

## How Things Work

*How Things Work* outlines all the important things to know to have a successful experience at the WSPTA Annual Meeting. Many of the “rules” are requirements of the law (noted as Revised Code of Washington (RCW), *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws* (bylaws), *WSPTA Policy Manual* (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 [2026 WSPTA Annual Meeting Standing Rules \(SRs\)](#) found in this program and on the [Voting and Association Business](#) webpage.

## Important Deadlines (RCW, policy, SRs)

- **Voting delegate [registration](#) deadline is **May 4, 2026 at 12pm (noon)**.**
- Space permitting, members may be able to register as a provisional delegate through **May 11 at 12pm (noon)**. To be a voting delegate, a member 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 11 at 12pm (noon)**.
- On-site registration, space permitting, opens at **9:00 AM on May 15**. To register as a delegate, you must provide written permission from your PTA President naming you as a voting delegate.
- Deadline to submit motions to amend the proposed bylaws amendments is **May 16 at 1:30 PM at the WSPTA Table**.

## 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 and Association Business](#) webpage.

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

- Voting credentials are issued to voting delegates who have registered for the WSPTA Convention and Annual Meeting and have been authorized by their local PTA or council president as outlined in the above [Important Deadlines](#). 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. State delegates must be a member of a local PTA in Washington state.

- 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 2026. 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, 2026, 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 audio or video recording, AI notetaking, transcribing, and/or live streaming during general sessions are 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, WSPTA Advocacy Director, or the resolutions and bylaws amendment 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, WSPTA Advocacy Director or the resolutions and bylaws amendment 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 2026-2028 WSPTA nominating committee on May 17, 2026. See the [Election Information webpage](#) for more details.
- Delegates will consider the proposed amendment to the *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws* and new resolutions as shown in the *Proposed WSPTA Uniform Bylaws and Resolution Amendments Guide*, which can be found on the Whova app or the [Election Information webpage](#), on May 16 and May 17, 2026.
- Delegates will vote for the WSPTA Advocacy Director position by voice vote in a business session.
- Delegates will vote for Nominating Committee members by computer at Convention.
  - Delegate cards must be shown and name verified, in order to enter the voting area.
  - The five candidates that receive the most votes will be elected as the 2026-2028 WSPTA nominating committee.
- **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 Amendment to the *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws and Resolutions*

### Bylaws and Resolution Amendment Writing Help (bylaws, SRs)

- There will be **amendment writing help on Saturday, May 16 during lunch** or at the Governance Table.

### Motions (policy, RR, SRs)

- All motions, except for motions to amend the proposed bylaws amendment (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 [Proposed WSPTA Uniform Bylaws and Resolution Amendments Guide](#) are open for amendment and debate.
- All motions must be seconded by another voting delegate before they 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.
- Resolutions *whereas* clauses will be updated by the resolutions committee as needed.
- WSPTA may correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, style, cross-references, conformity to previously adopted language, and make other technical changes in the final adopted positions to reflect the intent of the voting delegates. Amendments to correct these items are not in order during the annual meeting.
- 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 the 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 amendment. 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 amendment must be **pre-submitted by Saturday, May 16 at 1:30 pm** by a voting delegate in writing on the designated motion form.
- **Proper form:** Motions to amend the proposed bylaws amendment must clearly state what change(s) you want to happen. Use the following language (add/insert and strike/delete) and format:  
*“In bylaws proposal #1, after word “for” strike out the word “adoption” and insert the word “consideration.””*
- Only the parts of the proposed bylaws amendment with changes, as shown in the [Proposed WSPTA Uniform Bylaws and Resolution Amendments Guide](#) as **bold/underlined** or ~~striketrough~~, are open for amendment and debate. A motion to amend may only alter those words that are changing in the proposed bylaws amendment. If it is not **bold/underlined** or ~~striketrough~~, 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 the 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 the proposed bylaws amendment in the order they 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)

See also [Flow Diagram of the Debate and Voting Process](#)

- Voting delegates are encouraged to participate in the debate process!
- There are 4 microphones in the general session room, each with a different purpose:
  - **The “pro” microphone** is for delivering speeches in favor of the motion being considered.
  - **The “motions” microphone** is where delegates make all motions.
  - **The “info” microphone** is where delegates can ask questions about the motion being debated, the rules, or certain other actions.
  - **The “con” microphone** is for delivering speeches against the motion being considered.
  - See [Parliamentary Procedure Simplified](#) for more information.
- After the introduction of the proposed bylaws amendment or a 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.
- 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.
- During debate, the chair will recognize speakers alternating between “pro” and “con” microphones, when possible (there are speakers present), until there are no further speakers or the total time for debate on the main motion has expired.
- The total time of debate for each main motion (proposed bylaws amendment or new resolution) is 12 minutes.
- The total time of debate clock will stop for all questions and other matters from the “info” microphone, or by the chair as needed.

- 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 “con” 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 or leave the general session room during a counted vote.

## 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 "pro" and "con" when possible
- 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 "pro" and "con" when possible
- 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 the “info” microphone 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 about 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 considered 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.