

Mercer County Retired Educators' Association Constitution and Bylaws

Revised: 5/14/97
Amended: 5/20/98
10/14/98
3/1/99
10/18/00
10/16/06
5/14/09
5/18/10
10/2011
5/16/2013
1/14/16
5/16/18

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I – NAME AND AFFILIATION

1. The name of this Association shall be the MERCER COUNTY RETIRED EDUCATORS' ASSOCIATION, INC., hereafter known as the Association or MCREA, incorporated as a non-profit corporation under Title 15A: Section 2-8 of the New Jersey Domestic Non-profit Corporation Act, and in compliance with Internal Revenue Service Code 501c (4).
2. It is affiliated with the New Jersey Retirees' Education Association (NJREA) under its rules, and the MCEA, NJEA, and NEA-R.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSES AND GOALS

1. To promote the welfare of members, and inform them about available benefits.
2. To advocate, promote, and urge the passage of local, state, and national legislation benefiting retired persons.
3. To promote educational growth in New Jersey in cooperation with NJREA, MCEA, NJEA, and NEA-R.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. The following persons may become active unified members of the MCREA. Any retired Mercer County employee who is a member of the New Jersey Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund (TPAF) or the New Jersey Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) or any New Jersey alternate benefits retirement program, i.e., any person employed in an education capacity in a public or state school, college, or other institution or agency operating under the laws of the State of New Jersey.

Section 2. Unified membership (September 1-August 31) is based on the payment of annual/life dues established by MCREA/NJEA/NJREA/NEA-R.

Section 3. Current education employees, anticipating retirement, may become MCREA/NJREA members without the privilege of voting or holding office.

Section 4. Membership shall be in accordance with the standards and policies of the NJREA and in keeping with the incorporated purpose of the MCREA.

Section 5. Persons born before September 1, 1936 shall not be required to become members of NJREA if they were members of the MCREA during the 2010-11 fiscal year. These same persons of MCREA who were life members (retired or pre-retired) prior to September 2, 2011 shall not be required to become members of NJREA. If a grandfathered “MCREA only” member does not pay the MCREA annual dues, the person loses his/her exemption status and must rejoin NJREA as an Annual or Lifetime member. Unified membership for the above exceptions is strongly recommended.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

1. The officers of the Association shall be the President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Corresponding Secretary, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer.
2. The election of officers shall be held at the May General Membership Council Meeting every two (2) years.
3. Officers shall be elected according to the adopted rules of the Elections Committee. Terms of all officers [except Treasurer] shall be limited to two successive terms of two years. [Treasurers shall be limited to three successive terms of two years.]
4. If a vacancy occurs in the office of president before his/her term is completed, the vice president shall become the president. If a vacancy occurs in any other office, the Executive Board shall elect a successor until the next regular election.
5. Whenever an officer is unable to fulfill his/her position, or is incapacitated, the Executive Board shall elect a replacement until the next regular election; except in the case of a presidential vacancy.
6. If unified membership requires additional delegate(s) to the NJREA Delegate Council, the representative will be First Vice President, Second Vice President, or Treasurer.

ARTICLE V – EXECUTIVE BOARD – effective 9/1/16

1. The Executive Board of the MCREA shall consist of the elected officers of the Association, the Chairpersons of the fourteen (14) Standing Committees, the past presidents, and their term shall be concurrent with the President’s term of office. The Executive Board may also include elected NJREA representative(s) to the NJEA Delegate Assembly from Mercer County (if any).
 - a. The voting members of the Executive Board shall be:
 - i. Six (6) officers with a weighted vote of six (6) each
 - ii. Fourteen (14) standing committee chairs with a weighted vote of two (2) each
 - iii. If a standing committee has co-chairs, the weighted vote will be split between them.
 - iv. Immediate Past President has a weighted vote of two (2).
 - v. A person serving in more than one position shall claim one (1) voting weight.
2. The NJREA representative and/or alternate(s) to the NJEA Delegate Assembly from Mercer County and the Chairpersons of NJREA standing and/or *ad hoc* committees may also be invited to attend the meetings of the MCREA Executive Board in a non-voting capacity.

ARTICLE VI – MEMBERSHIP COUNCIL

The Membership Council will consist only of dues paying members in attendance at a General Membership meeting. There shall not be fewer than two (2) General Membership Council meetings per year.

ARTICLE VII – AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of members present at a scheduled General Membership Council Meeting, provided that the proposed amendment has been disseminated to members at least two weeks prior.

ARTICLE VIII – FISCAL YEAR

The MCREA fiscal year shall correspond to the NJEA/NJREA fiscal year.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be in accordance with the standards and policies of the NJREA and in keeping with the incorporated purpose of the affiliate.

1. Members shall be informed about benefits and other matters of concern at the General Meetings and through written communication.
2. Members shall be given the opportunity to express concerns and opinions at both General Meetings and Executive Board Meetings.
3. Social activities shall be provided for the welfare of members.

