed by the executive board shall be:

- Call to Order
- Reading and Approval of Minutes
- Principal’s Report
- President’s Report
- Treasurer’s Report
- School Leadership Team Report
- Committee Reports
- Old Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

### **Section 3      Quorum**

A quorum of members of the BSI PTO shall be required in order to conduct official PTO business. The quorum for a general membership meeting, either in-person or by VRP, must consist of representation by at least 8 PTO members, including a minimum

of 2 executive board members and 6 parent members. In addition, quorum for a hybrid meeting format requires at least one executive board member in attendance on school premises.

**Section 4 Minutes**

Minutes shall be taken of all general and special membership meetings. Minutes of the previous meeting shall be available in written form and read for approval at every general membership meeting. The minutes of any BSI PTO meeting must be made available upon request to any member. It is advised that VRP and Hybrid PTO meetings be recorded.

**Section 5 Special Membership Meetings**

- 5.1 A special membership meeting may be called to deal with a matter of importance that cannot be postponed until the next general membership meeting. The president may call a special membership meeting with a minimum of 48 hours written notice to parents stating precisely what the topic of the meeting will be.
- 5.2 Upon receipt of a written request from five BSI PTO members, the president must call a special membership meeting within five working days of the request and with 48 hours written notice to parents.

**Section 6 Parliamentary Authority**

Meeting rules of order should be adopted for use as a guide and included in these bylaws. Where no meeting rules of order are adopted, *Robert's Rules of Order – Newly Revised* will be deemed to apply, provided that it is consistent with laws, policies, rules, and regulations.

**Article VII - Committees**

**Section 1 Standing Committees**

- 1.1 The president will appoint standing committee chairpersons with the approval of the executive board. Ad-hoc committees shall be established by executive board approval. The standing committees of the BSI PTO are the following:

**Audit:** The audit committee shall conduct an audit of all financial affairs of the BSI PTO with the help of the treasurer who shall make all books and records available to them. The audit committee may recommend that an external audit of the BSI PTO's financial records be conducted. The committee shall be responsible for hiring a Certified Public Accountant or a similarly qualified person with professional expertise in accounting, finance, or a related field, to conduct BSI PTO audit/financial review. The person selected should be knowledgeable of the laws, policies, rules, and regulations applicable to PTOs, including those that are 501c (3) organizations. He or she must not be a member of the BSI PTO, a relative of any BSI PTO member, or have any direct or indirect interest in the funds. The treasurer shall make all books and records available to the auditor appointed by the Audit Committee. Additional duties of the audit committee may include the examination of all relevant financial statements and records of disbursements, verification of all BSI PTO equipment and ensuring compliance with bylaw provisions for the transaction of funds.

The audit committee shall prepare a written report or provide copies of the external report to be presented to the membership at a general membership meeting or upon completion of their review and investigation. This report shall be included for review and discussion during the June transfer of records.

**Fundraising:** The fundraising committee shall be chaired by the co-Vice presidents of fundraising. It shall be responsible for raising monies necessary to meet the proposed annual budget. The fundraising committee will plan a minimum of two (2) fundraising events each school year for the express purpose of raising money for the BSI PTO programs and projects. The fundraising committee may, but is not required to, plan additional fundraising events during the school year provided that such additional events have a designated purpose. All fundraising events must be approved by the membership, at a duly noticed General Membership meeting, in advance of the event and the vote must be recorded in the minutes of said meeting. The fundraising event, if it is an ongoing activity or program, must be approved each year by the BSI PTO membership. The co-Vice Presidents of the fundraising committee shall coordinate with BSI PTO president and treasurer in accounting for receipts and disbursements for all fundraising activities within 24 hours of each fundraising event or at such other time as requested by the BSI PTO president or treasurer.

The co-Vice Presidents of Fundraising may appoint a Captain or Co- Captains for each fundraising event. Event Committees may also be formed by the co-Vice Presidents. The following must be completed for all fundraising events all under the direction and supervision of the co- Vice Presidents of the Fundraising Committee:

- Creating a budget for the event
- Communications to the membership about the event
- Recruitment of volunteers and organization of said volunteers for the event
- Assigning each volunteer specific tasks and developing a work schedule
- Preparing the final report for the approval of the co-Vice Presidents of the Fundraising Committee
- Soliciting donated goods and services
- Clearing dates with the school and reserve needed facilities and equipment
- Completing the building use form and obtain all necessary signatures
- Obtaining all necessary permits.
- Obtaining written contract(s) from vendors
- Confirming that vendor is fully covered by his/her own liability insurance and Workers' Compensation and, obtaining a copy of the vendor's certificate of insurance,
- Requiring vendor to sign a pre-approved Hold Harmless Agreement.

