

# **CONSTITUTION OF THE POTOMAC CHINESE SCHOOL**

Adopted by the General Assembly on 7 May 1978; amended by the General Assembly on 31 May 1981, on 2 May 1982, on May 1986, on 5 April 1987, on 23 April 1989, on 29 April 1990, on 3 May 1992, on April 27, 1997, on April 25, 2004, on April 10, 2011, and on April 25, 2021.

## **ARTICLE I Name, Objectives and Nature**

- I.A The name of the organization shall be the Potomac Chinese School (hereafter School); in Chinese, it shall be 博城中文学校
- I.B The objectives of the School are:
1. To teach students to comprehend and exercise basic Chinese conversation, reading, and writing.
  2. To promote students' understanding of the Chinese Culture.
  3. To promote student leadership and community services
- I.C The School shall be a non-profit, non-political, and non-religious organization.
1. The School does not contemplate pecuniary gain or profit.
  2. The School shall not participate in any political campaign, including the publication or distribution of statements.
  3. The School does not assume any religious or political affiliation.
- I.D The School is primarily for children between three (3) years and eighteen (18) years of age. No student applicant shall be denied admission because of race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin.
- I.E The School is an equal opportunity employer. No person shall be denied of a position in the faculty or administrative staff because of age, sex, color, race, religion, and ethnic or national origin.

## **ARTICLE II School Regulations**

- II.A The affairs of the School shall be managed by School Officers. The policies of the School shall be set by the Board of Directors.
- II.B The Directors and Officers shall not receive salaries or any other compensation for their services.
- II.C The Directors and Officers of the School shall not be personally liable for the debts, liabilities, or obligations of the School.
- II.D No part of the net earnings of the School shall inure to the benefit of or be distributed to its members, officers, or other private persons; except that the School shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for

services rendered.

- II.E The School shall not be liable for any accidents which may occur. Parents are required to sign a waiver so stating on the registration form for every year.
- II.F Tuition is reviewed annually, and adjusted by the Board of Directors, if needed, according to anticipated expenditures of the School for the upcoming school year.
- II.G Full tuition and registration payments are due by the end of the first week of the fall and spring semesters, respectively. A penalty fee of no more than one third (1/3) of the tuition per semester may be charged for late payment. The registration fee is not refundable once a child has been accepted. Enrollment shall be for the entire school year.
- II.H Advance payment of a registration fee and tuition paid by July fifteenth may get discount according to the school policy of the current year. II.I No reduction in tuition will be made for absence or withdrawal before the end of school year after the first four (4) sessions of school.

### **ARTICLE III The General Assembly**

- III.A One General Assembly (hereafter Assembly) shall convene per semester during the school year. The date, time, and place for this meeting shall be published in the school calendar or announced at least one month prior to the meeting.
- III.B The membership of the General Assembly is formed on the basis of student households registered at the beginning of each school year, as reflected in the published school directory or on records with the Registrar. All parents or legal guardians of registered students are members of the Assembly, and may be elected to the Board of Directors.
- III.C Members of the Board of Directors for the following school year shall be elected at the second General Assembly.
- III.D The Assembly has the right to establish the basic direction of the School, which will then be followed by the Board of Directors and school officers. The Assembly also has the authority to amend the Constitution and to dissolve the School in accordance with Articles IX and X, respectively.
- III.E Parents who are unable to attend the Assembly may pick up blank ballots from and deliver the carted ballots to the Secretary.
- III.F The Assembly has the right to impeach and remove members of the Board of Directors by a vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Assembly. And in accordance with Article IV, Section F, upon recommendation by the Board involving immediate action in the best interest of the School, the Assembly may impeach and remove the Board of Directors in its entirety by a vote of at least

two-thirds (2/3) of the Assembly. And, in the event that immediate replacements to any and all of the Board of Directors members can not be identified and elected, the School Development Committee may be elected to provide temporary and limited management and administration of the day-to-day activities similar to those expected of Board of Directors members until the annual General Assembly meeting whereby the Assembly reconvenes to elect a new Board of Directors in accordance with Article III, Section A.

III.G The Assembly may be called to convene by the Board of Directors or by a petition bearing the signatures of at least one fourth (1/4) of the Assembly members.

III.H A quorum at the General Assembly shall consist of one-fourth of the Assembly members.

#### **ARTICLE IV The Board of Directors**

##### IV.A Duties

The overall direction of the school affairs, policies and activities shall be established by the Board of Directors (hereafter Board), which will include the Principal during his/her term. The Principal shall preside over all Board meetings unless the Board chooses to elect a chairperson. The Directors shall act only as members of the Board. Individual Directors shall have no power independent of the Board.

