

# **GARRETT COUNTY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION BYLAWS**

## **ARTICLE I- NAME**

The name of this association shall be the Garrett County Education Association, hereinafter referred to as the Association.

## **ARTICLE II-AFFILIATION**

The Association shall be affiliated with the Maryland State Education Association under its bylaws and rules and the National Education Association under its bylaws and rules.

## **ARTICLE III-PURPOSE**

The purposes of the Garrett County Education Association are as follows:

**Section 1.** To unify and strengthen the public school system and to secure, improve, and maintain the proper environment, resources, and working conditions necessary to support quality education.

**Section 2.** To enable members to speak with a common voice on issues pertaining to education and to present individual and common concerns before the Board and all appropriate bodies, elected and appointed.

**Section 3.** To work for the welfare of school children, the advancement of education, and the improvement of educational opportunities for all.

**Section 4.** To negotiate with the Board of Education for educational employees as set forth by Articles 6-404 and 6-505 of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

**Section 5.** To hold property and funds and to employ staff for the attainment of these purposes.

**Section 6.** To employ such persons, firms, and corporations, as may be necessary or desirable to communicate the educators' positions, programs, and points of view to the general public and to enhance public education.

## **ARTICLE IV- MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1. General**

- a. Active membership in the Association shall be open to all employees of the Garrett County Board of Education who agree to abide by the Code of Ethics of the education profession (see <https://www.nea.org/resource-library/code-ethics-educators>), and who are designated as part of Unit I non-supervisory certificated and Unit III non-certificated bargaining units.
- 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 Maryland State Education Association and the National Education Association.

**Section 2. Revocation of membership-** According to procedures adopted by the Representative Assembly, the Board of Directors may suspend from membership or expel any member who has violated the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession, may cancel the membership of any member convicted in a court of law of a crime involving moral turpitude, and may reinstate a member who has previously been suspended or expelled from the Association.

**Section 3. Term of Membership:** The membership year of the Association shall be September 1 through August 31.

## **ARTICLE V- DUES**

**Section 1.** The Representative Assembly shall approve the dues annually for the Garrett County Education Association.

**Section 2.** Members on leave without pay may maintain their annual membership by paying the NEA annual dues, ten percent (10%) of MSEA dues, and ten percent (10%) of GCEA dues.

## **ARTICLE VI-Representative Assembly**

**Section 1.** The legislative and policy-making body of the Association shall be the Representative Assembly.

**Section 2.** The Representative Assembly shall consist of the Board of Directors, one or more representatives from each school or worksite.

**Section 3.** In each school or worksite members in good standing shall select annually one Association representative to the Representative Assembly for each ten members or major fraction thereof. There shall be at least one representative from each school or worksite where members are assigned to have Unit I certificated and Unit III non-certificated representatives present.

**Section 4.** Association representatives shall attend the regular meetings of the Representative Assembly.

**Section 5.** The Association representative shall call meetings at the school or worksite to discuss Association business, conduct elections, enroll members, be liaison for Association communications, and represent the concerns of the membership.

**Section 6.** The Representative Assembly shall be the primary policy-making body of the Association. It shall establish and adopt Association policies and objectives approve the budget, set the dues for the Association, act on reports of committees and the Board of Directors, approve resolutions and other policy matters, fill all vacant offices on the Board of Directors as specified in these bylaws and adopt procedures for implementing the Code of Ethics of the Profession and those to be followed in censuring, suspending, and expelling members. It may adopt such rules governing the conduct of meetings as are consistent with these Bylaws.

**Section 7.** The Representative Assembly shall meet monthly during the school year. The president shall prepare the agenda for each meeting.

**Section 8.** Special meetings of the Representative Assembly may be held at the call of the President, a majority of the Board of Directors, or upon request to the President by representatives of at least five Association schools or worksites.

**Section 9.** All meetings of the Representative Assembly are open to all members of the Association who may participate in discussions.