**Membership:** The membership committee shall be responsible for encouraging parent participation, outreach and recruitment. The Vice President(s) of Parent Involvement, serving as chairpersons of this committee, or the Vice President(s) working with a chairperson of this committee shall make every effort to coordinate their outreach efforts and strategies with the school's Parent Coordinator. The membership committee shall also prepare a welcome letter from the BSI PTO informing parents and teachers of their membership and voting status. The committee shall prepare a newsletter to all members

which contains, at a minimum, messages from the principal, BSI PTO president, list of executive board members, all BSI PTO meeting dates, student and parent events, school policies, BSI PTO budget, and any other material deemed appropriate by the BSI PTO. The committee shall also be responsible for maintaining a current list of members which shall be available without home addresses and telephone numbers at every membership meeting. The committee will also collect voluntary membership dues for the BSI PTO and provide event support.

**Nominating Committee:** A nominating committee must be established during the February general membership meeting. The nominating committee shall consist of three to five members. The majority of the committee members must come from the general membership. The remaining members of the nominating committee shall be selected by the president, subject to the approval of the executive board. The nominating committee shall choose one of its members to serve as chairperson. No person employed at Brooklyn School of Inquiry shall be eligible to serve on the nominating committee. No person who is running for office may serve as a member of the nominating committee. A member of the nominating committee may be considered a candidate for office if he or she resigns immediately. The nominating committee will be responsible for conducting the election process outlined in Section 4 of these By- Laws.

**Section 2      Ad Hoc committees**

To accomplish a specific task or address a specific issue the executive board may recommend the formation of a committee that will cease to function once the task or issue has been addressed. The creation and dissolution of the committee must be recorded in the minutes of the PTO.

**Article VIII - Financial Affairs**

**Section 1      Fiscal Year**

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

**Section 2      Financial accounts & signatories**

A checking account must be maintained in the name of the BSIPTO. All PTO funds must be deposited into the checking account. Any accounts other than the mandatory checking account must be authorized by a vote of the membership and must be in the name of the BSIPTO. However, the primary checking account must be used for all transactions, including deposits and withdrawals. The Executive Board may arrange online access through the bank's online bill payment system for goods and services rendered. Prior to any transaction the Executive Board must provide authorization for the intended expenditure by issuing a disbursement form that must accompany all online transactions. In order to set up online access to the PTO account(s), a DOE issued email account assigned to PTO is required.

The president or co-presidents, executive vice president and treasurer shall be authorized to sign checks. All checks require at least two (2) signatures, or two online authorizations in the case of online banking, at least one of which must be the Treasurer. The two signatories of a check may not be related by blood or marriage. Under no circumstances may spouses, siblings, in-laws or other relatives or members of the same household sign the same BSI PTO check. A BSI PTO member may not sign a check if she/he has any direct or indirect interest in the expenditure.

### **Section 3      Budget**

- 3.1      The executive board shall be responsible for the development and/or review of the budget process, which includes:
- The outgoing executive board must review the current budget, annual financial status, accounting, expenditures and outstanding bills and prepare a proposed budget for the next school year. The proposed budget must be presented to and approved by the membership no later than the May meeting.
  - The incoming executive board must review the proposed budget in September for presentation and discussion during the September meeting. Budget amendments may be proposed at this time.
  - The counting and handling of any cash, checks, or money orders received by the BSI PTO, must be completed by at least two (2) BSI PTO members. These BSI PTO members cannot be related by blood or marriage. Funds must be counted in the school on the same day of receipt. The BSI PTO's financial records must display the total amount of funds and the signatures of the BSI PTO members who participated in counting the funds.
  - The principal's written consent is required when the fundraising activity is held during school hours or on school property.
  - No parent or staff member shall collect fundraising proceeds from any student without the written approval from the principal.
  - All funds shall be deposited in the bank account by authorized executive board members within 24 hours of receipt, whenever possible, but in any event, no longer than 3 business days. The executive board must ensure that no funds shall be kept in a member's home but shall be secured and locked in the school. The executive board must obtain written acknowledgement from the principal when BSI PTO funds are secured in the school. BSI PTO funds must be taken to the bank for deposit by at least 2 authorized members.
  - Documentation related to every transaction must be maintained at the school (e.g., canceled checks, deposit receipts, purchase orders, BSI PTO minutes related to the financial transactions, etc.)
- 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      The executive board is authorized to make an emergency expenditure not to exceed \$1000.00 with a two-thirds approval by the executive board. These expenditures shall be reported to the general membership at the next BSI PTO meeting in writing by the treasurer. The minutes of the meeting must reflect a vote taken by the BSI PTO to accept this action.

