

# Prairie Spirit Teachers' Association Policies and Guidelines



*Effective August 28, 2017*

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## **1. Membership**

### 1.1. Fees

- 1.1.1 Membership fees shall be prorated according to contract, with a minimum of 25% of the full fee. In exceptional circumstances where a member must withdraw membership from the local association, the executive may refund membership fees on a case to case basis.
- 1.1.2 The process of collecting association fees shall be determined by the executive.

### 1.2. Associate Membership

- 1.2.1 The rights and privileges of associate members are limited to receiving local publications and participating in locally sponsored programs.
- 1.2.2 The rights and privileges are conditional upon the payment of an associate membership fee.
  - 1. The associate membership fee shall be established by September 30 by the Executive.
- 1.2.3 Associate members may not run for office, vote in elections, vote on policies, vote on collective agreements, sit as voting members on local committees or represent the local in any forum.

1.3. Honorary Membership

1.3.1 Honorary membership in the association may be provided through a decision of the executive. Honorary members have the same rights and privileges as associate members.

1.4. Substitute Teachers

1.4.1 Substitute teachers who wish to join the local association shall pay 25% of the full membership fee.

1.4.2 Substitute teachers who are members of the association have full rights and privileges of membership except for the following restriction:

1. Substitute teachers are not eligible to run for the office President, Vice president, or STF Councillor.

**2. Election Procedures**

2.1. The executive each year shall establish the dates for elections and shall make those dates known to the membership in a timely manner.

2.1.1 Elections for president are held prior to the general assembly and prior to the election for the other officers in the executive.

2.1.2 Election of officers to the executive and standing committees is held prior to the general assembly.

2.2. The executive shall appoint a returning officer for the term July 1 to June 30.

2.3. No funds of the PSTA shall be spent in support of any candidates.

2.4. Nominations for office signed by two members of the local are submitted to the returning officer before the vote is held. Nominations are also invited from the floor at a representative assembly held just prior to the executive and standing committee elections.

2.5. Nominees shall have the opportunity to submit a word statement to be published by the PSTA. These statements may include a maximum word limit to be determined by the returning officer.

2.6. Elections will take place in the following order: president, vice president, STF councillors, local implementation and negotiation committee (LINC), professional development committee, and communications committee.

2.6.1 Unsuccessful candidates have the opportunity to continue to be nominated down the ballot during the election process.

2.7. The President is responsible for notifying the membership, and media of the election results on behalf of the returning officer.

2.8. Returning Officer

2.8.1 The duties of the PSTA Returning Officer include:

1. Organizing school-based votes by the membership to elect the president
2. Organizing elections to the local executive at representative assemblies.
3. Providing members and school staff liaisons with information about election policies and procedures
4. Ensuring that for the presidential election instructions are prepared for each school staff liaison. The information shall contain the voting procedures, the ballots, and the process for turning in ballots.

2.8.2 The president may assist the returning officer in carrying out the duties of voting and elections.

2.9. Election of President

2.9.1 If the margin of victory is less than 25 votes, a recount shall be performed.

2.9.2 In the event of a tied vote, a revote shall occur for the tied candidates.

2.9.3 The candidate receiving the most votes shall be declared elected.

2.9.4 All voting shall be conducted in accordance with the following rules:

1. Voting in each school staff is to be conducted under the supervision of the school staff liaison.
2. Voting is to take place on the day(s) appointed and between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:00 pm.
3. The school staff liaison is authorized to conduct an advanced poll to ensure that all eligible voters have the opportunity to vote.
4. At 4:00 pm (or before if all eligible voters have voted) the school staff liaison shall count the ballots for their school staff. The results shall be sent to the regional STF Councillor.
5. All ballots shall be sealed in the envelope and returned to the PSTA office.
6. Each STF Councillor shall forward the results to the returning officer by 5:00 pm on the date appointed for voting.
7. The returning officer shall contact the President with the results.
8. The President shall announce the results of the vote.
9. Ballots shall be kept for one year. The ballots shall be destroyed by order of a motion from the Executive.

2.10. Election of Executive Officers and Standing Committee Members

2.10.1 Nominated members do not have the opportunity to address the representative assembly unless all nominated individuals have the opportunity to do so. The prepared statement provided by the nominated individual will be available for school staff liaisons.

2.10.2 A motion made from the representative assembly is required to close nominations. The motion is not voted on.

2.10.3 Only members of the representative assembly are eligible to vote.

2.10.4 For executive offices or standing committees that consist of more than one position, members shall cast one vote for each position open. Ballots with votes less than the full number of open positions shall be declared invalid.

