
OHIO COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

CONSTITUTION

Adopted January 2012

ARTICLE I (NAME and PURPOSE)

Section 1. This organization shall be known as the Ohio Council of Teachers of English Language Arts.

Section 2. The Ohio Council of Teachers of English Language Arts is a nationally recognized, non-profit charitable organization that serves English language arts educators in the classroom and the extended education community.

OCTELA's goals are to promote best practice and teacher leadership, to advocate for fair and appropriate education policy, and to provide resources and quality professional development that support diverse literacies, classrooms and students. It is our hope to bring Ohio's English language arts educators together to build friendships, share ideas, and celebrate teaching and learning.

Section 3. The primary purposes of this organization shall be to provide for its members and others interested in the English language arts:

A. information about theory and research in the English language arts;

B. demonstration in practical application of that information in the teaching of the English language arts.

Section 4. These purposes shall be implemented to improve the effectiveness of the teaching of English language arts through:

A. the promotion of discussion of methods to improve the teaching of the English language arts in pre-school, in elementary, middle/junior high and secondary schools, and in colleges and universities;

B. meetings that include, but are not limited to, an annual Spring Conference, for demonstration of teaching skills, instruction about research-based findings, and the study and discussion of methods to improve the teaching of English language arts;

C. the promotion and support of "best practices" in English language arts and the evaluation of the results achieved;

D. the publication of reports, articles, and research studies dealing with the teaching of English language arts;

E. cooperation with other groups and individuals whose purposes are consonant with those of this association;

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- F. assistance in the formation and continuation of other NCTE affiliates in Ohio;
 - G. affiliation with the National Council of Teachers of English;
 - H. recognition of excellence in student and educator achievement.

ARTICLE II (MEMBERSHIP)

- Section 1.** Any person interested in the purposes of this organization is eligible for membership.

ARTICLE III (OFFICERS AND DUTIES)

- Section 1.** The elected officers of this organization shall be president, president-elect, vice-president, immediate past president, secretary, and secretary-elect. All officers shall be members of the Ohio Council of Teachers of English Language Arts and the National Council of Teachers of English.

- Section 2.** A slate of officers representative of OCTELA's diversity should be put forth by the past-president for the approval of the Executive Committee, no later than November 1. This slate will either be mailed to the membership or published in the OCTELA's newsletter (*Ohio Voices*). Members will be asked to affirm or reject this slate either by response to the mailing, the *Ohio Voices* article, or by a vote at the Spring Conference.

- Section 3.** The president shall organize and preside at all meetings, appoint the chairs of all necessary committees, and conduct the business of the organization.

- Section 4.** The president-elect shall serve as chair of the Spring Conference and shall preside in the absence of the president.

- Section 5.** The vice-president may assist the president-elect and conference co-chair in planning the Spring Conference and assist the president in other activities as needed. The vice-president shall serve as communication chair.

Vice-president (elected annually)

- Serves one year as vice-president
- Serves one year as president-elect
- Serves one year as president
- Serves one year as immediate past president

- Section 6.** The immediate past president shall chair the board of trustees meeting, shall organize the Outstanding Educators Awards committee, and shall prepare a slate of officers for approval by the Executive Committee.

- Section 7.** The secretary shall take minutes of the Executive Committee meetings and the annual business meeting of the organization; minutes shall be sent to Executive Committee members no more than two weeks after each Executive meeting. The secretary shall also provide printed copies of minutes at each Executive Committee meeting.

- Section 8.** The secretary-elect shall assist the secretary as needed and shall provide an up to date roster at every Executive Committee meeting. The secretary-elect shall assist in the performance of these duties as needed.

Secretary-elect (elected annually)
Serves one year as secretary-elect
Serves one year as secretary

- Section 9.** A vacancy in any office shall be filled by an appointment by the president with the approval of the Executive Committee.
- Section 10.** Any Executive Committee member who misses three board meetings within that member's term of office without notifying the board president shall be dropped from the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will have the power to appoint an interim replacement to complete the vacated position.

