

# Position Paper

## Board Approval



Region 2

As the year progresses, naturally many questions begin to arise. A very common one concerns the practice of running committee work by the Board before taking action. Many chairs feel this is "micro-managing" or controlling, and many leaders feel this is a downright disrespectful way to treat valued teammates. What gives?

The Board of Directors bears fiduciary responsibility for the organization. In other words - the Board has to keep the PTA true to its mission. The treasurer is responsible for filing the Charitable Solicitations act, but it is the duty of the entire board to make sure the unit is acting in accordance to what it has legally set as goals, and makes the financial decisions necessary to remain viable. As a chair, you can think of the Board as the people who grant you permission - or you can think of them as the people who owe you their full attention and support. Those duties don't need to be in conflict. In fact, if both parties think of them as compatible duties, then they become compatible duties.

For example, when the President of my Local Unit appointed me to the position of Auction Chair, the first thing I did was go before the Board to ask them how they intended to support the Auction. I asked them if they would be attending the Auction, inviting friends, donating items, and volunteering. I believed their questions to be signs of their interest and curiosity - not hostility. Only when I was satisfied that they truly supported this activity did I agree to fill this position of Auction Chair.

I encourage Chairs need to think of "Board Approval" in this way. When you describe your event or activity, think of how you and your Board will work as a team. What will the Bulletin Board chair do for you? What will the Newsletter Editor do for you? What about the Webmaster, the Volunteer Coordinator, and the Head Room Parent? Answer their questions thoroughly and honestly, and they can become your teammates.

Board members must also think of Board Approval this way. When a Chair is presenting the work of their Committee, ask how the event or activity contributes to the goals and objectives of the PTSA. Give Committees the opportunity to link their work to the larger goals of the association. And thank them for this contribution.

When it's necessary to make chairs aware of problems with their plans, do so respectfully and professionally. Not everyone is aware of the Gambling Commission's rules regarding raffles, or the specifics regarding the presence of students at events where alcohol is being served. Bringing up these matters will be helpful to everyone in the long run - so make it a positive experience.

Chairs should plan to present to the Board, at a minimum, at the meetings before and after their event or activity. They should offer a written budget showing how they plan to use their budgeted funds as well as information about the work of their committee.

I hope it goes without saying that even if the work of the Committee can be done by one person, that it's worthwhile to bring another person or two on board. This is one of the best ways for your PTA to do community outreach. Each time a Chair invites someone to be on a Committee, your PTA is saying "We value you" to a new volunteer.