

Parent Teacher Organization Handbook

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A Welcome from the Principal

Dear Lodi Academy Families,

Welcome to the Lodi Academy Parent Teacher Organization, a ministry of partnership!

I believe one of God's greatest gifts to a school is a strong partnership between home and school. When parents, teachers, staff, administration, and our church family work together with a shared purpose, students experience something truly special. They are surrounded by adults who encourage them, pray for them, believe in them, and invest in their growth.

The Parent Teacher Organization is much more than a group that plans events or raises funds. It is a ministry of partnership. It is an opportunity for families to become actively engaged in the life of our school, to build meaningful relationships, to encourage our teachers and staff, and to help create a Christ-centered culture where every student feels known, valued, and supported.

As Principal, I believe that every parent has something valuable to contribute. Whether your gift is serving behind the scenes, organizing events, welcoming new families, praying for our school, or simply showing up to encourage others, your involvement makes a difference.

My hope is that the PTO becomes a place where relationships flourish, communication is strengthened, and we work side by side with a spirit of humility, trust, and Christian service. Together, we have the privilege of creating an environment where students can grow spiritually, academically, socially, and emotionally while experiencing the love of Christ through the adults who surround them.

Thank you for choosing to partner with Lodi Academy. Your investment in this school is ultimately an investment in the lives of our students. I look forward to serving alongside you as we continue to build a thriving Christ-centered community where every student is encouraged to discover God's purpose for their life.

May God bless our partnership as we serve Him together.

With gratitude,

Dr. Jennifer Cooper
Principal at Lodi Academy

Foundation of the Parent Teacher Organization

Purpose

The Lodi Academy Parent Teacher Organization exists to support the mission of Lodi Academy by fostering strong partnerships between families, staff, administration, and the School Board. The PTO serves the school by encouraging parent engagement, strengthening the school community, coordinating volunteer support, and providing resources that enrich the educational experience of every student.

Mission

The PTOs mission is to strengthen the partnership between families, faculty, and school leadership in support of Lodi Academy's Christ-centered mission, fostering student success, positive school culture, and meaningful community engagement.

Vision

The PTOs vision is to be a ministry of partnership between home and school, building a Christ-centered community where students, families, and staff grow together in faith, learning, and service.

Core Values

The Parent Teacher Organization is committed to the following values:

- **Christ-Centered Service** – We seek to honor God in all we do through service, encouragement, and love for others.
- **Partnership** – We believe students thrive when parents, teachers, administration, and the School Board work together with mutual trust and shared purpose.
- **Respect** – We value every member of our school community and treat one another with kindness, dignity, and grace.
- **Collaboration** – We encourage teamwork, open communication, and shared responsibility in support of the school's mission.
- **Stewardship** – We faithfully manage our time, talents, and financial resources to benefit students and strengthen the school.
- **Hospitality** – We strive to create a welcoming environment where every family feels valued, connected, and included.
- **Integrity** – We conduct ourselves with honesty, transparency, and accountability in all PTO activities.
- **Excellence** – We pursue high standards in our service and programs while continually seeking ways to enhance the student and family experience.

Goals

The Parent Teacher Organization seeks to:

- Support the spiritual, academic, and social mission of Lodi Academy.
- Strengthen partnerships between parents, teachers, administration, and the School Board.
- Promote a positive, Christ-centered school culture through fellowship, encouragement, and community-building activities.

- Encourage meaningful parent involvement through volunteer opportunities that support student learning and school programs.
- Provide financial support for approved projects and initiatives that benefit students and the school community.
- Foster open communication and collaboration between home and school.
- Welcome and connect new families to the Lodi Academy community.
- Encourage school pride and strengthen relationships among students, families, faculty, alumni, and friends of the school.
- Support activities and events that enrich student life and strengthen the overall educational experience.
- Operate in a manner that reflects the mission, values, and governance of Lodi Academy and the Seventh-day Adventist educational system.

Culture & Guiding Principles

The Parent Teacher Organization is more than a volunteer organization; it is a ministry of partnership between home and school. The culture we create through our words, actions, and relationships has a lasting impact on our students, families, faculty, and school community. As we serve together, we are committed to cultivating a Christ-centered culture that reflects the mission, vision, and core values of Christ-centered service and strengthens the partnership between home and school.