ARTICLE II - DUES

1. The annual dues of the Association shall be recommended by the Budget Committee and approved by the Executive Board. Lifetime membership shall be 25 times the current annual dues.
2. *Honorary Members* shall be so designated by the Executive Board. The criteria for honorary membership shall be: a non-member of MCREA whose voluntary accomplishments have contributed to the advancement of public education. Honorary members are non-voting members.

ARTICLE III – OFFICERS

1. The officers of the Association shall constitute the Board of Trustees of the Corporation, with a report filed annually with the office of the NJ Secretary of State.
2. The official address of the Association shall be that of the President. If the President is not a resident of New Jersey, then the address shall be that of another officer who is a New Jersey resident, as determined by the Executive Board.
3. The President and First Vice President shall represent the Association at the annual NJREA Convention. Alternates may be selected by the Executive Board when necessary. Expenses of one delegate shall be paid for by the Association; the other, by NJREA.

Section 1. Terms and Conditions

- a. Officers shall be members of MCREA, NJREA, NJEA, and NEA-R.
- b. The term of office shall be two years, and no officer [**except Treasurer**] shall serve for more than two consecutive terms. [**The term of Treasurer shall be limited to three consecutive terms of two years.**]
- c. Officers shall assume their duties on July 1 following elections.
- d. Old and new officers shall meet in June for an orderly transfer of MCREA and NJREA documents.
- e. No officer shall serve on the Elections Committee or Audit Committee.

Section 2. Powers and Duties

- a. President – The President shall be the Executive Officer of the Association and represent it in all matters, preside over meetings and prepare agendas, appoint chairpersons of standing committees, recommend appointments of Liaison Board members, be an *ex officio* member of all standing committees, serve as a liaison with MCEA, and perform all other functions usually associated with this office.
- b. First Vice President – The First Vice President shall assist the President with meetings and agendas, arrange the programs at meetings, serve as liaison with MCEA, and perform duties of the President in the President's absence.
- c. Second Vice President – The Second Vice President shall assist the First Vice President with programs and assist in other areas as requested by the President.
- d. Treasurer – The Treasurer shall receive and deposit Association monies, give receipts therefore, make payments as budgeted or approved by the Executive Board, and prepare a financial report to be presented at Executive Board and General Meetings. The Treasurer shall be responsible for filing all state and federal file forms and making any appropriate payments. The Treasurer shall not serve as chairperson or member of the Budget and Finance Committee. The Treasurer shall be available as a resource to the Budget and Finance Committee.
- e. Corresponding Secretary – The Corresponding Secretary shall have charge of correspondence, oversee the filing of corporation papers, and maintain the necrology file.
- f. Recording Secretary – The Recording Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all Executive Board Meetings and General Meetings and publish them as soon as possible; and maintain a file of Association business.
- g. No officer shall authorize his/her own voucher or be a signatory on his/her own check. All checks and vouchers must be signed by two (2) officers.

Section 3. Election of Officers

- a. Election of officers shall be conducted every two years at the May General Meeting according to rules of the Elections Committee.
- b. The President shall be elected by MCREA members.
- c. If a vacancy occurs in the office of President, the First Vice President shall become President; if any other office becomes vacant, the Executive Board shall fill it.

Section 4. Removal from Office

The Executive Board may recommend that an officer be removed from office due to poor attendance or non-performance of duty by a two-thirds vote of members present at an Executive Board meeting, provided that the officer is informed and permitted to address the Board; the membership then may remove the person from office by a two-thirds vote of members present at a General Meeting.

Section 5. Elections Committee

- a. An Elections Committee, consisting of a chairperson and a minimum of two members (none of whom may be an officer or candidate), shall be appointed by the President with the Executive Board's approval at least three months before elections; and it shall be disbanded after candidates are sworn in.
- b. The Committee shall recommend to the Executive Board for their approval at the April meeting at least one candidate for each office, and it shall present election rules for approval.
- c. Nominations: the Elections Committee shall establish rules for the nomination of candidates for office. All dues paying members in good standing who have met the criteria established herein shall be eligible to seek office.
- d. Elections: the Elections Committee shall establish a method of voting that protects the principle of one-person, one-vote.
- e. Election of each office shall be by the majority of voting members present. In the event of a tie, another vote for that office will be held immediately; that vote will be held by secret ballot.

ARTICLE IV – GENERAL MEMBERSHIP COUNCIL MEETINGS

1. Each meeting shall include a formal business meeting, program, or speaker(s) and appropriate commemoration of deceased members, and lunch or refreshments.
2. General Membership Council Meetings shall be held annually – in October, January/February (if possible), and May.
3. The January/February meeting may be postponed or cancelled due to inclement weather.
4. A majority of members present shall constitute a quorum for voting. At registration, members who have been verified, will be issued an official voting card.
5. A special General Membership Council Meeting may be called by the President or on request of at least five Executive Board members. Proper notice shall be disseminated to members at least two weeks prior.
6. *Robert's Rules* shall be the parliamentary authority on all questions not covered in the Constitution or Bylaws.

