

ESSEX COUNTY RETIREES EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
Constitution and Bylaws

1. Article 1. Name and Affiliation

This Association shall be known as the Essex County Retirees Association (ECREA) and be affiliated with the New Jersey Retirees Education Association (NJREA), the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA), and the National Education Association-Retired (NEA-R).

- A. The Association shall apply for tax-exempt status under Internal Revenue Code 501c (4) and govern itself in a manner that will not jeopardize its tax-exempt status.
- B. Any reference to Essex County Retirees Education Association (ECREA) shall mean ECREA officially has adopted the Standards of Affiliation adopted by the NJREA Delegate Council.
- C. The Association shall be incorporated as a non-profit corporation under Title 15A, Sections 2-8 of the New Jersey Domestic Nonprofit Corporation Act.

II. Article II. Purpose

The purpose of this Association shall be:

- A. To keep members informed about the benefits available to them and how they may attain those benefits.
- B. To further the advancement of public education in New Jersey and in the United States of America.
- C. To advocate and promote programs, services and legislation of benefit to retired members.
- D. To provide meetings so that valuable information may be presented to those members who conduct state business.
- E. To provide a report of meetings, ECREA activities and other valuable information to each member by means of the ECREA publications and media or through the publications and media of NJREA/NJEA and NEA-Retired.

III. Article III Membership

The following may become members of the ECREA by paying the annual/life dues:

- A. Any retired public education 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.
- B. Any person employed in an education capacity in a public or state school, college, University, or other institution, or agency operating under the laws of the State of New Jersey.
- C. Life membership for retirees is available as described in the Bylaws.
- D. Current education employees anticipating retirement may become ECREA/NJREA members without the privilege of voting or holding office.
- E. A person may be a Multi County member upon payment of the dues to the additional county(ies) and have all privileges thereof, except as to voting in NJEA elections which is regulated by Article VII, Section 4 of the NJEA Constitution.

IV. Article IV Officers

- A. The officers of this Association shall be a president, first vice-president, second vice-

president, corresponding secretary, recording secretary, treasurer, and the immediate past president (ex officio for one year).

- B. Officers may serve two two-year terms and then they may run for another position.
- C. The elected officers shall assume the duties of their office September 1, following the election.
- D. The officers shall meet at the request of the president to appoint chairpersons and to suggest agenda items for the next executive board meeting.
- E. A person running for ECREA office shall be a member of ECREA/NJREA.
- F. If a vacancy occurs in the office of president or first vice-president before the terms are completed, the first vice-president shall become president; and/or the second vice-president immediately shall become the first vice-president. A vacancy in any other elected office shall be filled by presidential appointment with approval of the executive board.
- G. A person who fills an unexpired term until the next regular election, or who has been elected to fill a one-year unexpired term, will not lose eligibility for being elected to serve the number of full terms listed for that office in Section B of this Article.
- H. The officers shall make available to their successors all materials necessary for an orderly transfer of duties.
- I. The president shall invite an NJREA officer to attend one general membership meeting every two years.
- J. The officers shall be responsible for the maintenance of all changes in these standards, policies, statutes or regulations.
- K. The president shall observe and conform to the Constitution and By-Laws of the NJREA.

V. **Article V** Committees

- A. Committees shall include: audit, budget, community service, constitution, government relations/congressional contact, historian, hospitality, luncheon, member-at-large, member services, membership, nominations/elections, philanthropic, publications, publicity, and travel/entertainment.
- B. The chairperson of each committee shall be appointed by the president with the approval of the elected officers. The term of each shall expire at the close of the president's term.

VI. **Article VI** Executive Board

- A. The executive board shall consist of the officers, all committee chairpersons, and a member-at-large appointed by the president. The elected officers are the voting members of the Executive Board.
- B. All officers and executive board members shall be required to hold membership in ECREA, NJREA, NJEA and NEA-R. They shall work actively to reflect unified NJREA policies and stated goals.
- C. The executive board shall have a minimum of three (3) business meetings annually. Additional meetings shall be called by the president or at the request of a majority of the executive board.

VII. **Article VII** Amendments

- A. Amendments to the constitution should be submitted to the executive board. A majority

of the voting members of the board must vote to accept the amendment the first time it is read at a meeting. A two-thirds (2/3) vote will be necessary for final acceptance when it is read at a second meeting.

