

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Beginner's Guide

Disclaimer: This Parliamentary Procedure overview is for general education purposes only. These materials are not associated with the TSA competitive event Chapter Team, nor are they intended as preparation materials for that event, or any other TSA competitive event.



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President

National TSA

Leadership



The duties of the president include:

- Preside over all TSA meetings
- Make necessary committee appointments, including each committee chairperson
- Develop a program of work with the Executive Committee (national TSA officer team) for its term of office
- Be available, as necessary, to promote the general welfare of TSA

The national TSA president also serves as the student member representative on the TSA, Inc. Board of Directors.

The symbol of the president is the gavel.

Vice President

National TSA Leadership



The duties of the vice president include:

- Serve in any capacity as directed by the president
- Accept the responsibility of president as needed
- Be available, as necessary, to promote the general welfare of TSA

The national TSA vice president also serves as the chairperson of the TSA Council of State Presidents.

The symbol of the vice president is the star.

Secretary

National TSA

Leadership



The duties of the secretary include:

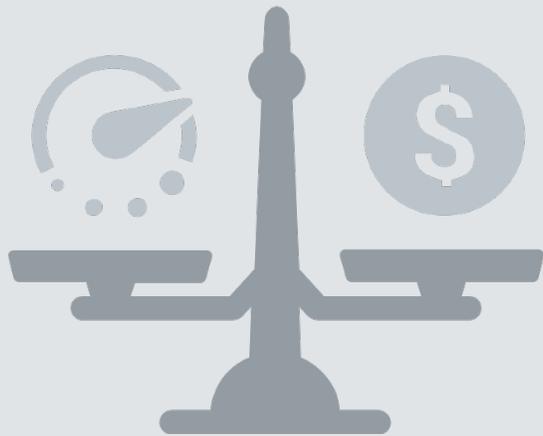
- Serve in any capacity as directed by the president
- Record proceedings at all meetings
- Be available, as necessary, to promote the general welfare of TSA

The national TSA secretary conducts the “Roll Call of the States” at the national TSA business meeting.

The symbol of the secretary is the pen.

Treasurer

National TSA Leadership



The duties of the treasurer include:

- Serve in any capacity as directed by the president
- Keep records and membership reports
- Be available, as necessary, to promote the general welfare of TSA

The symbol of the treasurer is the balanced budget.

Reporter

National TSA

Leadership



The duties of the reporter include:

- Serve in any capacity as directed by the president
- Accumulate and keep up-to-date information on the history of the association
- Prepare articles for TSA publications, professional magazines and journals, newspaper and other news media
- Contact other association members concerning news items for publication
- Be available, as necessary, to promote the general welfare of TSA

The symbol of the reporter is the beacon tower.

Sergeant-at-Arms

National TSA Leadership



The duties of the sergeant-at-arms include:

- Serve in any capacity as directed by the president
- Assist in the preparation and control of the meeting place
- In the event that a parliamentarian is not appointed by the president, assist in conducting all meetings according to parliamentary procedure as set forth by the current edition of *Robert's Rules Of Order Newly Revised*
- Be available, as necessary, to promote the general welfare of TSA

The symbol of the sergeant-at-arms is the hearty handshake.

Bylaws

The bylaws are the fundamental rules upon which an organization is based. They cannot be suspended and cannot be changed unless members propose an amendment well in advance and a two-thirds majority enacts it. The national TSA bylaws require any proposed amendments to be submitted, in writing, to the national TSA president 90 days prior to the annual business meeting, so that previous notice of 30 days may be given to chartered delegations, and then the proposed amendment must be passed by a two-thirds vote.

The bylaws have precedence over the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised. This means that no rule in Robert's Rules can be enforced if it conflicts with the bylaws.

***Voting in TSA:** National TSA permits each chapter in attendance at the annual business meeting two voting delegates. These two voting delegates are allowed to cast their ballots for officer candidates. They also are allowed to debate on any business that comes before the assembly and vote on the business at hand. It is the job of the voting delegates to listen to their chapter's opinions and vote accordingly.*

Holding a Meeting

In order for a meeting to meet the requirements of the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, **the following must occur**:

To begin, a quorum must be established. A quorum is the minimum number of members required to conduct business. If the bylaws do not specify a quorum, *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* sets a quorum as the majority of the members, which is simply more than half. The national TSA bylaws set the quorum for the annual business meeting as a majority of the voting delegates at a national TSA conference. A roll call is typical at a business meeting to establish a quorum.

In addition, in order to transact business, a presiding officer and someone to record the proceedings of the meeting must be present. By default, these roles are filled by the the president and secretary, respectively.

Typically, there is an agenda. The agenda usually includes the call to meeting, opening ceremonies, reading and approval of the minutes, reading and approval of the treasurer's report, and unfinished business. Then, the meeting can proceed to new business. Often, the agenda lists the items of new business that are expected to be considered.