### **Section 4      Audit**

- 4.1      The president or co-presidents shall request volunteers to form an audit committee of 3 to 5 persons. Executive board members who are not eligible signatories on BSI PTO checks may serve on the audit committee. The majority of the committee shall be



comprised from the general membership.

- 4.2 The audit committee shall conduct an audit of all financial affairs of the BSI PTO with the help of the treasurer who shall make all books and records available to them. The audit committee may recommend that an external audit of the BSI PTO's financial records be conducted. The committee shall be responsible for hiring a Certified Public Accountant or a similarly qualified person with professional expertise in accounting, finance, or a related field, to conduct BSI PTO audit/financial review. The person selected should be knowledgeable of the laws, policies, rules, and regulations applicable to PTOs, including those that are 501c organizations. He or she must not be a member of the BSI PTO, a relative of any BSI PTO member, or have any direct or indirect interest in the funds. The treasurer shall make all books and records available to the auditor appointed by the Audit Committee.
- 4.3 Additional duties of the audit committee may include the examination of all relevant financial statements and records of disbursements, verification of all BSI PTO equipment and ensuring compliance with bylaw provisions for the transaction of funds.
- 4.4 The audit committee shall prepare a written report or provide copies of the external report to be presented to the membership at a general membership meeting or upon completion of their review and investigation. This report shall be included for review and discussion during the June transfer of records.

## **Section 5 Financial Accounting**

- 5.1 The treasurer and assistant treasurers shall prepare the Interim Financial Report by January 31st and the Annual Financial Report by July 15, including all income, expenditures, and other transactions. These reports shall 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 funds of the BSI PTO and shall keep accurate records in a form consistent with these bylaws and applicable Regulations of the Chancellor. In accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-610, parents must obtain written approval from the principal before collecting fundraiser proceeds from students. The treasurer and at least one other BSI PTO officer shall transport all funds to the bank. Deposit slips shall identify the source of all deposited funds. All parties involved in financial transactions shall initial the deposit slips. All records of the BSI PTO including checkbooks, ledgers, canceled checks, invoices, receipts etc., shall be maintained and secured on school premises.
- 5.3 PTO Presidents will open all bank envelopes, review bank statements and compare them with monthly treasurer reports and other financial reports before signing them.

## **Article IX - Conflicts of Interest, Contracts and Services of Directors and Officers**

### **Section 1 General**

BSI PTO Directors, Officers, and members should be careful to avoid acting in circumstances in which their personal interest conflicts with their interest as BSI PTO Directors, Officers, and members, respectively.

## **Section 2 Disclosure and Non-Disclosure Agreements**

- 2.1 Immediately upon election or appointment to the Executive Board, all Officers shall disclose any relevant interest, whether direct or indirect, which may pose a conflict of interest. Disclosure shall include any interest, financial or otherwise, in any corporation, organization or partnership which provides professional or other services to BSI PTO. All disclosures of a conflict of interest shall be placed in the minutes of the meeting at which the disclosure was made.
- 2.2 When any matter comes before the Executive Board or any Committee of the Executive Board in which a Director or an Officer has an interest, that interest shall be immediately disclosed to the Executive Board or the Committee.
- 2.3 Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDA) (attachment B)  
NDA will be used to assure that BSI PTO members' personal and financial information remains confidential. Each NDA will be project specific and last for the duration of the project. Parliamentarians together with the Executive Board will set up a process to acquire the NDA when a new project, which requires access to confidential information, is presented. Project and the names of individuals who sign the NDA will be disclosed at the General PTO meeting. The Recording Secretary and/or VP of communication will maintain the NDA records.

## **Section 3 Definition of "Interest"**

Whether a Director or an Officer has an interest in a matter shall be determined by whether that person would derive an individual economic benefit, either directly or indirectly, from the decision on the matter by the Executive Board or a Committee. An "interest" is not intended to include positions on legislative matters of general impact.

