PSCSTA Board Operations Manual

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I. Overview

The Puget Sound Computer Science Teachers Association (PSCSTA) is a local chapter of the national organization, Computer Science Teachers Association (CSTA). CSTA is a membership organization that supports and promotes the teaching of Computer Science (CS) and other computing disciplines. CSTA provides opportunities for K-12 teachers and students to better understand the computing disciplines and to more successfully prepare themselves to teach and learn.

Mission:
Provide community, professional development, support, and advocacy for computer science teachers throughout Washington and help them provide equitable, high-quality CS education to all K-12 Washington state students.

Core Operating Principles:
These ten core values guide our actions to ensure effectiveness, sustainability, and transparency.

1. We are committed to education: We are dedicated to improving computer science education, supporting teachers, and making computer science education accessible to all students.
2. We are ethical: We pledge to uphold high ethical standards in all interactions, both internally and externally. We manage and disclose potential conflicts of interest among board members and staff to our general membership, donors, and the public.
3. We are transparent and accountable.
   Openness: We operate with transparency by sharing our financial information, decision-making processes, and progress toward goals with our membership, donors, and the public.
   Accountability: We hold our leadership accountable for financial management, adherence to legal requirements, and ethical behavior.
4. We are prudent financial stewards. We manage our finances, time, and materials prudently to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organization.
5. We are an inclusive and diverse community: We embrace diversity and inclusivity in volunteer recruitment, leadership, and the populations we serve.
   Equity: We promote inclusivity and diversity throughout all aspects of our organization, ensuring that all voices are heard and represented.
   Cultural Competence: We strive at all times to be culturally competent and sensitive to the needs of diverse communities and teachers.
6. We are volunteer-centered: We recognize that volunteers are the lifeblood of PSCSTA. We place a strong emphasis on engaging, training, and supporting volunteers to maximize their impact. All board positions are filled on a volunteer basis, and we recognize and give grace to all members who dedicate time and energy to PSCSTA among other commitments.
7. We are collaborative: We seek opportunities for collaboration and partnerships with other nonprofits, community organizations, and stakeholders who share similar goals. We engage with the broader educational community as well as our membership to understand specific needs and tailor our programs accordingly.

8. We are Teacher-focused. PSCSTA believes that the largest long-term impact to CS Education is through Teachers. We provide opportunities for teacher professional development, mentorship, and support to enhance their skills and effectiveness in the classroom. We offer access to resources, tools, and materials that benefit educators and improve teaching practices. We support students by supporting the teachers, rather than focusing on student-facing activities such as programming contests or hackathons.
9. We are advocates. We support and advocate for policies that promote quality education and support computer science teachers regionally, state-wise, and nationally.
10. We are adaptive. We regularly assess CSTA's programs and initiatives to measure their impact and effectiveness in our region. We are willing to adapt strategies and programs based on evaluation results and changing educational needs.

These core operating principles form the foundation of PSCSTA, enabling us to make a positive, sustainable, and effective impact on the computer science teaching and educational community. These principles are derived from the National CSTA values of teacher-driven, commitment to equity, growth-led, and member-focused.

Connection with National CSTA:
As a local chapter of the national CSTA organization, we embrace and follow CSTA chapter guidelines, calendar, programming, and contribute to national committees. We participate by encouraging PSCSTA members to attend the annual conference and other national events when possible. We are compliant with National CSTA evaluation instruments such as completing the annual chapter scorecard/rubric and similar activities. We represent the needs, interests and perspectives of CS Teachers of our region during convenings of regional CSTA chapter leadership across the country.

