

*Constitution and Bylaws
of the
Valley Central
Teachers' Association
(as amended May 2016)*



*There are no greater advocates
for children and education
than teachers and teacher unions.*

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Article I: Name

- A. This organization shall be known as the Valley Central Teachers' Association (VCTA), hereafter referred to as the Association.

Article II: Purpose

- A. The purpose of this Association shall be to:
 1. promote the welfare of its members;
 2. advance the standards of the teaching profession;
 3. promote the interests of public education and public education students in our community, state, nation and throughout the world.

Article III: Membership

- A. Active Membership (Bylaw I, Section 1-A)
- B. Honorary Membership (Bylaw I, Section 1-B)
- C. Retired Membership (Bylaw I, Section 1-C)

Article IV: Executive Council

- A. The administration of the Association shall be vested in an Executive Council, to include members as prescribed in the bylaws.
- B. The legislative and policy forming body of the Association shall be the Executive Council.

Article V: Amendments

- A. Any proposed amendment must be submitted in writing to all members of the Executive Council at least five school days before the Executive Council is to vote on the proposal.
- B. A resolution to submit the proposed amendment to the general membership must be passed by a majority vote of the Executive Council, or failing this, must be initiated by a petition signed by twenty-five percent of the general membership.
- C. Adoption of the proposed amendment requires approval by two-thirds majority of the ballots cast by the general membership.
- D. Voting shall take place in the separate buildings under the direction of the Executive Council.

Association Bylaws

Bylaw I: Membership

Section 1—Definition of Membership: Membership shall be classified as active, honorary, or retired.

- A. **Active Members**
 1. Active membership shall mean unified membership in the Association, NEW YORK STATE UNITED TEACHERS and its national affiliates, and shall be open to any personnel employed by

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the Valley Central School District (hereafter referred to as District) who are members of the bargaining units represented by the Association.

2. Active membership shall be continuing until the member retires and/or leaves the school system, or resigns from the Association.

B. Honorary Members

1. Persons deemed worthy of this distinction by the membership upon the recommendation of the Executive Council.

C. Retired Members

1. Persons who have retired from the teaching profession while employed by the District after having been a member for at least one year in the District.

Section 2—Obligation of Membership:

A. Members of the Association shall have the following obligation:

1. To subscribe to and support the stated purpose of the Association as contained in the constitution and bylaws.

Section 3—Membership Dues: The membership year shall be from July 1 through June 30.

A. Dues for Active Members

1. Single (unified) dues shall include the individual member's dues for an amount set for the operation of the Association and dues for the New York State United Teachers, hereafter referred to as NYSUT, and its national affiliates.
2. The annual local dues shall be determined by the Executive Council subject to the approval of the membership. Members will be notified 15 days before any local dues increase vote. Said vote will be by secret ballot..
3. Special assessments must be recommended by the Executive Council and approved by two-thirds of the members voting.
4. Dues must be paid by payroll deduction.
5. Payment of dues through payroll deduction shall mean for all intents and purposes that the member's dues are fully paid.

B. Dues for Honorary Members

1. Honorary members of the Association are exempt from the payment of dues and other fees.

C. Refunding of Dues

1. Except when a member leaves the employ of the District before the end of the school year, membership dues, or any part thereof, are not refundable except as specified under the agency fee procedure or by special action of the Executive Council.

D. Agency Fee

1. Agency fee payers must pay a fee equal to the amount of dues paid by active members of the Association. This fee will be collected through payroll deduction.

Section 4—Membership Rights and Privileges

A. Services for Active Members

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1. Every member and agency fee payer shall have the right to receive all published materials of the Association and its affiliates, to attend meetings, and to participate in any of the services which the Association may provide.
- B. Rights of Active Members
 1. Active members shall have the right to attend and vote at general meetings; shall be eligible to serve as an officer or as a member of any committee or council except as provided by the bylaws.
- C. Rights of Honorary and Retired Members
 1. Retirees shall be entitled to a maximum of two (2) representatives to the Executive Council. The President shall recommend to the Executive Council two (2) teacher unit retirees for appointment as retiree representatives. Retiree representatives shall not have the power to vote.
- D. Grievance and Ethics Committee
 1. Any member of this Association shall forfeit his/her rights and privileges as a member and shall be dropped from the membership list of this Association by a two-thirds vote of those with voting rights at the Executive Council meeting on the recommendation of the Grievance and/or Ethics Committee, provided that said member has been served with written specific charges and given a reasonable time to prepare his/her defense and afforded a full and fair hearing.
- E. Reinstatement
 1. The Executive Council shall have the power to reinstate a person whose membership has been terminated under Bylaw I, Section 4D, by a two-thirds vote.