## **Section 4 Voting**

- 4.1 No Director, Officer or member shall vote on any matter in which he or she has an interest.
- 4.2 BSI PTO members who are employed in PS/IS 686 may not vote or otherwise participate in:
  - Personnel matters, including tenure recommendations and screening committees for selections of supervisors and administrators; and
  - Selection of or service as parent representatives to committees or the School Leadership Team.
- 4.3 A Community District Education Council member (or any other school employee or officer) who is also a member of BSI PTO and who is likely to hear the same subject on appeal, must refrain from voting or otherwise participating in the decision in which he/she will sit on the appeal panel. Any council member who has participated in the decision-making below may not participate at the higher appellate level.
- 4.4 Decisions must be made by vote of only those members of BSI PTO who do not have a conflict of interest. In matters where a member or members has/have a conflict of interest, he/she must abstain from voting or otherwise participating in the decision.
- 4.5 Once a quorum is established at any meeting of either the Executive Board or the

General Membership, a majority vote of those in attendance at such meeting who are entitled to cast a vote shall be sufficient to approve and transact the business of the BSI PTO.

**Section 5 Non-participation**

5.1 Any BSI PTO Director, Officer or member who has any direct or indirect interest in a business dealing with PS/IS 686, the community school district or the Community District Education Council, citywide council on special education, citywide council on high schools, or the Department of Education, including a contract or personnel appointment, must refrain from participation in any decision relating to that matter.

5.2 The Executive Board may, by majority vote, ask any Director who has an interest in a matter not to participate, or to leave the room in which discussion is carried on; provided, however, that the interested Director may participate in any discussion regarding his or her exclusion.

**Section 6 Attempts to Influence**

Directors, Officers, and members, respectively, shall not attempt to influence other Directors, Officers and members, respectively, regarding matters in which they are interested, without disclosing that interest.

**Section 7 Contract Review Committee**

If a contract is proposed in which a Director, an Officer, or a member, or an organization which employs a Director, an Officer, or a member is a potential contractor, regardless of amount (an "Interested party Contract"), a Contracts Review Committee (comprised as set forth below) of the Executive Board shall review the contract and shall recommend that the chairman execute or not execute the contract. Ad hoc Contract Review Committees shall be appointed by the Directors as needed and shall consist of two (2) Directors disinterested in the Interested party Contract. Either an ad hoc Contract Review Committee or the Executive Board may review an Interested Party Contract; however, if a Contract Review Committee reviews an Interested party Contract and recommends that the chairman not execute the Interested party Contract, the Executive Board subsequently may review the Interested Party Contract and may recommend that the chairman execute or not execute the Interested party Contract.

**Section 8 Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy**

8.1 If the Executive Board or the Contract Review Committee has reasonable cause to believe a Director, an Officer, or a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall inform the Director, the Officer, or the member of the basis for such belief and afford the Director, the Officer, or the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.

8.2 If, after hearing the Director's, the Officer's, or the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the Executive Board or the Contract Review Committee determines the Director, the Officer, or the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

**Section 9 Records of Proceedings**

The minutes of the Executive Board and the Contract Review Committee shall contain:

- 9.1 The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have an interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest the nature of the interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the Executive Board's or Contract Review Committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
- 9.2 The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

#### **Section 10 Periodic Reviews**

To ensure BSI PTO operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

- 10.1 Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information, and the result of arm's-length bargaining.
- 10.2 Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to BSI PTO's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in inurement, impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.

#### **Section 11 Use of Outside Experts**

When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in Section 9.10 of this Article, BSI PTO may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the Executive Board of its responsibility for ensuring that periodic reviews are conducted.

### **Article X – Record Retention Policy**

The BSI PTO record retention policy ensures that necessary records and documents are maintained and protected at BSI PTO. This policy is also intended to preserve BSI PTO history. Records retention applies to all records, whether paper, electronic, or other media.

Individuals responsible for the retention of records are responsible for the destruction of records following the retention period. Documents should be destroyed in a manner so all sensitive or confidential material can no longer be read. This means paper documents should be shredded and electronic documents should be erased or otherwise made unreadable.

BSI PTO financial records are the property of the PTO and do not belong to those who prepare such records. No member has a personal or property right to PTO financial records and no member may remove or copy such records for personal use.

#### **Record Types and Retention Periods**

Records are two types: PTO Financial records requiring retention for legal or audit purposes; and routine PTO and Executive Board records and meeting minutes.