By-Laws:

The original PSCSTA Chapter ByLaws are located at:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1fzWzELlgGYZTQ4YzI2MTUtZDk0Ni00MDJhLWE3OTMtZDlkODBiYjg4Mjc4/view?usp=sharing&resourcekey=0-OC98L14NxORypslHlcH-mg

In 2019 the by-laws were amended to clarify our separate tax status from the national CSTA chapter, and to clarify the process for dissolving the chapter. The amended by-laws are located at:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BwgOduTNYzyNTWM4UlRsakt6eThPYXc3cDNCZXUxS3J5MktN/view?usp=sharing&resourcekey=0-BfzQoFqWlBouY5KN1wU7rA

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II. Elected Board Positions

Our charter requires that the board be composed of the following elected positions: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and an unspecified number of Members at Large positions. The elected board position terms are for 2 consecutive years with elections held for half of the board members in alternate years.

Role Name: President
Term: 2 years
Time Commitment: 8-10 hours per month on average
Responsibilities:

- **Planning** - establish vision and strategic focus areas, help to set the annual list of activities
- **Representation & Communication** - ensure regular communication between organizations like CSTA National, ECEP (Expanding computer education pathways), UW, community colleges, CSForAll WA, and other local partners. Attend events and meetings as PSCSTA leader.
- **Accountability** - regularly check in with other board members to ensure smooth operations and workload balancing across the board, and ensure we're in compliance with the national organization, including filling out chapter documentation twice a year
- **Transparency** - open invitation for all PSCSTA members to attend leadership meeting 3-4 times per year, and ensure member and officer pages on website are up-to-date
- **Collaboration** - assist Vice-President in organizing officer elections, work with treasurer to approve spending

Role Name: Vice-President
Term: 2 years (elected in alternate years from President)
Time Commitment: 4-5 hours per month on average
Responsibilities:

- **President alternate** - serves as interim president if president steps down between elections, runs meetings if president is not available, represents PSCSTA at events if president is not available
- **Board elections** - organizes new board member elections process every year
- **Membership** - responsible for maintaining PSCSTA membership lists, reporting on membership statistics and trends, encouraging existing members to renew, ensuring new members have a welcoming first experience, and collaborating with Membership Coordinator if one exists
- **Leadership operations** - responsible for coordinating the monthly leadership meetings by working with the secretary and president to set the agenda and to schedule and send out reminders, bringing treats to in person meetings 🙂

Role Name: Treasurer
Term: 2 years
Time Commitment: 4-5 hours per month on average
Responsibilities:

- **Compliance** - with CSTA policies and guidelines including Chapter Finance Toolkit
- **Taxes** - responsible for filing taxes each year by November 15th. Note that this usually consists of submitting a “postcard” 990-N form unless donations/revenues are in excess of $50,000

- **Budget** - responsible for creating a budget each year, regularly reporting on budget status to leadership team, and ensuring budget is balanced throughout the year
- **Financial Operations** - download all transactions from Paypal and BECU into Quicken or other financial reporting tool once a month, responsible for approval, payment, reimbursement of all valid chapter expenses, work with president to regularly collect physical mail, establish methods for members and volunteers to register/receive payment for PSCSTA events (i.e. clock hours)
- **Financial Security & Access** - ensuring limited access and proper approvals are obtained for accessing chapter funds. Note: currently the President, VP, and Treasurer have BECU debit cards and Treasurer maintains checkbook.
- **Transparency** - as well as regular budget reporting, Treasurer is responsible for documenting and storing all transaction information including receipts and invoices in PSCSTA\Finance folder: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1P3VcIHkvmjvFMmskUTudnniUcapYf_nK. Note that prior to 2021, info stored in CSTA Chapter https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B1fzWzELlgGYMUVKZEpIZE5zbVE?resourcekey=0-diU_KAkKp5weYAHOzob4Aw (Financials) and https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B1fzWzELlgGYWnV5a1BfMWtDM3M?resourcekey=0-kX9WzF4Q1HYelRSSMRMOfQ (Invoices).
- **Donations** - establish methods to easily allow people to donate to PSCSTA, help establish a donation/funding strategy
- **Contracts** - manage contractor work agreements (Student Media Manager, other), W-9 and 1099 forms.