##### IV.B Number, Election and Qualification

1. The Board shall have nine (9) members. All members shall be elected from the Assembly.

2. Each Director may serve a three year term, starting on the following day of the last day of the school year in that a Director is elected. Board member may be elected for one consecutive term, and serve not more than two consecutive terms.

3. The Directors shall be elected in the following manner.

3. a. The incumbent Board shall submit names of nominees of equal to or one more of the departure members to the General Assembly for election. The nominees who receive the most votes shall be elected to the Board. In some cases, additional nominees will be submitted for election to meet the total of nine board members.

3. b. In the event that two or more nominees receive the same number of votes, the nominee *who* has been a member of the Assembly the longest shall be elected. If they are of the same length as a member of the Assembly, a toss of coin shall be used to break the tie.

#### IV.C Meetings

1. Annual Board Meeting. The Annual Board Meeting shall be held within one week and no later than two weeks after the General Assembly. All incoming and outgoing Directors shall attend this meeting.
2. Regular Meetings. Meetings of the Board may be called, as needed, by the Principal or any four (4) members of the Board. All Directors shall be informed of the date, time, place, and agenda of each meeting no less than three (3) and no more than fifteen (15) days before the meeting. All meetings, except the special business meeting for the Board of Directors which is held once per semester, are opened to the teachers who can express their opinions upon request.
3. Quorum. At all Board meetings, the presence of five (5) Directors shall be necessary and sufficient to constitute a quorum. The decision of a majority of the Directors present shall be the decision of the Board.

#### IV.D Vacancy of Directors

In case of a vacancy on the Board, the Board may select as a successor the nominee who received the next highest vote to serve until the next General Assembly. If no nominees are available, the Board may appoint an interim Director until the next General Assembly.

#### IV.E Action without a Meeting

Should a Board member need to take action without prior authorization obtained at a meeting, he/she shall inform and obtain consent from at least four (4) other Board members, and report the action to the next meeting.

#### IV.F Two-thirds (2/3) of the Board may recommend emergency policies and procedures to the Assembly for amending the Constitution.

#### IV.G Removal of Directors

Any Director may be removed at any meeting of the Board by a vote of at least seven (7) members of the Board wherever the best interest of the School will be served thereby.

### **ARTICLE V The Executive Office**

#### V.A The Executive Office (hereafter Office) shall carry out the policies of the School.

#### V.B The Officers of the School shall be a Principal, a Vice Principal, a Treasurer, a Secretary, a Public Relations Officer, a Recreation Officer, a School Business Officer, an Admissions Officer and Registrar, a Culture Promotion Officer, and a Teaching Director. Except for the Teaching Director, Officers shall be elected among members of the Board of Directors by mutual agreement.

## V.C Committees

1. A School Development Committee shall be established to serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of Directors concerning matters related to School's mid and/or long range planning and development, including recommendations on revisions to the Constitution, and identification of areas requiring coordination among officers, parents, and general public.

The School Development Committee shall be composed of seven (7) members, including the current and immediate past Principal, and five (5) other members elected by the Board of Directors from past Board members, Teaching Directors, and concerned parents. The current Principal shall serve as Chairperson.

2. Special task committees may be appointed by the Officers as necessary.

## V.D Duties of Officers

The Officers shall have such authority and perform such duties in the management of the School's affairs and activities as usually pertain to the offices they hold, as may be assigned to them by the Board, or as may be otherwise provided by the Constitution including but not limited to the following:

### 1. *Principal*

- 1.a The Principal shall be the chief executive officer and active head of the School, and between meetings of the Board, shall have general control and management of all of its activities and affairs.
- 1.b The Principal shall plan and preside over the General Assembly.
- 1.c The Principal shall make an annual report to the Board and Assembly showing the current condition of the School and making such recommendations as he/she considers proper. In addition, he/she shall, whenever necessary or appropriate, bring before the Board any matters pertaining to the affairs and property of the School.
- 1.d The Principal, jointly with Teaching Director, shall prepare written evaluation of teachers by the end of each school year and present these evaluations to the Board, he/she and the Teaching Director shall discuss such evaluation with the respective teacher.
- 1.e The Principal shall be in charge of external activities, including fund raising.

### 2. *Vice Principal*

- 2.a The Vice Principal shall be responsible for renting and using classrooms and facilities for all school activities. He/she shall prepare the school calendar at the beginning of each academic year.
- 2.b The Vice Principal shall be responsible for overseeing the order and safety of all school activities.