**Routine Records**

Routine records should be retained by the Executive Board according to the table below to ensure the continuation of BSI PTO policies. If the PTO Executive Board has any doubt whether a record should be preserved, it should consult with the BSI Principal before destroying the record.

<b>Corporate Records:</b>	
Articles of Incorporation	Permanent
By-Laws, including Amendments	Permanent
Minutes of Executive Directors Meetings	6 years
Minutes of General membership meetings	6 years
Minutes of Committee meetings	6 years
Election Records	Ballots six (6) months following the date of the election or until the determination of any grievance filed concerning the election, whichever is later. Ballots must not be removed from the school.
<b>Federal Tax Records:</b>	
Form 990 and support	Permanent
IRS Exemption Application & Determination Letter	Permanent
State Tax Exemptions	Permanent
<b>Membership Records:</b>	
PTO membership list	6 years
All parent contact information	6 years
<b>Fundraising Records:</b> Fundraising	
Event budgets Fundraising Event	6 years
Activity reports	6 years
<b>Grants Records:</b>	
Grant Application and Reporting Forms	6 years

**Financial Records**

Financial record schedules are calendar-driven; the retention period begins on the last day of the fiscal year that the records were created. The retention period for tax documents generally begins on the filing date for that period. The retention period for Financial Records are as follows:

**Accounting and Financial Records:**

Books and Records	7 years
Check Registers	7 years
Treasurer Monthly and Semi-Annual reports	7 years
Treasurer Annual reports	Permanent
Annual Budget and amendments	7 years
Audit/Financial Review Reports	Permanent
Insurance policy	7 years

**Bank Records:**

Bank Statements	7 years
Bank deposit slips	7 years
Bank Reconciliation's & Support	7 years
Canceled Checks	7 years

Financial records must be easily retrievable for examination by authorized PTO officers, auditors and others authorized.

This document retention policy must ensure that financial transactions and authorizations are fully supported if there is an audit or litigation. BSI PTO's Executive Board will periodically review the document retention policy for any changes needed in the policy and in the time periods for retention of documents.

Any destruction or disposal of PTO documents must stop whenever the PTO anticipates litigation or is the subject of a subpoena, governmental audit, or investigation. Once the PTO has notice of any of these, the Executive Board must preserve all documents and records (both hard copy and electronic) that may relate to the matter.

**Article XI – Amendments and Regular Review of Bylaws**

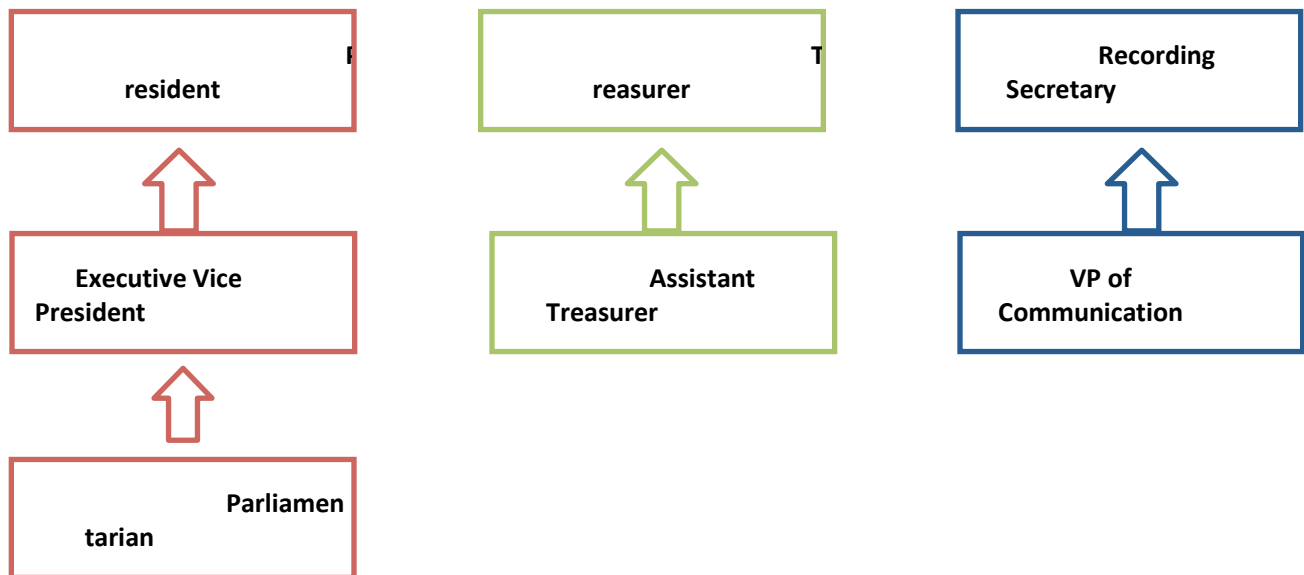
BSI PTO must review, and if necessary amend, the bylaws every three years and whenever regulation CR A-660 is revised. After review, the bylaws must be re-adopted by a vote of the membership regardless of whether any amendments have been made. The title page must show the date of approval by membership and the signatures of the PA/PTA president and recording secretary at the time of adoption. Bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the BSI PTO 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 immediately unless otherwise specified. All provisions of these bylaws must conform to CR A-660 and Department of Education guidelines. Any BSI PTO member may present a motion at a general membership meeting to amend a provision of the bylaws that is not in compliance with CR A-660. Amendments that bring the bylaws into compliance must be voted on immediately after the motion is presented. A two-thirds vote of the membership is required for approval.