2.10.5 In the event of a tied vote, a revote shall occur for the tied candidates.

2.10.6 The candidate(s) receiving the most votes shall be declared elected.

2.10.7 The executive shall invite individuals who are not members of the association to assist in the election process. These individuals will:

1. Count ballots using the counting sheet under the supervision of the returning officer.
2. The returning officer calls out each ballot name, counters mark their sheet accordingly.
3. Once ballots are counted, counting sheet numbers are compared for accuracy
4. The returning officer declares a winner and informs the President of the results.

2.10.8 The President shall announce the results of the vote.

2.10.9 Ballots shall be kept for one year. The ballots shall be destroyed by order of a motion from the Executive.

2.11. The following schools/groups of members shall elect a school staff liaison by Constitution formula:

1. Aberdeen School & Riverview Colony School
2. Allan School
3. Blaine Lake School & Green Leaf Colony School
4. Borden School
5. Clavet School
6. Colonsay School
7. Dalmeny High School
8. Delisle Composite School & Willow Park Colony School
9. Delisle Elementary School
10. Division Office
11. Dundurn School & Hillcrest Colony School & Lost River Colony School
12. Hague Elementary School
13. Hague High School
14. Hanley School
15. Hepburn School
16. Laird School
17. Lake Vista Public School
18. Langham Elementary School
19. Leask Community School & Leask Colony School
20. Lord Asquith School, Eagle Creek Colony School & Sunnydale Colony School
21. Martensville High School
22. Osler School
23. Perdue School

24. Pike Lake School
25. Prairie View School
26. Rosthern Elementary School
27. Rosthern High School
28. South Corman Park School
29. Stobart Community School
30. Traditions Elementary School
31. Valley Christian Academy
32. Valley Manor School
33. Vanscoy School
34. Venture Heights School
35. Waldheim School & Riverbend Colony
36. Walter W. Brown School
37. Warman Community Middle School
38. Warman Elementary School
39. Warman High School
40. Warman Community Middle School

### **3. Offices and Duties**

- 3.1 All PSTA members, committees, and officers shall work to promote and uphold STF Bylaws and Policy.
- 3.2. Committee Chairs
  - 3.2.1 All committees of the association shall have a chair.
  - 3.2.2 Duties
    1. Contribute to the establishment and maintenance of the committee
    2. Organize and preside over committee meetings
    3. Recruit, mentor and support committee members
    4. Facilitate the review of committee plans, programs and goals
    5. Liaise between the committee and the local, the school division and the provincial organization
    6. Maintain communication with the President on the status of the committee
    7. Prepare required reports or documents on behalf of the committee
    8. Act as a means of communication for the committee with respect to findings, policy implications and recommendations.
- 3.3. Communications Committee
  - 3.3.1 Ensures that the association retains the domain rights for the website.
  - 3.3.2 Responsible for any association merchandise
  - 3.3.3 Enhance the profile of the local association.
    1. Develops a strategic plan to enhance communication internally and externally with the local association and surrounding communities with input from the executive, representative assembly and membership.

2. Promotes the local association and enhances the image of the teaching profession.

3.4. Local Implementation and Negotiation Committee (LINC)

- 3.4.1 Liaises with the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation and other LINC's on matters related to bargaining.
- 3.4.2 Constitutes the grievance committee/board of review with matters arising out of the local agreement.
- 3.4.3 Designates two members to join the President on committees related to the provincial collective agreement.
- 3.4.4 Works with the President in administering the local collective agreement.
- 3.4.5 Nominates a chairperson. The LINC Chair:
  1. Has the same role and responsibilities as other committee chairs.
  2. Maintains regular contact with the local association executive and the provincial organizations during negotiations.
  3. Speaks on behalf of the committee to members and school division officials.
  4. Maintains relationships with school division officials involved in collective bargaining.
  5. Assists members in dealing with grievances related to the local collective agreement.
  6. Works with the president in administration of the local collective agreement.
  7. Must send a letter to the Educational Relations Board registering the bargaining route selected by the association.
  8. Must send a letter to the Board Chairman at least 100 days prior to the expiration of the current agreement requesting that negotiations commence.

3.5. Past President

- 3.5.1 Will be the member who last held the position of president.
- 3.5.2 Will only be a member of the executive for the first year of a president's term.
- 3.5.3 May assist the president in facilitating the development and implementation of local policies.
- 3.5.4 May assist the president in facilitating the development and maintenance of local services to members.
- 3.5.5 May assist the president in a mutually agreed upon role or responsibility.