- 2.c. In the event of the absence or inability of the Principal, the Vice Principal shall perform the duties of the Principal.

### **3. Treasurer**

- 3.a The Treasurer shall keep a record of and have custody of all of the funds of the School.
  - 3.b The Treasurer shall collect tuitions and fees for books, and contributions, where appropriate.
  - 3.c The Treasurer shall prepare payments in check and/or cash for expenditures supplies, and school activities where appropriate. All checks should require signature(s) from Principal, or/and Treasurer.
3. d The Treasurer shall maintain a record of tuitions, fees, contributions, and expenditures with all vouchers and receipts and shall prepare written financial statements to be presented to the Board at its regular meetings and at the General Assembly.
- 1.e The Treasure shall coordinate and prepare the school budget of the year.
  - 1.f The Treasurer shall file Federal and State tax forms as necessary for the year he/she is responsible.

### **4. Secretary**

- 4.a The Secretary shall have charge of the School Seal.
- 4.b The Secretary shall keep a record of all proceedings of the Board and of all Board meetings and Assemblies.
- 4.c The Secretary shall prepare and file announcements, correspondence, the school directory, and forms used by the School.
- 4.d The Secretary shall serve as the liaison between the Board of Directors and the Teachers Committee.
- 4.e The Secretary shall be responsible for renewing the school licenses, operation documents, and memberships of the societies.

### **5. Recreation and Culture Promotion Officer**

- 5.a The Recreation Officer shall coordinate all student culture promotional classes, and after school outside activities related to Chinese culture or Chinese community.
- 5. b The Recreation Officer shall coordinate all adult culture promotion activities and workshops, and after school outside activities related to Chinese culture and Chinese community.
- 5.c The Recreation and Culture Promotion Officer shall coordinate social functions including sports and performing arts of the school.
- 5.d The Recreation Officer shall collect fees for all culture classes and keep the records of the culture classes.

## **6. *School Business Officer***

- 6.a The School Business Officer shall purchase textbooks, equipment and other articles for the School. All purchases exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100) shall be authorized by the Board.
- 6.b The School Business Officer shall be in charge of school equipments, textbooks, and other school properties.
- 6.c The School Business Officer shall be responsible for reproducing teaching materials.
- 6.d The School Business Officer shall act as the school cashier.
- 6.e The School Business Officer shall be responsible for the school fundraising.

## **7. *Education Promotion Officer***

- 1.a The Education Promote Officer shall organize and manage the Parent Participation Program (parent-on-duty program) for maintaining a healthy school environment during school time.
- 2.b Education Promote Officer shall administrate the Student Service Learning program, and manage the TA program in support of Teaching Director.
- 3.c The Education Promote Officer shall guide and assist Student Government Association (SGA) for annual election and other activities.
- 4.d The Education Promote Officer shall coordinate with PTA for all parents involved activities.

## **8. *Public Relations Officer***

- 8.a Public Relations Officer shall promote school in pubic through news reports and advertisements on various local news media.
- 8.b Public Relations Officer shall promote school by coordinate with other organizations in the community events.
- 8.c Public Relations Officer shall organize socially value-added seminars during school for parents and students.

## **9. *Admissions Officer and Registrar***

- 9.a Admission Officer and Registrar shall prepare a standard school registration procedure, and create and maintain a school form electronically.
- 9.b Admission Officer and Registrar keep and maintain registration information and academic records of all students for the current school year and hand over the records to Secretary at the end of each school year.

- 9.c Admissions Officer and Registrar collaborating with Teaching Director shall evaluate each new student; assign him/her to an appropriate class according to his/her age and comprehension of Chinese.
- 9.d Admissions Officer and Registrar shall prepare the school directory before the first General Assembly of a school year.