Role Name: Secretary
Term: 2 years
Time Commitment: 3-4 hours per month on average
Responsibilities:

- **Meeting management** - management of monthly board meetings including scheduling, sending out a call for topics, setting agenda, meeting time management, documenting meeting minutes
- **Document management** - maintain and organize PSCSTA document storage and file system (currently housed in Google Drive), ensure correct folder permissioning, ease of navigation, and a document backup plan
- **Communications & Social Media** - work with the Student Media Manager (if one exists) to regularly post news and announcements to current PSCSTA channels, newsletter, email lists and website.

Role Name: Member At Large
Term: 2 years
Time Commitment: Varies
Quantity: maximum of 3 positions per term
Responsibilities:

- **Participation** - Members at Large are the most flexible board positions and responsibilities may vary greatly depending on the member. However, Members at Large are required to attend all board meetings and be an active participant in discussions and decisions that affect PSCSTA.

- **Audience Representation** - represent a segment of CS Teacher or CS Ecosystem audience on the Board (i.e. K-5, High School, New Teachers, Tech Industry, Non-profit organization, etc.)
- **Coordinator Roles** - Members at Large can assume responsibility for one or more coordinator positions described below, or manage coordinators

III. Coordinator Positions

In addition to elected board positions, there are several crucial roles that should be filled, not necessarily by a board member. However, each of these Coordinator positions should report to a specific board member.

Role Name: Education Coordinator
Time Commitment: 3-4 hours per month on average
Term: 1 year with opportunity to renew
Responsibilities:

- **Professional Learning Calendar** - establish the calendar of professional learning opportunities for PSCSTA members each year
- **Clock Hours** - apply to be clock hour provider by Aug 1 of each year: Become an Approved Provider | OSPI (www.k12.wa.us). For each clock hour opportunity, do the following:
    - Drive creation of clock hour application form. PSCSTA has set a minimum of 3 hours per application. Legal limit is one hour.
    - Provide teachers with instructions on how to register their clock hours
    - Ensure fulfillment of clock hours - gather documentation of attendance or PD survey completion
    - Use Adobe Acrobat to get signature on clock hour form
    - Store all documentation in PSCSTA\ClockHourTraining folder https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1STPf_lXM8vadBBvN6YPKDqCeu83lY63v
    - Update board members on number of clock hours provided for the year
- **Promotion of Professional Learning** - responsible for working with Board to communicate and promote all PD events and opportunities to PSCSTA members and beyond
- **WTCS Foundations of CS for Teachers** - this course will eventually be handed off to Shoreline Community College to run. However, in 2023-24 the Education Coordinator is still responsible for clock hour work and approval of scholarships. PSCSTA will provide several modest scholarships to current high school public school teachers or junior/seniors in education in Washington colleges (two separate applications).

Role Name: Membership Coordinator
Reports to: Vice-President
Time Commitment: 3-4 hours per month on average
Term: 1 year with opportunity to renew
Responsibilities:

- **Reporting** - responsible for monthly membership report and communicated to board
- **Promotion** - ongoing promotion of CSTA/PSCSTA membership benefits through various channels, events and partner organizations (i.e. TEALS, WinForCS, ACTE, CS Fairs, etc)

- **New Member Onboarding** - responsible for ensuring new members feel welcome, valued and understand how to participate. This may include things like:
    - virtual orientation meeting
    - personal email greeting to new members (can ask why they joined CSTA, why interested, how can they best use their PSCTA membership)
    - documentation for new members (FAQ)
- **Expired Member Retention** - outreach to expired members to understand why they let their membership lapse, and what we can do to get them to renew
- **Featured Members** - collect stories and conduct interviews for featured member articles in newsletter
- **Community Building** - suggest and plan member networking opportunities, location or interest-based sub-group sharing calls/meet-up's, and buddy/mentor connections

Role Name: Advocacy Lead
Reports to: President
Time Commitment: 3-4 hours per month on average
Term: 1 year with opportunity to renew
Responsibilities:

- **Public Sector Liaison** - ongoing monitoring of state and local governmental bills and policies affecting CS Education
- **Advocacy** - drive discussion/endorsement of CS Ed policies, help teachers advocate for computer science with their school administration, parents and communities, advocate for computer science teacher training and resources
- **Communications -** ensure all board members and PSCSTA members are aware of current policies, research, and reporting on the state of CS Education in Washington and local districts. Promote any new job or volunteer opportunities that become available.
- **National CSTA Policy committee** - participate to represent Puget Sound and Washington State CS education data and policies
- **Collaboration** - with other Washington State CS Ed advocacy organizations, other CSTA chapters (i.e. Code.org, OSPI), and local University CS Departments and Outreach programs

Role Name: Election Coordinator
Time Commitment: 3-4 hours per month on average
Term: 1 year with opportunity to renew
Responsibilities:

- **Annual Election Planning & Coordination** - this may include the following activities:
    - Send out email notices to membership soliciting nominations (see folder with draft emails and other materials https://www.google.com/url?q=https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B9p__2Sb-Kn-VHJCenljU2plcDQ?resourcekey%3D0-aEEcC8qGdzkZg4OxcFxy6g%26usp%3Ddrive_link&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1700417541235077&usg=AOvVaw0tBUi1jCi4y0P58rPuHG1u)
    - Gather the nominee statements

    - Conduct the actual election, be it in person (as in the past) or online voting (post-pandemic)
    - Count the votes and announces the winners to the board
    - Act as point person for any voting issues
- Transparency
    - The Election Coordinator should not be running for a position on the board
    - The board itself can announce elections ask for call for nominations, and announce election results, but the coordinator should oversee the actual election process itself, and maintain distance from anyone running

Role Name: Events Coordinator
Time Commitment: 3-4 hours per month on average (varies according to event)
Term: 1 year with opportunity to renew
Responsibilities:

- **Event Planning** - establish timeline, task list, volunteers, speakers, content
- **Logistics** -
    - Coordinating facilities, catering, parking
    - Ensuring accessibility
    - Virtual option if required
    - Creating registration form
- **Budget** - working with Treasurer and possibly other Board members on ensuring budget and collecting payment for paid events
- **Promotion and Communication** - sending invites, working with Education Coordinator to ensure event awareness, clear communication on event time/agenda/directions
- **Event Summary** - send out an event summary with highlights/lowlights, feedback and photos

Role Name: Student Media Manager
Time Commitment: 10 hours per month on average
Term: 1 year. In 2024-24 fiscal year this was a paid internship position
Responsibilities:

- **Content Calendar** - management of the regular updates, news, and announcements across PSCSTA communications channels (newsletter, Twitter, MemberNova), and assistance planning for future topics
- **Channel Moderation** - regularly checking and responding to queries and comments across PSCSTA social channels

IV. Elections Process

Our charter requires that we hold regular elections for the positions of President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and an unspecified number of Members at Large positions.

The elected board position terms are for 2 consecutive years with elections held for half of the board members in alternate years. Election terms follow the CSTA fiscal year, from July 1st through June 30th. A yearly election should take place at the beginning of June when half of the board positions will be up for re-election. In June 2023 elections were held for the positions of President and Secretary and 3 Member-At-Large positions.

The process for running elections is determined by the Election Committee, which is chaired by the Election Coordinator. If not up for election, the Election Coordinator is usually the Vice President. If the Vice President is up for election, another non-running board member may be designated to run the election. See Election Coordinator role above.

Elections may be held electronically, by mail, or in any form as determined by the election committee.

