PTA. PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION BY-LAWS

MEMBERS: All Parents and Teachers.

PURPOSE: To provide a constant line of communication between Parents and School and to promote understanding among all the School groups as well as a forum for discussion between Parents and Teachers.

BASIC POLICIES:

1. The PTA shall be non-profit, non-commercial, non-sectarian and non-partisan in its activities.
2. The PTA shall support and cooperate the School faculty and administration.
3. All funds raised by the PTA must be used for, or donated to, the School in accordance with PTA objectives.

PTA ACTIVITIES:

1. Encourage constructive involvement of Parents in School activities.
2. Provide an additional channel of communication between parents and the School.
3. Include fundraising events for projects or needs not in the School budget.

ORGANIZING BODY:
The recommended organizational structure is such but does not have to be composed exactly as this:
President
Vice President
Treasurer
Secretary

During one of the last PTA meetings for the current school year an announcement will be made that the PTA is looking for volunteers for the PTA Board for the following school year. It is recommended that an announcement be placed in the Weekly Newsletter as well. Volunteers may choose to set the Board up in a way that they believe will work the best for them. The only required position is that of Treasurer.

In a year when there are no volunteers for the Board, certain sub-committees may continue to function such as the Newsletter, Bake sale and Welcome Committee. In this case, the Treasurer becomes the central communication point. The Headmaster must hand all requests for purchases to this person. The sub-committee chairpersons are not eligible to approve any purchases for the school.

COMMITTEES FOR ACTIVITIES AND FUNDRAISING EVENTS:

At the first PTA meeting of the school year the President outlines the requirements for each of the year's events. A chairperson is named and a list of members is compiled. The following is a list of suggested committees. They do not appear in any order of importance. Each year the PTA Board may choose to have as many of these committees as they like and may add new ones as well.

Bake Sale: This is a fundraiser held on the third Wednesday of the month. Parents are asked to donate snacks to be sold to the students and teachers at morning break. A reminder is placed in the Weekly Newsletter. It is also recommended that the dates for the bake sales be placed in the students' daily diaries that the school publishes. Three or four helpers are needed.

Hospitality: This includes a teacher appreciation lunch for the teachers and refreshments on Graduation Day, etc., which are offered by the PTA. The number of helpers varies according to the event. A Teacher Appreciation Lunch should be done sometime around Thanksgiving. A buffet lunch set up in the staff lounge is a good solution. The teachers also appreciate receiving cards from their students on this day. This activity should be coordinated with the Room Mom Coordinator.

Newsletter: A bi-lingual weekly newsletter is sent home with the students on Friday afternoons. On Tuesday morning the newsletter writer meets with the Headmaster who will give her any information he wished to communicate. She then gathers other items of
interest regarding school activities, sports functions, field trips, etc. The newsletter is then flatten up and faxed or brought in to school for additions and/or alterations. The final draft should be ready by Wednesday morning (or Thursday morning at the very latest) for translation, photocopying and distribution to the teachers' mailboxes on Thursday afternoon. The teachers will then distribute them to the students on Friday morning. Contributions from the students and teachers are encouraged and advertisements at the cost of 3 Euros can be placed. The deadline for contributions and advertisements is 9:00am on Tuesday.

**Room Mothers:** In the classes from Nursery through 5th grade Room Mothers are chosen to help the teachers in the classroom, on demand, for duties such as school parties, field trips, photocopying, etc. One or more mothers are needed for each grade.

**International Day:** Is an event that is held once a year. The function is open to the ACAT-IST community and their families and friends. All families, Italian and foreign, are invited to have a stand serving the many and varied culinary delights of their own countries or regions, or of countries in which they have lived. Each stand can be decorated with its national colors and any other typical theme. It is up to the individual to choose. After lunch there are games and activities for the children to do. This usually lasts one and a half to two hours. It is the responsibility of the chairperson to make sure there are enough helpers for these activities. Since this is a fundraising activity people are asked to donate food but a small amount will be reimbursed to countries with a high outlay. In order to avoid any problems, the amount to be reimbursed should be agreed upon up front. This will involve the treasurer, the subcommittee chairperson and the chairperson representing a particular country. It is the responsibility of the individual country's chairperson to make sure there are enough volunteers to work at the stand and to donate enough food.

**Thanksgiving:** The school has a long-standing tradition of celebrating Thanksgiving. Pumpkin bars are distributed to the entire school community. Currently 18 small cans of pumpkin are required to make sure every child and staff members receive one bar.

**Santa’s Workshop:** Another Christmas event, held near the end of the first trimester. This is not a fundraiser, but a “shop” for the students in Nursery through 12th grade so that they can buy gifts for their families with a limit of six gifts per student. Order forms are sent out and returned with the money for each gift. (1998: 10,000 lire each). The purchase of a gift for each order is made by the President and the Chairperson with help from her committee as needed. This event requires a great deal of shopping so therefore is time consuming. Volunteers for this committee should realize this before offering to help. On the day of Santa's Workshop, help is needed to guide the students around the gift tables and for the wrapping of each gift, which is labeled with the name of the recipient with a previously prepared sticker. The sale is held from 9:30 am through 4:00 pm and the room has to be set up and decorated beforehand. Twelve helpers are needed on this day.

**Welcome Committee:** The Welcome Committee organizes coffees, lunches, etc.. to introduce new families to the community. Since this committee is active also during the summer, it would be good to ask for new members at one of the last PTA meetings. The committee may also send farewell cards to families that are leaving.

