

*How Things Work* outlines all the important things to know in order to have a successful experience at the convention and annual meeting. Many of the “rules” are requirements of the law (noted as Revised Code of Washington (RCW)), *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws* (bylaws), *WSPTA Policy* (policy), or our parliamentary authority, Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised (RR). The information in the debate and voting section is contained in the proposed [2024 WSPTA Annual Meeting Standing Rules](#) (SRs).

## Important Deadlines (RCW, policy, SRs)

- **Voting delegate** [registration](#) deadline is **May 6 at 12pm (noon)**.
- Space permitting, members may be able to register as a provisional delegate through **May 15 at 12pm (noon)**. In order to be a voting delegate, they must send evidence from their PTA President that they were named as a voting delegate to [support@wastatepta.org](mailto:support@wastatepta.org).
- Registration deadline for audience members and provisional delegates is **May 15 at 12pm (noon)**.
- On-site registration, space permitting, opens at **7:30 AM on May 17**.
- Deadline to submit motions to amend the proposed bylaws amendments is **May 18 at 1pm**.

## Voting Delegate vs. Audience Member (bylaws)

- **Audience member** – Any invited guests, member of a local PTA, or supporting member of WSPTA may register to attend the WSPTA Convention and Annual Meeting. Audience members have access to all classes and materials, educational opportunities, networking, exhibitors, and general sessions, but do not have voice or vote, and may not submit motions or amendments.
- **Voting Delegate** – A voting delegate must be a member of a local PTA. They have access to all the same opportunities as audience members. They also have voice and vote and may submit motions and amendments during debate, since they have indicated that they been designated as a voting delegate by their local or council PTA president.
- Detailed information about the voting delegate authorization process can be found on the [voting information webpage](#).

## Voting delegate information (RCW, bylaws, policy)

- Voting credentials are issued to voting delegates who have registered for the convention and annual meeting and have indicated they have been authorized by their local PTA or council president as a voting delegate no later than noon on May 6.
- Local PTA voting delegates must be a member of the local PTA they represent. Council voting delegates must be a member of a local PTA in the council they represent.
- Delegates may only vote on behalf of one local PTA or council – the local PTA or council under which they have registered.
- Voting credentials are non-transferable and cannot be replaced.
- The method for selecting voting delegates and alternates should be specified in a local PTA or council’s standing rules.
- Local PTAs in good standing have voting delegates determined by the number of paid members at the end of January 2024. PTAs with up to 200 members are entitled to four voting delegates; one additional delegate may be added for each additional 100 members.

- Each council in good standing is entitled to have four voting delegates.
- New local PTAs and councils chartered after January 31, 2024, are allowed delegates based on the membership number recorded in the WSPTA office 30 days prior to the annual meeting.

## Expectations for all attendees (RR, policy)

- To provide a safe and welcoming event free of harassment, all attendees are expected to follow all health and safety protocols in effect and behave with decorum and civility. Incivility, harassment, discrimination of any kind or failure to follow safety protocols will not be tolerated. The WSPTA President can take any necessary disciplinary measures to ensure a safe environment for all.
- All attendees must wear an official current-year convention badge at all activities.
- All cell phones or other noise-producing devices must be put on vibrate or silent mode during all general sessions, workshops, panels, and classes.
- All video and/or live streaming during general sessions is prohibited unless pre-approved by the chair.
- All campaign materials in support of or opposition to one or more candidates for the WSPTA Nominating Committee or the resolutions and bylaws amendments under consideration by the voting delegates must have the approval of the chair prior to distribution.
- Any item supporting or opposing a candidate or a ballot measure in a general election, candidates for the WSPTA Nominating Committee, or the resolutions and bylaws amendments under consideration by the voting delegates must not be visible during general sessions.
- **Photo Release:** By attending the WSPTA Convention and Annual Meeting, you grant Washington State PTA the right to record, film, photograph, or capture your likeness in any media and to distribute, broadcast, use, or otherwise disseminate, in perpetuity, such media without any further approval from or any payment to you. **Note:** Parental consent is required to publish photographs that feature attendees under the age of 18.

