OKPTA Virtual Meetings Platforms Listing (meetings have to be VIDEO)

If local leaders choose to hold meetings via video conference based on our recent guidance, there are various free tools to consider that allow you to hold online video meetings with multiple attendees (subject to limitations).

Some options include:

1. GoToMeeting and GoToWebinar
2. Zoom *
3. Google Hangouts

To compare conference call systems, please go to https://www.quicksprout.com/best-conference-call-services/.

* Please note that Zoom’s free plan normally limits conference calls to 40 minutes, but this rule has been temporarily lifted for K-12 schools affected by Coronavirus. Click here to learn how to access this offer, and how to verify your school using its official email address.

** Mention of these companies does not imply endorsement by Oklahoma PTA.

FAQ’s for Meetings

Is it mandatory that we hold an Association Meeting via videoconferencing?
No, we are just giving our Units and Councils, an alternative to hosting an in-person meeting during these uncharted times. These guidelines expire on June 30, 2020.

How much notice of this meeting do I need to give?
Refer to your Unit Standing Rules.

**How do we give notice of the meeting?**

Refer to OKPTA Virtual Meeting Policy, item #6.

**What should we do if we do not have a current membership list?**

If there is no current membership list, (which is required according to the OKLAHOMA UNIFORM UNIT BYLAWS), then you would have to grant voting rights to all those on the call, once you verify they are actually members of your school population.

**Is it okay to present financials at a teleconferencing meeting?**

You **MUST** present a full treasurer's report including income and expenses at any official meeting.

**Does the slate of officers need to be posted?**

Your proposed slate of officers should be posted 30 days in advance.

**We never elected a nominating committee and do not have a slate of officers, what should we do?**

It is still important to hold an election. You will need to take all nominations from the floor for the elected positions listed in your bylaws.

**How do people run from the floor?**

You can handle this one of many ways. A couple of suggestions:

- Have those who want to run from the floor announce their intention at the very beginning of the meeting when asked by the chair. That way it will make things easier when the time comes to hold the election.
- Have those who are interested in running from the floor make their intent known within a certain time frame after the meeting notice goes out. The chair could then announce the names of those who are running from the floor to let people know in advance who is running for the various positions.
FAQ’s for Financials

Can our PTA donate to other community non-profits who are taking lead roles in supporting the many under-served families in our district? Can we offer some sort of direct support to members (individuals and families) of need in our school communities?

The IRS is very clear that a 501(c)3 public charity (which all PTAs are) may donate funds to another 501(c)3 public charity with a similar mission. That means that a PTA can donate money only to non-profits who have similar purposes. For example, you could not donate to the Red Cross, but you could donate to a non-profit children’s library, provided it had 501(c)3 status.

Likewise, the IRS is very clear that a public charity may not gift funds to individuals or families unless that is what the charity was organized to do. PTAs are not organized for that purpose, so we may not give money (including gift cards) to individuals or families in our school communities, regardless of need.

The PTA may donate to other community organizations if they meet the criteria above (and assuming the association voted to do so), but the PTA cannot gift funds to an individual or family.

How do we get 2 signers on checks in order to pay our bills?

Each board must determine the best and safest way to do this. For some, this will be the treasurer preparing everything needed to pay a bill, copy of invoice, written check, an addressed and stamped envelope all put together and transmitted to the second signatory who verifies the accuracy, signs the check and finishes the process (i.e., mailing the check). Transmission of the materials could be via mail or porch drop-off. Use best practices and recommendations by health officials.

If literally there is no safe way to transmit physical documents AND the unit’s bank allows it, only one physically signature may be on a check. BUT, EMAIL DOCUMENTATION OF THE SECOND REVIEW AND APPROVAL MUST BE ATTACHED IN THE UNIT FINANCIAL FILES. This should only be used in extreme situations and is an exception NOT the rule.
How do we close end of year FRR?

Boards will need to be flexible with closeout timing. I know many units want to have their books closed before everyone leaves school. There is no physical school, so other options may need to be considered. Closing the books may have to wait until June. By that time, small groups may be able to get together, if enough space allows for separation, and review the books and complete the FRR. Worst case scenario and people cannot gather together, then each member of your Financial Review Committee will need to individually review the books. After each has had a chance to review, a virtual meeting will need to be conducted to discuss any irregularities and/or ask questions. A single person would be designated to complete the actual form. That form would be sent to all committee members. Each would give their approval (signature) via an email response. All of that documentation would be included with the FRR and become the official review. If at some point everyone is able to gather and physically sign the FRR the dates on the email approval should be used. The documentation should always be kept. However, the single form is all that would need to be presented on behalf of the unit.

Do we have to spend money on items we already budgeted?

Absolutely not. Best practices would be to NOT spend money on activities or items planned UNLESS the unit is legally obligated to do so (i.e., the unit has committed to a fund-raiser and have accepted merchandise and money, then the unit is legally obligated to fulfill the commitment. However, call and work with your vendor. You want to preserve the relationships the unit has cultivated.) A unit must pay any outstanding bills. If an event was held prior the mandates by the government, those expenses are valid expenses and payment is required. Units are allowed and SHOULD have carryover from one year to another. Funds should not be spent simply because they are “left over”.
How can a unit handle authorization/approval of board expenses by current board members?

First question would be “why is a member incurring expenses”. Secondly, was it for something already approved in a Plan of Work or approved in the budget or approved at a meeting? If it was already approved in one of the ways mentioned, then a Check Request would be submitted for review and approval. Payment would follow procedures already outlined.

No expenses should be occurring that have not already been approved via some method. Is the expense really a modification to a plan of work? If it is truly for something that has not been approved via another option, then it would have to be presented and approved at a meeting (now a virtual meeting). All rules still apply. The methods are what have changed.

**FAQs for Teacher/Staff Appreciation**

**What can PTAs do for Teacher/Staff Appreciation while schools are closed?**

- If local businesses or members of the community wish to donate gift cards/certificates to school staff, you may facilitate that donation.

- You may pay for a staff appreciation meal for all staff members by paying a restaurant directly. Many restaurants are now offering “fixed price” menus for pickup and/or delivery. You may pay a restaurant to provide such a meal to each staff member at your school and then let the staff know how to contact the restaurant to pick up/receive delivery of their meal.

- You can send thank you cards (by mail, email, or social media) thanking staff for all their amazing work during this trying time. Notes from parents and/or students will be particularly meaningful. You should work with the school principal to determine the best way to distribute these notes to the staff.

- You can issue a “rain check” for your usual staff appreciation activities and plan to hold them as soon as in person school resumes or whenever large gatherings of people are permitted again.