

Bylaws

Article I Parliamentary Authority

The parliamentary authority for all Association meetings is Robert's Rules of Order, Tenth edition, 2000. Any updated editions of Robert's Rules of Order, readily available concurrently in Braille, audio or electronic formats including availability from the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped shall replace the tenth edition or any subsequent editions as the Parliamentary Authority.

Article II Officers and Board Members

Section 1 Qualifications for Service as an officer

In order for a member to serve as an officer of the Association, the member must meet the following requirements.

- (1) Dues for the current year are paid in full.
- (2) The member has attended one of the schools mentioned in Article III of the Constitution of the Association.
- (3) The individual must be a member of the Association for at least twelve (12) months.

Section 2 Qualifications for service as a Board Member

In order for a member to serve as a board member who is not currently an officer of the Association, the member must meet both of the following requirements.

- (1) Dues for the current year are paid in full.
- (2) The member has been a member of the Association for at least twelve (12) months.

Section 3 Composition of the Board of Directors

Two-thirds (2/3) of the Board of Directors must have attended one of the schools mentioned in Article III of the Constitution of the Association. If this composition changes so that the composition is less than two-thirds (2/3), the Board of Directors will seek to fill the vacant positions thus restoring the two-thirds (2/3) composition. Each person chosen will be elected by a majority vote of the Board of Directors and will complete any unexpired term.

Section 4 Duties of Officers and Board Members

- (1) The duties of the President shall be:
 - (a) to chair all meetings of the Board of Directors and any business meetings of the Association,
 - (b) to appoint, subject to Board approval, all chairpersons for standing and special committees except the nominating committee, who may be nominated by any Board member, with nominees being elected to serve by a majority vote of the Board of Directors,
 - (c) to appoint a parliamentarian when the vice-president is unable to serve in that capacity,
 - (d) to call, with the assistance of the Secretary, all regular and special meetings of the Board of Directors and of the entire membership of the Association.
 - (e) To serve as an ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee.
- (2) The duties of the vice-president shall be:
 - (a) to perform all of the duties of the President whenever the President is unable to perform the

duties of the presidency,

- (b) to assist the president as needed,
- (c) to serve on at least one standing committee excluding the nominating committee,
- (d) to serve as the parliamentarian for the Association.

(3) The duties of the Secretary shall be:

- (a) to keep and maintain all records of the Association,
- (b) to record the minutes of all meetings of the Board of Directors, the executive committee, and business meetings of the entire Association,
- (c) to handle the correspondence of the Association,
- (d) to communicate notices in written, oral or electronic form of all Board and business meetings of the Association.
- (e) to notify the Board of Directors and the chairperson of the nominating committee of the expiration of the terms of office of officers and members of the Board of Directors within 90 days prior to term expirations.

(4) The duties of the Assistant Secretary shall be:

- (a) to perform all of the duties of the Secretary whenever the Secretary is unable to perform the duties of the secretariat,
- (b) to assist the secretary as needed.

(5) The duties of the treasurer shall be:

- (a) to keep and maintain all financial records of the Association,
- (b) to oversee all contributions, payments of dues, gifts-in-kind or any other asset that is received by the Association and disbursements or any other types of expenditure, real or otherwise, made by and/or on behalf of the Association,
- (c) to prepare periodic income/expense reports provided to the Board of Directors and to members upon request,
- (d) to serve as a member of the finance committee, and
- (e) to ensure that all necessary forms and communications are provided to governmental authorities as required by law.

(6) The duties of a board member who is not an officer shall be:

- (a) to assist the officers as needed,
- (b) to serve on at least one standing committee,
- (c) to assist with fund-raising for the Association.

(7) The attendance policy for meetings of the Board of Directors shall be:

- (a) To maintain consistent attendance at all scheduled meetings of the Board of Directors, except for cases of emergencies, illness, death, or acts of nature, absences whether anticipated shall require notification to the Board of Directors.

Section 5 Removal from Office

(1) Any officer or Board member may be removed from office by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors for any or all of the following reasons:

- (a) being more than six (6) months late on membership dues owed to the Association,
- (b) habitually failing to perform the duties of the office to which the member has been elected,
- (c) being involved in any criminal activity which would adversely affect the Association.

(2) If the removed member wishes to be reinstated to office, the member must submit an appeal in writing to the secretary within thirty (30) days of the removal. Within thirty (30) days of receiving a written appeal, the Board of Directors shall refer the matter to the appeals review committee consisting of nine (9) members of the Association, none of which may be a current member of the Board of Directors. The hearing, as scheduled by the chairperson of the appeals review committee, may occur in person or by telephone communication. At least seven (7) members of the appeals review committee must be present or connected by telephone for the hearing to be conducted. A majority vote of the appeals review committee will re-instate the member to office, provided the qualifications for holding the particular office are met. A two-thirds (2/3) vote not to re-instate the member to office will certify the removal by the Board of Directors who will seek to fill the vacant position with another qualified member of the Association.

