

Torrington Education Association

Constitution

Bylaws

Standing Rules and Procedures

(Revised 2023-24 School Year)

Torrington Education Association

CONSTITUTION

Article I - Name

The name of the association shall be the Torrington Education Association.

Article II - Purpose

Section 1 - To help members to obtain and maintain economic positions and working conditions suitable to their professional status.

Section 2 - To develop pride in the profession.

Section 3 - To encourage professional improvement of its members.

Section 4 - To urge members to accept their responsibilities as potential leaders in the profession and in the community.

Section 5 - To encourage greater understanding, cooperation, and communication between members and among all other groups interested in education.

Section 6 - To work for the welfare of school children, the advancement of education, and the improvement of instructional opportunities for all.

Section 7 - To advance the efficiency of education as a public service.

Section 8 - To help the citizens of Torrington to realize the value of education in a democracy and its need for proper support.

Section 9 - To support the stated policies of the Connecticut Education Association and the National Education Association.

Section 10 - To provide funds for the attainment of the above purposes.

Article III - Membership.

Section 1 - Active Members

- a. Active membership in the Association shall be open to all personnel who are employed in the schools of Torrington whose position requires certification and are not included in the administrator's unit or excluded from the purview of §10-153a to 10-153n of the Connecticut General Statutes.
- b. Active membership shall be continuous until the member leaves the school system, resigns from the Association, or fails to pay membership dues.
- c. Active members of the Association shall also be members of the Connecticut Education Association and the National Education Association.
- d. Dual members, those holding membership in both the Association and a competing organization, are not eligible to hold an office or chairmanship, occupy a seat on an Association committee or serve as an Association Faculty Representative.

Section 2 - Expulsion and Reinstatement

The Representative Council shall have the power to censure, suspend or expel any member for cause after due notice and hearing, and shall have the power to reinstate any suspended or expelled member. Disciplinary action against a member for violation of the code of Ethics of the Association shall be taken only on the basis of recommendations duly submitted in writing by the Professional Rights and Responsibilities (PR & R) Committee and the Executive Board, following a full and proper inquiry conducted by local and state Association Representatives. Such action may be appealed by the members so affected to a meeting of the general membership at which a two-thirds majority of those present shall be required to remove such action as may be taken by the Representative Council.

Article IV - Officers

Section 1 - Titles. The officers of the Association shall consist of a president, or co-presidents, three vice-presidents, a secretary and a treasurer. The three vice-presidents shall be one each from the high school, middle school and the elementary schools.

Section 2 - Term of Office. The officers shall serve a term of 2 years beginning August 1 thru July 31 and may be re-elected without an intervening term.

Section 3 - Vacancies.

- a. President. Whenever the office of the President becomes vacant before the end of the prescribed term, the remaining members of the executive board will determine which of the vice-presidents will become president during the unexpired term until the

Representative Council can fill the vacancy, except as provided in Article IV, section 4 of the Constitution. [If the office is held by Co-Presidents, the remaining members of the executive board will determine if the role of the Co-President should be filled by one of the vice-presidents or remain vacant until the end of the prescribed Co-Presidents' term. (10/10/17)]

- b. Other Officers. Whenever other offices become vacant between elections, except as provided in Article IV, Section 4 of the Constitution, the Executive Board shall choose, whenever possible, an Association member in good standing not currently serving on the executive board as either an officer or a chair, to serve in that position until the Representative Council can fill the vacancy. (6/2015)

Section 4 - Impeachment of Officers. Whenever a majority of the Executive Board shall agree that an officer has been grossly negligent of the duties defined in the Bylaws or is incapacitated, they shall recommend to the Representative Council that the office be declared vacant. If the Council so votes by a two-thirds majority, it shall immediately elect a replacement to fill the unexpired term previous to the next general meeting. Such action may be appealed to the PR & R Committee by the officer so replaced.

Article V - Executive Board

Section 1 - Composition. The Executive Board shall consist of the officers, and chairs as designated by the president.

