



Bylaws

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Article I- Name and Objective

Section 1 - Name

The name of this organization shall be the Oak Park Teachers' Association (hereafter "OPTA" or "Association"), an affiliate of the Illinois Education Association and the National Education Association.

Section 2 - Purposes

The purposes of this Association shall be to advance public education in Oak Park and Illinois and to promote the welfare of OPTA members.

Article II- Membership, Affiliation and Non-Discrimination

Section 1 – Membership

Membership will be open to all employees in the bargaining unit represented by the Association and employed by Oak Park Elementary School District 97, Oak Park, Illinois. Membership continues year to year on an automatic renewal basis. A continuing member terminates membership upon signed written notice to the local president or the IEA president. Electronic notice is not sufficient.

Section 2 - Affiliation

This Association shall be affiliated with, and comply with the bylaws of the Illinois Education Association (IEA) and the National Education Association (NEA). If there are any conflicts or inconsistencies between these bylaws and the bylaws or constitutions of the state or national organization, the state or national documents shall govern.

Section 3 – Privileges

Members will have full membership services and privileges, including voting, holding office, serving on committees and commissions, serving as a delegate to IEA and NEA assemblies, participating in fringe benefits provided by the Association and related enterprises, and such other rights and privileges as are conferred through the Association governance. Individuals who join as a member when they are first eligible for membership immediately have full voting rights. For individuals who become members after they were first eligible or who rejoin as a member will only have voting rights after they have been a member for 1 pay period.

Section 4 – Censure and Discipline

In the event a charge is filed against a member calling for the censure, suspension, or expulsion of the member, the Executive Board shall conduct a due process hearing and rule on the charge. The decision of the Executive Board may be appealed to the IEA Review Board. The local shall deny membership to an individual while that

individual is denied membership in the IEA pursuant to NEA Bylaw 2-3.d.

Section 5 - Non-Discrimination

This Association shall not deny membership based upon race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status or economic status.

Article III- Governance

Section 1 - Executive Officers

The Executive Officers of the Association shall be the President, two Vice Presidents (one elected by the elementary schools and one elected by the middle schools), a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

Section 2 - Executive Board

The Executive Board shall consist of the Executive Officers, two active members-at-large, two Ethnic Minority Representatives, and all Regional Council Representatives which shall be elected by the Membership.

The Communications/Public Relations, Membership, Legislative, and Grievance Committees and the Minority Caucus will each appoint one of their members to serve as a non-voting member of the Executive Board. The Teacher Leader for Mentoring will serve as a non-voting member of the Executive Board.

Article IV- Executive Officers

Section 1 - Duties

A. **President.** The President shall be the Chief Officer, with the power and the duty to enforce and interpret the Bylaws, carry out Association policies and positions as established by the Executive Board, sign contracts and agreements, represent the Association before the public either personally or through designees, appoint and remove members of all committees with the consent of the Executive Board serve as ex-officio member on all committees personally or by designee, cause a budget to be constructed, cause an annual audit to occur, and preside over meetings of the Executive Board and membership. Further, the President shall have the power and duty to perform all acts generally associated with the nature of the office and such other duties applicable to the office as prescribed by parliamentary authority adopted herein which are not inconsistent with the Bylaws.

1. **Co-Presidents.** Co-Presidents must be nominated together prior to balloting and elected together on the same ballot. In the case that Co-Presidents are elected, any disputes amongst Co-Presidents, will be resolved by a majority vote of the Executive Board. In the case of a vacancy of one co-president, the other co-president will continue the term solo or can request the Executive Board appoint an interim Co-President to finish the life of the term.

- B. **Vice Presidents.** There shall be an Elementary Vice President representing the elementary schools and a Middle School Vice President representing the middle schools. In even-numbered years, the Vice President representing the elementary schools shall exercise the powers of the President in the President's absence or inability to serve other than a vacancy. In odd-numbered years, the Vice President representing the middle schools shall exercise the powers of the President in the President's absence or inability to serve other than a vacancy. The Vice Presidents will serve on the Leadership Committee for Roles and shall also have other duties as may be assigned by the President.