Main Motion

A main motion is a proposal for specific action to be brought before the assembly. After obtaining recognition from the chair (the president), the maker of the motion should say, “I move to” or “I move that we” and state his/her proposal. A second is also required for business to be brought before the assembly. The second does not imply support for the motion, but means the seconder agrees that it should be considered. The chair then states the motion again before the assembly. When the chair states the motion, it is called stating the question, and it formally makes the motion the assembly’s property for consideration.

For example:

Secretary: Mr. President.

President: Madam Secretary.

Secretary: I move to purchase TSA patches from the online TSA store.

Reporter: Second.

President: The motion has been made and properly seconded to purchase TSA patches from the online TSA store. Is there any discussion?

The chairperson will then open the floor for debate.

Debate

Debate is the formal discussion of the motion. During this time, any secondary (subsidiary, privileged, or incidental) motions can be made. This also is the time for members to express their opinions. However, some of these secondary motions may not be debatable, so the floor will not be opened for discussion while they are being handled.

Debate for each member is limited to two turns at 10 minutes each. However, the motion to limit or extend limits of debate can change the amount of times and length of each time that a member can speak.

Debate Don'ts:

- Don't single out a member explicitly. Refer to another officer or member by title, not by name.
- Don't speak without being recognized by the chair.
- Don't argue with the presiding officer. There are proper ways to call attention to any errors, such as a point of order or an appeal.
- Don't bring up other topics that are not related to the pending motion. For example, if the motion is about purchasing TSA patches, it is not appropriate to ask about the details of your chapter's Relay for Life fundraiser.
- Don't be confrontational. Instead, respectfully disagree and state your side.

Voting Procedures

After the members are done debating the motion at hand, the chair then calls for a vote. This is called “putting the question before the assembly.” In most situations, a voice vote can be used; the chair will ask for all those in favor to say “aye,” and those opposed say “no” or “nay.”

Before or immediately after the chair officially declares the result, any member can call a division. A division is required on the demand of a single member, and it is used when the result of a voice or show of hands vote seems unclear. The division requires the assembly to proceed to an uncounted standing vote. If the chair is still in doubt as to the outcome, the chair can order the standing vote to be counted. The assembly, by a majority, also can require the standing vote counted, or can order a roll call or ballot vote.

Following the vote, the chair announces the result by saying either “the ayes have it and the motion passes” or “the nays have it and the motion fails,” and can tap the gavel to officially declare the outcome.

Common Subsidiary Motions

Subsidiary motions are secondary motions that help dispose of the main motions during a meeting. There are a few common subsidiary motions:

Amend: Amend is the most commonly used subsidiary motion. The motion to amend is used to change the wording of the main motion that is being considered. This requires a majority vote.

Previous Question: The previous question is used to immediately end debate and vote on one or more motions. To pass this motion, there must be a two-thirds vote since this limits the rights of the members to debate.

Limit or Extend Limits of Debate: Limiting or extending limits of debate is the motion used to lengthen or shorten the amount of time a person can speak, or limit or extend the total number of times a person can speak. To pass this, a two-thirds vote is required since it pertains to the rights of the members.

Common Privileged Motions

Privileged motions are secondary motions that are used to take care of the needs of the people in the organization. There are a few common privileged motions:

Recess: The motion to recess provides a short break in the proceedings. This allows the members (and the chair) to have a few minutes to re-energize and take care of personal business without disrupting the meeting. This requires a majority vote.

Raise a Question of Privilege: The motion to raise a question of privilege is when a member asks for specific rights or privileges of individuals or the entire assembly. Often the chair makes a ruling on the request, unless it is a substantial enough request that the chair offers it to the assembly as a motion, in which case a majority is required.

Adjourn: The motion to adjourn is a request to end the meeting. This requires a majority vote.

Common Incidental Motions

Incidental motions are motions that rise out of a current question at hand and must be taken care of before business can proceed. There are a few common incidental motions:

Point of Order: A point of order is called when there is a breach of the rules; it must be considered immediately. No vote is taken on this motion, the chair simply states the ruling of the point.

Appeal: An appeal is a way to express dissatisfaction with the chair's ruling. It brings the chair's ruling back into consideration, and chair's ruling is voted on by the membership. A majority is required to overturn the chair's decision.

Object to the Consideration of a Question: Objecting to the consideration of the question is used to ensure that the motion another member brings up is not brought to the floor for discussion. This requires a two-thirds vote, since it is limiting the rights of the members to speak on this topic.

Citations

Robert, H. M., Robert, S. C., Evans, W. J., Honemann, D. H., Balch, T. J. Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised. 11th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Da Capo, 2011. Print.

Jennings, C. Alan. Robert's Rules for Dummies. 2nd ed. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2012. Print.