## What will be voted on? (RR, bylaws)

- Delegates will vote on the adoption of the agenda and the proposed standing rules.
- Delegates will vote to elect the 2024-2026 WSPTA Nominating Committee on May 18. See the [Election & Candidate Information webpage](#) for more details.
- Delegates will consider the proposed amendments to the *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws* and Resolutions as shown in the [Voter's Guide](#) on May 18 and 19.
- **Emergency or Substitute Legislative Positions or Resolutions** - Delegates shall not consider emergency or substitute legislative positions or resolutions, other than those originally presented to the delegates, without prior approval of the WSPTA board of directors.

## Proposed Amendments to the *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws* and Resolutions

### Bylaws Education Sessions and Amendment Writing Lab (bylaws, SRs)

- Education sessions are the best way for attendees to understand the proposed bylaws amendments. These are opportunities for delegates to learn and ask questions about the proposals, so they can fully participate in the debate and voting process.

- Any attendee may participate in the bylaws education sessions. Only voting delegates (including student voting delegates) have the right to propose motions, speak in debate, ask questions, or vote at the annual meeting.
- There will be two Bylaws Education sessions: **Friday, May 17 at 1pm and Saturday, May 18 at 8am.**
- There will be an **Amendment Writing Lab Saturday, May 18 during lunch.**

## Motions (policy, RR, SRs)

- All motions, except for motions to amend the proposed bylaws amendments (see below), can be made during debate on the motion forms found at the microphone tables.
- Motions for secondary amendments (amendments to motions to amend) will be allowed during debate.
- **Proper form:** Motions to make amendments (primary and secondary amendments) must clearly state what change(s) you want to happen. **Use the following language (add/insert and strike/delete) and format:** *“I move to amend resolved clause #2, bullet #1, by striking the word “parent” after the word “authentic” and inserting the words “family and community.”*
- Only the parts of the resolutions that are in the shaded boxes in the Voters’ Guide are open for amendment and debate.
- All motions must be seconded by another voting delegate before it can be discussed.
- Once a motion has been made and seconded, it will be restated by the chair, who will then ask for discussion and recognize the maker of the motion for their speech in favor.
- Resolutions may not have more than four resolved clauses.
- Resolution *whereas* clauses will be updated by the resolutions committee as needed.
- Amendments to correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, style, cross-references and make other technical changes will be handled by WSPTA, so amendments to correct these items will not be in order.
- See [Parliamentary Procedure Simplified](#) for more information about motions that delegates can make and their priority order (precedence).

## Motions to amend a proposed bylaws amendment (RR, SRs)

- The language of each proposed bylaws amendment has already been reviewed by the WSPTA Governance Committee, the WSPTA Parliamentarian, the WSPTA Board of Directors, and legal counsel. However, a voting delegate may propose to change the language of the proposed bylaws amendments. Any amendments adopted by the delegates should be considered pending, subject to review by the WSPTA legal counsel prior to going into effect on July 1.
- Motions to amend the proposed bylaws amendments must be **pre-submitted by Saturday, May 18 at 1pm** in writing on the designated motion form.
- **NOTE:** Only voting delegates who attend one of the Bylaws Education Sessions or the Amendment Writing Lab will be able to submit motions to amend the proposed bylaws amendments.
- **Proper form:** Motions to amend the proposed bylaws amendments must clearly state what change(s) you want to happen. **Use the following language (add/insert and strike/delete) and format:**
- *“In bylaws proposal #2, after word “for” strike out the word “adoption” and insert the word “consideration.”*
- Only the parts of the proposed bylaws amendments with changes, as shown in the voter’s guide as **bold/underlined** or ~~strikethrough~~, are open for amendment and debate. A motion to amend may only alter those words that are changing in the proposed bylaw amendment. If it is not **bold/underlined** or ~~strikethrough~~, those words cannot be changed in your motion to amend.
- Amendments should also try to stick to one focus at a time. For example, if there is a proposed bylaws

amendment with multiple parts and a delegate would like to propose changes to two of them, it would be better to submit two separate amendments. The reason for this is that if delegates like one of the amendments but not the other, the whole motion may fail if they are considered together.