- C. **Secretary.** The Secretary shall maintain the official files and shall assist the President with Association correspondence. The Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of each meeting of the Executive Board and meetings of the membership, and shall notify members of regular and special meetings.

- D. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall maintain the records of membership, keep accurate records of expenses and income, and report such records at meetings of the Executive Board, and meetings of the membership. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the payment of bills and for transmitting dues to the IEA as per IEA policies. The treasurer shall prepare the annual budget and present to the Executive Board for approval.

Section 2 - Terms

- A. The term of office of Executive Officers shall be three years commencing on July 15. The term will be three years and until a successor is elected. Executive Officers should serve no more than three consecutive terms in the office to which they were elected. Officers may succeed themselves.

- B. **Transfer of Records.** Each officer shall transfer records to the Association within ten (10) days of leaving office.

Section 3 - Vacancies

Vacancies occurring by reason of death, resignation, incapacity or other disqualification shall be filled as follows:

- A. **President.** A vacancy in the office of the President in an even-numbered year shall be filled by the Vice President representing the elementary schools for the remainder of the unexpired term. A vacancy in the office of the President in an odd-numbered year shall be filled by the Vice President representing the middle schools for the remainder of the unexpired term. If the Vice President who would fill the vacancy under this provision is unable to serve, the other Vice President shall complete the unexpired term.

B. **Other Officers.** If the vacancy occurs in any other office, the President shall appoint a successor for the remainder of the unexpired term, with the consent of the Executive Board.

C. **President and Vice Presidents.** If a vacancy occurs in both the office of President and of both Vice Presidents, the Secretary or Treasurer, the one who has served the greatest time as a voting member of the Executive Board, shall assume the President's duties until an election is conducted by the Election Committee within sixty (60) days to complete the unexpired terms.

Section 4 - Recall

Any Executive Officer may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those active members voting at a meeting of the membership when a quorum is present. Such recall election shall be conducted by the Election Committee within twenty (20) school days of receipt of a petition stating the specific grounds of the recall and containing the signatures of thirty percent (30%) of the active membership. Only groups who were eligible to vote in the original election should vote in the recall.

Section 5 - Meeting Rules

When the president(s) and at least one of the vice presidents meet outside of the executive board to discuss district wide business, the other vice president will be invited to the meetings, to ensure that all president(s) and vice presidents are aware of OPTA business.

Article V- Regional Council Representative and Alternate

Section 1 - Duties

IEA Regional Council Representatives shall attend the IEA Regional Council meetings, represent the Association and report Council activities to the Executive Board, and membership as necessary.

An alternate shall perform the duties of the Regional Council Representative in his/her absence.

Section 2 - Election, Term, and Recall

The election of a Regional Council Representative and alternates shall be as prescribed by the IEA Bylaws. The terms of Region Council Representatives shall be two years. The election of a Regional Council Representative and alternate must be as prescribed by the IEA Bylaws. A Regional Council Representative or alternate may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those members voting at a membership meeting when a majority of the membership is present. Such recall election will be conducted by the Election Committee upon receipt of a petition stating the specific grounds of the recall and containing the

signatures of thirty (30) percent of the membership.

Section 3 - Vacancies

Vacancies for Regional Council Representatives and alternates must be filled in the manner of the original election as prescribed by the IEA Bylaws.

Article VI - Member at Large

Section 1 – Duties

Members at Large shall serve as a liaison to the general membership. The Members at Large are Responsible for reporting out concerns on behalf of the general membership to the Executive Board.

Section 2 - Election, Term, and Recall

There are two member-at-large positions. The election of the Member at Large positions will occur in years opposite each other. The term of each Member at Large shall be two years. Any Member at Large may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those members voting at a membership meeting when a majority of the membership is present. Such recall election will be conducted by the Election Committee upon receipt of a petition stating the specific grounds of the recall and containing the signatures of thirty (30) percent of the membership.

Section 3 – Vacancies

The President shall notify the membership of a vacancy to collect information on interested parties. From the interested applicants the President will appoint a successor for the remainder of the term, with the consent of the Executive Board

Article VII – Ethnic Minority Representative & Alternate

Section 1 – Duties

Ethnic Minority Representatives shall serve as a liaison to the ethnic minority membership. The Ethnic Minority Representative shall attend and co-chair all minority caucus meetings and events. The Ethnic Minority Representative is responsible for reporting out concerns on behalf of the ethnic minority membership to the Executive Board. The Association shall provide training for EMR, keep the EMR informed of Association activities and positions, and provide incentives for attracting and retaining EMR.