## **ARTICLE VII-OFFICERS**

**Section 1.** The officers of the Association shall consist of a President, a Vice-President Unit 1 (Certificated), a Vice-President Unit 3 (ESP), a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

**Section 2.** President: Shall preside over meetings of the Board of Directors and Representative Assembly, appoint the chairperson of standing committees, appoint special committees, be ex-officio member of all committees, except election committee, and shall be the executive officer of the Association. The President shall represent the Association before the public, either personally or through designees, and shall perform all other functions usually attributed to the office. The President shall be the Associations' local delegate to the National Education Association's Representative Assembly. The President shall be a signatory on all checks with the Treasurer.

**Section 3.** Vice-President for Unit 1 (Certificated): Shall perform the functions usually attributed to the office of Vice-President. They shall work closely with one or more standing committees as the President shall suggest. They will fill the unexpired term of the President. They shall take on all functions of the office of the President in absence of the President.

**Section 4.** Vice-President for Unit 3 (ESP): Shall perform the functions usually attributed to the office of Vice-President with particular emphasis on the concerns of ESP members. He/she shall work closely with one or more standing committees as the President shall suggest and shall represent ESP members at GCEA and MSEA meetings and trainings.

**Section 5.** Secretary: Shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings, shall maintain official files, and shall assist the President with Association correspondence, and shall provide Representative Assembly members with minutes of all meetings.

**Section 6.** Treasurer: Shall hold funds of the Association and disburse them upon proper authorization by the President or Board of Directors. They shall transmit timely monthly dues to MSEA and NEA. They shall keep accurate accounts of the receipts and disbursements, shall report at each meeting of the Board of Directors and Representative Assemblies, and shall prepare an annual financial statement to the Board of Directors. The Treasurer is a joint signatory on all checks with the President.

## **ARTICLE VIII-Board of Directors**

**Section 1.** The Board of Directors shall consist of the officers listed in Article VII, three Unit 1 (Certificated) members elected one from each level as elementary, middle, and secondary representatives-at-large, and three Unit 3 (ESP) members elected as representatives-at-large.

**Section 2.** Whenever a majority of the Board of Directors shall determine that an officer has been grossly negligent of the duties defined in the Bylaws or is incapacitated, it shall recommend to the Representative Assembly that the office be declared vacant. If the Representative Assembly by a two-thirds majority approves the recommendation, it shall immediately elect a replacement to fill the unexpired term, except that the Vice-President for Unit 1 (Certificates) shall fill the unexpired term of the President.

**Section 3.** The Board of Directors shall be responsible for the management of the Association, shall approve all expenditures within the budget, shall approve all unbudgeted expenditures, shall carry out policies established by the Representative Assembly, shall report its actions and those of the Representative Assembly to the members, and shall recommend policies for adoption by the Board. Powers not delegated to the Association at large or the Representative Assembly or officers shall be vested in the Board of Directors.

**Section 4.** The Board of Directors shall approve negotiating teams for Unit 1 (certificated) and Unit 3 (non-certificated), recommended by the President and Vice-President of Unit 3, to represent the membership in negotiations with the Board of Education.

**Section 5.** The Board of Directors shall meet at the call of the President or at the request of four other members of the Board.

**Section 6.** The Unit 1 (Certificated) and Unit 3 (ESP) representatives-at-large shall be present at BOD and Representative Assembly meetings and shall be points of contact for Association members with concerns particular to their area of responsibility. They shall be responsible for communicating those concerns to the Board of Directors and Representative Assemblies.

**Section 7.** A simple majority of filled positions will constitute a quorum at the Board of Directors' meetings.

**Section 8. Terms and Succession**

a. Terms of office for Board of Directors members shall be for two years with elections being held for officers and representatives-at-large every other year. Terms of office shall begin July 1 following the election and end June 30 of the second year after the election.

b. Board of Directors members may be re-elected three times without an intervening term. After a third term, Board of Directors members must give up their current position.

Board of Directors members may run for another Board of Directors position, should they choose to do so, or spend at least one term off the Board of Directors.

c. When the office of both President and Vice-President for Unit 1 (certificated) become vacant simultaneously between elections the Board of Directors shall select a President pro tem.

D. The election of all officers shall be through open nomination, by secret ballot, by plurality vote, and in conformity with the one-person one-vote rule.