Section 2 - Powers and Responsibilities. The Executive Board shall be the executive authority of the Association. Between general membership meetings or Representative Council meetings of the Association, the Executive Board shall perform all the duties necessary to the proper administration of the affairs of the Association. These duties and responsibilities shall be outlined in these bylaws. (6/2015)

Section 3 - Attendance. The Executive Board shall attend 8/10 of the regular meetings to receive the salary for the position (effective August 1, 2024). (10/2023)

Article VI - Representative Council

Section 1 - Composition. The Representative Council shall consist of the Executive Board, one or more representatives from each school faculty, and the chairman of each standing committee.

Section 2 - Powers and Responsibilities. The Representative Council shall be the legislative and policy making body of the Association.

Section 3 - Meetings. Any member of the Association who is not a member of the Representative Council may attend its meetings, and shall have permission to speak.

Article VII - General Membership Powers

Powers not delegated to the Executive Board, the Representative Council, the Officers, or other groups in the Association shall remain with the general membership.

Article VIII - Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order shall be parliamentary authority of the Association on all questions not covered by the Constitution and Bylaws and such standing rules as the Representative Council may adopt.

Article IX - Affiliation

The Association shall affiliate with the Connecticut Education Association under its rules and the National Education Association under its rules, and shall abide by the Constitution of both organizations unless otherwise voted by the two-thirds majority of the members.

Article X - Amendments

Section 1 - Constitution. The Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of those present at any General Membership meeting, providing that a written notice of the nature of the proposed change shall have been given to the members at least twenty days prior to the meeting.

Section 2 - Bylaws. The Bylaws may be amended by a simple majority vote of those present at any General Membership meeting, providing that a written notice of the nature of the proposed change shall have been given to the members at least twenty days prior to the meeting.

Section 3 - Standing Rules and Procedures. The Standing Rules and Procedures may be amended by a simple majority vote of those present at any General Membership meeting.

BYLAWS

Article I-Meetings

Section 1—Executive Board – The executive Board shall meet at the call of the president or co-presidents, or at the written request of three (3) members of the Board.

Section 2—Representative Council – The Representative Council shall meet at the call of the president or co-presidents, or at the written request of five (5) or more members of the Council. The Executive Board shall help prepare the agenda for each meeting and shall circulate it to all members of the Council so that the representatives have time to discuss it with their faculty members in advance of the Council meeting.

Section 3 – Special Meetings - Special meetings may be called at any time by the order of the president or co-presidents. The calling of special meetings shall be mandatory when a written request stating the business of the meeting and signed by twenty (20) members in good standing is submitted to the president. Upon receipt of such a request, the president shall call the meeting within ten (10) days.

Section 4 – General Membership – The Executive Board shall arrange meetings of the members each year. Specific meeting dates shall occur in October and May.

Article II – Quorum

A majority of their members shall be a quorum of the Representative Council, Executive Board, and Committees except in case of censure, suspension or expulsion when two-thirds (2/3) of each bodies' membership shall be a quorum for the Executive Board, Representative Council and the Professional Rights and Responsibilities Committee. For General Membership meetings, a quorum will be a majority of the members who are present and sign in at the beginning of the meeting.

Article III – Duties of the Officers

Section 1 – President or Co-Presidents – The President or Co-Presidents shall preside over the meetings of the Executive Board, appoint chairpersons and members of standing committees, be ex-Officio member of all standing committees and shall be the executive officer of the association. The President or Co-Presidents shall not have the power to vote except in the case of a tie vote. The President or Co-Presidents shall represent the Association before the public either personally or through delegates, and shall perform all functions usually attributed to this office. [The president (or co-presidents) shall discuss with the Executive Board when he/she is initiating contact with the press to release information on behalf of the Association. - Amended 5/2011]

Section 2 – Vice President – The vice presidents shall perform the duties of the President during his/her absence or at his/her request. They shall serve as members of the PR & R committee and each will serve as chairperson of that committee when a grievance is received and

processed at their respective teaching levels. They are each to serve on one other committee and are to perform such additional duties as the president may assign.

