

Hopewell Valley Education Association

Constitution and Bylaws

**Hopewell Valley Regional School District
425 South Main Street
Pennington, NJ 08534**

Latest Revision - 2019

Hopewell Valley Education Association
Constitution and Bylaws
1966, 1971, 1979, 1988, 1990,
1991, 1992, 1994, 1999, 2008, 2018, 2019

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I – Name and Incorporation

Section 1: The name of this organization shall be the Hopewell Valley Education Association, Inc. hereafter referred to as the Association.

Section 2: It is incorporated as a non-profit corporation under Title 15, Sections 1-12 of Revised Statutes of the State of New Jersey.

ARTICLE II – Affiliation

The Association shall be an affiliate of the Mercer County Education Association, the New Jersey Education Association, and the National Education Association.

ARTICLE III – Purpose

Section 1: To give teachers an organization in which to unite as professionals.

Section 2: To acquaint teachers with the policies of their own school system and to offer advice regarding those policies.

Section 3: To unify and strengthen the teacher profession and to secure and maintain the salaries, retirement, tenure, profession, sick leave, and other working conditions necessary to support teaching as a profession.

Section 4: To enable members to speak with a common voice on matters pertaining to the teaching profession and to present their individual and common interests before the Board of Education.

Section 5: To develop, promote, and maintain the adoption of ethical practices, personnel policies, and standards of preparation and participation in the profession.

Section 6: To collaborate with parents and other civic bodies having educational objectives and communicate to the public the needs, the functions, and the steady progress of public schools.

ARTICLE IV – Membership

Section 1: Active Members

- a. Active membership in the Association shall be open to all non-supervisory professional employees of the Hopewell Valley Regional School District.
- b. Active members of the Association shall also be members of the Mercer County Education Association, the New Jersey Education Association, and the National Education Association.

Section 2: Honorary Members

- a. Honorary members include all former members who have retired.
- b. Honorary members have all the rights and responsibilities of active members except the right to vote, hold office or to represent the Association.
- c. Honorary members may attend other functions upon payment of any additional assessments, if necessary.

Section 3: Revocation of Membership

According to procedures adopted by the Representative Council, the Executive Board may suspend from membership or expel any member who shall have violated the ethics of the education profession and may reinstate a member who has previously been suspended or expelled from the Association.

Section 4: Rights of Membership

- a. Every active member shall have the equal rights and privileges within the organization to nominate candidates for office; to vote in elections or on referenda of the Association; to attend membership meetings; to participate in the deliberations and voting upon the business of such meetings, except that in voting on contract ratification only members in the appropriate unit of representation shall have the right to vote.
- b. Every member shall have the right to meet and assemble fully with other members and to express any views or opinions.
- c. No member shall be fined, suspended, expelled, or otherwise disciplined except for non-payment of dues without being served with specific chargers and given a reasonable time in which to prepare a defense which may be assessed at a full and fair hearing.

ARTICLE V – Officers

Section 1: The officers of the Association shall consist of:

- a. President, Vice-Presidents (2), Secretary, and a Treasurer.
- b. The HVEA shall be represented by two Vice-Presidents
 - i. One Vice-President shall be an elected member from the elementary level.
 - ii. One Vice-President shall be an elected member from the secondary level.

Section 2: Whenever an officer is no longer employed in the Hopewell Valley Regional School District or is incapacitated, the President shall appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term of office with the advice and consent of the Executive Board.

Section 3: Whenever a majority of the Executive Board shall agree that an officer has been grossly negligent of the duties designed in the Bylaws, they shall recommend to the Representative Council that the office be declared vacant. If the Representative Council so votes by a two-thirds majority of the total Council present, the President shall immediately appoint a replacement to fill the unexpired term.

ARTICLE VI – Executive Board

Section 1: The Executive Board shall consist of:

- a. The President, Vice-Presidents (2), Recording Secretary, Treasurer
- b. The Chairperson of each Standing Committee.
- c. The immediate Past President as a voting member.

Section 2: Interpretation of the Constitution and Bylaws rests with the Executive Board.

Section 3: Members of the Executive Board will receive reimbursement for expenses incurred as a result of attending meetings.