ARTICLE IV (EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE)

- Section 1.** The authority and responsibility for conducting the affairs of the organization shall be vested in the Executive Committee.
- Section 2.** The Executive Committee shall be composed of the elected officers of the organization, the executive director, the treasurer, the editors of the *Ohio Journal of English Language Arts* and *Ohio Teachers Write* and all board appointed liaisons and chairs of all standing committees.
- Section 3.**
- A.** The Executive Committee shall select the executive director who will be paid a yearly sum to be determined by the committee. The executive director will be evaluated yearly by the Executive Committee. The executive director will give one year's notice before resigning from the position. The duties of the executive director include but are not limited to the following:
1. serve as membership chair
 2. prepare and mail newsletters and other information necessary for membership
 3. assist the committees as appointed by the president
 4. assist the NCTE liaison in completing the annual report
 5. maintain an updated roster of the executive committee and affiliate membership
- B.** The Executive Committee shall select the treasurer who will be paid a yearly sum to be determined by the committee. The treasurer will be evaluated yearly by the Executive Committee. The treasurer will give one year's notice before resigning the position. The duties of the treasurer include but are not limited to the following:
1. keep accurate financial records of the organization
 2. collect and disburse monies with the authorization of the Executive Committee
 3. manage and oversee the investment of funds for the organization
 4. prepare an annual budget with the assistance of the finance committee
 5. submit an annual federal tax report to the Internal Revenue Service and to NCTE in a timely fashion
 6. arrange an annual audit
- C.** OCTELA affiliate liaisons shall serve a term of three years on the Executive Committee and be appointed by their own association(s).
- D.** The Executive Committee will name the editor of the *Ohio Journal of English Language Arts* and the editor of *Ohio Teachers Write* for initial terms of three years. Each position may

be renewed for an additional two-year period by mutual agreement of the editor and the Executive Committee. Notice of one year should be given by an editor who needs to resign before the end of a term of office. The search for a new editor will be conducted, in the final year of an editor's term of office, by the president, past president, advisor, and any other Executive Committee members appointed by the president.

E. The advisor to the Executive Committee shall be appointed by the president with the approval of the Executive Committee and shall serve a term of three years which may be renewed. The advisor is charged with maintaining the archives of the organization.

F. The Executive Committee shall choose from the membership of the organization for a term of three years an NCTE liaison officer who shall be a member of the National Council of Teachers of English. The term may be renewed. The liaison officer is charged with keeping the Executive Committee informed concerning NCTE activities and serving as a member of the NCTE Board of Directors.

G. The Executive Committee shall invite a language arts consultant from the Ohio Department of Education to serve on the Executive Committee as the liaison to the Ohio Department of Education.

H. The president shall appoint liaisons and chairs of standing committees for three-year renewable terms.

Section 4. The Executive Committee shall elect from its membership for a term of one year as many directors of the National Council of Teachers of English as the organization is entitled to. Depending on the number of directors indicated by NCTE, the representation will be as follows: NCTE liaison, executive director, president, president-elect, and vice-president.

ARTICLE V (MEETINGS)

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall meet at least three times during the year at the call of the president.

Section 2. A majority of the Executive Committee present at any meeting shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business, providing that notice has been given of the meeting.

Section 3. The time, number, and place of the meetings of the organization shall be determined by the Executive Committee. An affiliate, wishing to serve as host to a meeting of the organization, shall present an invitation to the Executive Committee for its consideration.

Section 4. At least one general business meeting shall be called annually.

ARTICLE VI (AMENDMENTS)

Section 1. Amendments to the constitution may be initiated by a majority vote of the Executive Committee or of the membership voting at a regularly scheduled meeting of either group.

Section 2. At the time of the initiating of an amendment, it shall be decided by a majority vote of the initiating body whether ratification shall proceed by mail/electronic ballot or by a vote at the next general business meeting. No ratifying action shall be effective without previous notice

to the membership. Such initiated amendments shall be ratified either by a two-thirds majority of those responding or by a two-thirds majority of the membership voting at the next general business meeting.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I (FISCAL YEAR)

Section 1. The financial accounting period (fiscal year) for the Ohio Council of Teachers of English Language Arts shall run from July 1 to June 30 of the next calendar year.

ARTICLE II (STANDING COMMITTEES and COORDINATORS)

Section 1. The standing committees of this organization shall be the finance committee, the curriculum and instruction committee, the Spring Conference committee, the membership committee, the outreach committee and the professional development committee.

Section 2. As new NCTE affiliates are formed in the state, each such affiliate shall appoint a representative to the executive committee for a three-year term.

