

Constitution for the Glen Ridge Education Association

Article I – Name of Association as Indicated on Incorporation Papers

Section 1: The name of this Association shall be Glen Ridge Education Association, as denoted on the Certificate of Incorporation, and hereinafter referred to as the “Association.”

Section 2: The Association shall be incorporated as a non-profit corporation under N.J.S.A. 15A:1-1 *et seq.*, the “New Jersey Nonprofit Corporation Act.”

Section 3: The Association shall apply for tax-exempt status under Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(5) and govern itself in a manner that will not jeopardize its tax-exempt status. The Association may apply to the New Jersey Education Association (“NJEA”) to be included in a group exemption letter.

NOTE: “Tax-exempt status” only applies to income tax and covers money collected by an association, i.e., dues. NJEA and its affiliate associations are labor organizations and, as such, ***cannot*** be sales tax exempt.

Article II – Affiliation

Section 1: The Association shall be an affiliate of the Essex County Education Association, the NJEA, and the National Education Association (“NEA”).

The Association shall abide by the *Standards of Affiliation for Local Associations with the New Jersey Education Association* (hereinafter referred to as “NJEA Standards of Affiliation for Local Associations”) and shall forward a copy of its Constitution to NJEA. The affiliation shall not carry any legal liability for damages by the Association or NJEA due to actions taken independently by either. Each Party shall defend indemnify and hold harmless the other party, including their respective officers, directors, shareholders, employees, representatives, agents, successors, and assignees, from and against all claims of third parties, and all associated losses, to the extent arising out of (a) a party’s gross negligence or willful misconduct in performing any of its obligations under this Constitution and Bylaws, or (b) a material breach by a party of any of its representations, warranties, covenants or agreements under this Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 2: NJEA may, at the request of the NJEA Executive Committee and 10 percent of the members of the Association, conduct an evaluation of the Association under guidelines established by the NJEA Delegate Assembly.

Section 3: The Association must fully comply with the most up-to-date version of the NJEA Standards of Affiliation for Local Associations.

Article III – Purpose and Mission of the Association

The primary purpose and mission of the Association is improvement in the terms and conditions of employment and advancement of the welfare of members; to represent its members and other employees in negotiations and grievances with the school district on all matters of compensation and all other terms and conditions of employment. The Association shall be the recognized bargaining agent for all appropriate school district employees to the full extent of the provisions of Chapter 123, Public Laws of 1974, also known as the New Jersey Public Employment Relations Act, N.J.S.A. 34:13A:1 et seq., unless another organization has been officially designated as the bargaining agent.

The Association shall promote the general welfare of members, advance educational standards, and establish and maintain good community relations. The Association shall also develop and promote continuing programs to secure and maintain better employment benefits, uniform personnel practices, professional preparation standards, improvements in terms and conditions of employment, and sound retirement systems.

The Association shall work to unify all employees eligible for membership so as to enable members to speak with a common voice on all matters of mutual concern and to represent individual and common interests of members before the Board of Education and other legal authorities; and to act as the majority representative before the N.J. Public Employment Relations Commission, in accordance with the N.J. Employer-Employee Relations Act. The Association is also established to promote the educational interests of the school district/higher education institution and the State; to promote equal educational opportunity for all students; to secure and maintain for the office of teaching its true position among professions, and to emphasize the importance of other education professionals in meeting student, school, and community needs.

Article IV – Membership

Section 1: Active Members

Active members in the Association shall be all professional, secretarial, paraprofessional, custodial and maintenance staff members employed by the Board except the following:

1. Administrators or any personnel having the power to hire, discharge, discipline or to effectively recommend the same
2. Substitute teachers and temporary secretaries
3. Confidential secretaries and clerical employees including:
 - a. Secretary to the Business Administrator/ Board Secretary
 - b. Executive Secretary to the Superintendent
 - c. Confidential Secretary Payroll and Accounts payable/receivable
 - d. Secretary to the Director of Student Services
 - e. Secretary to the Director of Curriculum and Technology
4. Confidential Technology staff including IT Specialist and Network Coordinator

Section 2: Membership shall be continuous until the member leaves employment, resigns from the Association, or fails to pay membership dues.

Section 3: The Association shall require its professional members to hold membership in their county association, NJEA, and NEA, where eligible. Active supportive members must hold membership in their county association, NJEA, and NEA where eligible.

Section 4: Honorary membership may be conferred upon members of the teaching profession or other persons for distinguished service to education and the profession. Honorary members shall enjoy all the privileges of the Association except those of voting and holding office and shall be exempt from payment of dues.

Section 5: Rights of Membership

- a. Every member shall have the equal rights and privileges within the Association to nominate candidates for office; to vote in elections or on referenda of the Association; to attend membership meetings; and to participate in the deliberations and voting upon the business of such meetings.
- b. Every member shall have the right to meet and assemble fully with other members; to express any views, arguments or opinions; and to express views at meetings upon candidates in an election of the Association or upon any business properly brought before the meeting.
- c. No member shall be suspended, expelled or otherwise disciplined except for nonpayment of dues without being served with specific written charges and being given a reasonable time in which to prepare a defense which may be asserted at a full and fair hearing.
- d. There shall be no limitation upon a member's right to institute action against the Association in any court or proceeding before any administrative agency.
- e. Any member whose rights as an employee are affected by a collective negotiations agreement has the right to inspect and duplicate copies of the collective negotiations agreement at any reasonable time. Copies of such collective negotiations agreements shall be maintained and be available for inspection by any member or by any employee whose rights are affected by such agreements.

Article V – Officers and Executive Committee

Section 1: The officers of the Association shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The positions of President and Vice-President together may be replaced by one pair of Co-Presidents, sharing the duties of both offices as mutually determined. The term "President" as used in this Constitution refers to either one individual serving as a President or a pair of individuals serving as Co-Presidents.

Section 2: The officers shall be elected at the Spring general meeting and be installed in June for a term of one year.

Section 3: The officers of the Association shall serve their terms so long as they satisfactorily perform the duties. Where an officer is guilty of misconduct, such officer may be removed for cause (shown after notice and a hearing) and by a majority vote of the members of the Association.

- A. Recommendation for recall can be made by the submission of a petition containing the signature of 75% of the membership to the Executive Board.
- B. The Executive Board shall notify in writing any officer who is recommended for recall.
- C. Any officer may appeal in writing to the Executive Board.
- D. The Executive Board shall schedule hearings, whenever necessary, to review the recommendation of recall of an officer.
- E. The report of those hearings shall be made available to the membership.
- F. A General Membership meeting shall be called to vote upon recall recommendations.

Action upon the recall shall be determined by a majority vote of the members in attendance.

Section 4: Nothing in this Article shall be construed as precluding officers from succeeding themselves in office, if duly elected.

Section 5: In the event of a vacancy in the office of the President, the Vice-President shall become President and serve until the next annual election. If two Co-Presidents are serving, then the remaining Co-President will assume all duties.

Article VI: Executive Board

Section 1: The policy forming body of the Association shall be the Executive Board. It shall consist of:

- A. the officers of the Association and
- B. Building Representatives from each building, elected by the building members

Section 2: The Building Representatives shall call meetings of members within their buildings to discuss Association business, appoint such building committees as the Association may require, and organize and oversee the subsequent elections of representatives, the enrollment of members, and two-way Association communications within the building.

Section 3: Any member of the Association who is not a member of the Executive Board may attend the meetings, shall sit apart from the voting body and may receive permission to speak.

Article VII: Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution may be made by a two-thirds majority of the active members of the Association voting in a regular or special election for this purpose, provided that:

- A. the amendments have been submitted in writing to the Executive Board.
- B. the Executive Board, by a majority vote, proposes to recommend said amendments to the General Membership.
- C. the Executive Board has distributed copies of the proposed amendments to all active members at least two calendar weeks in advance of the vote.

Bylaws for the Glen Ridge Education Association

Article 1: Meetings

Section 1: The Executive Board shall meet at least bimonthly, at the call of the President, or at the request of any three members of the Committee. The President shall prepare the agenda for each meeting.

Section 2: General Membership

- A. The Executive Board shall arrange at least three (3) meetings of the members each year.
- B. Special meetings of the membership may be called by the President or upon request of one-quarter of the members for a specific purpose, but no business other than that for which the meeting is called may be transacted.
- C. At least one week prior to each general membership meeting, the Executive Board shall notify all members of the time and place of said meeting.

Section 3: The order of business at any Executive Board or General Membership meeting shall be as follows:

- A. Call to Order
- B. Approval of Minutes
- C. Correspondence
- D. Report of Treasurer
- E. Report of Standing Committees
- F. Report of Special Committees
- G. Old Business
- H. New Business
- I. Adjournment

Article II: Quorum

Section 1: A majority of the Executive Board members shall constitute a quorum for the Executive Board meetings.

Section 2: One-quarter of the membership (with at least one person from each building) shall constitute a quorum for a General Membership meeting.

Article III: Powers and Duties of the Officers

Section 1: The President shall:

- A. preside over all meetings of the Executive Board and General Membership.
- B. appoint the chairperson and members of all standing committees not otherwise provided for in the Constitution and Bylaws.
- C. be an ex-officio member of all committees.
- D. with the Treasurer, sign all orders drawn upon the treasury for which a voucher has been submitted.
- E. represent the Association before the public either personally or through a designated representative.
- F. perform all other functions usually attributed to the office.
- G. have authority to make disbursements from a discretionary fund of \$300 without requiring prior approval, provided there are no more than two disbursements made in any one fiscal year. The President will inform the Executive Board of any such disbursement at the next regularly scheduled Executive Board meeting after such disbursement is made.

Section 2: The Vice-President shall:

- A. assume all duties of the President in his or her absence and work closely with one or more standing committees as the President may suggest.
- B. become President whenever the presidency becomes vacant as provided for in Article V, Section 5 of the Constitution.
- C. be an ex-officio member of the Negotiations and Professional Rights and Responsibilities Committees.
- D. serve as Membership Chairperson and as such, shall organize and conduct membership enrollment.

If a pair of Co-Presidents serves as President, there shall be no Vice-President, and the powers and duties of the office of Vice-President shall be shared by the Co-Presidents as they mutually agree.

Section 3: The Secretary shall:

- A. be responsible for handling all correspondence for the Association.
- B. carry on the affairs of the Association as directed by the President and Executive Board.
- C. keep accurate minutes of all of the Executive Committee and General Membership meetings..
- D. maintain the official files.

Section 4: The Treasurer shall:

- A. prepare an annual budget.
- B. deposit monies in a bank, in the name of the Association.
- C. notify the NJEA of the name of the bank in which Association monies are deposited.
- D. hold the funds of the Association and disburse them accordingly upon submission of vouchers approved by the President.
- E. sign all checks.
- F. report at each meeting of the Executive Board and General Membership.
- G. prepare an annual financial statement that shall be available to all members.
- H. file the appropriate Federal and State forms.
- I. arrange for an annual audit, a copy of which shall become part of the Association's permanent record, with an additional copy sent to the NJEA.

Article IV: Powers and Duties of the Executive Board

Section 1: The Executive Board shall:

- A. establish policies and be responsible for the management of the Association.
- B. authorize all expenditures within the limits of the budget.
 - 1. authorize by a majority vote non-budgeted disbursements not to exceed \$500 per expenditure.
 - 2. authorize by a two-thirds vote non-budgeted disbursements in excess of \$1,000.
- C. establish such special committees as may be necessary.
- D. act on reports of committees.
- E. set the agenda for all General Membership meetings.
- F. provide information about and funding for NJEA training for incoming officers.
- G. adopt rules for governing the conduct of meetings as are consistent with this Constitution and Bylaws.
- H. be the final judge of qualifications and elections of officers, active committee members, and Building Representatives.

