BYLAWS

GEORGIA ALLIANCE OF SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL

AND PHYSICAL THERAPISTS

Article I. Name

The name of this organization is:

GEORGIA ALLIANCE OF SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL AND PHYSICAL THERAPISTS (GASOPT).

Article II. Purpose

The Georgia Alliance is established as a special interest group of occupational and physical therapists and Assistants. The purpose of the Alliance is to provide a forum for the exchange of information concerning current practice; provide educational/training opportunities to advance evidence-based practice; support developing standards of practice for students with exceptional/diverse needs within the Department of Education of Georgia and Allied Agencies, and provide philanthropic opportunities when available to support the education of occupational and physical therapy students, occupational and physical therapist Assistants, and students with unique and diverse needs in the community.

Article III. Members

Section 3.01 Eligibility

All occupational and physical therapists and assistants licensed and eligible for licensure in the State of Georgia can join this special interest group and attend meetings. Members will have full voting privileges, will receive all mailings, and be eligible to hold office in the Alliance. Members shall have the following rights and privileges:

Section 3.02 Membership Privileges

An Occupational or Physical therapist and assistant member:

1. May attend and participate in all regular and called meetings of the Alliance.

2. Will receive contact hour credits for attendance at Alliance workshops.

3. May vote in the election of officers and on all issues of this Alliance.

4. May hold any office and serve on committees provided they are currently licensed to practice as a physical or occupational therapist or a physical or occupational therapist assistant.

5. Will receive routine communication from the Alliance.

6. Members may bring a student who is interning with them to a meeting at no cost to the student; Registration must be made for the student.

Section 3.03 Limited Membership

Continuing education classes are open to all educational professionals. However, only active members of GASOPT are eligible to hold office. Other educational professionals (e.g., Speech Language Pathologists, Special Education coordinators, and teachers) may attend conferences after paying the registration fee but may not hold office or serve on Alliance committees and will not have voting rights. An attendance certificate will be provided but it is solely the responsibility of the attendee to verify acceptance of continuing education credits with the licensing or certification board of their respective profession. The business meeting is limited to active members of GASOPT.

Occupational and physical therapists and assistants, who attend conferences from out of state, can also be members of the alliance. It is solely the responsibility of the out-of-state attendee to verify the acceptance of conference CEUs with their State's licensing board.

Section 3.04 Membership Standing

Members who do not attend two consecutive conference meetings will be removed from the current mailing list. Information on future conferences will continue to be available on the Alliance's website and can be accessed by all current and former members. Should a former member attend a conference after missing two or more consecutive conferences, they will be reinstated to the mailing list.

Article IV. Officers, Duties, and Elections

Section 4.01 Officers

The officers of the Alliance shall be two (2) co-chairpersons, a secretary, and a treasurer. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these bylaws and by the parliamentary authority stipulated by these bylaws. All officers shall hold office for a term of two (2) years and until their successors are elected and assume office. The secretary and treasurer shall be elected in the opposite year of the co-chairpersons. New officers shall assume their duties at the first meeting of the fiscal (school) year. The elected officers of the Alliance shall include co-chairpersons, which should consist of a physical and occupational therapist, a secretary, and a treasurer. The role of secretary and treasurer can be filled by either a physical or occupational therapist.

Section 4.02 Duties: Co-chairpersons

(a) The co-chairpersons or the designated representative shall preside at all alliance meetings and be

responsible for all correspondence of the Alliance. Each co-chairperson shall receive from the Alliance a total stipend per conference of $200.00.

(b) The co-chairpersons shall be responsible for:

I: Plan the agenda for the bi-annual workshops

II: Obtain guest(s) speakers

III: Establish program objectives

IV: Provide the pre-test and post-test as needed

V: Produce conference brochure

VI: Establish a host site for workshops

VII: Provide updated information for website postings

Section 4.03 Duties: Secretary and Treasurer

(a) The secretary shall take the minutes of the meetings, provide written communication to the body, and confirm the membership eligibility of all Alliance members.

(b) The treasurer will manage the finances of the organization. The treasurer will collect fees and pay all bills related to the organization.

They shall preside when the co-chairpersons are absent and perform other duties as delegated by the co-chairpersons. The secretary and treasurer shall each receive a total stipend per virtual conference of 200.00.

Section 4.04 Elections

(a) All nominations are opened from the floor

(b) Voting shall be by a show of hand

(c) Majority rules when a show of hands according to Robert's Rules.

Article V. Meetings and Fees

Section 5.01 Meetings shall be at regular stated intervals to be scheduled by the officers of the Alliance. There will be a minimum of an equivalent two 6-hour content workshops annually.

Section 5.02 Special meetings may be called by the co-chairpersons or by the majority of the membership. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the call. Except in cases of emergency, at least three (3) days notice shall be given.

Section 5.03 Forty (40) members of the Alliance shall constitute a quorum.

Section 5.04 At least one of the officers of the Alliance shall be present to hold a meeting.

Section 5.05 The fiscal year shall coincide with the school year in Georgia.

Section.06 The annual membership fee shall be announced for the upcoming fiscal (school) year by the members of the last meeting of the current fiscal year and shall be printed in the brochure for the workshop.

Section 5.07 The annual membership dues for the Alliance shall be waived for the co-chairpersons, secretary, treasurer, and the EBP Research Liaisons for the length of their term in office. The Alliance shall pay housing expenses, food, and mileage for these officers and EBP Research Liaisons to attend in-person meetings. Mileage reimbursement must be submitted, documenting the actual miles driven and paid at the federal mileage rate. All housing, food, and mileage expenses are capped at $300.00 per conference, per officer.