**ARTICLE VI Teaching Director, Teachers and Teachers Committee**

VI.A Teaching Director

- 1 The Teaching Director shall be a person or persons qualified to be a teacher(s) of the School with preference given to a person with education administration background and teaching experience.
- 2 The candidate for Teaching Director(s) shall be recommended by the Board of Directors and approved by the General Assembly.
- 3 The term of the Teaching Director shall be two (2) years. The incumbent may be recommended by the Board of Directors and re-appointed at the end of each two year term.
- 4 Except for the initial appointment, at each appointment period the Board of Directors shall give one month's notice of application in January and shall recommend a candidate in April, to be voted on by the second General Assembly.
- 5 The Teaching Director(s) shall be responsible for recommending appointment of teachers, assigning classroom teachers, evaluating teacher performance, approving student report cards prepared by teachers, ensuring quality and consistency in teaching, and enforcing adopted teaching policies. He/she also serves as chairperson of the Teachers Committee which is also responsible for formulating the curriculum, reviewing teaching material, coordinating class teaching objectives and plans, recommending textbooks, as specified in VI.C.3.
- 6 The Teaching Director(s) shall be responsible to the Board of Directors as an ex-official, non voting member and as a liaison between the teachers/Teachers Committee and the Board of Directors. He/She shall be present at the meetings of the Board of Directors except the special business meeting as specified in I V. C. 2.
- 7 The Teaching Director(s) may serve concurrently as a teacher and if so, shall receive, or share, an additional like amount of the teacher's compensation.
- 8 The Teaching Director can be recalled with two thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors.
- 9 Vacancy of Teaching Director. In the event that the Teaching Director can not finish the full term, the Board of Directors shall immediately select an acting Teaching Director who is the senior member of the current Teachers Coordinators, until next General Assembly.

VI . B Teachers

- 1. Prospective teachers shall be interviewed by the Principal and the Teaching Director. Qualified individuals are appointed by the Board.



2. The appointment of each teacher shall be for one year, and may be renewed annually.
3. Each teacher shall be evaluated by the Principal and the Teaching Director at the end of each school year. The written evaluation shall be reported to the Board, which shall then determine whether or not the appointment shall be renewed. The renewal of teacher's appointment is recommended by the Teaching Director and is approved by the Principal of the new school year.
4. Each teacher shall follow the School teaching policies and serve his/her complete term. If he/she cannot complete his/her term, a written resignation to the Teaching Director is required.
5. Each teacher shall work together with the Teaching Director in preparing teaching objectives and plans for each semester before school begins.
6. Each teacher shall prepare report cards for students in his/her class at the end of each semester. The report card states each student's academic standing in the class and progress during the past semester.
7. Teachers may not serve as members of the Board of Directors simultaneously.
8. During the policy making process, all the teachers have the right to express their opinions through the regular teachers' meeting or through the Teachers Coordinators in the Teachers Committee.
9. All the teachers are eligible to serve as Coordinators in the Teachers Committee.
10. The teachers' meetings, except the special business meeting which is held once per semester, are opened to all the Board of Directors who can express their opinions upon request.

#### **VI.C Teachers Committee**

1. The Teachers Committee includes the Teaching Director as the chairperson of the Committee and four (4) Teachers Coordinators.
2. The Teachers Coordinators are selected by the teachers. There is one Coordinator from each grade (lower, middle, and higher grades), while the fourth Coordinator is selected from the grade level with the most classes. The term of the Coordinators is two (2) years which can be extended. In case of vacancy among the Teachers Coordinators, the replacement shall be selected from the current teacher of the same grade level to finish the term. The primary responsibility of the Coordinator is to represent and to express the interests and concerns of all the teachers of his/her grade levels.
3. The responsibilities of the Teachers Committee include the following but are not limited to:
  - 3.a Reviewing teaching materials, coordinating class teaching objectives and plans, recommending textbooks (language and culture).
  - 3.b Holding meetings at regular interval (once a month or whenever the need arises. The attendees shall include the Teaching Director, at least three

Coordinators (one from each grade level), and the liaison from the Board of Directors (the Secretary). The meetings, except the special business meeting which is held once per semester, are opened to all teachers and Board of Directors who can express their opinions upon request.