- Voting delegates will receive further instructions on next steps after submitting their motion.
- Submitted motions will be reviewed by the WSPTA Parliamentarian for conformity to established submission guidelines. Those found to be in order may be put into proper form.
- Motions found to be in order will be considered during debate for each proposed bylaws amendment in the order they were received. For example, all the motions to amend proposed bylaw amendment #1 will be considered during debate on bylaw amendment #1, and in the order that the motions were received.
- Delegates with motions still need to proceed to the motions microphone and wait to be recognized by the chair prior to presenting their motion.

## Debate and Voting during General Sessions (policy, RR, SRs)

- Voting delegates are encouraged to participate in the debate process!
- There are 3 microphones in the general session room, each with a different purpose:
  - **Microphone 1**, labeled “for” or “pro”, is for delivering speeches in favor of the motion being considered. In addition, all motions are made from microphone 1.
  - **Microphone 2**, labeled “against” or “con”, is for delivering speeches in opposition to the motion being considered.
  - **Microphone 3**, labeled “information” is where delegates can ask questions about the motion being debated, the rules, or certain other actions.
  - See [Parliamentary Procedure Simplified](#) for more information.
- After the introduction of a proposed bylaws amendment or resolution, one voting delegate may speak in favor, followed by one voting delegate in opposition, before any motions may be proposed.
- To speak, voting delegates must first be recognized by the chair. After the chair recognizes the voting delegate, they **state their name and local PTA or council number**.
- Each speech in debate is limited to 90 seconds.
- No voting delegate may speak more than twice on the pending motion, and no one may speak a second time until everyone who wants to has spoken once.
- The chair will alternate recognizing speakers at the “for” and “against” microphone, or until the total time of debate has expired.
- The total time of debate for each main motion (proposed bylaws amendment 1-12 or resolutions) is 12 minutes.
- The total time of debate clock will stop for all questions and other matters from microphone 3, or by the chair as needed.
- After the first speech in favor, if there are no delegates wishing to speak against and no motions to amend, the vote will be taken without further debate.
- If an amendment is proposed, the chair will recognize the motion maker to speak in favor, and one voting delegate to speak against, before a secondary amendment may be proposed.
- At the conclusion of the first speech in favor of the motion to amend, if no voting delegate has approached the “against” microphone and there are no secondary amendments or other motions, the vote on the motion to amend will be taken without further debate.
- This process is repeated for each motion to amend until all the motions to amend have been processed, or the total debate time for the main motion has expired. If time remains after all amendments have been

processed, debate on the main motion (as amended) will resume until the total debate time expires. When there are no further voting delegates wishing to speak, or total debate time has expired, the vote on the main motion, as amended, will be taken.

- Delegates will vote by raising their voting credentials card when directed by the chair.
- Adoption of resolutions requires a majority vote, and adoption of proposed bylaws amendments require a 2/3 vote in the affirmative.
- If needed, a rising vote or counted vote may be used, at the request of the chair or a voting delegate. No one may enter the general session room during a counted vote.
- See also [Flow Diagram of Debate and Voting Process](#)

## Example Debate and Voting Scenarios

**Example 1** - No amendments submitted, no con speakers:

- Begin debate of the proposal
- Proponent opening statement (90 seconds max)
- Seeing no con speakers and no motions
- Vote taken without further debate