**Charity Committee:** The school with the help from the PTA chooses a charity to support. Various activities should be organized to raise funds for this charity.

**Luncheons Committee:** This is a very important part of the PTA fundraising. Each year different members of ACAT-IST offer to host a lunch at their home. The luncheon will have a theme of the nationality that the hostess is. These lunches are very popular with the entire community and therefore whenever possible should be open only to ACAT-IST members. The committee’s responsibilities include coordinating the dates, times and locations of all of the luncheons. It also accepts the responsibility of receiving the reservations for each luncheon. It also makes sure that there are enough helpers for set up and clean up. An amount for reimbursement should also be agreed upon ahead of time.

**STRACAT:** STRACAT is open to the entire ACAT-IST community and their families and friends and consists of a road race, a barbeque, games for the children, a raffle and an award ceremony for the winners of the race. Because the race is run on public streets and roads, the local Vigili have to be informed and letters advising all residents along the route to keep their dogs insides their properties are distributed some weeks in advance. Water stands and directions are set up along the way and a person has to be available to follow up in a car to pick up anyone who may need help. After the race, a barbeque is held in the school grounds. Trophies are awarded to the winners of the race. The winners are from 6 different age categories that have been subdivided into girls and boys. A raffle is held with prizes, which need to have been prepared ahead of time. The raffle prizes are usually donated by other ACAT-IST families. The Middle School students sell the raffle tickets starting about three weeks before STRACAT takes place. After lunch, there are games and activities for the children to do. This usually lasts one and a half to two hours. It is the responsibility of the chairperson to make sure there are enough helpers for these activities. Because of it being held on public domain, STRACAT is the event that requires the most careful organization. About 40 helpers are needed.

Possible other committees are: an After-school Club, a Language Exchange Coffees Committee, a Wine and Cheese Committee.

* Since the new Privacy Laws came into effect in 1998, some events have become very difficult to organize. For this reason, some changes in organizational structure may have to be made, while some services have had to be eliminated altogether.

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS:**

1. To circulate a list requesting volunteers. Only the Chairperson and the President should circulate and maintain control of the list for privacy reasons.
2. To inform members of meetings. The Chairperson can inform members through the ACAT-IST Newsletter, individual notes sent home, telephone calls or during PTA meetings. However, it is the committee member's responsibility to read the Newsletter, to come to the PTA meetings and to be available for committee meetings. Since phone calls are costly and time-consuming, the Chairperson should not have to call each member constantly.

3. To keep the President informed of the status of the committee. If any difficulties or problems should arise, the President should be informed immediately. Problems could be due to a number of things including the availability of money, supplies or help.

4. To keep the PTA informed as the event draws near.

5. To maintain control of all monies involved in the event. Only the Chairperson can request advances and reimbursements from the PTA Treasurer. The Chairperson must report to the Treasurer all income and expenses for the event with receipts, and account for all money advanced. The Treasurer must refer all accounting to the President.

PTA OFFICERS: The President, or at least one of the officers, should be bi-lingual Italian/English and it would be desirable that all the other officers have a minimal knowledge of Italian/English. It is important also that the international community at ACAT-IST be represented on the Board so that new ideas and different outlooks can be expressed. A Board comprised of only one language group should be avoided.

PTA MEETINGS: These are bi-lingual and are held about every 6 weeks or as necessary. The PTA Board members, the Chairpersons and the Teacher Representative should attend every meeting. The Headmaster also attends and any concerns regarding the school can be freely discussed and questions asked. Forthcoming PTA events are arranged and discussed also, and extra help that may be required for these events is sought. The meetings are an important and appropriate forum for the discussion of all matters pertaining to the school and should be used as such by any members of the ACAT-IST community should they so wish. Since the meetings are so important, it is recommended that they be announced in the Weekly Newsletter with plenty of notice. It is also recommended to have them in the students' daily diaries that the school publishes.

FACULTY AND NON-TEACHING STAFF: All staff members are encouraged to attend and actively participate in as many events as possible. They are welcome to present projects at PTA meetings, to contribute to the Newsletter and take part in the social and fundraising activities.

REQUEST FROM THE SCHOOL FOR DONATIONS: A staff member should write up a request for purchase/rental/donation of an item. It should include the purpose, the cost and specification (model numbers if known). It should be given first to the Head of School, who checks if it is part of the normal school budget and then approves it to be forwarded on to the PTA Board. The PTA Board has the right to accept or deny the request, following the below procedure:

- Requests under €100 will be discussed and decided by the PTA Board. A notice about this request
- Requests between €100 and €500 will be discussed in the PTA Board and a temporary decision will be taken. A notice in the Newsletter will be placed to ask if there are any reactions or reasons to change the decision. If this is the case, the request will be discussed again in the next PTA meeting, in which people not agreeing with the request can participate. After this discussion a final decision will be taken.
- Request above €500 will be discussed in the PTA Board and be brought in to be voted on in the PTA meeting. The Staff member making the request will be given the opportunity to explain the request orally. Requests above €500 are announced in two subsequent newsletters; like with requests between €100 and €500 everyone in the community will have the opportunity to participate the discussion in the PTA meeting.

Requests should be given to the PTA Board with enough time for it to act on

NOTE: All Parents and Teachers are automatically members of the ACAT-IST PTA. Regular meetings are held, with the committees operating and meeting more often throughout the year as necessary. If you have any additional ideas that could help the PTA encourage more members to become active in the PTA and attend the meetings, please let us know. Is there anything else you would like to see the PTA accomplish or address?

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