B. Bylaws may be amended by a simple majority vote of the executive board.

VIII. **Article VIII** General Membership Meetings

- A. There shall be no less than two General Membership meetings per year.
 - 1. The Luncheon Meeting(s) shall serve as the General Membership meeting(s).
 - 2. There may be "working meetings" if determined by the Executive Board.
- B. The president shall have the power to call additional meetings as is deemed necessary or upon the request of one-fourth (1/4) of the general membership.
- C. At each luncheon meeting, a time shall be allotted for input from all members of ECREA present.
- D. The budget for the fiscal year, September through August, will be presented to the general membership for adoption at the spring meeting.

IX. **Article IX** Bonding of Officers

The president, treasurer, and other designated officers of the ECREA shall be bonded under a policy provided by and paid for by NJEA. The county retired affiliate shall adhere to the following accounting procedures in compliance with the bonding policy:

- A. The bank accounts in which all deposits are made shall be in the name of the Essex County Retirees Education Association.
- B. Counter-signature for all ECREA accounts shall be required for all checks.
- C. Endorsement of checks shall be limited to endorsements for deposit to the credit of the ECREA only.
- D. The books and accounts of the treasurer shall be examined formally at least once a year. The report by the auditor(s) must be made part of the ECREA's permanent records. Said reports of the auditor(s) shall be made available to the membership and to NJREA upon request. Having a total annual budget of \$5,000 or more, the ECREA must have the annual audit performed by a public or certified public accountant(s).
- E. Bank accounts shall be reconciled at least once a year by someone other than the treasurer as part of the auditing process.
- F. No payments in cash (including checks made out to "cash") shall be made from funds.
- G. A voucher system for payment of bills shall be instituted.

X **Article X** Liability

NJREA does not carry any liability for damages incurred by the ECREA, nor does the county retired affiliate carry any liability for damages incurred by NJREA. This does not prohibit either party from providing assistance in the event of such an occurrence as determined by appropriate governing bodies.

XI **Article XI** Recall Procedures

- A. Officers of the association shall serve their terms so long as they ethically and satisfactorily perform the duties of office.
- B. Where an officer is guilty of misconduct, negligence, dereliction of duty, or becomes incapacitated, such officer may be removed for cause (shown after notice and a hearing) by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members of the executive board.

- C. The officers shall notify the executive board of the allegation(s) against an officer and schedule a hearing(s) to review and adjudicate the matter. A two-thirds (2/3) vote will decide the matter.

BY-LAWS

I. Meetings

There shall be a minimum of two meetings of the general membership each year. Dates will be set by the executive board and announced to the membership by newsletter at least two weeks prior to the meetings. The President shall have the power to call additional in person or virtual meetings as is deemed necessary or upon the request of one-fourth (1/4) of the general membership.

II. Annual Dues

- A. Annual membership dues shall be set by the executive board and cover the fiscal year beginning September 1 and ending August 31.
- B. A unified dues structure established by the NJREA shall be applicable to members in accordance with standards and policies of the unified retired organization.

III. Elections

Elections shall be held every two years at the spring general membership meeting. Nominations shall be made by the nominating/election chairperson and two other members appointed by the president with the approval of the executive board. Nominees shall be announced in the spring newsletter and elected during the spring meeting.

- A. The committee shall consist of three (3) members.
- B. No officer or candidate for office may serve on the committee.
- C. Officers shall assume their duties September 1, following their election.
- D. Nominations may be made from the floor at the spring general membership meeting. 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 by secret ballot.

IV. Membership Records

All membership records shall be maintained by the membership chairperson(s). ECREA and NJREA membership lists will not be made available to any individual or organization without the written approval of the respective association.

V. Parliamentary Rulings

"Robert's Rules of Order; Newly Revised" shall govern the procedures of all meetings of the Association.

VI. Duties of the Officers

The ECREA will be governed by the officers elected by the dues-paying voting members of the ECREA. The officers will be: President, 1st Vice-President, 2nd Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer.

- A. President - The president shall preside at all meetings, appoint chairpersons to regular and special committees, appoint a parliamentarian, act as a liaison between the ECREA, NJREA, and ECEA, be an ex-officio member of all ECREA committees, serve on the delegate council of NJREA, approve payment of funds for legitimate expenses,