**Example 2** - No amendments submitted, with con speakers:

- Begin debate of the proposal
- Proponent opening statement (90 seconds max)
- Speaker in opposition
- Alternate speakers between the "for" and "against"
- Vote when we run out of speakers or total debate time

**Example 3** - Amendments have been submitted:

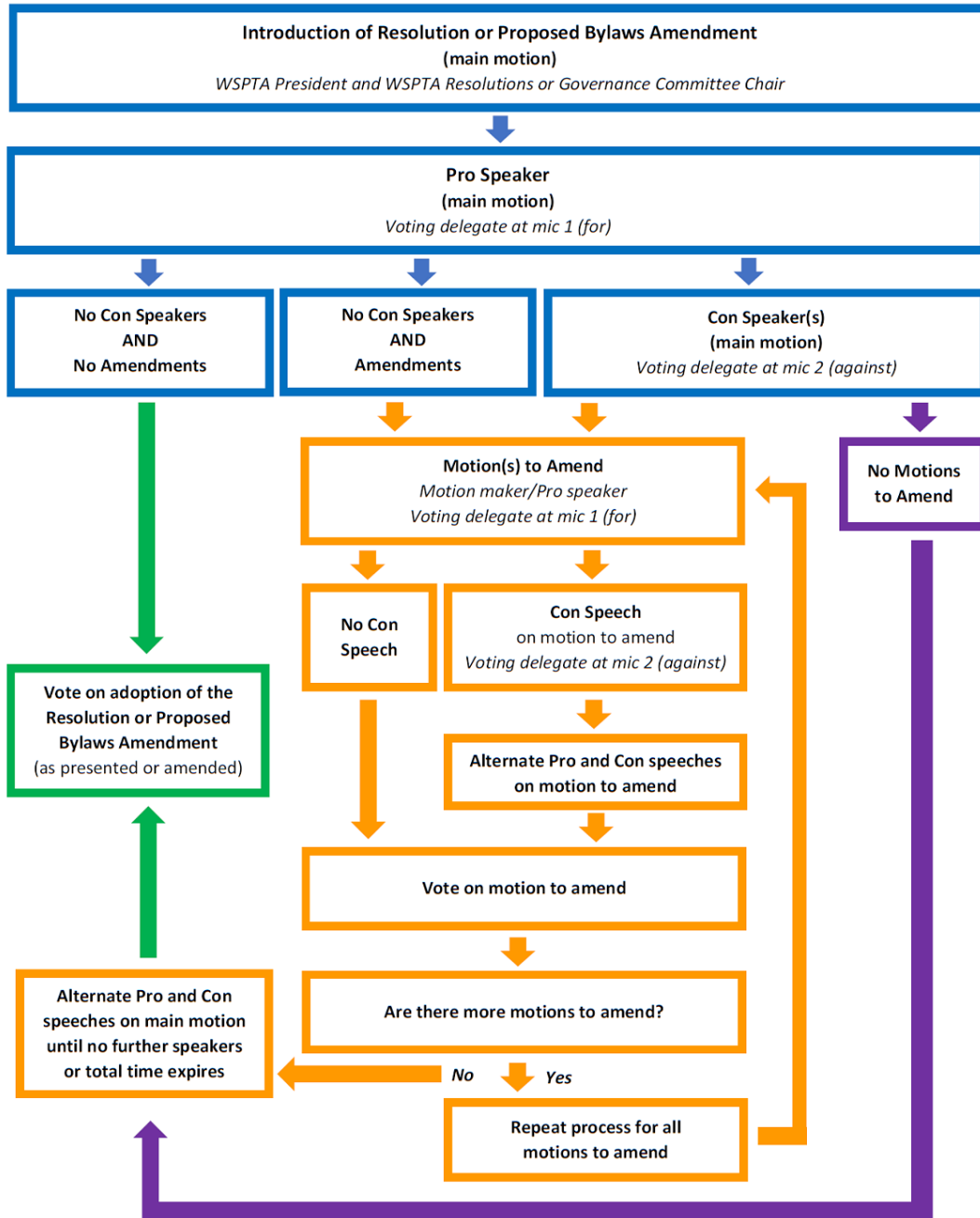
- Begin debate of the proposal
- Proponent opening statement (90 seconds max)
- Speaker in opposition (if there is one)
- Consider motions to amend
- Alternate speakers between the "for" and "against"
- Vote when we run out of speakers or total debate time