ARTICLE VII – Affiliate Representative Council

Members of the Affiliate Representative Council shall consist of:

1. The Representative to the Mercer County Education Association
2. The Representative to the National Education Association

ARTICLE VIII – Representative Council

Section 1: The Legislative and policy-forming body of the Association shall be the Representative Council.

Section 2: The Representative Council shall consist of the Executive Board and the Faculty Representatives of each school’s faculty, and Affiliate Representatives.

Section 3: Members of the Representative Council may receive reimbursement for expenses incurred as a result of attending meetings.

ARTICLE IX – Amendments

The Representative Council may adopt amendments to this Constitution by two-thirds majority of those voting at any Council meeting provided that amendments have been introduced at the proceeding Council meeting of the Representative Council and that copies of proposed amendments have been distributed to members of the Council for faculty discussion at least two calendar weeks in advance of the vote.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I – Meetings

Section 1: Executive Board

The Executive Board shall meet on the first Tuesday of each school month at 4:00 pm at the call of the President, or at the request of three members of the Board.

Section 2: Representative Council

- a. The Representative Council shall meet at least every other month on the second Tuesday at 4:00 pm. The Executive Board shall prepare the agenda for each meeting and may circulate it to all members of the Council so representatives may have the agenda to discuss with their faculty members in advance of the Council meetings.
- b. Any member of the Association may attend meetings of the Representative Council.
- c. The agenda at any Representative Council meeting shall include the following:
 - a. Call to Order
 - b. Approval of Minutes
 - c. Correspondence
 - d. Report of the President
 - e. Reports of the Vice-Presidents
 - f. Report of the Treasurer
 - g. Reports of the Standing Committees
 - h. Reports of Special Committees
 - i. Building Reports
 - j. Old Business
 - k. New Business
 - l. Adjournment

Section 3: Special Meetings

- a. Special meetings of the Representative Council may be held at the call of the President or upon written request to the Executive Board from three to five faculty representatives from at least two buildings.
- b. Business to come before special meetings must be stated in the call, which shall be sent either in writing or electronically to each representative.

Section 4: General Membership Meetings

The Executive Board shall arrange meetings of the members each year.

ARTICLE II – Quorum

Section 1: A majority of their members shall be a quorum for the Representative Council, Executive Board and committees.

Section 2: For meetings of the Association, thirty percent of the total membership shall be the quorum.

ARTICLE III – Elections of Officers

Section 1: Qualifications for Elections

Any member in good standing of the Hopewell Valley Education Association may run/serve in the position of HVEA Representative. Representatives who have served for one year may then stand for election to other positions within the Association. The President, per the powers and duties outlined herein, may make a direct appointment to an HVEA position to address an unexpected vacancy or other emergency situation.

Section 2: Elections

- a. The officers of this Association are to be elected for a two-year term.
- b. Each officer may succeed himself/herself in the same office for up to three consecutive terms.
 - a. In the event a position is open after nominations, the current officer may succeed himself/herself for additional terms.

Section 3: Nominations

- a. At the February Representative Council meeting, members of the Association may nominate candidates for the positions of President, Secondary Vice President, Elementary Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Affiliate Representative of the Mercer County Education Association and the National Education Association

delegate and alternate. Association Representatives may be nominated at this time, or at another time as needed or at the President's discretion.

- b.** Members of the Representative Council may self-nominate and/or nominate other candidates from the floor.

Section 4: Voting

- a.** Elections shall be in March of each year.
- b.** The President, with the approval of the Representative Council, shall appoint an Election Committee.
 - a.** No candidate may serve on this committee.
- c.** Members shall vote by secret and/or electronic ballot in accordance with procedures developed by the Elections Committee and approved by the Representative Council.
- d.** The Election Committee shall report the results to the President, who shall cause them to be published.
- e.** Results of the elections of officers shall be reported immediately to MCEA, NJEA, and NEA by the current President.

Section 5: Vacancies

- a.** In the event of vacancy in the office of President, the predetermined Vice-President shall serve as President until the next annual election, as provided in Article IV, Section 2d.
- b.** All vacancies occurring during the term of office of any other officer shall immediately
be filled by the President with the approval of the Executive Board.
- c.** Whenever the three offices of President and Vice-Presidents 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 Representative Council can fill the vacancies.

Section 6: Oath of Office

“I, (name), do solemnly promise to perform faithfully the duties of the Office of (name of office) of the Hopewell Valley Education Association.”

ARTICLE IV – Powers and Duties of the Officers

The following positions will be compensated in accordance with a salary guide developed by members of the Executive Board and Representative Council.

Section 1: President – The President shall:

- a. Preside at all meetings of the Association and of the Executive Board.
- b. Appoint chairpersons for all Standing Committees with approval of the Representative Council.
- c. Represent the Association whenever needed.
- d. Establish a time and place for all meetings of the Association and the Executive Board.
- e. Designate a member in good standing to attend each regular open meeting of the Board of Education of the Hopewell Valley Regional School District during the school year.
- f. Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees.

Section 2: Vice-Presidents – The Vice-Presidents (2) shall:

- a. Represent the association as needed.
- b. Oversee Special Projects of the HVEA.
- c. Be bonded by the Association
- d. The following Vice-President responsibilities shall be divided equally between the two Vice-Presidents at the start of the term of office:
 - a. Act as President in case of the absence of incapability of the President to preside.
 - b. Become President whenever the Presidency becomes vacant, as provided in Article III, Section 5 of the Bylaws of the Constitution.

Section 3: Recording Secretary – The Recording Secretary shall:

- a. Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Association, the Executive Board, and the Representative Council
- b. Receive and keep all records of the Association.
- c. Be responsible for duplication and distribution of the minutes of the meetings.

Section 4: Treasurer – The Treasurer shall:

- a. Receive all monies of the Association.
- b. Keep all monies in a bank account in an approved bank.
- c. Manage payroll.
- d. Keep records of all financial affairs and keep the President and the Executive Board informed of the financial condition of the Association.
- e. Be bonded by the Association.
- f. Pay all bills as ordered by the Executive Board.
- g. Assist the Executive Board in formulating a budget at the end of the year for the following year.
- h. Keep accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements, report to each meeting of the Representative Council, and prepare an annual financial statement for publication to members as directed by the Executive Board.
- i. To prepare or cause to be prepared all State and Federal filings, and have financial records audited at the end of the fiscal year.
- j. To maintain attendance records of both Representative Council and Executive Board meetings.
- k. Maintain attendance records for Representative and Executive council meetings.
- l. Present monthly and yearly budget reports to the Representative Council.
- m. Submit budget reports to the Members Only online portal.

In addition to the aforementioned positions, the Association shall appoint individuals for the following compensated positions, pursuant to the rights and privileges established herein and based upon their ability to fulfill the requirements for each position.

The Membership Chair shall:

- Maintain and Update NJEA MARS database.
- Track new memberships and organize new member events.
- Manage internal member outreach.
- Implement member benefit and retention programs in accordance with NJEA state directives.
- Maintain internal mailing lists
- Manage correspondence responsibilities for the Association.

The PRIDE Chair shall:

- Coordinate planning and payment of PRIDE grants.
- Plan and conduct local parent outreach activities (Pennington Day, BTSN, etc.).
- Train staff on PRIDE application process.

The Social Chair shall:

- Plan and maintain a budget for staff social events, including the yearly retirement dinner.
- Organize and execute all social events for HVEA.

The Grievance Chair shall:

- Explore and prepare action programs for securing satisfactory personnel policies and procedures for the redress of grievances.
- Represent the Association at an appointed meeting with the Superintendent or a committee or the Board of Education.
- Serve on the Negotiations Team, if necessary.
- Be appointed at the discretion of the President and serve until he/she resigns and/or a new President makes a new appointment.

The LAT Chair shall:

- Attend and report on all county-level legislative action events.
- Advise local PAC activities, if any.
- Attend all rep council meetings to deliver county legislative report.
- Plan and execute potential screenings and forums of local political candidates and host said candidates at member events.

The Chief Negotiator shall:

- Manage all aspects of district contract negotiations.
- Attend state-level training and labor law professional development.
- Plan negotiations strategy.
- Lead HVEA delegation at all negotiation sessions.
- Participate in legal review of proposed contracts with NJEA Research and Law.
- Compile association fact-finding reports, if needed.
- Write and negotiate sidebar agreements, if needed.
- Inform staff on the details of active collective bargaining agreement.