Section 2: In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the Vice-President shall become President and serve until the next annual election. In the event of a Co-Presidency, if there is a vacancy by one Co-President, the remaining Co-President will become the President individually and serve until the next annual election.

Section 3: Whenever the offices of both President and Vice President or Co-Presidents shall become vacant between elections, the remaining members of the Executive Board shall choose one of their members to serve as President pro tempore until the Executive Board can fill the vacancies.

Article V: Standing and Special Committees

Section 1: There shall be Standing Committees carrying out the specific functions listed below, with members selected to be broadly representative of all members, appointed for overlapping terms of one year.

Section 2: The President, with the advice and consent of the Executive Board, shall appoint members of Standing Committees at or before the Fall meeting and fill all unexpired terms as vacancies occur.

Section 3: Each Standing Committee shall meet regularly as necessary to accomplish the goals of the committee.

Section 4: Chairpersons shall report as necessary to the Executive Board and the General Membership and shall prepare an annual written report which shall become a part of the continuing Committee record in the Association.

Section 5: Committee Titles and Duties

- A. The Negotiations Committee shall survey the members regarding all areas of member welfare and general working conditions and prepare a proposed package to be negotiated with the Board of Education and the Association's negotiations team.
- B. The Professional Rights and Responsibilities Committee shall secure policies and procedures for the redress of grievances. It shall process all grievances filed in accordance with the agreement and policies adopted by the Association. It shall advise the Executive Board in situations involving the defense of individual rights.
- C. Public Relations/Pride Committee shall strive to develop public understanding of the purposes and programs of the Association. It shall develop procedures by which the Association can present material through news and social media and work cooperatively with the public in civic, fraternal, and social organizations.
- D. The Legislative Committee shall have broad concern for state and national legislation affecting the interests of the Association. It shall inform members about newly proposed and enacted legislation related to their interests, promote activities leading to their responsibility to vote, and their rights to participate in political activity
- E. The Communications Committee, shall maintain the Association website and email distribution lists so that the Executive Committee can effectively communicate with the general membership. It shall develop an effective communication system for the membership in case action is required or a crisis situation arises. At least one of its members shall be at the disposal of the Negotiations Team. The Association President shall review all crisis or negotiation communications.
- F. The Social Committee shall organize such social activities as may serve the needs of members and promote rapport within the Association.

Section 6: Each year the President shall appoint, with the approval of the Executive Board, such Special Committees as may be necessary, and shall disband them upon completion of their duties. These Committees shall operate according to rules approved by the Executive Board.

Article VI: Elections

Section 1: Nominations

- A. The President, subject to approval by the Executive Board shall appoint a Nominating Committee which will seek and name one or more candidates for President and Vice President (or a pair of Co-Presidents in lieu of a President and Vice President), Secretary, Treasurer and Building Reps. Any member of the Association may nominate candidates.
- B. The Nominating Committee shall make its recommendations to the Executive Board. Members of the Executive Board may nominate other candidates.
- C. The Nominating Committee shall present in writing all nominations to the general membership no later than two (2) calendar weeks in advance of voting.

Section 2: Members shall vote for officers by secret ballot in accordance with procedures developed by the Nominating Committee.

Article VII: Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Association shall begin September 1 and end August 31.

Article VIII: Authority

The most recent edition of Roberts Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority for the Association on all questions not covered by the Constitution and Bylaws and such standing rules as the Executive Board may adopt.

Article IX: Amendments

Amendments to the Bylaws may be made by a two-thirds majority of the active members of the Association voting in a regular or special election called for this purpose, provided that each amendment has been previously introduced at a regular meeting of the Executive Board and that copies have been distributed to each active member of the Association at least (2) calendar weeks in advance of the election.