In 2023, elections were held electronically. The process was as follows:

- An email announcement (using MemberNova) was sent to the general membership announcing the upcoming election, the open positions, and calling for nominations.
- Each nominated candidate was contacted to verify that they were interested in running for the stated position, and were asked to provide a short, one paragraph candidate statement to send to the general membership.
- A Google Form was created to send to the voting membership, listing the candidates. Email addresses and names of the voters were collected in the ballot form to validate that each vote was from an active member, and that members only submitted one vote. Only the Election Coordinator has access to the google form.
- A link to the voting form was sent out to general membership, along with the candidate statements and a deadline for when the election closes.
- Once the election closes, all votes were verified by the Election Coordinator, to ensure that only active members were voting and that they only voted once.
- Once the vote was validated, all identifying information was removed from the google form by the Election Coordinator.
- The voting results were shared with the board and the general membership.
- Sample documents from the 2023 election. These are also in the shared PSCSTA document drive
    - Sample Google voting form
    - Sample Elections emails.

V. Communications & Collaboration

The board strives to communicate and collaborate with membership in multiple ways, and to meet on a regular basis to conduct PSCSTA business.

- **Monthly meetings** - Board Members meet on a monthly basis. Currently meetings are scheduled for the first Wednesday of every month at 6:30pm for an hour duration. Meetings once a quarter are open to any PSCSTA Members to attend. Secretary will solicit topics and document notes from each meeting.
- **Online Documents** - all documentation for the PSCSTA is stored in a Google shared drive. Only active Board Members have edit permissions to documents. The shared folder organization and access permissions are maintained by the Secretary.
- **Membership communications**
    - PSCSTA members should receive a welcome email when they sign up
    - We also send a monthly newsletter with the latest events, professional learning opportunities and news about fellow members
    - As a CSTA chapter, we also maintain our own PSCSTA website through MemberNova
    - Our Social Media Manager also coordinates updates via social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram

VI. Professional Learning & Events

One of our core operating principles is that we are a teacher-focused organization. We provide opportunities for teacher professional development, mentorship, and support to enhance their skills and effectiveness in the classroom. We offer access to resources, tools, and materials that benefit educators and improve teaching practices. We do not focus on student-facing activities such as programming contests or hackathons.

Below is a list of some of the professional learning opportunities and events that our chapter has hosted. We are always open to exploring new and effective ways to support our membership.

- **Educator Professional Learning** - PSCSTA strives to provide professional learning opportunities to its members at least once a quarter. These may either be CSTA online learning courses or in-person local workshops. Topics range from Equity & Inclusion, Physical Computing, AI/ML, Data Science, or other member-requested learning.
- **Lightning Talks** - Over the last few years, PSCSTA has hosted “lightning talk” events to help with knowledge sharing and community building among members. These talks have been organized in collaboration with University of Washington’s STEP CS program
- **Regional Meet-up’s** - PSCSTA will support local meet-up’s for educators to get together in their locations. Interested parties can contact PSCSTA for details and potential funding if they are interested in hosting an event.

- **Clock hours** - PSCSTA dedicates a portion of its budget to grant PD clock hours to educators taking advantage of training opportunities.

VII. Calendar, Rhythm of Business

The following is a compendium of major dates for PSCSTA board functions.

- **Fiscal Year** - PSCSTA fiscal year is from July 1st through June 30th.
- **Board Meetings** - the board meets monthly, usually the first Wednesday of the month. Once a quarter the meeting is open to the general membership.
- **Elections** - take place at the beginning of June when half of the board positions will be up for re-election.
- **Planning** - the annual planning cycle usually kicks off in August when new board members are in place. Board members may take a half-day offsite to discuss strategic focus areas, events and PD, partnerships, and any other topics to plan for the year.
- **CS Education Week** - is in December each year, and while PSCSTA does not directly engage in CS Ed Week classroom activities or Hour of Code, there may be Teacher training, resource dissemination or coordination across Puget Sound districts leading up to this week.
- **CSTA Conference** - the national conference is held every July with alternating years being virtual and in-person. Depending on the number of PSCSTA members attending, the chapter may sponsor a member meet-up during the conference.