An alternate shall perform the duties of the Ethnic Minority Representative in his/her absence.

Section 2 - Election, Term, and Recall

There are two ethnic minority representative positions. The election of the Ethnic Minority Representative positions will occur in years opposite each other. The term of

the Ethnic Minority Representatives shall be two years. Any Ethnic Minority Representative may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those members voting at a membership meeting when a majority of the membership is present. Such recall election will be conducted by the Election Committee upon receipt of a petition stating the specific grounds of the recall and containing the signatures of thirty (30) percent of the membership.

Section 3 – Vacancies

The President shall notify the membership of a vacancy to collect information on interested parties. From the interested applicants the President will appoint a successor for the remainder of the term, with the consent of the Executive Board.

Article VIII- Executive Board

Section 1 - Duties

The Executive Board shall conduct and supervise the business of the organization, annually recommend a budget for adoption by the Association Representatives, approve such expenditures as are necessary and reasonable for the operation of the organization, consent to the appointment of committees, plan and recommend programs to the membership, develop Bylaws, and consent to the filling of vacancies. The executive board shall call upon the IEA Director of Business Services to conduct a financial review or audit should they determine circumstances warrant such.

Section 2 - Meetings

- A. **Quorum.** A majority of the voting members of the Committee must be present to conduct business and a majority vote of those present shall rule. A majority is considered fifty percent (50%) plus one member.
- B. **Regular Meeting.** The Executive Board shall meet the first Tuesday of each month during the school term and may meet as many additional times as necessary or reasonable to transact its business.
- C. **Special Meetings.** Special meetings may be called by the President or shall be called upon the written request of three members of the Executive Board. Except in cases of emergency, at least one day notice shall be given to all Executive Board members and business shall be limited to that contained in the notice.

Article IX- Association Representative

Section 1 - Duties

The Association Representative is a member of the Association selected by the President to create two-way, personal communication between the Association leadership and the members through individual and small group meetings. The AR

ensures a well-informed membership by distributing information to members personally, and conducting frequent, informative and information-gathering meetings. The ARs shall recruit volunteers for Association responsibilities and activities and generate support for Association positions and programs. The Association shall provide training for ARs, keep the ARs informed of Association activities and positions, and provide incentives for attracting and retaining ARs. A budget shall be adopted annually by the membership which will include at least \$3 per member for arbitration, mediation and fact-finding.

Section 2 - Election, Terms, and Recall

There is a minimum of one Association Representative per building. The election of Association Representative members will occur as follows:

Even Years	Odd Years
Beye	Longfellow
Lincoln	Mann
Whittier	Julian
Holmes	Hatch
Brooks	Irving

The term of office for Association Representative members shall be two years and shall commence on July 15. Any Association Representative may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those members voting at a membership meeting when a majority of the membership is present. Such recall election will be conducted by the Election Committee upon receipt of a petition stating the specific grounds of the recall and containing the signatures of thirty (30) percent of the membership.

Section 3 - Vacancies

The President shall notify the membership of a vacancy to collect information on interested parties. From the interested applicants the President will appoint a successor for the remainder of the term, with the consent of the Executive Board

Section 4 - Meetings

A. **Quorum.** A majority of the members of the Association Representatives must be present to conduct business, and a majority vote of those present will rule. A majority is considered fifty percent (50%) plus one member.

B. **Regular Meeting.** The Association Representatives from all buildings shall meet with the Executive Officers on the first Thursday of every month.

C. **Special Meetings.** Any other special meetings may be called by the President or

called upon the written request of five Association Representatives. At least two days notice shall be given to all Association Representatives and business shall be limited to that contained in the notice.

Article X – Education Council

Section 1 - Education Council Representatives

In accordance with the OPTA Collective Bargaining Agreement, OPTA elects members to the Education Council.

