



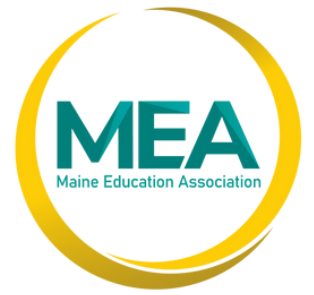
# MEA/NEA ELECTIONS HANDBOOK FOR LOCAL GOVERNANCE AFFILIATES 2024 - 2025

Where applicable, the principles contained in this document govern all elections for MEA office.

Many procedures have been standardized for operational consistency.

Some governing document citations are meant to provide support for the standardization for operational consistency.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



<b>MEA OFFICERS/DIRECTORS STRUCTURE &amp; BYLAWS AND ELECTION COMMITTEE .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY DEADLINES .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>I. ELECTION OF MEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY DELEGATES/ALTERNATES .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>II. ELECTION OF NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY DELEGATES/ALTERNATES .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>III. ASSOCIATION RESOURCES FOR CANDIDATES .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>IV. ELECTIONS APPEALS .....</b>	<b>13</b>

# MEA OFFICERS/DIRECTORS STRUCTURE & BYLAWS AND ELECTION COMMITTEE



## **MEA Officers and Directors**

*Jesse Hargrove, MEA President*

*Beth French, MEA Vice President*

*Jaye Rich, MEA Treasurer*

*Rebecca Cole, NEA Director*

*Rachelle Bristol, MEA Executive Director*

## **Structure & Bylaws and Election Committee Members**

(\* denotes Elections Committee Member)

*Krista St. Cyr, Chair\**

*Shelley Hooper*

*Robert Kuech*

*Belinda Micucci\**

*Martha White\**

*Rebecca Manchester, Board Liaison*

*Erin Noyes, MEA Staff Liaison*

**2024 - 25 RA DEADLINES ACCORDING TO MEA GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS**

ITEM	REFERENCE IN DOCS	TIME FROM RA ACCORDING TO RULES	DUE DATE (PER RULES)	DATE TO BE DONE
Delegate data verification sent to ALL delegates				September 30
Delegate data verification due				October 11
Notification of terms expiring – del/alt, Board, Officer				October 21
<b>MEA CONDUCTED ELECTIONS - BEFORE RA: Cluster, Higher Ed, MEA-Retired, Student, Board of Dir., NEA Dist. &amp; At-Large</b>				
Notice of Intent deadline for publication		75 days	March 3	January 17
Notification of no nomination (del/alt positions only)	SR2, Sec 2, E	30 days after initial advertisement		January 17
Bios/photos/campaign statements due – Board, NEA At-large/Dist	SR2, Sec 5, C-2/C-4			January 17
Contested election notification	SR2, Sec 6, C	2 days prior to ballot distribution		January 20
Ballot distribution	SR2, Sec 6, B	45 days	April 2	February 3 - 7
Email Student MEA for NEA-RA delegate election (if contested, send ballots after 3/15 notice from NEA)				Email Feb. 1 Ballots March 19
Ballot return deadline				March 14
Ballot recount deadline	SR2, Sec 6, F			March 28
<b>ELECTIONS OF RA DELEGATES/ALTERNATES CONDUCTED BY LOCAL GOVERNANCE AFFILIATES</b>				
Notify Local Presidents # of del/alt vacancies	SR2, Sec 3, A	90 days	February 16	October 21
Certificate of Election deadline				March 14
Local delegate/successor forms for NEA RA deadline				April 4
<b>MEA CONDUCTED ELECTIONS - DURING THE RA: President, VP, Treasurer, NEA Director, MEPERS Trustee</b>				
Notice of Intent deadline for publication	SR2, Sec 1, A	75 days	March 3	(January 17)
No candidates for office additional advertising period – Officer elections	SR2, Sec 1, G	30 days after initial advertisement		(January 17)
Bios/photos due for Officer elections	SR2, Sec 5, C-2			(January 17)
Notify state-wide candidates about flyer for RA Agenda Book – due March 31				(February 28)
Notice of Intent deadline (no publication) - Officer Elections	SR2, Sec 1, A	30 days	April 17	(April 17)
Contested election notification	SR2, Sec 6, C	2 days prior to ballot distribution	May 16	(April 18)
<b>OTHER DEADLINES</b>				
Constitution/Bylaws/Standing Rules/Resolutions changes deadline	Const. Art. 8/SR3, Sec 4, D	70 days	March 8	March 1
Annual Committee Reports deadline				March 10/March 24
S&B open/count ballots				March 14
Notification of Election results				March 24 - 28
Budget presented to Board	Bylaws Art.9, Sec 3B	45 days	April 2	March 29
RA Agenda book mailed/emailed	Bylaws Art.9, Sec 3B	30 days	April 17	Mail: April 17 Email: Apr 14 - 18