- and perform any other duties that may be required.
- B. First Vice-President - In the absence of the president, the first vice-president shall perform the duties of the office of president. The person holding this office shall assist with duties assigned by the president. The roles and responsibilities of the 1st Vice-President may be expanded to include those of the 2nd Vice-President as necessary to meet the needs of the ECREA.
 - C. Second Vice-President - In the absence of the president and the first vice-president, the second vice-president shall perform the duties of the president. The person holding this office shall be chairperson of the philanthropic committee. The roles and responsibilities of the 2nd Vice-President may be expanded to include those of the 1st Vice-President as necessary to meet the needs of the ECREA.
 - D. Recording Secretary - The recording secretary shall take the minutes of all meetings. A copy of the minutes of an executive board meeting shall be mailed to each member of the board at least two weeks prior to the next meeting. The roles and responsibilities of the Recording Secretary may be expanded to include those of the Corresponding Secretary as necessary to meet the needs of the ECREA.
 - E. Corresponding Secretary - The corresponding secretary shall have charge of correspondence and keep copies of outgoing letters pertaining to the general business of the Association. The roles and responsibilities of the Corresponding Secretary may be expanded to include those of the Recording Secretary as necessary to meet the needs of the ECREA.
 - F. Treasurer - The treasurer shall have custody of all funds of the Association, use a voucher system, and pay out the same only on orders of the president. A report of the financial condition of the Association shall be given at all regular meetings. This person shall also annually file the Incorporation Report, ensure that the 990 Form is filed with the IRS, file all other state and federal forms required with payments as necessary and ensure an audit is performed by an accredited outside firm to maintain the Association's status and prepare the annual budget as budget chairperson. The treasurer, president and/or designated officer shall be authorized to make necessary banking transactions. The president, treasurer, and/or designated officer should not authorize his or her own voucher or sign his or her own check.

VII. **Duties of Committees**

- A. Audit - This committee shall make an annual audit of the books of the treasurer and certify as to their accuracy. A report shall be made to the executive board in September. A Certified Public Accountant will be contracted to conduct annually an audit of ECREA finances.
- B. Budget - This committee shall prepare an annual budget which will be presented to the executive board for approval. The treasurer shall be the chairperson of the budget committee. The budget for the fiscal year, September through August, will be presented to the General Membership for adoption at the spring meeting.
- C. Community Service - The function of this committee and chairperson shall be to seek community partnerships and establish opportunities for members to provide volunteer services to citizens and students of Essex County. These partnerships may include public schools, civic organizations, non-profit organizations, sororities, fraternities, and the ECEA and local associations.
- D. Constitution - This committee shall receive suggestions for changes to the constitution and/or bylaws, make recommendations as to whether the changes are in the best

- interest of the Association, and prepare and submit the necessary changes to the executive board for action.
- E. Government Relations/Congressional Contact - The function of these committees shall be to inform members of state and national legislation which is of concern to them. The chairpersons shall consider legislative proposals and make recommendations to the executive board.
 - F. Historian - The chairperson shall be responsible for keeping records of the history of the ECREA.
 - G. Hospitality - The function of this committee and chairperson shall be to coordinate and support social events that promote the goals and activities of the Association and its members.
 - H. Luncheon - The function of this committee shall be to coordinate and arrange all of the details for general membership meetings.
 - I. Member-at-Large - This person shall be appointed by the president to accomplish a specific task not covered by any other committee, to participate in the activities of regular committees as the need arises, and to act as a liaison between the executive board and the general membership.
 - J. Member Services - The functions of this committee shall be to promote the well-being of all members. Its chairperson will act as a resource person to the membership regarding available benefits and services.
 - K. Membership - The function of this committee shall be to maintain membership records. The chairperson(s) shall collect county membership dues from the 2011 exemption members, NJREA Life members, and members wishing to join ECREA who are unified through another county. In exceptional circumstances, the chairperson(s) shall provide computerized lists of all members.
 - L. Nominations/Elections - This committee shall consist of the chairperson and two other members appointed by the president with the approval of the officers. The Nominations/Elections Committee will nominate members for the offices and conduct the elections.
 - M. Philanthropic - The Philanthropic Fund is a separate corporation. This committee shall be responsible for coordinating donations and fund-raising for the Association's philanthropic efforts. The chairperson shall initiate appropriate procedures that facilitate the selection of the scholarship recipient by the committee.
 - N. Publications - The function of this committee shall be to collect and report timely news of interest to all members. The chairperson shall see that newsletters and other publications are mailed to the general membership at the prescribed times.
 - O. Publicity - The function of this committee shall be to submit articles of news about ECREA for all issues of the NJEA Review and NJREA Newsletter, and maintain the ECREA webpage. The chairperson also shall submit news to the various public media throughout Essex County.
 - P. Travel/Entertainment - The function of this committee shall be to establish and maintain an esprit de corps among the general membership by coordinating and arranging trips and activities of interest to all.

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