Section 2 - Election, Term, and Recall

There is one Education Council Representative from each building. The election shall take place by June 11. Half of the Education Council members shall be elected each year to a two-year term. Education Council Representatives, with exception of Minority-At-Large and Special Education positions, will be elected by their building. Minority-At-Large and Special Education positions are voted on by the entire membership.

Even Numbered Years

- Hatch
- Irving
- Julian
- Longfellow
- Mann
- Minority-At-Large

Odd Numbered Years

- Beye
- Brooks
- Holmes
- Lincoln
- Whittier
- Minority-At-Large
- Special Education

Any Education Council Representative may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those members voting at a membership meeting when a majority of the membership is present. Such recall election will be conducted by the Election Committee upon receipt of a petition stating the specific grounds of the recall and containing the signatures of thirty (30) percent of the membership.

Section 3 – Vacancies

The President shall notify the appropriate building of a vacancy to collect information on interested parties. From the interested applicants the President will appoint a successor for the remainder of the unexpired term, with the consent of the Executive Board

Article XI- Elections

Section 1 - Elections Committee

- A. **Composition.** The President shall appoint an Election Committee with the approval of the Executive Board with one person serving as the Chairperson appointed by the President. No person running for office may serve on the Election Committee for that Election.

- B. **Duties.** Establish procedures subject to the approval of the Executive Board for nomination of candidates, dissemination of notices concerning the election and conduct of the election and tabulation of the ballots consistent with the procedures established by the IEA Elections Committee. The Elections Committee will also create the sign in sheets, nomination forms and create the ballots for all elections.

- C. **Vacancies.** Should a vacancy occur on the Committee, whether because a member becomes a candidate for office or for any other reason, the vacancy will be filled in the manner of the original appointment.

Section 2 - Election Procedures

- A. **Calendar.** The Elections Committee shall establish a local election calendar with nominations and election timelines.

- B. **Conduct.** All elections shall be conducted by open nomination and secret ballot.

- C. **Nominations.** Reasonable notice of not less than ten (10) school days shall be given for nominations to all offices to be filled. Notice shall include time, place and method for submitting nominations. Candidates may be declared elected when the number of nominated candidates equals the number of positions available, except for the IEA RA and NEA RA delegate elections and any other position where a write-in provision is required.

- D. **Write-In Provisions.** A write-in provision is required if the number of declared candidates is less than the number of positions available and required for IEA RA and NEA RA delegate elections.

- E. **Eligibility.** All active dues paying members must be afforded the opportunity to run for and vote in any election representing active members. This does not include fair share or reserve members.

- F. **Notice.** A fifteen (15) school-day notice of local elections shall be given by posting or by other means of communication with the entire membership.

- G. **Consistency.** All election procedures shall be consistent with Regional, State and Federal requirements.
- H. **Use of Dues.** No dues may be used in support of a candidate for any Local, Regional, State or National office.
- I. **Offices Governed by this Article.** All Local Officers, At-Large Board Members, Association Representatives, Regional Council Representatives, Ethnic Minority Representatives, Delegates to IEA Representative Assembly, Delegates to NEA Representative Assembly.
- J. **Runoff Elections.** In the event that there is no candidate who has received a majority of the votes cast for a particular office, the Elections Committee shall immediately conduct a runoff election between the two (2) candidates who had received the highest number of votes for that office. However, elections for Delegates to the IEA and NEA Representative Assemblies shall be decided by plurality votes, except where a candidate is elected as a delegate by virtue of being elected as a local officer. Runoff elections will be run in the same manner as the original election.
- K. **Results of the Election.** The results of the election must be published in a timely manner, which allows members to obtain the information without unusual effort.

Section 3 - Election Challenges

Any member desiring to challenge the conduct of any elect must file a written challenge according the procedures as follows:

- A. **Local Level:** Initial challenges to all local elections governed by this Article will be filed with the Local Elections Committee. Such challenges must be made in writing no later than seven (7) calendar days of the issuance of election results.
- B. **Region, State, and National Level:** Consult the region, state, and national governing documents for additional challenge procedures and timelines, especially for offices which serve as delegates to the IEA and NEA Representative Assemblies.