**2025 PRE-RA Overview Meetings (PROM):**

- April 29 – Virtual
- May 5 – Portland
- May 6 – Augusta
- May 7 – Bangor
- May 8 – Presque Isle

**MEA-RA: May 17 & 18, 2025**

- 2025 Elections – candidates’ names on ballots must be Alpha-order**
- 2026 Elections – candidates’ names on ballots must be Alpha-order**
- 2027 Elections – candidates’ names on ballots must be Reverse-order**
- 2028 Elections – candidates’ names on ballots must be Reverse-order**

# ELECTIONS HANDBOOK

## INTRODUCTION



This *Elections Handbook* is designed to assist candidates who seek election to MEA offices. The MEA Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules set forth the basic requirements for candidates who seek MEA elective office. This *Elections Handbook*, is designed to implement those requirements.

The document is distributed to candidates who file a *Notice of Intent* to be a candidate for office. Additionally, the guidelines are made available annually to the presidents of the MEA local governance affiliates and the MEA Representative Assembly Delegates/Alternates so that they are aware of the appropriate role of governance affiliates in an election campaign. The candidate has the responsibility to ensure that all campaign workers are instructed to abide by the campaign regulations. If a candidate becomes aware of any unauthorized prohibited campaign activity that is being conducted on their behalf, the candidate should notify the chairperson of the Elections Committee, in writing, within forty-eight (48) hours of knowledge of the prohibited activity.

In the event that the Elections Committee finds that an alleged violation of a campaign regulation is in fact true, the Committee will direct immediate cessation of the irregular practice. Prior to any nominations or elections to be held at the Representative Assembly, the Committee shall report any violations of the election rules and regulations. Disputed elections shall be appealed to the Maine Education Association Elections Committee. (Rule 1, Section C)

The *Notice of Intent* form (Attachment A) for all statewide/at-large/district/cluster vacancies is available from the MEA Executive Director or on the MEA website in the *For Members* area (address is on the front cover of this handbook).

The *Notice of Intent/Certificate of Election* form (Attachment B/C) for vacancies within local governance affiliates for MEA Representative Assembly delegates/alternates is available from the local governance affiliate president or on the MEA website.

A “governance affiliate” is a recognized and chartered group of employees of a school administrative unit, higher education institution, retired teachers, students attending a higher education institution, or employees of an educational television station. (Bylaw Article VII, Section 2, Part A)

Prospective candidates are encouraged to submit their *Notice of Intent* form promptly so that they may become eligible for the various support services that MEA provides for candidates.

Questions pertaining to the interpretation of election procedures or the contents of this *Elections Handbook* should be directed to: Chair, MEA Elections Committee; Maine Education Association; 35 Community Drive; Augusta, ME 04330.

# ELECTIONS HANDBOOK

## I. ELECTION OF MEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY DELEGATES/ALTERNATES



Delegates shall be elected in accordance with the one-person one-vote principle. Elections shall be conducted by open nomination and secret ballot. Only active, active education support, student, and retired members of the Maine Education Association shall be eligible to nominate and vote. (Constitution Article V, Section 3, Part B)

### A. Eligibility

#### 1. Membership Categories

Any active and active education support member of the Maine Education Association is eligible to be elected a voting member of the Representative Assembly by active and active education support members. Any retired member of the Maine Education Association is eligible to be elected a voting member of the Representative Assembly by retired members. Any student member of the Maine Education Association is eligible to be elected a voting member of the Representative Assembly by student members. (Constitution Article V, Section 3, Part A)

#### 2. Dues Transmittal

The delegates who represent the Governance Affiliate shall be seated in the Maine Education Association Representative Assembly at the annual meeting only if the governance affiliate they represent has transmitted sixty (60) percent of the dues receivable by May 1. Any delegate from a governance affiliate who is denied a seat at the Representative Assembly due to the application of this paragraph may appeal the matter to the full Representative Assembly which may, by majority, vote to seat the delegate. (Bylaw Article II, Section 2, Part E)

### B. Elections Conducted by Local Governance Affiliates

Elections for MEA Representative Assembly delegates and alternates shall be conducted by the governance affiliate (local association) following the procedures stated herein, except for cluster delegates/alternates. (Standing Rule 2, Section 3, Part B)

#### 1. Allocation of Delegates/Alternates

Allocation of delegate credentials to governance affiliates shall be on the basis of active, active education support, student, and retired membership in the Association as of August 31 of the year preceding the convening of the Representative Assembly. (Constitution Article V, Section 2, Part A).



A delegate elected to represent a governance affiliate or cluster election district shall be and remain a member of that governance affiliate or a governance affiliate within the cluster election district. (Bylaw Article II, Section 1, Part A)

In apportioning or reapportioning delegates, the Structure and Bylaws Committee shall adhere to the principle of one-person, one-vote. Each governance affiliate shall provide ethnic minority representation at least proportionate to its ethnic minority membership and shall provide proportionate representation by educational position. (Bylaw Article II, Section 1, Part B)

Delegates, representing active and active education support members, shall be apportioned to governance affiliates in accordance with the following:

- o affiliates with 35 to 104 members shall be entitled to one (1) delegate;
- o affiliates with 105 to 174 members shall be entitled to two (2) delegates;
- o affiliates with 175 to 244 members shall be entitled to three (3) delegates;
- o affiliates with 245 to 314 members shall be entitled to four (4) delegates;
- o affiliates with 315 to 384 members shall be entitled to five (5) delegates; and
- o affiliates with 385 or more members shall be entitled to one (1) delegate for each additional 70 members or major portion thereof.
- o Affiliates with 34 or less members shall be clustered into election districts containing at least 35 members. (Bylaw Article II, Section 1, Part C)

## **2. Loss of Membership**

When a governance affiliate suffers a loss of membership as of August 31 and the loss of membership reduces the number of delegates to which the governance affiliate is entitled, and there are no vacant delegate seats, then the delegate(s) and alternate(s), if any, elected more recently shall suffer the delegate seat reduction. (Bylaw Article II, Section 1, Part F)

In the event that the loss of membership results in the loss of more than one (1) delegate, the governance affiliate shall determine by random selection the Representative Assembly delegate(s) who will retain their seat(s). (Bylaw Article II, Section 1, Part G)

## **3. Terms of Delegates/Alternates**

- a. All terms of office of Representative Assembly delegates shall be for one year. The terms shall begin and expire upon ratification of MEA election results. (Bylaw Article II, Section 2, Part A)



b. Delegates and alternates shall be elected at the same time. (Bylaw Article II, Section 2, Part B)

c. An alternate delegate who has been elected through the regular elections process may be designated to replace a delegate who is unable to attend the Representative Assembly and shall resume alternate delegate status immediately following the Representative Assembly. An alternate delegate may also be designated to serve the remaining term of a delegate who has resigned from the delegate position or who is no longer employed in the governance affiliate represented. (Bylaw Article II, Section 2, Part C)

d. In multi-delegate governance affiliates, the alternate delegate with the longest term, as determined by the local governance affiliate president, shall be designated the first alternate delegate. The alternate delegate with the next longest term shall be designated the second alternate delegate, and so forth, until all seats are filled. (Bylaw Article II, Section 2, Part D)

e. Alternate delegates to fill possible vacancies shall be elected at the same time delegates are elected. The filling of vacancies must comply with the requirements set forth in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules. (Standing Rule 2, Section 3, Part C)

#### **4. Notification of Vacancies**

The Executive Director shall notify all local governance affiliates of the number of delegates/alternates to which they are entitled on or prior to the date set by the Elections Committee which shall be not fewer than ninety (90) days prior to the annual meeting of the Representative Assembly. This notification shall include a list of delegates/alternates and the year their terms expire, the clustering of governance affiliates for the purpose of electing Representative Assembly delegates/alternates, other MEA vacancies which exist, information regarding deadlines, and the proper forms for submitting the names of elected delegates/alternates. (Standing Rule 2, Section 3, Part A)





## **5. Posting of Vacancies**

Each governance affiliate president or designee shall post the vacancies that exist within their governance affiliate, along with instructions for filing a Notice of Intent/Certificate of Election to be a candidate for those vacancies and the deadline. Other vacancies that exist within the state association (MEA) shall also be posted.

## **6. Notice of Intent/Certificate of Election (Attachment B/C)**

A *Notice of Intent/Certificate of Election* form to run for local MEA Representative Assembly delegate/alternate governance affiliate vacancies shall be delivered to the local president (or designee) on or prior to the date set by the local.

A completed Certificate of Election, indicating the names of the elected delegates/alternates shall be forwarded to the MEA Executive Director no later than the deadline set by the MEA Elections Committee. (Standing Rule 2, Section 3, Part E)

Members are responsible for confirming that all necessary documents have been received.

## **7. Only One Candidate for Any Vacancy**

Whenever the number of nominees for delegate or alternate to the Representative Assembly is not greater than the number of vacancies in the delegation from a governance affiliate or cluster election district, nomination shall be considered equivalent to election. (Standing Rule 2, Section 3, Part D)

## **8. Candidate Involvement in Elections**

A candidate shall not be involved in running an election within the candidate's local governance affiliate. (Standing Rule 2, Section 3, Part F)

## **9. Balloting**

- a. the Elections Committee or designee shall prepare ballots containing the names of all certified candidates; (Standing Rule 2, Section 6, Part A-1)
  
- b. the ballot shall not identify the source of any nominators, indicate endorsing parties, or contain any information that might be construed as prejudicial, such as a candidate's capabilities, prior service, or present or previous office(s) held. (Standing Rule 2, Section 6, part A-2)



- c. the order of names on the ballot shall be determined in alphabetical order for two (2) consecutive years and in reverse alphabetical order for two (2) consecutive years. (Standing Rule 2, Section 6, Part A-3)
- d. Members shall be elected by secret ballot for each individual office. (Standing Rule 2, Section 6, Part A-4)
- e. Balloting procedures should be so devised that the person expressing a choice cannot be identified with the choice expressed. (Standing Rule 2, Section 6, Part A-5)
- f. The governance affiliate president or designee shall conduct the counting of the ballots and complete the Notice of Intent/Certificate of Election to be submitted to the Executive Director at the Maine Education Association headquarters in Augusta on or prior to the date set by the Elections Committee. Members are responsible for confirming that MEA has received all necessary documents.

## **10. Delegates/Alternates Who File Late**

- a. Members who file a notice of intent to become delegates/alternates after the May 1 deadline shall be considered late and shall meet with the Structure and Bylaws Committee prior to the first business session for an orientation session regarding seating procedures. Members will be required to:
  - Provide proof of membership,
  - Submit a Certificate of Election signed by the local president. (Bylaw Article II, Section 3, Part A)
- b. A list of qualified delegates who filed late shall be presented by the Elections Committee to the Representative Assembly for seating. A majority vote of delegates present and voting shall be required to seat delegates/alternates who filed late. (Bylaw Article II, Section 3, Part B)
- c. Members who filed late and are seated by the Representative Assembly shall hold office only until the next ratification of MEA election results. (Bylaw Article II, Section 3, Part C)



- d. The delegates who represent the governance affiliate shall be seated in the Maine Education Association Representative Assembly at the annual meeting only if the governance affiliate has transmitted sixty (60%) percent of the dues receivable by May 1. Any delegate from a governance affiliate who is denied a seat at the Representative Assembly due to the application of this paragraph may appeal the matter to the full Representative Assembly which may, by majority of its membership vote to seat the delegate. (Bylaw Article II Section 2, Part E)

## II. ELECTION OF NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY DELEGATES/ALTERNATES

### A. Eligibility

Only persons who have been and remain active and active education support members of the Maine Education Association and the National Education Association for the two (2) years immediately preceding their nomination shall be eligible to be delegates to the National Education Association Representative Assembly. Elections shall be conducted in accordance with procedures outlined in the MEA Standing Rules, Elections Handbook, and the NEA Elections Guidelines. (Bylaw Article III, Section 1)