## **ARTICLE IX-ELECTIONS**

### **Section 1. Nominations**

a. Any active member of the Association may nominate candidates for President, Vice-President Unit 1 (Certificated), Vice-President Unit 3 (non-certificated), Secretary, Treasurer, and Board of Directors Representatives-At-Large to the Board of Directors in a manner prescribed by the Nominations and Elections Committee. On odd years, elections will be held for GCEA President, Unit 3 Vice President, and Representatives-At-Large. On even years, GCEA will hold elections for vice president of Unit I, secretary, treasurer, and the ESP-At-Large.

b. The Elections Committee shall verify the acceptance of all nominees and report them to the Representative Assembly.

c. Local association representatives to state and national affiliate representative assemblies shall be elected bi-annually in accordance with the respective organization's bylaws. The national affiliate representative assemblies are optional. Any member may be elected to represent the local association at the state and national affiliate assemblies. Both Unit 1 (Certificated) and Unit 3 (ESP) members shall elect representatives proportional to their membership in GCEA.

d. In the event that the President cannot attend the NEA Representative Assembly or elected delegates to the MSEA or NEA Representative Assemblies cannot attend for any reason, the Representative Assembly may appoint alternate delegates.

**Section 2. Balloting-** Members shall vote by ballot in accordance with procedures developed by the Elections Committee and approved by the Representative Assembly. The Elections Committee shall report results in a timely manner to the Board and membership.

## **ARTICLE X- SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

**Section 1.** Structure- There shall be special committees carrying out specific functions outlined below. Each committee may, with the approval of the Board of Directors, organize special sub-committees and task forces for specific needs from the membership of the Association.

**Section 2.** Meetings- Each special committee shall meet as necessary throughout the year.

**Section 3.** Reports- Each committee shall keep a record of its activities. Chairpersons shall report to the Representative Assembly.

**Section 4.** Each committee shall be composed of both Unit 1, certificated, and Unit III, non-certificated members, from both represented units.

### **Section 5.** Title and Duties

a. The Negotiations Committee shall have responsibility in the area of negotiations. It shall be responsible for negotiations preparation and research. It shall seek the views and needs of the membership through member surveys during negotiation years. It shall keep the membership informed of negotiations activities.

b. The Nominations and Election Committee follow the election procedures set forth in the policy. They certify the nominated candidates and certify the election results.

c. The Government Relations Committee shall have concern for legislation affecting the interests of the Association and its members and for the exercise of political responsibilities of members. The committee shall inform members about pending and enacted legislation and encourage participation in political activities of interest to the Association.

## **ARTICLE XI- CONTRACT RATIFICATION**

Any Tentative Agreement shall be ratified by the membership in accordance with the following:

A.The Tentative Agreement shall be published to the membership at least two weeks prior to the conduct of voting.

B. During the two-week period, there shall be at least one informational meeting at the Northern end of the county and the Southern end of the county prior to the conduct of voting.

C. The ratification of the Tentative Agreement shall be voted on by the respective bargaining unit members.

D. The vote shall be conducted in accordance with provisions adopted by the Nominations & Elections Committee.

E. A majority of those voting is required to ratify the Tentative Agreement.

## **ARTICLE XII- GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS/General Representative Assembly Meetings**

General meetings of the membership may be called by the President with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors and/or the Representative Assembly.

## **ARTICLE XIII-AUTHORITY**

Robert's Rules of Order, latest revisions shall be the parliamentary authority for the Association on all matters not covered by these Bylaws and such standing rules as the Representative Assembly may adopt.

## **ARTICLE XIV-QUORUM**

Six (6) or more or 50% of the Board of Directors present shall constitute a quorum. For general membership meetings a quorum shall be ten (10) percent of the active membership of the Association.

## **ARTICLE XV-AMENDMENTS**

The Representative Assembly may adopt amendments to these Bylaws by a two-thirds majority of the members' vote as reported by their Association Representatives. The amendments must have been introduced at an earlier meeting of the Representative

Assembly. Copies of proposed amendments have been distributed to members for voting by each member of the Association within each school or worksite.

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***Dates of By-Laws Amendment:***

6/2025

3/2026 Article XI-Contract Ratification