Article III Committees

Section 1 Standing Committees

(1) The Association will maintain the following standing committees: convention, membership, finance, awards/scholarship, nominating, communications, archives and history, education, constitution and bylaws, resource development, legislative/advocacy and benevolence. Each of these committees may form sub-committees from the Association membership as needed to assist with performing its duties.

(2) The purposes of the standing committees are as follows:

- (a) **Convention:** to plan, organize and conduct the annual convention of the Association,
- (b) **Membership:** to plan, organize and conduct methods and drives to initiate, maintain and increase membership in the Association, and maintain and distribute a membership directory,
- (c) **Finance:** to prepare annual budgets and guide the Association with sound fiscal planning and management,
- (d) **Awards/Scholarship:** to plan and develop an awards and scholarship program including developing awards and scholarship resources, administering awards and scholarship resources and selecting awards and scholarship recipients.
- (e) **Nominating:** to provide qualified nominees who are willing to serve on the Association Board of Directors. If two members are nominated to chair the nominating committee, a vote between the two nominees shall occur with one being chosen by majority vote. If more than two are nominated, the two receiving the highest number of votes shall run for the chair, the chair being elected by majority vote.
- (f) **Communications:** to create, develop and maintain an Association web site, and oversee the production and distribution of publications produced by and on behalf of the Association.
- (g) **Archives and History:** to preserve the archives and history of the North Carolina State Schools for the Blind and Deaf and the Governor Morehead School, in collaboration with the GMS Historical Society, ensuring that a museum for such purposes is in existence.

(h) **Education:** to collaborate with and promote the Governor Morehead School and to plan, coordinate and conduct seminars, lectures and classes for the education of blind and deaf children and adults and their families and friends.

(I) **Constitution and Bylaws:** to receive proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws, to recommend proposed amendments to the Board of Directors, and to annually review the Constitution and Bylaws for possible amendment recommendations.

(j) **Resource Development:** to plan, coordinate and direct all fund-raising efforts.

(k) **Legislative/Advocacy:** to monitor, communicate, and inform the Board of Directors and the general membership of the Association of any legislation or legislative actions that may impact or influence the lives of the blind and deaf populations in North Carolina and to plan, organize and execute strategies to facilitate effective advocacy related to issues impacting the blind and deaf populations of North Carolina.

(l) **Benevolence:** to provide acknowledgements, tributes, expressions of sympathy to members of the Association or immediate family members of the Association through the presentation of cards, or letters of condolence, or flowers, or modest financial contributions at the discretion of the Benevolence committee and to provide an annual monetary sponsorship or gift in-kind to a needy individual or family who is blind or deaf at a special time during the year such as Christmas or holiday season from among applicants or recommendations received and reviewed by the committee; and to provide assistive technology or other services to a blind or visually impaired individual or deaf individual as resources are available for such assistive technology or other services

Section 2 Special Committees

Special committees may be established as needed to perform certain functions and may be dissolved upon completion of the assignment. Examples of such committees include the following: appeals review committee, resolutions committee, tellers committee and roster committee. These committees may be formed by the Association at business meetings, the Board of Directors or as directed by the constitution or bylaws of the Association.

Article IV Dues

Annual and life membership dues are set by the Board of Directors and may be changed by a majority vote at a business meeting of the Association. Annual membership shall be based on a calendar year with each membership year beginning on January 1 and running through December 31 of that same year. New members shall pay the annual dues when joining and shall pay the same amount no matter when they join during the year. Former members who rejoin the Association shall pay annual dues as when joining for the first time. A life membership may be paid in up to six (6) installments not to extend beyond a two-year period. Once the life membership is paid in full, the member shall be a member for life and shall owe no more dues to the Association.

Article V Meetings

Section 1 Business Meetings of the entire Association

Members of the Association shall be given a notice not less than 30 days when a business meeting of the Association is called. A business meeting may occur during a convention or at any other time of the year provided a notice of thirty (30) days or more is given. A business meeting of the Association is called either by a majority vote of the Board of Directors or by a petition submitted to the Board of Directors by the greater of 20% or 25 members of the Association.

Section 2 Board of Directors Meetings

Notice of forty-eight (48) hours or more for the calling of any regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors shall be given to members of the Board of Directors. Meetings shall be called by the president or by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members of the Board of Directors.

Article VI Amendments

The bylaws of the Association may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership at a duly called business meeting of the Association. An oral or written announcement of the proposed amendment must be given at least fifteen (15) days before the vote on the amendment is cast.

These Bylaws are hereby adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the organizing Board of Directors on January 4, 2007 and ratified by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership at a duly called business meeting on August 11, 2007.

These Bylaws are hereby amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership in attendance at a duly called business meeting on August 2, 2008. These Bylaws are hereby amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership in attendance at a duly called business meeting on August 6, 2011.

These Bylaws are hereby amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership in attendance at a duly called business meeting on August 4, 2012.

These Bylaws are hereby amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership in attendance at a duly called business meeting on August 3, 2013.

These Bylaws are hereby amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership in attendance at a duly called business meeting on August 2, 2014.

These Bylaws are hereby amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership in attendance at a duly called business meeting on August 8, 2015.