3.5. President

- 3.6.1 One president shall be elected by the membership.
- 3.6.2 Represents the local and speaks on behalf of its members within the STF and the area served by the local.
- 3.6.3 Monitors, communicates to members, and works to further the goals and activities established at the provincial level of the STF.
- 3.6.4 Works to resolve conflict and solve problems with the local.

- 3.6.5 Refers schools and members in need of advice and assistance from STF Senior Administrative Staff.
  - 3.6.6 Attends all Local Implementation and Negotiation Committee meetings with the school division.
  - 3.6.7 Meets regularly with the Director of Education or designate and other school division staff.
  - 3.6.8 When possible, attends division meetings of the in-school administrators.
  - 3.6.9 Attends meetings of the school division to represent the association.
  - 3.6.10 Has initial approval of all minutes of the Representative Assembly and executive meetings. Minutes are sent out to respective members as part of the next meeting package. Amendments are asked for at the next regularly scheduled meeting and are formally approved.
  - 3.6.11 Acts as the agent of the local in managing its affairs:
    - 1. Organizing and presiding over executive meetings
    - 2. Facilitating leadership development within the local
    - 3. Ensuring the effectiveness of local association committees by having the right to call meetings of chairpersons and committees for the purpose of liaison and planning, and shall be ex officio, a member of all committees.
    - 4. Establishing and maintaining effective, two-way communication with members
    - 5. Facilitating the development and implementation of local policies
    - 6. Facilitating the development and maintenance of local services to members
    - 7. Develop and create resources for the representative assembly and executive.
    - 8. Ensures that the website and portals are maintained.
    - 9. Assists in the maintenance of social media accounts.
- 3.7. Professional Development Committee
- 3.7.1 Organizes and plans general assemblies.
  - 3.7.2 The chair, two committee members and the President will join the Prairie Spirit School Division committee(s) for consultation and collaboration related to professional development /adult learning in the division.
  - 3.7.3 Ensures all provisions related to professional development /adult learning that are contained within the local collective bargaining agreement are implemented.
- 3.8. School Staff Liaison
- 3.8.1 Attends and contributes to the Representative Assembly, providing the perspective of the school while acting on behalf of all members of the local by:
    - 1. Acquiring information about issues facing the local, sharing it with those in their schools or electorate and seeking feedback from them.
    - 2. Reporting on assembly decisions and the reasons for them.
    - 3. Arranging for a substitute to attend Representative Assembly meetings from the member's school/group if unable to attend.
  - 3.8.2 Liaises between the school and the local association executive or provincial organization

- 3.8.3 Reports to the school staff on STF meetings, PSTA meetings and local and provincial issues, ensuring that their implications are understood and discussed
- 3.8.4 Gathers and distributes information as requested
- 3.8.5 Links members to supports and services within the STF (e.g., counselling, mediation, professional development, legal advice, benefits information)
- 3.8.6 Conveys information on teacher concerns to the local association and/or the provincial organization.

### 3.9. Secretary

- 3.9.1 Maintains and distributes all records of all general meetings and meetings of the representative assembly and the local association executive.
- 3.9.2 Ensures the members of the executive and representative assembly are informed about the business of the local association.
- 3.9.3 Assists the treasurer.
- 3.9.4 Assists the president by carrying out responsibilities designated as by the president and/or executive.

### 3.10. STF Councillor

- 3.9.1 Attends STF Council meetings and contributes to the work of the STF Council, providing the perspective of the local while acting on behalf of all STF members.
  - 1. Informs the Councillor Chair of the need for a substitute at Council meetings if unable to attend.
- 3.10.2 Acts as an agent of the STF within the local:
  - 1. Connects members to the STF in matters related to contracts of employment, benefits, accreditation, STF policies, STF plans and activities, and STF services. Shares information with members regarding educational issues and trends affecting teachers.
  - 2. Support the development and implementation of STF plans and policies at the provincial level.
  - 3. Informs the STF Executive and Administrative Staff about the needs of local members and developments or issues within the local
  - 4. Maintains local relationships, both internal and external, that facilitate influencing and information-gathering on behalf of the STF
  - 5. Offers advice and guidance consistent with STF policies, bylaws, and codes to local members who need assistance in their professional duties or relationships

### 3.11. Treasurer

- 3.11.1 Maintains accurate financial records of all monies received and disbursed by the local association.
- 3.11.2 Prepares an annual financial report for consideration at the annual general meeting.
- 3.11.3 Arranges for the financial records to be reviewed or audited as stipulated in the constitution.

3.11.4 Fulfills requirements in the constitution and in policy.

3.11.5 Provides a monthly statement to the executive.

3.12. Vice President

3.12.1 One vice-president shall be elected by the representative assembly.

3.12.2 Presides over general meetings of the membership.

3.12.3 Assumes the role of president in the event that the president is unable to carry out the responsibilities assigned by:

1. Representing the president at meetings.
2. Chairing meetings in the president's absence.

3.12.4 Assists the president by carrying out responsibilities designated to the office by the president and/or executive.

3.12.5 Collaborates with the professional development committee to organize general assemblies.

3.13.1 An executive or standing committee member wishing to remain in office while on extended leave shall, at their earliest convenience, inform the executive and continue to fulfill the duties of their office, as outlined in PSTA Policies and guidelines

3.13.2 The Executive shall refer to Section 3: Duties of Office outlined in PSTA Policies and Guidelines when determining the extent to which an executive or standing committee member on extended leave of absence has fulfilled their duties.

3.13.3 If concerns arise over the ability of a member on extended leave to fulfil the duties of their office, those concerns will be shared in accordance to the STF Code of Ethics.

#### **4. Financial Matters**

4.1. The President, Treasurer and Vice President shall have co-signing authority for all financial transactions of the local association.

4.2. The Treasurer will reconcile all accounts by August 20th of each year and transfer them to the new Treasurer by the date of the school year start.

4.3. The financial institution shall be determined by the executive.

4.4. Approved expenses will be reimbursed at rates determined by the executive.

4.5. Honoraria shall be awarded as determined by the representative assembly.

4.6. Release time may be provided to local association officers through a decision of the representative assembly or general assembly. Release time for officers of the local is negotiated with the employing Board of Education through LINC. The local association

will reimburse the Board of Education for the costs of releasing an employee to carry out roles and responsibilities for the local association.

#### 4.7. Reimbursement of Expenses

4.7.1 PSTA members are eligible for travel expense reimbursement for the following committees and/or purposes:

1. Executive meetings
2. Representative Assembly Meetings
3. Standing Committee Meetings
4. Other meetings or purposes that are approved by the President

4.7.2 Travel expense claims will be at the Executive approved rates based on the PSTA distance chart.

4.7.3 Travel expenses shall be reimbursed at least twice per year.

1. The president shall have all travel expenses reimbursed monthly.

4.7.4 Travel expense claims shall be based on

1. Any additional distance beyond the regular daily distance that a member would travel to and from their location of work, OR
2. A minimum travel expense rate

4.7.5 PSTA members are eligible to submit for a per day expense claim for the expenses other than travel incurred when attending the following:

1. Executive meetings
2. Representative Assembly Meetings
3. Standing Committee Meetings
4. Other meetings or purposes that are approved by the President

4.7.6 The maximum amount of the per day expense will be approved by the Executive.

4.7.7 Expense claims must be submitted within 30 days of the event.

### 5. Association Records

5.1. Association records shall consist of:

- 5.1.1 Financial statements
- 5.1.2 Budget documents
- 5.1.3 Election documents
- 5.1.4 Ballots from votes and elections
- 5.1.5 Minutes from all committees, representative assemblies, executive meetings, and general assemblies
- 5.1.6 Constitution and Policies
- 5.1.7 Other documents as determined by the executive

5.2. The PSTA will work with STF archives to ensure documented history of the association is collected and preserved.

5.3. Unless otherwise stated in policy or in the constitution, items listed above will be preserved on file for five years.

- 5.4. The president will ensure a historical record of members who have served on the PSTA Executive is maintained.
- 5.5. Every effort should be made to keep a copy of all records in one location that is not a personal residence.

## **6. Local Collective Bargaining**

- 6.1. The executive shall select the bargaining route.
- 6.2. Agreement Ratification
  - 6.2.1 A recommendation for ratification will be made to the executive when LINC has determined that there is a proposed agreement.
    - 6.2.1.1 Prior to a recommendation for ratification, the LINC Chair will review the proposed agreement with the STF to ensure the proposed agreement is not in violation of any provincial agreements.
  - 6.2.2 The Executive considers the recommendation from LINC. If approved a motion is made to call for vote of the membership.
  - 6.2.3 The PSTA contacts the School Staff Liaisons with the vote question, background and voting process.
  - 6.2.4 The President administers a school staff based vote using processes established by policy for elections.
  - 6.2.5 A 50% + 1 vote from the membership is necessary for the ratification of a collective agreement.
- 6.3. Amendments to the Local Collective Bargaining Agreement
  - 6.3.1 A recommendation to seek an amendment will be made to the executive by LINC.
    - 6.3.1.1 Prior to a recommendation for amendment, the LINC Chair will review the proposed agreement with the STF to ensure the proposed amendment is not in violation of any provincial agreements.
  - 6.3.2 The Executive considers the recommendation from LINC. If approved a motion is made to call for a vote of the membership to support opening discussions to seek an amendment.
  - 6.3.3 The PSTA contacts the School Staff Liaisons with the vote question, background and voting process.
  - 6.3.4 The President administers a school staff based vote using process established by policy for elections.
  - 6.3.5 If the membership is in favour (50% + 1) of moving forward, the PSTA LINC team contacts Prairie Spirit School Division to seek an amendment.
  - 6.3.6 A proposed amendment is presented to the executive. Prior to proposing the amendment, the LINC Chair will confirm with the STF that the proposed

amendment is not in violation of any provincial agreement. If approved a motion is made to call for vote of the membership.

- 6.3.7 The PSTA contacts the School Staff Liaisons with the vote question, background and voting process.
- 6.3.8 The President administers a school staff based vote using process established by policy for elections.
- 6.3.9 A 50% + 1 vote from the membership is necessary for the approval of an amendment of the collective agreement.

## **7. General Assembly**

- 7.1. Involvement with and understanding of the PSTA and the STF, at the local and provincial level, is a professional obligation of every teacher.
- 7.2. Members unable to attend a PSTA general assembly held during a school day will follow regular procedures for accessing leaves.
- 7.3. The general assembly shall receive a report from the President on the state of the association.

## **8. Executive Practices and Procedures**

- 8.1. The executive shall maintain a record of practices and procedures.
- 8.2. Practices and procedures are developed by a motion of the executive.

## **9. Resolutions**

- 9.1. A resolution is a formal proposal calling for the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation or the Prairie Spirit Teachers' Association to take a certain action, or to express a certain view or set of beliefs.
- 9.2. Members seeking a resolution to be adopted by the Prairie Spirit Teachers' Association or to be submitted to the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation on behalf of the association must submit the resolution to the executive.
- 9.3. The executive assigns the resolution to a committee.
  - 9.3.1 The committee works with the members who submitted the resolution.
  - 9.3.2 The committee develops wording of the resolution.
  - 9.3.3 The committee develops background research to include with the resolution.
  - 9.3.4 The committee brings the completed resolution to the executive. The executive approves the resolution for referral to the Representative Assembly. The Representative Assembly must approve a resolution in order for that resolution to move forward to the STF as endorsed by the PSTA.
- 9.4. Resolutions Approved

9.4.1 Resolutions for the STF are submitted on behalf of the association by the deadline required by the STF.

9.4.2 Resolutions for the PSTA are submitted to the executive to administer.

## 10. Community Support

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### 10.1 Scholarships

10.1.1 The Prairie Spirit Teachers' Association will provide a student scholarship.

10.1.2 The method of awarding the scholarships shall be through one of the following methods as determined by the representative assembly:

a) Partnership with Prairie Spirit School Division

b) Process administered by the Association

10.1.3 The amount of the scholarship will be determined annually as part of the Association budget. Changes in contributions must be approved through the budget process or through a motion of the executive within the approved budget.

10.1.4 A Student Scholarship Committee consisting of the PSTA President, Vice President, and three PSTA members appointed by the Executive will, independently or in collaboration with Prairie Spirit School Division, establish criteria, an application process, and an adjudication process.

Commented [P1]: Approved by Rep Assembly March 13, 2018

### 10.2 Sterling McDowell Foundation

10.2.1 The Prairie Spirit Teachers' Association should contribute on an annual basis to the foundation at a rate determined by the budget.

## 11. Teacher Recognition

11.1. The PSTA recognizes the importance of celebrating the superannuation of its members. Celebrations will occur in one of the following manners:

11.1.1 An event that is hosted by the PSTA and PSSD. The event will be planned by staff from PSSD and the PSTA Superannuation Recognition Committee and be jointly funded. The event will not, necessarily, replace individual staff appreciation events for superannuates.

Or,

11.1.2 The PSTA executive may select an alternate method, such as providing funding for school based events.

Commented [P2]: Approved by Rep Assembly March 13, 2018

11.2. The PSTA will provide an allotment of money to purchase a gift for each superannuate.

11.3. The PSTA will provide a gift for members who have served on the Executive.

11.4. The PSTA will provide a gift in memorandum for members that have died.