Article XII- Arbitration and Grievance Appeal

The Association is committed to fair representation of all persons within the bargaining unit, regardless of Association membership, as required by law. The Executive Board shall decide whether or not a grievance shall be processed to final and binding arbitration. Recommendations should be provided to the Executive Board from the

Grievance Committee. The affected bargaining unit individual(or a designated representative if there are several grievents) has a right to address the Executive Board before they decide whether to take the matter to arbitration.

Article XIII- Committees

Section 1 - Appointment

Committees may be established on a standing and/or ad hoc basis by the Executive Board. The President shall appoint members to any committees and name the chairperson with the consent of the Executive Board.

Section 2 – Standing Committees

In addition to the Elections Committee, there will be the following standing committees: Negotiations, Sick Leave Bank, Grievance, Insurance, Legislative, Calendar, Teacher Evaluation, Membership, Early Career, Communications/Public Relations, and Minority Caucus.

Special committees may be formed such as, but not limited to Curriculum and Instruction, Social, Bylaw Review, and Budget.

Section 3 - Reporting

Committees will report to the president by the following executive board meeting with the exception of the negotiations committee, which is on an as needed basis.

Section 4 - Negotiations Committee and Bargaining Team

The Negotiations Committee shall explore and prepare programs as necessary in all areas of employee welfare, contractual and otherwise. The committee shall solicit input from the membership as a whole.

The Bargaining Team will be selected by the Executive Board at least 6 months prior to the expiration date of the current contract. The application process will be opened 8 months before the expiration date of the current contract. Members will be selected according to a process decided by the Executive Board.

Section 5 - Sick Leave Bank Committee

The Sick Leave Bank Committee is the governing committee responsible for administering the Sick Leave Bank, which includes, but is not limited to:

1. Making eligibility determinations;
2. Determining the number of days granted to each applicant;
3. Ensuring that days are granted in accordance with contractual guidelines and legal requirements;
4. Maintaining Sick Leave Bank applications for up to three (3) years and shredding all confidential documents at the end of that time.

5. Recording and reporting use of Sick Leave Bank days to Human Resources

Section 6 - Grievance Committee

The Grievance Committee shall be responsible for monitoring and enforcing the contract. It shall assist members in the application of the grievance procedure. It will make recommendations whether to arbitrate grievances to the Executive Board.

Section 7 - Insurance Committee

The purpose of this committee is to discuss and make decisions regarding the health insurance benefits that all district employees can access. Representation on this committee includes administration, the Board of Education, teachers, secretaries, teacher assistants, and custodians.

Section 8 - Minority Caucus

The mission of the OPTA Minority Caucus is to foster rapport among minority teachers by seeking out opportunities to connect and mentor each other as well as to facilitate discussions that arise regarding racial equity within our district.

Section 9 - Legislative Committee

The Legislative Committee shall work with IEA Government Relations to help promote activities, which lead to the passage of desirable state and federal legislation for schools. At the Local Level the committee will interview and make recommendations for Board of Education Members, referendums, and other local elections.

Section 10 - Calendar Committee

The purpose of the Calendar Committee is to establish the district calendar for a given academic year.

Section 11 - Teacher Evaluation Committee

The purpose of the Teacher Evaluation is to review and reflect upon teacher evaluation tools.

Section 12 - Membership Committee

The Membership Committee shall implement an Association welcome for all newly hired employees, ask each newly hired employee about their goals and interests; it shall inform the potential member of the policies, programs, and accomplishments of the local, state, and national Associations which support those goals and interests and of the opportunity for the potential member to participate in and influence the life of the Association.

The Chairperson for Membership is responsible for tracking who is and is not a member for purposes of ongoing recruitment of members; and shall conduct an annual review /or reconciliation of the local's membership roster to the IEA membership roster to ensure that all members are included and appropriately classified. The chairperson is responsible for working with the district's payroll office to coordinate the payroll deductions for dues and with the OPTA Treasurer to make certain that all dues monies are paid promptly.

Section 13 - Communications/Public Relations Committee

The Public Relations Committee shall be responsible for planning and implementing the Public Relations activities of the local association. The Committee assimilates and gathers information of interest to members and publishes the information as necessary. The committee will also maintain a website for members, as well as an e-mail mailing list of members.