The original, signed BSI PTO bylaws must be kept on school premises. A copy must be given to the principal, who must ensure that the current version is available in his/her office. The BSI PTO executive board must ensure that a copy of the bylaws is made available at every meeting, and to members upon reasonable request. Whenever possible, bylaws should be made available in all languages that parents speak.

### Attachment A: Officer Vacancies:

All mandatory core 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 executive vice president or next highest-ranking officer. In the event that an office cannot be filled through succession, an expedited election must be held to fill the vacancy. Officers who wish to resign their positions once an election has been certified must submit their written resignation to the recording secretary and immediately turn over all BSI PTO records. The ranking of officers for succession purposes shall be according to the attached succession chart which is part of these BSI PTO ByLaws. *(Approved by PTO Membership, October 2014)*

### SUCCESSION CHART



**Attachment B, Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA, Final)**

Approved by PTO Membership January 22, 2015; revised and approved by the PTO Board 2/10/2021

**Brooklyn School of Inquiry PTO Confidentiality Agreement**

This confidentiality agreement (“Agreement”) is made pursuant to the Bylaws of the Brooklyn School of Inquiry PTO (“BSIPTO”) between the BSIPTO and the recipient of confidential information (“Recipient”) identified below, whose signature indicates understanding and agreement to its terms.

1. In support of BSIPTO operations or BSIPTO-related activities, the Executive Board of the BSIPTO may from time to time authorize the disclosure of certain Confidential Information to the Recipient.
2. The **Confidential Information** may be described as and includes: Member and parent names, (including student names, ids, emails, phones, grades, addresses and any other student related data); donor and donation information related to the Direct Appeal, the annual Gala and other BSI fundraising events; financial information, financial projections, project and event costs; other financial budget information; school and class data; school personnel data; grants; fundraising plans (current or future); or other such information provided by the BSIPTO, its agents or vendors to the Recipient.
3. The Recipient agrees (i) to maintain the confidentiality any Confidential Information, (ii) to use it only for approved BSIPTO purposes, (iii) to return any such information, whether in paper, electronic or other formats, to the BSIPTO at the end of their service, and (iv) if return of such information is not practical, to securely destroy or dispose of any such information not returned.
4. The Recipient agrees not to disclose any Confidential Information except (i) to professional service providers of the BSIPTO as necessary for BSIPTO operations or activities (e.g., banks, credit card vendors, etc.), (ii) other persons designated by the Executive Board of the BSIPTO to receive such information and who have completed and signed this agreement, or (iii) where required to do so by law.
5. This Agreement is effective from the date of signature or the date of sharing of any Confidential Information by the BSIPTO, whichever is earlier, until the return, destruction or disposal of all such information by the Recipient.
6. This Agreement states the entire agreement between the parties concerning the disclosure of Confidential Information. Any addition or modification to this Agreement must be made in writing and signed by the parties.
7. If any of the provisions of this Agreement are found to be unenforceable, the remainder shall be enforced as fully as possible and the unenforceable provision(s) shall be deemed modified to the limited extent required to permit enforcement of the Agreement as a whole.

**By signing below**, the parties acknowledge that they have read and understand this Agreement and voluntarily accept the duties and obligations set forth herein.

**Description of the type(s) of Confidential Information:**

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<b>Recipient of Confidential Information</b>	<b>Executive Committee representative</b>
Signature:	Signature:
Print Name:	Print Name:
Role/responsibility:	Role/responsibility:
Date:	Date: