

Role/Responsibilities of an NEA Director
General Description of Officer Position as Set Forth in NEA Board of Directors Handbook

Although the role of the individual NEA director may differ from state to state, there are certain general responsibilities common to all directors. These responsibilities and activities are outlined in the following position description adopted by the NEA Board of Directors at its February 1993 meeting. The position description codifies existing policies, ongoing practices, and actions of the Board that delineate the national, regional, state, and local roles and responsibilities of an NEA director.

NATIONAL LEVEL

A. Program and Policy Development and Implementation

The NEA Board of Directors acts for the Association between meetings of the Representative Assembly. NEA governance documents and/or policies authorize the Board to—

- Monitor the implementation of policy set by the NEA Representative Assembly and the Board of Directors (*Bylaw 5-7.a*)
- Adopt and maintain procedures as specified in the NEA Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules or as required by Representative Assembly action, e.g., affiliation procedures (*Bylaw 5-7.d*), director recall procedures (*5-13.d*), and the procedures for challenging the election of a director (*Bylaw 5-1.c*) and member of the Executive Committee (*Bylaw 6-1.c*)
- Act on boycott recommendations from the Executive Committee (*Standing Rule 6, G*)
- Review, modify, and approve the legislative program for presentation to the Representative Assembly
- Propose amendments to the various governance documents of the Association for submission to the Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules for presentation to the Representative Assembly (*Constitution, Article IX, Section 1.d and Standing Rule 9, B*)
- Introduce new business items at the Representative Assembly (*Standing Rule 6, A*)
- Accept nominations for awards and/or select award recipients, e.g., Friend of Education (*Board policy*)
- Receive all reports of the Executive Director, the Secretary-Treasurer, and of committees, and transmit appropriate reports to the Representative Assembly with its recommendations (*Bylaw 5-7.f*)
- Determine the time and place of the Annual Meeting and, in the event of an emergency, postpone the Annual Meeting by a two-thirds (2/3) vote (*Bylaw 5-7.b*)
- Develop policy on emerging issues when appropriate in response to initiatives of the Association and/or the Association President (*Constitution, Article V, Section 3*)
- Develop policy to enhance and/or modify existing programs (*Constitution, Article V, Section 3*)
- Recommend the development of new programs and services (*Constitution, Article V, Section 3*)
- Establish procedures and/or requirements for affiliation consistent with the standards set forth in the NEA Bylaws (*Bylaw 5-7.d*)
- Establish a committee to review and to recommend recognition or withdrawal of recognition of a Special Interest Group (*Bylaw 5-7.e*)

B. Fiscal Powers and Fiduciary Responsibilities

To ensure the financial solvency of the Association and to effectively implement Association programs and policies, the Board of Directors assumes responsibilities that are fiscal in nature. The Board is authorized to—

- Receive annual audit report from the Executive Committee (*Bylaw 6-9.b*)
- Review and tentatively approve, in even-numbered years, a two-year budget at least forty-five (45) days prior to the Annual Meeting; direct its printing for transmission to state and local affiliate presidents and to others as determined by the Board of Directors not later than thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Meeting (*Bylaw 11-9*); and, propose the budget to the Representative Assembly (*Bylaw 5-9*)
- Recommend adjustments as deemed necessary in the second year of a biennial budget at a meeting held at least forty-five (45) days prior to the Annual Meeting and report them to the Representative Assembly. The Representative Assembly will receive and act on the modifications recommended by the Board of Directors. (*Bylaw 11-9.e*)
- Authorize, by a two-thirds vote, disbursements from the Capital Improvement Fund to acquire new properties or to provide for major long-term improvement in existing properties (*Bylaw 11-5.b*)
- Establish investment policies for the General Fund and for the Capital Improvement Fund (*Bylaw 11-5.c*)
- Authorize allocations in excess of \$50,000 from the contingency fund (*Board policy*)
- Establish the dues of Retired members (*Bylaw 2-7.h*)
- Establish the dues of Substitute members (*Bylaw 2-7.i*)
- Make appropriations from the General Fund in accordance with *Bylaw 11-3.c*
- Establish recommended NEA Fund for Children and Public Education contributions and participate in fundraising activities in home states and at the NEA Annual Meeting (*Board policy*)
- Set the salaries of the executive officers in accordance with the provisions of *Bylaw 5-7.h*
- Establish UniServ Grant allocations in accordance with the policy of the NEA Board of Directors (*Bylaw 2-7.a*)

C. Development and Implementation of the NEA Strategic Plan

Board members serve as a major link between individual members and affiliates and the NEA strategic planning process. Board members are directly involved in a scanning procedure to solicit input at the state level to support the NEA strategic planning process. Using this input, the Board annually reviews the Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives, which then become the basis for the subsequent year's budget.