## Requests for Information, Inquiries, and Points of Order (RR)

- A voting delegate who has a question (request for information), a parliamentary inquiry, or wishes to raise a point of order or a question of privilege should go to microphone 3 and let the microphone attendant know why they are there. The attendant will signal the chair about the nature of the request.
- If the question is not relevant to the motion currently under consideration (germane), the chair will rule the comments out of order at the current time.
- **Request for Information/Inquiry:**
  - If a voting delegate does not understand what is happening during the meeting, they may ask a question:
    - Sometimes the issues get confusing, and you do not know which motion is being discussed.
    - You may have a question on the effect of a vote under consideration.
  - The chair will take this up before recognizing the next speaker.
  - The inquiry must be a specific question to ask for factual information or to ask a procedural question.
  - An inquiry may not be used to make a point in rebuttal or to clarify a point made in debate.

- Rhetorical questions are debate, not requests for information.
- The chair will respond to your question or ask someone to answer, and there is no discussion.
- **Points of Order:**
  - If a voting delegate believes a procedural rule is being violated or ignored, they may raise a point of order.
  - Points of order will be ruled on by the chair, and the ruling may be appealed by the delegates.

## Flow Diagram of Debate and Voting Process



# Parliamentary Procedure Simplified

## Debate

To do this:	Go to Mic:	When called on by the chair, <b>state your name and PTA name and number, and:</b>
Speak in favor (pro)	1 (Pro)	Give your speech; 90-second limit
Speak against (con)	2 (Con)	Give your speech; 90-second limit

## Ranking motions – from Mic 1

A motion in this list cannot be made if a motion above it is currently on the floor.

To propose:	Wording of motion: (If called on by the chair, <b>state your name and PTA name and number, and say:</b> )	Needs a second?	Open to debate?	Can be amended?	What vote is needed?
Adjourn a meeting	<i>I move that we adjourn.</i>	Yes	No	No	Majority
Call an intermission	<i>I move that we recess for ____ minutes.</i>	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
End debate and amendments	<i>I move the previous question. (OR: I move to close debate.)</i>	Yes	No	No	2/3
Extend debate	<i>I move to extend debate by ____ minutes.</i>	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
Postpone discussion until a specific time	<i>I move to postpone the discussion until...</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Study a question in more detail	<i>I move to refer the matter to the _____ committee.</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend a motion	<i>I move to amend the motion by...</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Main motion	<i>I move to...</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

## Other motions – from Mic 1

To do this:	Wording of motion: (If called on by the chair, <b>state your name and PTA name and number, and say:</b> )	Needs a second?	Open to debate?	Can be amended?	What vote is needed?
Suspend rules temporarily	<i>I move to suspend the rules so that...</i>	Yes	No	No	2/3

## Questions, points of order, appeals – from Mic 3 (Information)

To do this:	When called on by the chair, say:	Needs a second?	Open to debate?	Can be amended?	What vote is needed?
Ask a question for information	(Ask your question about the pending motion.)	No	No	No	No vote
Ask a question about the rules or process	(Ask your question regarding rules or process.)	No	No	No	No vote
Complain about noise, etc.	(State your concern.)	No	No	No	No vote
Protest breach of rules or conduct	<i>Point of order!</i> (And then state which rules may have been broken or are not being enforced.)	No	No	No	No vote
Appeal a ruling by the chair	<i>I appeal the chair's decision.</i>	Yes	Yes, usually	No	Majority