

Tabernacle HSA
Committee Chairperson

Tips and Hints for Success



Thank you for volunteering to lead a committee in our HSA. The information in this packet includes common-sense reminders, basic training, and insider tips to help you in your role.

With the help of volunteers like you, our school will be the best it can be, our students will enjoy the benefits, and we adults will have the satisfaction of knowing our involvement can make a difference. Thank You!

The Tabernacle HSA Executive Board

If you have volunteered to lead an HSA committee, thank you! The most successful parent groups have strong committees led by competent and dedicated chairpeople. To be the best committee leader possible—and to get the most out of the experience— please follow these suggestions.

Getting Started

Do you know just what your committee is supposed to do? Are you sure? It's not unusual to volunteer to run a committee with only a vague notion of its scope. Maybe the committee name sounds interesting, or you know someone who worked on the committee in the past, or your family attended the event last year. Whatever your motivation for selecting this particular responsibility, be sure, first of all, that you know what the committee is supposed to do, how it's supposed to be done, and the resources available to do it.

Confirm scope. Before you tackle any substantive committee work, confirm the scope of your committee's responsibilities with the HSA's executive board.

If you assume incorrectly, you run the risk of doing things already assigned to someone else or overlooking some important function of your committee. Ideally, you'll be given specific information about the committee's scope by the executive board or prior chairwoman. But if not, avoid frustration and confusion by asking!

Confirm expectations. Now that you know what you're supposed to do, you need to know how you're expected to do it. You may think you have a pretty good idea of the steps involved in doing your committee's job. If you're really lucky, you got training and files from the past chairwoman. But just to be safe, it's always a good idea to run your plans by the executive board. This advice is especially important if you haven't worked on the committee before—and it's essential if you're completely unfamiliar with the committee's past work.

Confirm financial parameters. Depending on the committee, you may be expected to spend money or make money—or perhaps not spend any money at all. Do you know the financial plan for your committee? Don't assume; get specific information from your group's treasurer. Your committee must manage its finances carefully so as not to “steal” from another project or fall short of profit plans, which might mean cuts in parent group programming. It's also important as a committee chair to know how to get reimbursed or to request that a check be prepared on the committee's behalf

Contact and Use Your Committee Volunteers

If you have been given a list of volunteers for your committee, **please contact every single one of them.** You can use e-mail, telephone, or a note home with the child. Even if your event is in the distant future, please contact the volunteers now, just to let them all know they haven't been forgotten and to introduce yourself as committee chair.

Try to find some way to **use every volunteer.** You may need to delegate more of the work than you had planned or think of new ways to use the committee. Never tell an eager volunteer, "No, thanks, we don't need your help." Every year, volunteers are turned off because no one called them. If your committee's job really isn't big enough for all of your volunteers, please at least have the courtesy to call everyone and explain the situation. We had several very unhappy potential volunteers last year who never heard from anyone. Your committee volunteers should not have to call you to make the initial contact.

***PLEASE e-mail your volunteers at the conclusion of your event to thank everyone for their time, energy, donations, talents, etc.!!!!**

Committees are empowered to make decisions within the scope and budget of their project

The HSA Vice President, Megan Chamberlin (morgli531@aol.com) is the **liaison between the HSA committees and the Executive Board.** You can e-mail her with any questions or if you need help in any way.

When you have a decision that must be debated or discussed in detail, do **that during a committee meeting**, not at a general monthly HSA meeting. Use your committee members to hash out issues, consider alternatives, and come to a decision. If the decision is potentially controversial or needs approval from HSA leadership, call the Vice President and set up a time for everyone to meet to discuss the issue. Also, if your committee is very small and you want advice from outside the committee, you can call the Vice President.

We ask that you please attend the General Membership meeting one month prior to your event as well as the month following your event. Your presentation at the monthly HSA meeting is to announce your committee's decisions, plans, and need for additional help, if necessary. Your attendance at the month following your event will allow you to give a brief summary of how you think things went as well as to hear feedback from members.

We really want the members to hear a report directly from each committee the month prior and the month following the event/program, preferably **no more than 5-10 minutes.** If you, the chairperson, are not available to attend that month's general meeting, please enlist one of your committee members to give your report. As a last resort, you can ask the HSA Vice President to give your report.

Tiger Paw Prints E-Mail and other Communication Tools

The Tabernacle School Tiger Paw Prints e-mail goes out every Wednesday. Marlene Walls, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, is the editor. If your committee has an announcement, submit it in writing to Marlene by Monday of the week you want it to go out. Please be advised that Marlene may need to edit your announcements for space considerations.

If you want to send home a flyer, you must get our Superintendent, Mr. Robbins' approval. It is important that he be aware of the informational flyers going out from the school. Please e-mail Mr. Robbins (robbinsg@tabschools.org) and Mrs. Walls (wallm@tabschools.org) to ask for approval for your flyer. Please also include in you e-mail when you would like the flyers to go home. Please give the office the courtesy of at least a week to approve and distribute all flyers.

The HSA's Corresponding Secretary, Amy Lepsis (amylepsis@shingle.com), can assist you with other forms of communication. You are encouraged to take advantage of the following methods to publicize your committee and its accomplishments and to thank your volunteers:

- HSA bulletin board in the school lobbies
- HSA website, accessible from the school's website
- HSA facebook page

Please keep good records for the next chairperson!

- Notes from your committee meetings
- Copies of flyers, announcements, signs, etc.
- Lessons learned
- Advice for next time
- Phone numbers of contact people
- Copies of invoices, contracts, etc.
- Photographs of the layout of the event, the event itself
- Event Planning and Evaluation Form

Turn your files over to the Vice President in May or June, or as soon as you conclude your role as chairperson. If you plan to continue as chair, you can keep a copy of everything for your files, but please be sure to complete the Event Planning and Evaluation Form anyway.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING
OUR SCHOOLS IN THIS ROLE!!!!!!!!!!