

Carthage Teachers' Association Constitution

Article 1: Name

This organization shall be known as the Carthage Teachers' Association.

Article 2: The Purposes of this organization shall be:

1. To promote the best interests of children and education in the Carthage Central School District.
2. To advance the standards of the teaching profession.
3. To secure and maintain the conditions necessary for a satisfactory learning environment.
4. To promote the welfare and foster the professional growth of its members.
5. To promote mutual assistance and cooperation with other organizations with which it is associated.
6. To promote the aims and objectives of the New York State United Teachers and its national affiliates, as defined by majority vote of the membership.
7. To expose and fight all forms of racism and discrimination.
8. To promote the unity and strength of the teaching profession.

Article 3: Affiliation

The Carthage Teachers' Association shall affiliate with the New York State United Teachers and its national affiliates, unless changed by majority vote of the membership.

Article 4: Membership

There shall be the following membership categories: Active, Special, and Life.

1. Active -- Active membership shall be open to any person who engages in the practice of teaching or who performs other educational duties in the Carthage Central School District, except: Chief School Administrator, Assistant Superintendents, Director of Special Education, Principals and Vice-Principals, and any subsequent administrative positions created by the CSA or School Board.
2. Special -- Special membership shall be open to part-time teachers.
3. Life -- Life membership shall be open to retired teachers of the Carthage Central School District.
4. Membership shall be obtained only through the payment of required dues.

Article 5: Dues

1. Active -- the dues shall include local dues plus current NYSUT assessments, as well as those of other national affiliates.
2. Special -- special members who are part-time teachers shall pay half the dues of the active, full-time members.
3. Life -- Retired members shall be exempt from dues, without any loss of privileges.
4. Absent an action by the Executive Council, these dues may be changed by majority vote, or by secret ballot, of the general membership after reasonable notice of the intention to vote on such question, or by majority vote of members in a membership referendum conducted by secret ballot.

Article 6: Officers

Section 1. The officers of the Carthage Central Teachers' Association shall be: President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, and Membership Chair.

Section 2. Duties of the President -- the President shall:

- a) be the chief executive officer of the Carthage Teachers' Association;
- b) administer all affairs and execute all policies of the organization;
- c) preside at all meetings of the Executive Council and the general membership;
- d) represent the organization's position with all external groups;
- e) appoint and establish the function of all committees with the approval of the Executive Council and be an ex-officio member of all such committees;
- f) call regular and special meetings of the Executive Council and general membership;
- g) distribute agendas for Executive Council meetings so that they are received by Building Representatives on the Friday previous to the meeting;
- h) appoint, at no later than the second Executive Council meeting, a team of Building Leaders, one per school building. The Building Leader will act as a contact person in each building, quickly conveying information and providing feedback to the building's constituents.
- i) fulfill such other duties as the office requires and that are consistent with these by-laws.

Section 3. Duties of the Vice-President -- the Vice-President shall:

- a) assume the duties and responsibilities of the President in his/her absence and perform such duties as the President may designate;
- b) succeed to the office of President in the event that the duly elected President shall, for any reason, not be able to carry out his or her term of office;
- c) be chairperson of the Nominating Committee;
- d) be responsible for the integrity of the nominating procedures, including, at a minimum, an informational newsletter, a hand-delivered notification, presented fifteen (15) days before the election, announcing the time and place of the vote, and the officer elections.

Section 4. Duties of the Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Chair, Representative Assembly Delegates and Alternate(s), Building Representatives, and Retirement Representative and Alternate:

- a) the Recording Secretary shall take the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Council and distribute them promptly to the membership, as well as keep a list of those who attend the Executive Council meetings. Also, the Recording Secretary shall determine and post all election results, enlisting assistance as needed, with the Vice-President's approval.
- b) the Corresponding Secretary shall provide adequate correspondence as directed by the President of the CTA or by the Executive Council.
- c) the Treasurer shall keep accurate financial records of the activities of the CTA, including the balancing of the check book, paying all bills and dues, and writing a financial report to present at each meeting. The Treasurer shall prepare a CTA budget for the following school year, and present it at the May meeting, to be voted upon at the June meeting. In addition, the treasurer shall keep proper records of the CTA scholarship account, present checks to the scholarship winners, and deliver the financial records of the Association to the Audit Committee for their bi-annual audit.
- d) the Membership Chair shall keep accurate records of the entire membership, present these records to NYSUT and other parties, when necessary, at the discretion of the President and Vice-President, and distribute membership forms to all new CTA members.
- e) the Representative Assembly Delegates, elected annually, shall attend the New York State United Teachers Representative Assembly, which is held annually in the spring, and, if interested, the American Federation of Teachers Convention, which is held in the summer. These elected Delegates shall vote, as instructed by the CTA, on proposed amendments to the NYSUT Constitution and Bylaws and on amendments to the AFT Constitution and Bylaws. Additionally, the Delegates shall debate and vote, as instructed by the CTA, on proposed resolutions and other business related to NYSUT's and their affiliates involvement in education and labor issues. The Representative Assembly Alternate(s), also elected, shall take the place, if needed, of the Delegate(s) at these conventions, and be prepared to act on their behalf. The CTA's RA Delegate count depends upon the number of its membership, and may vary from year to year.
- f) the Building Representatives shall:
 - 1) attend monthly meetings as scheduled, or provide an alternate;
 - 2) serve on committees as appointed by the President or by his/her designee;
 - 3) act as liaisons between the Executive Council and the building constituents by:
 - a) distributing the minutes in a timely fashion, by routing a paper copy and posting another copy in the teacher workrooms or other prominent places;
 - b) notifying constituents when the minutes have been updated on the CTA web site;
 - 4) hold an occasional meeting with their constituents to elicit concerns and explain significant issues;
 - 5) deliver VOTE/COPE solicitation forms to their constituents;

- 6) carry out election duties as appointed;
 - 7) be responsible for the election of their successors;
 - 8) have a working knowledge of the current Contract.
- g) the Retirement Representative or Alternate, elected every odd-numbered year, shall elect a teacher member at the New York State Teachers' Retirement System (NYSTRS) Board of Trustees and Delegates Meeting, held every November. The Retirement Representative, or Alternate, shall also act as a liaison between the NYSTRS and the Executive Council, reporting to the Council on a regular basis. The Alternate will serve as a backup to the Retirement Representative, attending the annual NYSTRS meeting if necessary, and take the Representative position, if it is vacated.

Section 5. Election of Officers

- a) each member shall be given reasonable opportunity to nominate candidates for office;
- b) notice of the offices to be filled, the right to make nominations, and the time, place, and proper form for submission of nominations will be distributed to all members no later than the last full week of March.
- c) the President shall appoint members to the Nominating Committee at the April Executive Council meeting. The Vice-President shall be chairperson. The Committee shall receive all nominations and secure candidates for the following offices to be filled by election: President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Chair, RA Delegates, and Alternate(s), and, on odd-numbered years, Retirement Representative and Alternate.
- d) a report on the slate of officers shall be made by the Vice-President at the May Executive Council meeting. Ballots will be delivered by the Vice-President to the appointed distributors of the ballots (Building Representatives, TA Representative, and Nurses Representative) no later than five school days after the May meeting
- e) the following policies will apply to nominations:
 - 1) the President, Vice-President, RA delegates and alternates must have had at least three full years of active membership in the CTA before assuming office and should also have served on the Executive Council;
 - 2) in the event that both the President and Vice-President are unable to carry out their terms of office, the Recording Secretary shall call a general meeting, within the next school month, to elect a President and Vice-President. All nominations at such a meeting shall be from the floor.
 - 3) an effort shall be made to see that no member shall hold more than one office at the same time, with the exception of the RA Delegate and Alternate.

Section 6. Election Procedures for CTA Officers:

- a) elections will be by secret ballot;
- b) the results of the elections shall be posted prominently in each building by one Representative from that building;

- c) the Recording Secretary shall preserve all election records, including ballots, for a period of one (1) year;
- d) envelopes with the member's names affixed will be delivered by the Vice-President to the appointed distributors;
- e) each envelope will contain a numbered ballot with voting directions and a return envelope;
- f) the appointed distributors will deliver their envelopes to the membership within their buildings or to their special memberships on the next school day after they have been received;
- g) the members will mark their ballots, place them in the return envelope, and send them directly to the Recording Secretary;
- h) ballots are due three days after being received;
- i) late ballots will not be counted.

Article 7: Executive Council

Section 1. The Executive Council shall be composed of the duly elected Officers, Building Representatives, and other members with voting privileges, including representatives for the Teachers' Assistants, Nurses, North Country Coordinating Council of Teachers, and Trades-Labor, as well as the Retirement delegate, Committee of 100 leader, and VOTE-COPE chair, if not already represented.

Section 2. Elections of Building Representatives, BPT Representatives, DPT Representatives, TA and Nurses' Representatives:

- a. one current Building Representative, Teachers' Assistant Representative, and Nurses' Representative, appointed by the Vice-President at the April meeting, are responsible for holding elections for the following year;
- b. these elections will run concurrently with the election of CTA officers;
- c. proper election procedures will be determined by the appointed representatives of each group ;
- d. elections shall be by secret ballot;
- e. ballots will be returned to the Recording Secretary.

Section 3. The duties of the Executive Council shall be to:

- a) act upon expenditures as may be required;
- b) interpret the by-laws;
- c) act on policy matters of the organization;
- d) make policy and contract recommendations to the membership for their consideration;
- e) communicate pertinent CTA business to the membership;
- f) create an annual budget;
- g) act according to the wishes of the majority of the membership;
- h) perform all other duties as enumerated in these by-laws.

Article 8: Standing Committees

1. Standing Committees are: the Safety Committee, the Liaison Committee, the Scholarship Committee, and the Social Committee.

2. the members of all Standing Committees will be nominated by the President after he/she informs the Executive Council of the Standing Committees.
 - a.) Building Representatives shall be provided, at the June meeting, a list of all Standing Committees, number of members on each, current members of the committees, and the specific duties and responsibilities of each.

Article 9: Meetings

1. Regular Meetings -- the Executive Council shall meet monthly during the school year. The first regular meeting shall be held in September.
2. Annual Meeting -- An annual meeting may be held at the discretion of the President.
3. Special Meetings -- Special meetings may be called by any of the following: the President, a majority request of the Executive Council, or a petition signed by fifteen (15) active members of the Association.
4. Quorum -- A quorum at a general membership meeting shall consist of twenty-five (25) percent of the total active membership of record at that time. A special quorum of fifty (50) percent shall be necessary for a vote related to negotiations.
5. Executive Session: when at least three members of the Executive Council request that the President hold an Executive Session, the following shall occur:
 - a) an Executive Session shall be held immediately, or as a special session called by the President;
 - b) all communication will be privileged and confidential;
 - c) no votes will be taken.

Article 10: Amendments

1. An amendment to the Constitution may be introduced, in writing, at any meeting of the Executive Council, or at a regular Association meeting, by a member of the Association. Said amendment shall be presented for action, with the recommendation of the Executive Council, not later than the second regular Association meeting following the introduction of the amendment, or six (6) months, whichever comes sooner.
2. Notice of the proposed amendment shall be posted at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which the amendment is to be voted upon.
3. Amendments, when approved by a two-thirds vote of the membership, shall become a part of the Constitution.

Article 11: Revision

At least once every five (5) years, a committee shall be appointed by the President, with the approval of the Executive Council, to study the Constitution for possible revisions. The Executive Council should spell out the duties and responsibilities of said committee.

Article 12: Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order shall be the authority on all questions of procedure not specifically stated in this Constitution and by-laws.

Article 13: Protection of Rights of Members

1. Every member of this organization shall have equal rights and privileges to nominate candidates to hold office, to vote in elections or referendum, to attend membership meetings, and to participate in deliberations and voting upon the business of this organization.
2. No member may be fined, suspended, expelled, or otherwise disciplined, except for non-payment of dues, by this organization, unless such member has been served with written, specific charges, given a reasonable time to prepare his/her defense, and afforded a full and fair hearing.
3. This organization shall show no discrimination toward any individual, or group of individuals, on the basis of sex, creed, color, race, national origin, political activity, belief, or sexual orientation.

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