Negotiation Team Building Rep shall:

- Analyze building-level survey data at the onset of negotiations.
- Represent the viewpoints and opinions of the staff in their buildings on the negotiations team
- Attend all negotiations sessions.
- Participate in strategic planning and legal review sessions during negotiations.
- Attend state-level training and labor law professional development.

The County Liaison shall:

- Attend all MCEA (Mercer County Education Association) meetings.
- Represent HVEA at MCEA meetings.
- Report to HVEA on county-level initiatives.
- Help implement county-level initiatives within HVEA.

Media, Technology, and Communications Chair shall:

- Maintain HVEA website, communication systems, and internal databases.
- Manage and expand HVEA's social media presence and associated accounts.
- Possess (or be willing to acquire) web design, programming, and video production skills.
- Contribute to HVEA PR campaigns.
- Work closely with the Executive Board to design, update, and implement Association information systems.
- Provide supplemental explanation and training on District technology initiatives.
- Serve as point person for all member correspondence and communication.
- Possess strong written communication skills.
- Distribute notices of association affairs and meetings to the general membership at the request of the President.

Professional Development Chair shall:

- Research, plan, and budget for all Association-sponsored PD activities.
- Reserve, arrange, and manage venues for all HVEA PD events.
- Plan other member engagement activities as needed.

Association Representatives shall:

- Attend 10 meetings of the Representative Council each year.
- Actively and effectively represent the needs and views of their respective building faculties.
- Vote on measures in accordance with the viewpoints and sentiments of their respective building faculties.
- Represent members in meetings with building administration.
- Plan and lead meetings with their respective building faculties.
- Distribute information to Association members.
- Represent the Association in building/district-level committees and meetings, as needed.

Lead Association Representatives shall:

- Attend 10 meetings of the Representative Council each year.
- Appointed by the Executive Board
- Actively and effectively represent the needs and views of their respective building faculties.
- Vote on measures in accordance with the viewpoints and sentiments of their respective building faculties.
- Serve as a point person for all Association needs in their respective buildings.
- Be primarily responsible for representing members in meetings with building-level administration.
- Plan and lead meetings with their respective building faculties.
- Distribute information to Association members.
- Represent the Association at building/district-level committees and meetings, as needed.
- Have served in the capacity of Building Representative for at least one year.
- Must attend all Executive Board Meetings

FAST (Community Outreach) Chair shall:

- Coordinate planning and payment of FAST grants.
- Plan and conduct community outreach activities.
- Train staff on FAST application process.

Board of Education Liaison shall:

- Attend all board meetings and take detailed notes
- Summarize key events and policies to the Representative Council.
- Keep a file of meeting minutes and notes for use by the Association.

ARTICLE V – Powers and Duties of the Executive Board

Section 1: The Executive Board shall be responsible for the management of the Association, approve all expenditures, adjust compensation for Association personnel carry, out policies established by the Representative Council, reports its transactions and those of the Representative Council to the members, and suggest policies for the consideration of the Representative Council.

Section 2: The Executive Board shall represent the Association in negotiating personnel policies with the governing and appropriating bodies of the school system. Within policies established by the Representative Council, it may make decisions binding the Association in these matters. The Board may delegate its power to negotiate to another committee or representative.

ARTICLE VI – Powers and Duties of the Representative Council

The Representative Council shall approve the budget, set the dues for the Association, act on reports of committees, and approve resolutions and other policy statements. It may adopt such rules governing the conduct of the Association, and the conduct of meetings as are consistent with this Constitution and Bylaws. Powers not delegated to the Executive Board, the officers, or other groups in the Association shall be vested in the Representative Council.

ARTICLE VII –Representative Council

Section 1: In each public school in the Hopewell Valley Regional School District, faculty members who are members in good standing of this Association shall elect for a term of one year one faculty Representative for every fifteen members or major fraction thereof. There shall be at least one Representative from each school's faculty.