Section 3 - Secretary - The Secretary shall keep an accurate written record of all business transacted at Association, Representative Council and Executive Board meetings. The Secretary shall also maintain the TEA website and be responsible for distributing email communication among members. (revised 10/10/23)

Section 4 - Treasurer - The treasurer shall hold the funds of the Association and disburse them upon authorization of the Executive Board. The Treasurer shall transmit amounts due to the Connecticut Education Association, shall maintain a journal of receipts and disbursements, shall present a financial statement in writing at each meeting of the Representative Council and General Membership, and shall prepare an annual financial statement for publication to members as directed by the Executive Board. The Treasurer shall prepare timely reports in accordance with regulations determined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and shall provide for an annual review of the financial records by a professional accountant. The Treasurer shall keep the President and Executive Board informed of the financial condition of the Association. The Treasurer, unless bonded by the NEA or the CEA, shall purchase bonding to the nearest \$1,000.00 of the budgeted annual income, shall use vouchers for all disbursements, shall maintain one account into which all receipts are deposited and one checking account through which all disbursements are made, and shall reconcile bank statements monthly.

Article IV - Duties of the Executive Board

The Executive Board shall be responsible for the management of the Association, oversee all expenditures, carry out policies established by the Representative Council, report its transactions and those of the Council to the members, suggest policies for consideration by the council, and nominate for approval of the Representative Council the chairperson of the Negotiation Committee.

Article V - Duties of the Representative Council

The Representative Council shall approve the budget for the Association subject to the approval of the General Membership meeting. The Council shall act on reports of committees, approve resolutions and other policy statements. It shall also elect the Negotiation Chairperson, after accepting a recommendation of the Executive Board.

Article VI - Building Representatives

Section 1 - Elections - Representatives shall take seats at the first meeting of the new year as part of the Representative Council.

Section 2 - Attendance - Faculty Representatives or alternates shall attend the regular meetings of the Representative Council unless they receive prior excuses from the President.

Section 3 - Duties - The Faculty Representatives shall oversee the enrollment of the members, and two-way Association communication to the membership they represent.

Article VII - Standing Committees

Section 1 - Structure - There shall be standing committees carrying out the specific functions outlined. They shall have terms of two years. The President shall appoint chairpersons to all standing committees every two years, except as provided in the Bylaws Article III and except for the Negotiation Chairperson (Bylaws, Art. IV and V). The President and Negotiation Chair shall appoint members to the Negotiation Committee proportionally representative of our Association members. The committee shall consist of 1 Chair, 1 THS representative, 1 TMS representative, 2 Elementary representatives, and 1 Specialist (Arts and Student Services pre-K-12) representative (6/2021). Each committee may, with the approval of the Executive Board, organize special sub-committees and task forces for specific activities from the membership of the forces of the Association. Ad hoc committees may be created and disbanded as needs arise and are met. Ad hoc committee reports should be submitted to the president and shared out at regular meetings after the standing committee reports. (6/2015)

Section 2 - Meetings - Each standing committee shall meet at the call of the chairperson.

Section 3 - Reports - Each committee shall keep a continuing record of activities, which shall become a part of the continuing committee record in the Association files.

Section 4 - Titles and Duties

a. Negotiations - The Negotiations Committee shall represent the Association in negotiating personnel policies with the governing and appropriating bodies of the school system. If a tentative agreement is reached with the Board of Education on all matters in negotiation, and prior to the filing of the tentative contract, salary and fringe benefit schedule with the Torrington Town Clerk's Office, the committee shall prepare and submit its report and recommendations to the members of the Association, at a meeting for ratification. This report shall detail all changes in, additions to, deletions from the then existing contract, and shall also include changes in salaries and fringe benefits. If it is necessary to enter into arbitration, procedures shall be followed in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes.

All members of the Negotiations Committee shall attend a Summer Leadership for training. The President and the Executive Board have the right to waive this requirement.

This committee will be established and convened for each negotiation cycle and for any contract reopener in between cycles. For contract reopeners, additional pay will need to be set and approved by the Representative Council. (6/2021)

b. Professional Rights and Responsibilities - The Professional Rights and Responsibilities Committee shall be concerned with the rights and responsibilities of the membership and shall process grievance according to the grievance procedure as stated in the contract.

All members of the Professional Rights and Responsibilities Committee shall attend Summer Leadership for training. The President and the Executive Board have the right to waive this requirement.

c. Organizing committee - The Organizing Committee shall organize and mobilize association members around educational issues/concerns. It shall serve as a liaison to CEA and communicate to members any CEA organizing events. It will develop community relationships to assist with promoting sound educational practices. [Added 10/2015]

d. Scholarship - The Scholarship Committee shall monitor the criteria for the annual TEA Scholarship. It will organize fundraising campaigns to provide funds for the scholarship and shall maintain a list of recipients of the scholarship.

e. Insurance - The Insurance Committee shall represent the Association in all matters of insurance coverage and benefits in accordance with the agreement between the Torrington Board of Education and the Torrington Education Association. It shall monitor legislative mandates that affect insurance coverages and benefits.

f. Social - The Social Committee will conduct all social functions of the Associations, such as events for new teachers, for retiring teachers and for past retirees.

Article VIII - Special Committees

Section 1 - Appointment - Every two years or as needed the President shall appoint an Election/Nomination Committee and such other committees as may be necessary and shall discharge them upon completion of their duties. These committees shall operate according to rules approved by the Representative Council. These committees shall prepare an annual written report as described in Article VII, Section 3. (6/2015)

Section 2 - Election/Nomination Committee - The Election/Nomination Committee shall be nominated by the President and elected by members at the October General Membership meeting. No officer of the Association shall serve on the Election/Nomination Committee. The Election/Nomination Committee will be responsible for coordinating and organizing all elections as needed, whether the election be held at a building level or throughout the district. The Election/Nomination Committee will instruct the building representatives on the election procedures, create ballots, and be responsible for securing and counting all votes. When possible, each building in the district will be represented on the Election/Nomination Committee. The Election/Nomination Committee will be responsible for soliciting and collecting nominees for all elected offices and shall present, at the meeting in April, the name of at least one nominee for each office. Additional nominations for each office may be made from the floor by the members in good standing. Elections will be held the day before and on the day of the general membership meeting, allowing for two days of voting. Balloting shall take place in each school building. Election shall be by simple majority. Should a candidate not receive a majority vote, a run-off ballot listing the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be presented to the active members. The elected slate shall be announced as soon as the counts are completed. If an office is uncontested, the President shall instruct the secretary to cast one ballot for the candidate and he/she shall be duly elected. Election of the Vice Presidents shall be done by building level only. (6/9/2015, 10/10/2017)

Election Procedures -- On the morning of the election, 2 building representatives at each school shall have an updated list of the TEA members at the school, a ballot box, and 1 ballot for each member. To vote, a TEA member signs the TEA roster and places the ballot in the box. The building representatives shall bring the ballot box to the Election/Nomination Committee, who opens all the ballot boxes and counts the ballots during the May meeting.

Section 3 - Professional Development and Evaluation Committee - This committee shall serve as a liaison between the association and the administration to ensure that our professional development and evaluation document remain current and relevant. This committee will stay current on state statutes and guidelines and make sure that the district follows them. [Added 10/2015]

Article IX: Rights of Members

The TEA shall not present information that could put a member in negative light with his/her evaluator, administrator, employer, or colleagues. Should the TEA plan to use information about a member who is not actively involved in an issue, the TEA will share that information with the member prior to the meeting for approval. [Added 10/11/2011]

STANDING RULES AND PROCEDURES

A. GOVERNANCE

1. MEETINGS:

- a. Meeting dates for TEA shall be established by the Executive Board.

2. COUNTY FORUMS:

- a. The cost of attendance will be paid by TEA for all officers, faculty representatives, committee members and not more than 10 other Association members.

