

# Welcome to Jumpstart

## What is Jumpstart?

“Jumpstart” is a chance to get a head start on the year by sharing strategies and policies at the beginning of the school year.

It helps new PTO officers transition into their roles for the upcoming year.



# What is the PTO Council?

The PTO Council is the governing body for the individual PTO's of the School District of Clayton.

The PTO Council is the legally registered 501(c)3 entity. The Council is responsible for setting the by-laws and PTO policies for the District.

The PTO Council is responsible for maintaining and providing records for tax purposes.



# What is the PTO Council?

## Mission Statement

PTO Council is the umbrella organization that connects all six individual PTOs in the School District of Clayton. The mission of the PTO Council is to provide guidance, support and a central forum for best practices. The Council promotes communication and cultivates a sense of community between PTO leadership and administration.



# Who Makes Up the PTO Council?

The PTO Council slate for  
the 2025-2026 school year is:

Mary Bower (2025-2028)  
Jessica Graetz (2023-2026)  
Abby Goldstein (2024-2027)  
Tahnee Jackson-Whitlock (2024-2027)  
Laura Seelbach (2023-2026)  
Lilly Gutwein Scharff (2022-2028)



# Who Makes Up the PTO Council?

In addition, there are six ex-officio directors that are comprised of one PTO President from each of the six schools.

These are the 12 voting members that make up the PTO Council.

(At least one representative from each school is required to attend each meeting)



# Why do we need the PTO Council?

The PTO Council is a resource for the six school PTOs. The council provides guidance and institutional knowledge to help the school PTOs navigate different situations such as:

1. Funding
2. Conflict
3. Planning and execution of capital improvement projects
4. Policies and procedures
5. Organizing district-wide events like the Back to School Bash

(The PTO Council meets four times each school year)



# PTO Council Website

The PTO Council website serves as a guide and resource for the schools.

Here are some highlights of what you can look up online:

1. Bylaws
2. Governing Rules
3. Accounting Procedures
4. Communication Guidelines
5. Communication Toolkits



# Things You Should Know...

## Voting Procedures

- Matters requiring a vote:
  - Expenses (outside of what has been budgeted)
  - Minutes, including the treasurer's report
  - Annual budget
  - New slate
- Passing a motion to make it an official part of the record.
- Voting language - motion, second, all in favor, etc. (Needs to be non-exec members making the motion and seconding)
- Tabling a motion.
- Notifying the PTO Members of votes involving significant investments, i.e. libraries, playgrounds, etc.
- For budget changes, refer to the PTO accounting procedures to determine if you need to take a vote or not. When in doubt, vote.





# Things You Should Know...

## Budget

- Budgets should be approved at the 1st PTO meeting of the school year
  - If it's in the approved budget, no further approvals are needed
  - Additions or changes may require approval depending on the amount
- What do we need to report on at PTO meetings?
  - All transactions since the previous meeting or report
  - Budget performance to-date
  - Any financial concerns or problems



# Things You Should Know...

## Calendar

Q: How can we avoid overlap and conflict when scheduling monthly PTO meetings so that parents who want to attend meetings at multiple schools don't have to choose?

A: Provide your list of monthly meeting dates to the PTO Council. This helps identify and resolve scheduling conflicts.



# Things You Should Know...

## Guest Speakers

Who can speak at a PTO meeting on issues not directly related to that particular school? For example:

- Individuals with a political agenda (BOE, Alderman)
  - Yes: The Board of Education and Alderman can speak at a PTO meeting as it's related to the school and/or the school district. If candidates requests to speak, extend a courtesy invitation to all candidates.
- Individuals hoping to promote a business
  - No.
- Others (Scouts of America, Girls on the Run, etc.)
  - This is at the discretion of each individual PTO.



# Things You Should Know...

## Insurance

How does PTO Council insurance coverage work? Who is covered?

- We have coverage for:
  - Commercial general liability (\$1m) with extended medical payments (\$50k)
  - Professional liability (\$1m)
  - Fidelity bond (crime) for embezzlement/theft (\$50k)
- All board members, officers and volunteers are covered
- Contact PTO Council Treasurer if you need a Certificate of Insurance or rider



# Things You Should Know...

## Contracts

What do I need to know before signing a vendor contract?

- READ the contract, especially indemnification and defense provisions. If you are unsure about anything, please contact the PTO Council.
- Contracts should be signed by a PTO officer (usually the president). **Include your title!**  
For example: Jane Doe, Meramec PTO Co-President
- If the PTO wants to pay an individual (for example, a visiting artist or storyteller), go through CSD. The District will handle required background checks and tax reporting.



# Donations

- What is a donation? A voluntary gift made with no expectation of receiving something of equal value
  - Yes: Money for FFE, care funds, teacher appreciation, etc.
  - No: Money for event tickets, t-shirts, yearbooks, etc.
  - TBD: Auction purchases, donor gifts
- PTO has to acknowledge (in writing) donations over \$250
- Donations from employer matches, donor-advised funds, etc. usually come to the PTO Council because it has the tax ID number



# Things You Should Know...

## Minutes

- How should the minutes be formatted and when and how should they be published?
  - The agenda is the best way to format the minutes.
  - For voting, include who made the motion, who seconded it and the results of the vote.
  - Submit minutes to the school's PTO board for approval before being sent to the your Communications person to publish to the website.
  - Minutes need to be published to the website within 2 weeks of the meeting.
  - Last month's meeting minutes will be approved at this month's meeting.
- Zoom vs. In Person meetings.
  - When meetings are held via Zoom (or a hybrid model), meetings should be recorded and the recording published to the PTO website.
  - Written minutes are also necessary, as stated above.



# Meeting Dates

## 2025-2026 PTO Council meetings:

- August 28, 2025 - Jumpstart
- November 20, 2025
- February 26, 2026\*
- April 16, 2026

\* All meetings are at noon in the conference room on the lower level of the admin building except the Feb. 26, 2026, meeting which will be held at the Center of Clayton.





# THANK YOU

**Thank you for all the time and energy you  
give to make the student experience  
the best possible one for all!**