Section 3. With the approval of the Executive Committee, the president shall appoint chairs of the following committees: curriculum and instruction, Spring Conference, outreach committee, and teacher education and professional concerns committee. The chairs of the committees shall appoint, in consultation with the Executive Committee, the members of their respective committees.

Section 4. The finance committee shall be composed of six members: the president-elect, the treasurer, the secretary-elect, the executive director, the advisor, and one member at large to be appointed annually by the president.

The responsibilities of the finance committee are to prepare the budget, function in an oversight capacity for the budget and reimbursements, work with the treasurer to inform members of the executive board as to budgeting guidelines and restraints, make recommendations to the executive committee regarding certain expenditures, review and propose appropriate stipends for work done for the executive committee, approve the auditor and/or accountant to work with the treasurer, establish a mileage policy, and establish a yearly finance committee meeting schedule.

Section 5. The curriculum and instruction chair shall, with OCTELA executive board liaisons, study concerns that affect English language arts teachers and report the consensus to the executive committee for approval/action.

Section 6. The Spring Conference Chair shall create a committee that includes, but is not limited to, the following: treasurer, vice president, conference coordinator, and registrar. This committee shall plan and direct the Spring Conference—setting a budget, selecting and hiring speakers, arranging the program, selecting the site, making all local arrangements, etc.—with the approval of the Executive Committee.

Section 7. Ad hoc committees shall be appointed by the president in order to carry out the business of

the organization.

- Section 8.** The president shall appoint, with the approval of the Executive Committee, two OCTELA members to serve on the Buckeye Children's Book Award committee for a term of three years. One of these appointees shall serve as an ex-officio member of the executive committee.
- Section 9.** The president shall appoint, with the approval of the Executive Committee, coordinators for the following student awards: the NCTE Promising Young Writers Award, the NCTE Writing Achievement Awards, and the NCTE Program to Recognize Excellence in Student Literary Magazines. These coordinators shall serve three-year terms as ex-officio members of the Executive Committee.
- Section 10.** The president shall appoint with the approval of the Executive Committee a coordinator(s) of the OCTELA Bonnie Chambers Award to serve for a term of three years which may be renewed.

ARTICLE III (DUES)

- Section 1.** The dues shall be determined annually by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE IV (AMENDMENTS)

- Section 1.** Amendments to the by-laws shall be decided by a majority vote of the Executive Committee at a regular meeting of that body. No ratification shall be effective without previous notice to the members of the Executive Committee.
- Section 2.** This constitution and its by-laws shall be reviewed and updated, where necessary, every five years beginning in the year 1995.

ARTICLE V (REQUIREMENTS TO BE EXEMPT AS AN ORGANIZATION AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 501(c)(3) OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE)

- Section 1.** Said organization is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, or scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.
- Section 2.** No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Section 3 of Article I of this constitution.
- Section 3.** No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.
- Section 4.** Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the organization shall not carry on

any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Section 5. Upon the dissolution of the organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a Court of Competent Jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

ARTICLE VI (POLICIES)

Section 1. Awards: Any OCTELA Awards judge and/or coordinator shall be ineligible to judge any entry of said judge's/coordinator's classroom students and/or family members.

Section 2. Mailing lists: Mailing lists may be provided to groups and individuals whose purposes are consonant with those of OCTELA. (For example, local affiliates and institutions providing opportunities for professional development in English language arts).

Section 3. Donations from private sources may be accepted and acknowledged, provided the donations are used to support the purposes of OCTELA and require no reciprocating action on the part of OCTELA.

Section 4. The president shall appoint with the approval of the Executive Committee, a representative to serve as liaison to other professional organization(s) and accept a representative(s) from other professional organization(s) as an ex-officio member(s) of the OCTELA Executive Board.

Any presidential appointee and Executive Committee member who represents OCTELA must be a member of OCTELA and of NCTE.

When and if the active membership of the Ohio Council of Teachers of English Language Arts becomes fewer than one hundred (100) members, it may be said that the organization is no longer effectively achieving the purposes for which it was founded. Should such a situation occur, OCTELA may be dissolved either by (a) a majority vote of the remaining membership, or (b) a majority vote of the executive committee, including the most recently-elected members of the Executive Committee.