



## **Parent Teacher Organization of American School of The Hague (ASH PTO)**

### **Code of Conduct**

Updated: 21 May 2019 - FINAL VERSION

The value of this Code of Conduct is that it presents the guidelines by which the PTO can manage well-run programs and address problems in an ethical manner. These values and principles will enable the PTO Board to ascertain the facts, identify the stakeholders and their concerns, and gather information to make better decisions based on specific criteria. Violation of our Volunteer Code of Conduct will result in Disciplinary Policy enactment.

Furthermore, acknowledging and adhering to the [Child Protection Policy](#) of the American School of The Hague and this PTO Volunteer Code of Conduct will enable volunteers, chairs, and board members to run an organization that will be perceived as one that can be trusted.

Ethical behavior is a basic and effective form of risk management. If a volunteer does not conduct themselves in an ethical manner, the PTO—as well as the school—is put at risk. The consequences may be severe and can include:

- Difficulty in recruiting and/or retaining volunteers
- Loss of endorsement by the school
- Termination of volunteer role
- Loss of reputation
- Legal action

**All volunteers shall understand, accept, and comply with the following principles:**

#### **Respect, Responsibility and Trustworthiness**

1. Volunteers shall show respect for the organization, the school, the community, and others that we work with and serve.
2. We shall avoid discriminatory or prejudicial behaviors and treat equitably all individuals with whom we volunteer.
3. Volunteers shall respect the privacy of individuals and safeguard information including written, electronic, audiovisual, and verbal formats.
4. We shall keep the best interest of the PTO and the school ahead of personal agendas and image. We shall use the PTO Bylaws as the guide for deciding what situations and projects are appropriate for the PTO.

5. We shall avoid conflict of interest as outlined in the PTO Bylaws. You must never use your position, influence, and knowledge of confidential school or board information for personal gain or advantage.
6. Volunteers will abstain from alcohol and drugs while volunteering for a PTO event.
7. Volunteers shall complete the child protection training module either online or in person and obtain a Verklaring Omtrent het Gedrag (**VOG**).

The Board of the PTO accepts the responsibility to ensure clear communication regarding commitments made on behalf of the organization or volunteers. In order to maximize success of everyone involved, the Board accepts responsibility to establish an on-boarding process that is understood and accepted by every volunteer.

Every volunteer understands personal and professional limits of his/her loyalty to other volunteers, clients, or organizations and prioritizes them clearly and appropriately to minimize liability and risk to everyone involved.

### **ASH PTO Disciplinary Policy**

In order to remain an active PTO member in good standing, volunteers must adhere to school policy, rules, and Child Protection Policy, as well as comply with PTO Bylaws, the PTO Handbook, and the Volunteer Code of Conduct.

If at any time a PTO volunteer violates or ignores the rules, policies, procedures, or bylaws, they will immediately be placed under disciplinary action. Such behaviors may include but are not limited to: harassment (child and adult), uncooperative or immoral actions (social-media irresponsibility while on duty, taking financial advantage of the volunteer position), or inappropriate/illegal behaviors (alcohol/drug use while on duty, inappropriate contact with a minor).

1. He/she will no longer be a member in good standing and shall not participate in any PTO functions or activities, effective immediately and upon further investigation.
2. If the violation is against PTO policy, bylaws, or procedures, the ban will be determined by the PTO Executive Board. If the violation is against school rules and policies, the ban will be determined by the Administration. If the violation is against the law, it will be handed over to the appropriate authorities.
3. The PTO Board (President listed at the end of the document) will determine if the behavior violates rules, procedures, policy, or bylaws.
4. Depending on the severity of the violation, the PTO Board representative and/or ASH Administration will determine the appropriate course of action.

5. A warning may or may not be granted, pending the violation. If the offense is deemed severe by either the Administration or PTO Board, no warning will be given and the volunteer will be immediately removed. The length of this removal will be determined by the Administration and the PTO Board.
  
6. The PTO Secretary will keep confidential records of violations, warnings, and bans with all matters directly related to the PTO.

## **ASH PTO Code of Conduct Violation Appeals Procedure and Policy**

When a violation of the ASH PTO Bylaws, Policy, Code of Conduct, and/or Procedure occurs and disciplinary action is given, the offending party may request an appeal under the following process:

1. Offending Party requests an appeal in writing to the ASH PTO within two weeks of the disciplinary action. Appeals submitted later than two weeks will be dismissed.
2. Executive Board Members will select a suitable date to meet with the offender.
3. The appeals committee will consist of the PTO Executive Board. If the violation was against school policy, then a school administrator and/or teacher representative will be included.
4. The offender, the Executive Board, and any PTO members wronged by the offender will present a brief fact-based case.
5. The Executive Board, or the extended appeals committee cited above per the type of violation, will hear the offender's information. Following the appeal, the Executive Board will vote. The vote will be final and not reexamined or appealed. The offender may only appeal once.
6. If at any time the offender violates bylaws, procedures, policy, code of conduct, or confidentiality, the appeals process is immediately terminated, resulting in an immediate ban for the remainder of the school year or longer. The ban time period will be determined by the Executive Board, with approval by the school administration, and is final.
7. Volunteers are permitted no more than one appeal a year.
8. If an appeal is granted, the offender will remain on probation for the remainder of the school year and not be held in good standing. If there is a violation of bylaws, procedures, code of conduct, policy, or lack of confidentiality involving the appeals process/decision, the offender will be banned immediately for a time period determined by the Executive Board, with approval by school administration. If this occurs, an additional appeal will not be granted and the decision is final.

\*\*\*\*\*

(1) Parent Teacher Organization of the American School of The Hague  
 Representative: President - [ptopres@ash.nl](mailto:ptopres@ash.nl) Suzanne Perl