### B. Local Governance Affiliate Delegates/Alternates

For the election of local governance affiliate delegates/alternates to the NEA Representative Assembly, the NEA allocates the number of delegates to local affiliate presidents whose local associations are officially affiliated with NEA. Local associations are responsible for electing delegates and alternates, completing the report forms and submitting them to MEA by the set deadline. The candidate with the highest number of votes is to be declared the first delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly and so on until the number of allocated delegate seats are filled. The remaining candidates may be declared alternate delegates, rank ordered according to the number of votes received. (Standing Rule 2, Section 4, Part B)



Members of local governance affiliates with less than seventy-six (76) members may be clustered with other governance affiliates with less than seventy-six (76) members who are officially affiliated by NEA into NEA cluster election districts as designed by the Structure and Bylaws Committee for the election of delegates/alternates for two-year terms. (Standing Rule 2, Section 4, Part A-5)

Elections shall be conducted in the same manner as elections conducted by local governance affiliates.

Funding for local governance affiliate delegates is the responsibility of the local governance affiliate or the individual delegate representing the local association.

## III. ASSOCIATION RESOURCES FOR CANDIDATES

### A. Mailing Labels/Lists/E-mail Lists

#### 1. Candidates Elected in a Governance District, Cluster Election District, or Local Governance Affiliate

Upon request of a candidate running for office to be elected in a governance district, cluster election district, or governance affiliate, the Maine Education Association shall provide at no charge to the candidate either one (1) set of mailing labels, list, or E-mail list of the Maine Education Association members eligible to vote for the candidate's office. The mailing labels or list shall contain names, member addresses, name of governance affiliate, and telephone numbers as available to the Association. The mailing labels, or lists shall be mailed to the candidate's home address or sent electronically upon receipt of a letter from the candidate guaranteeing the labels'/lists' confidentiality as provided by Maine Education Association policy. (Standing Rule 2, Section 5, Part C-1-b)

#### 2. Request Timeline

A one-week (1) notice is necessary to provide any mailing labels or lists. (Standing Rule 2, Section 5, Part C-1-c)

# ELECTIONS HANDBOOK



### **3. Additional Lists/Labels/Cost**

Upon request of a candidate, the Maine Education Association shall provide at actual cost, including staff time, additional sets of the Maine Education Association member mailing labels and/or lists. The cost of these sets of mailing labels or lists must be reported as campaign expense. (Standing Rule 2, Section 5, Part C-1-d)

### **4. Requests Prior to and After May 1**

Lists/labels of MEA Representative Assembly delegates/alternates requested prior to May 1 will include names of those MEA Representative Assembly delegates whose terms will expire once the election results have been ratified. Lists/labels of the newly elected MEA Representative Assembly delegates will be available by May 1.

## **IV. ELECTIONS APPEALS PROCEDURES**

**(Adopted by the Structure and Bylaws Committee)**

### **A. Scope**

These rules shall apply whenever the Elections Committee considers an alleged violation of campaign regulations in the Standing Rules.

### **B. Notice**

Any complaint to the Elections Committee shall specify in writing the regulations alleged to be violated. The Committee shall determine the date, time, and place for a hearing.

The MEA Executive Director shall provide written notice of the complaint and hearing to all parties.

### **C. Rights at Hearing**

The hearing shall be informal, provided that every party shall have the right to:

- be represented by a person of their choice. The MEA General Counsel or their designee shall act as counsel for the Committee.
- call and examine witnesses and make oral cross-examinations of any person present and testifying.



- present evidence and arguments on all issues raised by the complaint. The rules of evidence observed by courts shall not apply, but evidence upon which reasonable persons may rely in the conduct of serious affairs is admissible.

## **D. Agreed Settlement**

At any time prior to rendering its decision, the Committee may make an informal disposition of the matter upon an agreed written settlement by the parties.

## **E. Decision**

The Committee shall decide in writing whether a violation of campaign regulations has been established by a preponderance of the evidence and whether such violation may have affected the outcome of the election.

## **F. Remedy**

If a majority of the Committee finds a violation, it may direct appropriate relief consistent with the nature of the violation, Association policy, and applicable law. Relief may include, but shall not be limited to:

- reporting its decision to the MEA Representative Assembly; to the NEA Credentials Committee; to the governing body whose office was subject to the violation; and/or to the membership at large. No minority report shall issue.
- declaring the election to be void and directing the conduct of a new election in conformity with the Association's governance documents and the law.

## **G. Appeal**

Consistent with governance documents, any appeal from a decision of the Committee shall be taken to the governing body whose office was subject to the alleged campaign violation.