ARTICLE V – FINANCIAL POLICIES

Section 1. Budget

The budget for the fiscal year, September through August, will be presented to the Delegate Council for adoption at the spring General Membership Council Meeting. (Date of adoption may be changed to adapt to meeting schedule – must be approved prior to next fiscal year.)

Section 2. Audit

- a. The MCREA President shall recommend appointment of at least three (3) members to an Audit Committee with the approval of the Executive Board at the September meeting.
- b. This committee shall examine the financial records and report the status of those records no later than November to the Executive Board.
- c. A Certified Public Accountant may be contracted to conduct an audit of the MCREA finances.

ARTICLE VI – EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. Powers and Duties

The Executive Board shall determine the time and place of Executive Board and General Meetings, disburse funds of the Association, fill all officer vacancies, except that of President, appoint Liaison Members of the Board, remove from office any appointed member of the Board, and promote as fully as possible the work of the Association.

Section 2. Meetings

There shall be a minimum of nine (9) Executive Board meetings each year, the first of which (organizational meeting) shall be in July or early August. Special meetings may be called by the President or upon request of five (5) Board members.

Section 3. Standing Committees

- a. There shall be fourteen (14) Standing Committees (committees that function throughout the year). Each committee shall have a chairperson, appointed by the President and at least two members (except the Scholarship Committee), appointed jointly by the chairperson and the President. The terms of office for the committees and chairs shall coincide with the terms of officers. Chairpersons shall keep a record of activities, report activities at Board and General Meetings, and serve as liaison with former Associations when possible. Chairpersons shall submit written reports for publication in the MCREA newsletter. All committee chairs shall be members of MCREA, NJREA, NJEA, and NEA-R. (This includes any other member who may be appointed to represent the county on any NJ committee.)
 - No committee chairperson shall serve more than three consecutive two-year terms.
- b. Committee Names and Duties
 - 1) Affiliate Liaison – committee to inform members about *affiliate* activities and assist in coordinating participation in them.
 - 2) Budget and Finance – committee to prepare the budget and oversee the expenditure of Association monies.
 - 3) Community Services – committee to coordinate Association’s involvement with non-profit community groups in need of volunteers.
 - 4) Constitution – committee to review the Constitution and propose changes as needed, and monitor its implementation.
 - 5) Editorial – committee to publish the Association newsletter.
 - 6) Government Relations – committee to monitor proposed legislation and to lobby legislators to insure and safeguard members’ pensions and benefits, to work closely with MCEA’s Legislative Action Team, as well as NJEA’s Government Relations Chair.
 - 7) Hospitality – committee to oversee social arrangements at Executive Board meetings or special activities designated by the President.
 - 8) Membership – committee to keep a record of members and their payment of dues and to promote membership in the Association, as well as in NJREA and NEA-R.
 - 9) Member Services – committee to promote the well-being of MCREA members.
 - 10) Historian/Public Relations – committee to maintain a pictorial record of the activities of the Association and to provide news releases to the local media and affiliate associations.
 - 11) Scholarship – committee to supervise the Association’s Scholarship Fund, initiate projects to increase the Fund annually, and select the recipients of scholarships

and awards. The Fund is a separate corporate entity. The committee shall have a chairperson and minimum of six members, including the immediate past chairperson and the immediate past president.

- 12) Social – committee to organize and execute a program of events and activities for membership participation and enjoyment.
- 13) Technology – committee to provide technological information and resources to the membership.
- 14) Website – committee to create, maintain, and update the MCREA website.

Section 4. Liaison Members

Up to six additional members shall be appointed to the board from Mercer County school districts, county colleges or state colleges not currently represented on the board. Their duty shall be to act as liaison with their former associations, as well as to assist in promoting the Association's work. Liaison members are non-voting members.

Section 5. Special Committees

- a. The President, with the approval of the Executive Board, shall appoint an Elections Committee, Audit Committee, and any other special committee that may be needed for a specific purpose and period of time. These committees shall consist of a chairperson and at least two members, and they shall be disbanded when assigned duties are completed.
- b. Audit Committee – committee to audit the books of the Association annually to certify as to the accuracy of the records. The report shall be made to the Executive Board no later than November. No officer shall serve on this committee.

ARTICLE VII – SCHOLARSHIP FUND

1. The Scholarship Fund is funded annually by contributions and fundraisers determined by the Scholarship Committee and approved by the Executive Board. The ultimate goal is to sustain the scholarships and awards with the Fund's annual accrued interest.
2. Scholarships and awards shall be presented or announced at the May General Membership Council Meeting.
3. Trustees of the Fund shall be the six officers of the Association and the chairperson of the Scholarship Committee.

ARTICLE VIII – AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of members at a scheduled General Meeting provided that the proposed amendment has been disseminated to the members at least two weeks prior.