D. The Committee Process

The NEA committee structure provides for standing committees of the Representative Assembly, strategic objective standing committees, advisory standing committees, and special committees.

These committees report to the President, Board of Directors, and Executive Committee between meetings of the Representative Assembly.

The Association President designates a Board liaison for each NEA standing and special committee. Board liaisons are appointed from among the Board members who serve on a standing or special committee. Such liaisons will respond to questions or concerns that arise during Board meetings relative to committee activities. Opportunities for reports on standing committee activities will be available at each Board meeting. (*Board policy*)

Various NEA Bylaw provisions specify the role of the Board of Directors in the committee process. The Bylaws cited below authorize the Board to—

- Approve committee appointments made by the NEA President (*Bylaw 4-1.c*)
- Review committee reports prior to their transmittal to the Representative Assembly (*Bylaw 5-7.f*)
- Ensure ethnic-minority representation on all committees over which it has direct control (*Bylaw 5-7.c*)

E. Communications

NEA directors have significant responsibility for facilitating communications between and among the various groups in the Association family. In order to make informed decisions, directors 14

must be aware of the needs and desires of state and local affiliates as well as those of members. Through ongoing contact with affiliates and members, directors gain the knowledge of state issues and concerns that serve as the basis for Board actions.

Conversely, directors must represent NEA to affiliates and members and must assume responsibility for facilitating their understanding and encouraging their support for the positions and policies of the Association.

F. Congressional Briefing and Lobbying Activities

Prior to each Board meeting and when feasible, NEA directors are briefed on the status of Association issues and initiatives in Congress. Following these briefings, directors contact selected Congressional offices to advance the Association's federal agenda.

The NEA director(s) and the state president should lobby as a team at the national level. The state executive director would be included on the team as appropriate. NEA leadership may request NEA directors to conduct home congressional office visits with members of their legislative delegation.

G. Operating Procedures of the Board

Board meetings

The Board meets four (4) times per year with one meeting held in connection with the Annual Meeting, and at other times it deems necessary to conduct the business of the Association. The President or a majority of the members of the Board determines the time and place of meetings. The Board enacts rules and procedures to govern the conduct of its meetings. (*Bylaw 5-11*)

STATE LEVEL

A major responsibility of every director in their home state is to exercise leadership in interpreting the policies and governing documents of NEA. It is essential that the NEA director and the state leadership confer and communicate frequently. The director should be certain that NEA policies and programs are understood at the state level and that the state leadership recognizes its role in implementing such policies and programs.

The following Board policies describe the role of NEA directors in state Association activities, specifically noting responsibilities to—

- Exercise leadership in interpreting NEA policies and programs at the state, local, and building levels
- Exercise leadership in advancing the unified agenda
- Be a part of the state leadership team and meet regularly to discuss ways to advance state and national programs (NEA directors should be informed of the allocation of project grants and services to the states within their respective region.)
- Have a visible and meaningful role at state leadership conferences and delegate assemblies
- Make verbal and/or written reports at state board meetings and delegate assemblies
- Meet prior to NEA Board meetings with other members of the state leadership team for the purpose of discussing agenda items and meet following Board meetings to discuss actions taken

A. Relationship with State Officers and Leaders

The state affiliate shall designate at least one of its NEA state directors to serve on the board of directors (or equivalent governing body) of the state affiliate with full rights of participation. *(Bylaw 8-11.a)*

At least one NEA state director should serve on state level executive committees in states that have such committees. *(Board policy)*

NEA directors should be recognized as an official spokesperson for the NEA at state functions sponsored by the NEA (i.e., invitations should be extended for directors to participate, speak, or introduce NEA leaders at state functions). Opportunities to participate in public relations events at the state level should also be afforded to NEA directors. *(Board policy)*

B. Strategic Planning

NEA Directors working with state leadership teams, state boards of directors, and to the extent possible with local leaders and membership groups, generate input into the strategic planning process.