Section 2: Faculty Representatives shall attend the regular meetings of the Representative Council unless they are excused by the President. At the President's discretion, Representatives may use conference call technologies to participate remotely in meetings. After two unexcused absences of a Representative, the President may declare the seat unfilled and call for a faculty election to fill out the term. The President may designate a member in good standing to organize this special election.

Section 3: Faculty Representatives shall have been members of the Hopewell Valley Education Association for at least one year prior to their election and shall maintain their membership in good standing during the term in office. Faculty Representatives must also attend one Association and/or NJEA-sponsored training during each year of their term.

Section 4: Faculty representatives shall be responsible for representing the viewpoints of their respective faculties at meetings of the Representative Council, and shall vote in accordance with the sentiments of their respective faculties during Council votes. The viewpoints of active members shall be gathered using electronic survey technologies and/or face-to-face meetings. HVEA Members will have, in the absence of emergency circumstances, at least three days to submit their opinions on proposals in person, in writing, or via online survey technologies.

ARTICLE VIII – Procedures for Dismissal

A member of the Representative Council, Executive Board, or a committee chair may be dismissed from their position if they:

- fail to adhere to the job descriptions of the position taken.
- they violate the requirements of confidentiality between the membership and the Association.
- they violate the code of professional conduct in education described in Article IV/Section 3 of the Bylaws.
- they compromise the financial integrity of the Association through the mismanagement or misappropriation of funds.
- willfully disseminate confidential information about the Association to unauthorized third parties.
- engage in conduct detrimental to the best interests of the Association and its membership.

If a member of the Representative Council, Executive Board, or Committee chair is found to have violated one or more of these policies, evidence will be gathered and presented at an emergency meeting of the Executive Board. If a majority of the Executive Board votes to dismiss the individual in question, they will make a recommendation to the Representative Council for dismissal. A two-thirds vote by the Representative Council is required to formally dismiss the individual in question. The vacancy will be filled in accordance with Article V/Section 3 of the Constitution.

ARTICLE IX – Standing Committees

Section 1: Structure

There shall be standing committees carrying the specific functions outlined below. They shall have members selected to represent different groups in the Association and appointed for a term of one year. They may succeed themselves at the request of the President. Each committee may, with the approval of the Executive Board, organize sub-committees for the specific activities from the membership of the Association.

Section 2: Meetings

Each standing committee shall meet according to a calendar developed by the committee.

Section 3: Reports

Each committee shall keep a continuing record of activities. Chairpersons will report as necessary to the Representative Council.

Section 4: Association Committees and their Duties:

NOTE: The job descriptions of the Committee Leaders/Chairs are described above. The following descriptions pertain to those who wish to serve on each committee. Committee positions are uncompensated.

- a. **PRIDE** – shall have charge of affairs between the public and the Association and shall attend to publicity for the Association.
- b. **Social** – shall have charge of all social affairs and entertaining done by the Association.
- c. **Legislative** – shall keep members informed concerning all rulings and laws affecting education, schools, and teachers – locally, statewide, and nationally.
- d. **Negotiations** – shall initiate changes or seek improvements in terms and conditions of employment. Shall negotiate all changes in Board of Education policies affecting terms and conditions of employment.

- e. **Grievance** – shall explore and prepare action programs for securing satisfactory personnel policies and procedures for the redress of grievances. Shall represent the Association at an appointed meeting with the Superintendent or a committee or the Board of Education. May serve as a member of the Negotiations Committee.
- f. **Membership** – shall organize and conduct membership enrollment. Shall attempt to enroll cash members, new teachers, former non-members. Shall keep all membership records and update those records as necessary.
- g. **Digital Strategies** - shall research and implement strategies to serve, protect, and enhance member interests on digital technology platforms.

Section 5 : Special Committees

The President shall appoint such special committees as may be necessary. Such committees, upon completion of their assignment shall be dissolved and shall cease to exist.

Section 6: Relation to the Executive Board

The Executive Board shall assist the President to appoint members of the Standing Committees and to fill all unexpired terms as vacancies occur.

ARTICLE X-Authority

The most recent edition of Robert’s 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 Representative Council may adapt.

ARTICLE XI- Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote at any regular meeting of the Representative Council provided that proposed amendments have been previously studied by the Executive Board and copies have been sent to Faculty Representatives two calendar weeks in advance of the meeting.