3. NEA AND CEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLIES:

- a. For the CEA Representative Assembly, expenses will be paid by TEA for hotel cost, mileage and parking cost as vouchered. A daily food allowance, equivalent to the CEA allowance, will be paid by TEA to each delegate in advance. (10/18/90, revised 10/10/23)
- b. For the NEA Representative Assembly expenses will be paid by TEA for hotel costs and a daily food allowance, equivalent to the CEA allowance, paid in advance. In exceptional circumstances, i.e. exceptional distance between convention center and hotel, vouchers will be accepted for one rental car for the delegates. (10/21/98, revised 10/10/23)

B. SOCIAL

The Executive Board in conjunction with the Social Coordinator shall determine social events.

C. SECRETARY

The secretary of TEA shall distribute minutes of each meeting to Faculty Representatives to be posted in respective buildings or distributed to the membership.

D. FINANCE

1. The TEA President and Treasurer should be empowered to sign checks. (1973)
2. Any new President and any new Treasurer must sign a bank signature card. (1973)
3. Vouchers will be placed in the hands of officers and committee chairpersons in order to facilitate control. (1973)
4. The Executive Board will assess annual membership dues for the TEA on an annual basis. (10/21/98)
5. The fiscal year is to coincide with the term of office of all elected officers, namely, August 1 to July 31. (10/20/87)

6. A budgeted amount is the limit of the expenditures and does not mean that the entire amount should be spent except upon approval by the Executive Board (10/21/98)
7. See G.5

E. INSTRUCTION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. SUMMER LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE - All TEA officers, committee chairpersons, committee members and Association members are eligible to attend. The TEA will pay full expenses for officers, committee chairpersons and committee members and not more than 5 Association members.
2. ATTENDANCE AT OTHER CONFERENCES - Reimbursement for expenses incurred by members at conferences other than those referred to in item 1 above shall be subject to the approval of the President and the Executive Board. (10/21/98)

F. OTHER COMMITTEES

1. SCHOLARSHIP

- a. The TEA will give a \$1,000.00 scholarship to a student who plans to enter the field of teaching based on the following criteria:

1st Character

2nd Scholarship

3rd Need

4th Child of a TEA member (10/18/90)

- b. Money raised at events will be deposited in a separate account and not included with the TEA treasury. (1977-78)
- c. The Treasurer of TEA will send a check in the amount of the scholarship directly to the recipient upon proof of matriculation, i.e., a tuition bill or student ID number. (10/20/87)
- d. The Scholarship Committee or their designee will make timely reports to the Representative Council on all disbursement from and additions to the Scholarship Fund and also full disclosure of all fundraising activities. (10/21/89)

2. TEA-R

- a. The TEA-R will be a committee composed of Retired TEA members. This committee will be patterned after the CEA-R committee.
- b. The TEA-R will be responsible for helping with retirement issues as they impact active and retired teachers.
- c. The TEA-R will be responsible for keeping and maintaining an active list of all retired TEA members.
- d. The TEA-R will be a volunteer committee.

G. OPERATIONS

1. The TEA will pay annual salaries to officers as follows (Social Security Credit referred to as "SSC"):

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| President | 4 SSC |
| Vice President High School | 2 SSC |
| Vice President Middle School | 2 SSC |
| Vice President Elementary School | 2 SSC |
| Secretary | 2 SSC |
| Treasurer | 2 SSC |

The TEA will pay additional salaries as follows:

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Membership Chair | 1 SSC |
| Insurance Chair | 1 SSC |
| Negotiation Chair | 1.5 SSC* (one-half SSC during non-negotiating years) |
| Negotiation Team (each) | 1 SSC* |
| Social Chair | 1 SSC |
| Organizing Chair | 1 SSC |

| | |
|------------|-------------------|
| PDEC Chair | .5 SSC |
| | *negotiating year |

- 2. The appointment of non-elected Chairpersons and committee members is subject to the approval of the Representative Council. (5/1/91)
- 3. The Executive Board shall review TEA salaries at least every two years. (10/21/98)
- 4. Membership Coordinator can be an active or retired member of the TEA and if retired, must be a paid member of the CEA retirement board. Membership Coordinator shall be appointed by a majority vote of the Executive Board. (6/12/2001)