To accomplish this, we strive to:

- Place Christ at the center of all we do.
- Support the mission, leadership, and educational ministry of Lodi Academy.
- Assume positive intent and seek understanding before making assumptions.
- Communicate with honesty, kindness, respect, and grace.
- Foster unity by working collaboratively toward shared goals.
- Welcome every family and create opportunities for meaningful connection and belonging.
- Encourage and support our teachers, staff, and administration.
- Focus on solutions that strengthen the school and benefit students.
- Serve with humility, generosity, and a spirit of excellence.
- Respect the unique roles of parents, faculty, administration, and the School Board.
- Celebrate the successes of our students and school community.
- Remember that every interaction is an opportunity to reflect Christ's love and strengthen the culture of our school.

Governance and Organization

Governance Philosophy

The Parent Teacher Organization exists as a ministry of partnership between home and school, supporting the mission of Lodi Academy through service, collaboration, encouragement, and Christian fellowship. The PTO is the school's official parent support organization and functions under the administrative leadership of the Principal and the authority of the Lodi Academy School Board.

Healthy governance is founded on clearly defined roles, mutual trust, open communication, and a shared commitment to the mission of Christian education. The School Board provides governance by

establishing policy, approving the school's strategic direction, and exercising fiduciary oversight. The Principal serves as the educational and administrative leader of the school and is entrusted with the day-to-day leadership and oversight of the Parent Teacher Organization. The PTO partners with the Principal, faculty, staff, families, and the School Board to strengthen school culture, encourage parent engagement, coordinate volunteers, and support programs and initiatives that enrich the educational experience of every student.

By honoring these distinct yet complementary roles, the Parent Teacher Organization helps cultivate a Christ-centered school community where collaboration, trust, and service advance the mission and ministry of Lodi Academy.

Governance Principle

The School Board governs, the Principal leads, and the Parent Teacher Organization serves in partnership to support the mission of Lodi Academy.

Membership

The Parent Teacher Organization is open to all parents/guardians of current students, faculty, staff, and members of the SDA churches who support the mission of Lodi Academy.

All members are encouraged to attend meetings, volunteer their time and talents, participate in school activities, and contribute to the mission and goals of the PTO.

Elections

Officers for VP, Secretary, Treasurer shall be elected annually by the membership during the final PTO meeting of the school year or at another meeting designated by the organization.

The Principal shall nominate the PTO President/Chairperson for appointment by the School Board.

Officers shall serve a one-year term and may be re-elected.

If officer vacancies for VP, Secretary, or Treasurer occur during the year, they may be filled by appointment of the Executive Committee with the approval of the principal until the next regular election.

Officers

The PTO shall consist of the following elected officers:

- President/Chairperson
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

Additional committee chairs or coordinators may be appointed by the principal as needed to support the work of the organization.

Duties of Officers

President/Chairperson

The President provides leadership for the Parent Teacher Organization and works in partnership with the principal to fulfill the mission, vision, and goals of the PTO. The President/Chairperson will serve on the School Board as a member per Lodi Academy Bylaws. See Appendix A, Governing Documents.

Responsibilities include:

- Preside over PTO meetings.
- Develop meeting agendas in collaboration with the principal.
- Coordinate the work of officers and committee chairs.
- Encourage parent involvement and volunteerism.
- Serve as the primary liaison between the PTO and school administration.
- Promote the mission and goals of the PTO.
- Serve as a member of the Lodi Academy School Board.

Vice President

The Vice President supports the President and assumes leadership responsibilities in the President's absence.

Responsibilities include:

- Assist with planning meetings and events.
- Coordinate special projects as assigned.
- Support committee chairs.
- Perform other duties as requested by the President or principal.

Secretary

The Secretary maintains accurate records of the organization's activities.

Responsibilities include:

- Record meeting minutes.
- Maintain attendance records.
- Distribute meeting agendas and minutes.
- Keep all meeting minutes, documents, records in a PTO Binder
- Assist with communication as needed.

Treasurer

The Treasurer provides financial oversight of PTO funds in partnership with the school treasurer.

Responsibilities include:

- Maintain accurate financial records in an organized manner.
- Present financial reports at PTO meetings.

- Work with the school treasurer regarding deposits, reimbursements, and approved expenditures.
- Assist in preparing the annual PTO budget.
- Ensure funds are used in accordance with board-approved policies.

All PTO funds shall be deposited with the school and held in trust by the school treasurer in accordance with Lodi Academy Board policy.