Section 5.08 All members must pre-register and pre-pay for the workshops. If a member's employer has sent the fee and it has not arrived by the day of the meeting, the member is responsible for the fee that day. A refund will be given to the member within ten (10) working days from the receipt of the fee from the employer.

Section 5.09 A refund will not be given to a member who has paid the meeting fee and cannot attend without a written request (email to GASOPT) 7 days before the meeting. The cost of food/meals (when applicable) will be deducted from the full conference meeting registration fee.

Article VI. Committees

Section 6.01 Audit committee. The Audit Committee shall review the financial records of the Alliance yearly. The Audit Committee shall consist of three (3) members. No executive officer may serve on this committee. This committee will serve a two (2) year term concurrent with the chairpersons.

Section 6.02 Legislative Committee. The Legislative Committee will keep the Alliance membership informed of current laws, policies, and practices of the Federal and State of Georgia governments, and the State of Georgia Board of Education that are pertinent to the Alliance. They shall invite the BOE liaison to the scheduled bi-annual workshops. This committee will serve a two (2) year term. This committee will consist of no less than two (2) people (preferably one representing OT and one representing PT). They shall invite the State of Georgia Board of Education liaison to the scheduled bi-annual workshops.

Section 6.03 Special Committees: The co-chairpersons of the Alliance may appoint committees to study specific topics. Special committees are dismissed after the final report.

Article VII. Evidence-Based Practice Research Liaisons

Section 7.01 Elections

(Two) Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) Research Liaisons shall be elected and represented by a physical therapist and an occupational therapist for a term of two years, to coincide with the election year of the co-chairpersons. Both liaison

members must also be members of their national organizations (AOTA & APTA) for the timely posting of current practice resources.

Section 7.02 Duties

The EBP Research Liaisons will be responsible for the posting and dissemination of evidence-based practice articles or reference citation links to the GASOPT website from both occupational therapy and physical therapy journals, as well as pediatric relevant articles to advance membership scholarship in evidence-based practice methods and interventions. Posted article links will be available as PDF documents as allowable by copyright law.

The Research Liaisons will serve as GASOPT officers and be compensated for such service as outlined in Section 5.07.

Article VIII. Philanthropic Outreach

Section 8.01

Following the submission of the final fiscal report from the bi-annual conference, a charitable donation amount will be determined by the GASOPT Officers from the proceeds that exceed the cost of the 2nd bi-annual conference plus the reserve assets budgeted for the next consecutive scheduled conference meeting.

Section 8.02

The charitable donation recipient(s) shall be determined by the current GASOPT officers based on established criteria (i.e., established 503b organization, non-profit with EINs, etc.) and posted on the GASOPT website.

Section 8.03

A portion of the proceeds determined by the GASOPT officers shall be donated to established scholarship funds of the Georgia chapters of the professional occupational and physical therapy state associations and the Georgia Special Olympics.

Article IX. Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Alliance in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules or order the Alliance may adopt.

Article X. Amendments

These bylaws can be amended at any regular meeting of the Alliance by a two-thirds (2/3) vote provided notice of

the proposed amendment has been sent to each voting member thirty (30) days before the meeting. If requested in writing, absentee ballots will be opened at the meeting.

Article XI. Dissolution

If the Georgia Alliance disbands, after the debts are settled, the current body present will decide the allocations of funds for a college scholarship. The funds will be divided equally between the occupational and physical therapy fields, and the current body present will decide on a college(s) for a scholarship to a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant student and a scholarship to an occupational therapist or occupational therapist assistant student.

Article XII. Financial Compliance and Tax-Exempt Status

Section 1. Joint Compliance Mandate

The Corporation shall timely file all required annual federal informational returns, including but not limited to IRS Form 990 (or its applicable variants 990-EZ or 990-N), as well as all required state corporate annual reports, state tax filings, and charitable registration renewals necessary to maintain active tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Responsibility for this mandate shall be shared by the Co-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer as outlined herein.

Section 2. Duty of the Treasurer (Tax Professional Liaison & Oversight)

The Treasurer shall have primary operational oversight for the organization's financial compliance. Recognizing that 501(c)(3) tax compliance is a highly specialized area requiring expert knowledge to avoid filing errors, the Treasurer shall retain and directly collaborate with a qualified, external tax professional or Certified Public Accountant (CPA). The Treasurer remains responsible for gathering all necessary internal financial records, delivering them to the professional in a timely manner, and ensuring that completed, accurate drafts are provided to the Secretary immediately upon receipt. The Corporation is expressly authorized to retain such professional contractors to assist with any necessary historical back filings, tax status reinstatements, or retroactive compliance corrections.

Section 3. Duty of the Secretary (Distribution & State Corporate Filings)

The Secretary shall be responsible for distributing a complete copy of the finalized federal tax return to all voting members of the Board of Directors at least fourteen (14) days prior to submission. The Secretary shall also have primary responsibility for maintaining and filing the annual corporate report with the Secretary of State and recording all compliance timelines accurately in the meeting minutes.

Section 4. Duty of the Co-Chair (Executive Review & Filing Authorization)

The Co-Chair shall review all completed tax filings alongside the Treasurer and Secretary to provide executive oversight. The Co-Chair shall serve as the authorizing officer to sign and officially submit the returns to the Internal Revenue Service and state authorities, ensuring that no document is submitted without formal board review.