Section 14 - Early Career Committee

The Early Career Committee shall meet to identify the needs and topics of interest to those in their first through tenth year in the field of education and provide support to them through social events, mini PD, and networking.

Article XIV- Meeting of the Membership

Section 1. Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the membership will be held at least twice a year; One prior to winter break and one after winter break. Dates will be decided by the Executive Board and will be announced no later than one month prior to the meetings.

Section 2. Special Meetings:

Special meetings of the membership may be called by the President, a majority of the Executive Board, or a petition by thirty (30) percent of the membership. Except in case of emergency, at least 7 calendar days' notice shall be given. The Secretary shall notify the membership as soon as possible.

Section 3. Electronic Meetings

Electronic meetings of the membership may be scheduled in lieu of in-person meetings when public health emergencies have been declared or as otherwise determined by the President. Electronic meetings may include telephone conference, video conference, webinar or other method of communications, provided all participants are able to be heard by and communicate with all other participants. Notice requirements, as otherwise required for regular in-person membership meetings, still apply. Quorum requirements for electronic meetings remain in effect. Those who join the electronic meeting should be counted towards a determination of a quorum. All participants in the electronic meeting must be able to be heard by and communicate with all other participants. Minutes must be kept, adding in the additional details of how the electronic meeting was conducted.

Article XV- Voting

Section 1 - General

Unless otherwise provided herein, the adoption of all business by the Executive Board and the membership shall be by a majority of those voting. Proxy voting is not

permitted.

Electronic voting is permitted for contract ratification, membership dues increases, bylaw changes, local executive officers and other voting executive board positions where notice is given to members at least five (5) days before the vote and voting remains open for at least five (5) days after the ballot is delivered, provided that the number of votes cast constitutes a quorum. Electronic voting, for this sole purpose, may consist of voting by email or other electronic means. Electronic voting may be scheduled in lieu of in-person elections when public health emergencies have been declared or as otherwise determined by the president.

Section 2 - Contract

- A. The tentative agreement will be given to the Executive Board for their review and recommendation to the general membership.
- B. The ratification vote will occur on the eighth day in each of the ten individual schools and administration buildings. The election will be conducted and monitored by the Association Representatives at each location. Voting will begin one half hour before school and end one half hour after school. All voting will be by secret ballot by active members. This does not include fair share members. Any discrepancies or difficulties that occur during the election must be immediately reported to the OPTA President by interoffice mail or as specified by special arrangement. Electronic voting may be scheduled in lieu of in-person elections when public health emergencies have been declared or as otherwise determined by the president.
- C. No proxy or absentee votes will be allowed.
- D. Association Representatives will count the ballots upon the close of the election and report the results of their official vote count by phone to the OPTA President no later than 6:00PM. Association Representatives will return all ballots and signature sheet(s) to the OPTA President by interoffice mail or as specified by special arrangement.
- E. The OPTA President will communicate the results of the ratification vote to the membership the day following the election.

Article XVI- Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the proceedings of the Association in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the bylaws of NEA, IEA, these bylaws, or any special rules of order the Association may adopt.

Article XVII- Notice

Wherever the word “notice” is used, notice may be given by personal delivery, on paper, electronically or other method to reasonably assure receipt by the necessary parties.

Article XVIII- Dues

Local dues of at least \$15 shall be established by the Executive Board. The IEA-NEA dues shall be transmitted to the IEA-NEA as per IEA-NEA policies. The books and records of the organization will be open to inspection by any member upon reasonable request.

Article XIV- Savings Clause

In the event a portion or portions of these Bylaws are found to be inconsistent with state or federal law, such portions to the extent that they violate the law shall be deemed deleted and of no force and effect.

Article XXI- Amending Procedures

Proposed revisions of these Bylaws shall be submitted by the Executive Board to the full membership at a regular or special meeting a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present will rule, provided that all members of the Association have been sent notice of the date and place of the meeting and the proposed revision(s) at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. The local shall review its bylaws at least once every five (5) years to ensure compliance with the IEA and NEA Bylaws. A copy of the amended bylaws will be immediately sent to the IEA Executive Office.

Adopted *prior to 1958*

Amended _____, 20_____