Principal's Role

The Principal serves as the administrative leader and advisor of the Parent Teacher Organization.

Responsibilities include:

- Provide guidance and support to the PTO.
- Ensure PTO activities align with the mission and educational goals of Lodi Academy.
- Approve the annual calendar of PTO activities in coordination with the school calendar.
- Serve as a resource to officers and committees.
- Facilitate communication between the PTO and the School Board.
- Serve as an ex officio member of all committees

Meetings

The PTO shall meet regularly throughout the school year at dates and times determined in collaboration with the principal.

Special meetings may be called by the President/Chairperson or Principal as needed.

Meeting agendas shall be distributed in advance whenever practical.

Committees

Standing and special committees may be established to support the work of the PTO.

Examples include:

- Hospitality
- Teacher Appreciation
- Fundraising
- Student Activities
- Community Service
- Family Engagement
- School Events

Committee chairs shall report to the President and work collaboratively with the principal or designated staff member.

Administrative Oversight and Approval Authority

The Parent Teacher Organization operates under the administrative leadership of the Principal and the authority of the Lodi Academy School Board. While the School Board establishes policy and provides governance, it delegates the day-to-day administration, oversight, and coordination of the PTO to the Principal.

The Principal serves as the administrative advisor to the PTO and works collaboratively with its officers to ensure that all activities, programs, fundraising efforts, expenditures, and initiatives support the mission, philosophy, educational program, annual calendar, and policies of Lodi Academy.

Responsibilities of the Principal

The Principal provides administrative leadership for the Parent Teacher Organization and has the authority to:

- Establish annual priorities and goals for the PTO in collaboration with its officers.
- Approve the annual PTO calendar and schedule of events.
- Approve school community events, fellowship activities, parent engagement programs, and teacher appreciation activities.
- Approve volunteer initiatives and committee activities.
- Appoint or approve committee chairs, as appropriate.
- Approve fundraising activities that align with the school's mission and fall within the approved PTO budget.
- Approve routine expenditures and purchases that are included within the approved school budget.
- Coordinate the use of school facilities and scheduling of PTO sponsored events.
- Ensure that all PTO activities comply with school policies, conference policies, safety procedures, and educational priorities.

The Principal may modify, postpone, or deny any PTO activity, event, fundraiser, or expenditure that is inconsistent with the mission, philosophy, educational program, annual calendar, budget, or policies of Lodi Academy.

Responsibilities of the School Board

The School Board provides governance by establishing the organizational framework within which the Parent Teacher Organization operates. The Board is responsible for policy, oversight, and long-term direction and is not responsible for the routine administration or day-to-day operation of the PTO.

School Board approval is required for:

- Adoption or revision of the Parent Teacher Organization Guidelines.
- Changes to the Purpose, Mission, Vision, Governance Philosophy, or organizational structure of the PTO.
- Major initiatives or long-term programs that significantly affect the mission, operation, or financial obligations of the school.
- Financial commitments outside the approved school budget requiring additional Board authorization.
- Any matter specifically requiring School Board action under the Lodi Academy Bylaws or applicable conference policies.

Budget Authority

The annual PTO budget shall be developed collaboratively by the PTO Executive Committee, the Principal, and the school treasurer. The PTO budget shall be incorporated into the school's annual operating budget and presented to the School Board as part of the overall school budget approval process.

Once the annual school budget has been approved by the School Board, the Principal is authorized to approve routine PTO expenditures, purchases, fundraising activities, and events that are consistent with the approved budget, these Guidelines, and the mission of Lodi Academy.

The Principal may bring any PTO matter before the School Board whenever additional guidance, policy direction, or Board action is determined to be in the best interest of the school.

Commitment to Mission

The Parent Teacher Organization exists to serve the mission of Lodi Academy. Every decision, activity, event, and partnership should reflect a shared commitment to Christ, support the leadership of the school, strengthen the partnership between home and school, and contribute to the spiritual, academic, social, and emotional success of every student.

When each partner fulfills their unique role with humility, trust, and a spirit of service, the Parent Teacher Organization becomes an extension of the ministry of Lodi Academy, helping to cultivate a Christ-centered culture where students, families, faculty, staff, administration, and the School Board work together for the glory of God and the success of His children.

Decision Making

The Parent Teacher Organization seeks to make decisions through collaboration and consensus whenever possible. When a formal vote is necessary, each member present shall have one vote. Major financial commitments and activities shall be consistent with school policy and receive any required administrative or board approval.