- 3.c Voting: Each member of the Teachers Committee has one vote, except the board of Director who has no voting right but serves as a liaison between the Board of Directors and the Teachers Committee. The Coordinators shall vote according to the majority opinions of the teachers whom he/she represents. All matters are decided by a simple majority vote. A two third (2/3) majority vote is required for making recommendation of the use of new textbooks and the change of phonic systems in different grade levels.
- 3.d Formulating the short term and long term teaching policy and teaching curriculum, including Chinese language and Chinese culture, in accordance with the needs of the School and present it to the Board of Directors for approval by a majority vote.
- 3.e Working out specific details to carry out the proposed projects, which are specified in VI.C.3.d for approval by the Board of Directors by a majority vote.
- 3.f Having the obligation to execute the approved proposals on trial basis for no less than one (1) and no more than three (3) semesters. Once the trial period is completed and both the Teachers Committee and the Board of Directors satisfied, then the proposal shall be finally adopted. For items that are specified in X. D, the proposal should be sent to the next General Assembly for final approval.
- 3.g The procedure specified in VI.C.3.d to VI.C.3.f does not apply to the use of extra teaching materials by the individual teacher in his/her class, providing that the teaching materials are in line with the general policy of the School.
- 3.h When the Teachers Committee submit a new proposal to the Board of Directors and disagreements arise, and if the Board repeatedly fails to obtain two thirds (2/3) majority to override the proposals from the Teachers Committee and reaches a deadlock, the Board of Directors shall have the option to present the case to the General Assembly. The teachers also have the option to request the Board of Directors or ten (10) voting members of the School to submit their proposal to the General Assembly. In the General Assembly, all the parents, teachers, and Board of Directors are given the full opportunity to express their opinions. Any resolution adopted by the majority of the General Assembly can revoke existing policy or implement new policy, which has to be observed by the teachers and the Board of Directors. If the Teachers Committee fails to comply with the resolution adopted by the General Assembly, the Board of Directors shall have the responsibility to dissolve the current Teachers Committee and form a new committee and/or recall the Teaching Director according to the procedure which is specified in VI.A.8.
- 3.i When there is disagreement on the question whether the approved proposal is properly executed, and the difference can not be resolved

between the Teachers Committee and the Board of Directors, the Board of Directors shall have the option to present the case to the General Assembly for deciding the proper action. All the parents, teachers, and Board of Directors are given the full opportunity to discuss the case in the General Assembly.

4. A joint meeting with the Board of Directors shall be held at least once per semester.

#### **ARTICLE VII Parents**

- VII.A. All parents are members of the General Assembly as described in III. B.
- VII.B. The Parent on Duty program shall be implemented to promote understanding of the School activities and the conduct of their children, and to provide personal support to the School operation. Contents of this program shall be established by the Board, and details of its implementation shall be administered by the Vice Principal.
- VII. C. All parents are required to participate in various Parent Groups coordinated by the Vice Principal.
- VII.C. No parent shall receive monetary compensations for his/her service to the School other than teaching, and special tasks approved by the Board.

#### **ARTICLE VIII Students**

##### VIII.A Admission

Applications for admission shall be sent to the Admissions Officer. A committee consisting of the Principal, the Admissions Officer, and the Teaching Director shall review the applications, interview the applicants, and shall make decisions regarding the acceptance of applications. The Admissions Officer shall be responsible for informing each applicant of the Committee's decision. Whenever there is a waiting list, admission shall be processed according to the order of the date when request for admission was made.

##### VIII.B Discipline

Students shall serve orders and rules set by the School and the teachers. Appropriate disciplinary actions may be taken by teachers or the Board to maintain order or prevent property damage. The parent(s) of a student causing damage shall be responsible for reimbursing the School for any and all expenses arising there from. If a student persistently engages in misconduct, the Principal shall inform the parent(s) and report the problem to the Board of Directors. A student may be dismissed from the School upon a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors.

- VIII.C A student body may be established to participate in sports and cultural promotion activities.

## **ARTICLE IX Dissolution of School**

- IX.A The School may be dissolved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the General Assembly.
- IX.B When the dissolution of the School is necessary, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all of the liabilities of the School, turn over all of the remaining assets of the School to a tax exempt organization or organizations qualified under Section 501 (c)(3.) of the Internal Revenue Code.

## **ARTICLE X Amendments**

- X.A This Constitution may be amended, altered, or replaced by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Assembly at any meeting called as provided for herein.
- X.B The Board or any ten (10) voting members may submit an amendment or amendments to this Constitution. Notice of a proposed amendment needs to be submitted in writing and signed by any ten (10) voting members to the Board not less than five (5) days prior to the date of the General Assembly.
- X.C Any amendment ratified by two thirds (2/3) of the attending members of the Assembly shall be valid for all intents and purposes as part of this Constitution.
- X.D Any proposal for making changes regarding the formal adoption of school curriculum is subjected to the approval by two third (2/3) majority of the attending members of the General Assembly. The procedures for making these changes are specified in VI.C.3.

## **APPENDIX School Curriculum**

The School adopts the policy of teaching both the Chinese language and Chinese culture as formal curriculum for students at high school levels (7 to 12th grades). For elementary school level students (K and 1 to 6th grades) the School policy will be to emphasize the teaching of Chinese language as the primary objective and the teaching of Chinese culture will be supplemented as needed. The use of phonic system has been adopted as follow: Teaching and/or practicing the use of Pin Yin from first to twelfth grades.