Relationship to the School

The Parent Teacher Organization functions under the authority of the Lodi Academy School Board and administration as outlined in the Lodi Academy Bylaws.

The PTO exists to support, not direct, the educational ministry of the school through partnership, service, volunteerism, and community building.

Review and Revision of the Guidelines

These Parent Teacher Organization Guidelines are intended to provide a framework for the effective operation of the PTO and may be reviewed periodically to ensure they continue to support the mission and needs of Lodi Academy.

Revisions may be recommended by the PTO Executive Committee, the Principal, or the School Board. Any revisions shall become effective upon approval by the Lodi Academy School Board.

Appendix A - Governing Documents

Lodi Academy Bylaws Article XII Parent/Teacher Organization

- A. Constitution of PTO in harmony with guidelines outlined by NAD-PTO. Said constitution approved by the Board.
- B. Funds of the PTO deposited with the school and held in trust by school treasurer for use as directed by the PTO
- C. PTO shall be responsible to, and operate under the authority of the Board

Lodi Academy Bylaws Article II Board Membership.

The board of Lodi Academy shall be composed of constituency members as follows:

Article II, Section G. The PTO chairperson shall serve as a member of the Board. If the chairperson is in conflict of interest as outlined below in Article II.H, the PTO shall appoint an alternate to fill the PTO position on the Board.

Constitution of Lodi Academy of Seventh-Day-Adventists

Article VIII Constituency Responsibilities, section C. Parent Teacher Organization- Encouraging the organization and maintenance of the PTO, which acts as a connecting link between home and school.

Pacific Union Ed Code A16-108

Purpose-an organization of parents and interested church members whose purpose is to provide parent education and unite the home, the school, and the church in providing SDA education for all Adventist students.

Objectives/Responsibilities

- Aid and educate parents in parenting skills, including health and nutrition, discipline, and spiritual development
- Strengthen the relationship between home, school, and church
- Aid in recruitment of students for the school and assist the church in providing funds so all Adventist students may attend church school
- Assist the school in providing funds for needed equipment, materials, and library resources
- Provide activities that promote social interaction between the home, school, and church
- Assist the school in the recruitment of volunteers for such activities as teaching assistance, field trip drivers, homeroom parents, plant improvement and beautification, and other special projects requiring volunteer assistance

Resources: *A Quick Start Guide-Home and School Association Leadership* published by the NAD.

The Lodi Academy Parent Teacher Organization Handbook and Guidelines shall serve as the governing document (Constitution) of the Parent Teacher Organization as referenced in Article XII of the Lodi Academy Bylaws.

These PTO Handbook and Guidelines are intended to complement, not replace, the governing authority of the Lodi Academy Bylaws, the Pacific Union Education Code, the Northern California Conference policies, and School Board policies. In the event of any conflict, those governing documents shall take precedence.

Our Commitment

May our words, our actions, and our service always reflect the character and love of Jesus Christ. As we partner together in the ministry of Lodi Academy, may we serve with Christ's heart, encourage one another with His grace, and in all that we do, bring honor and glory to God.

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."

Colossians 3:23–24

NEED BOARD APPROVAL FOR THE FOLLOWING:

1. Our LA Bylaws state that the “constitution of the PTO is in harmony with guidelines outlined by NAD PTO. I do not know if a constitution of PTO by LA exists? If it does not, ask Board Approval for updating the Bylaws to the following:

The Lodi Academy Parent Teacher Organization Handbook and Guidelines shall serve as the governing document (Constitution) of the Parent Teacher Organization as referenced in Article XII of the Lodi Academy Bylaws.

or

update the Article CII By Laws to replace the word “constitution” with “PTO handbook/guidelines”

2. Add to Lodi Academy Bylaws Article XII, Section C;“While the PTO operates under the authority of the School Board, the Board delegates the day-to-day administration, oversight, and coordination of the PTO to the Principal. The Principal works collaboratively with PTO officers to ensure that all activities align with the mission, policies, educational program, and annual calendar of Lodi Academy.”

The admin is responsible for the day to day operation of the school. The Board governs the school through policy and oversight. It should not have to approve every bake sale, teacher appreciation lunch, or volunteer school event.

3. At Finance Comm: An Approved budget for PTO that is incorporated into the annual operating budget:

***The Bylaws state that the PTO Chairperson is a Board Member