Bylaw II: Qualifications, Method of Election, and Duties of Officers

Section 1—Elected Officers:

- A. Qualifications
 1. All elected officers shall hold active membership in good standing in the Association for a minimum of four years.
- B. Election, Term and Assumption of Office
 1. Officers shall be elected as provided in Bylaw VI for a term of two years and shall assume office at the beginning of the fiscal year.
 2. The elected officers of the Association shall be president, vice-presidents, secretary and treasurer.
- C. Duties of the President—The president shall:
 1. preside at all general meetings of the Association and meetings of the Executive Council;
 2. appoint all committees and committee chairpersons except as otherwise provided in the bylaws;
 3. be an ex-officio member of all committees, except the election committee;
 4. recommend to the Executive Council a person for appointment as parliamentarian;
 5. recommend an Association budget to the Executive Council,
 6. appoint a member to audit the treasurer's books—no officer of the Association shall serve in this capacity;
 7. appoint an election committee, including representation from elementary, middle and high school levels—no officer of the Association shall serve on this committee;
 8. appoint any representatives of the Association to serve on any committees or councils within the school or civic community as may be necessary to carry out the purpose of the Association;
 9. call meetings of the Association and its Executive Council as provided in the bylaws;
 10. appoint members to fill trustee vacancies on the Valley Central Benefit Trust Board;
 - a. A maximum of one Trustee may be a retiree.

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- b. In June of each year or as soon thereafter as practicable, the Trustees shall select from among the appointed Trustees a Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, each to serve for a term of one year.
 - c. The Trust Chair must be an active VCTA member.
11. be the Association's first representative/delegate to NYSUT's Annual Representative Assembly and the AFT's Biennial Convention.
- D. Duties of the Vice-Presidents—A vice-president shall:
1. upon designation by the executive council, assume the duties and responsibilities of the president in case of his/her absence or disability;
 2. perform such other duties as the president may request;
 3. be the Association's second and third representatives/delegates to NYSUT's Annual Representative Assembly and the AFT's Biennial Convention.
- E. Duties of the Secretary—The secretary shall:
1. record the minutes of the general and the Executive Council meetings and make available copies to the members of the Executive Council and other members who so request not later than five school days after such meetings have been held;
 2. maintain official files of the Association;
 3. have available a copy of the constitution and bylaws of the Association at all meetings;
 4. keep a record of attendance of all meetings of the Executive Council;
 5. assist the president and the Executive Council with Association correspondence;
 6. distribute notices and agendas of all meetings as prescribed in the bylaws;
 7. notify committee members of their appointments;
 8. distribute the names of officers, all members of the Executive Council, all chairpersons of standing committees, and other appointed chairpersons to the membership not later than two months following the first organizational meeting of the new Executive Council;
 9. maintain a calendar of events for the Association;
 10. perform such other duties as the president may request;
 11. be the Association's fourth representative/delegate to NYSUT's Annual Representative Assembly and the AFT's Biennial Convention.
- F. Duties of the Treasurer—The treasurer shall:
1. assume responsibility for the funds of the Association, deposit them in a bank in the name of the Association, and disburse them upon authorization of the Executive Council;
 2. maintain complete records and accounts of monies received and disbursed;
 3. prepare and/or assist in the preparation of the annual budget of the Association at the direction of the President;
 4. keep the president and Executive Council informed of the financial conditions of the Association
 5. perform such other duties as may be required by the president or Executive Council;
 6. assist with the annual audit;
 7. be the Association's fifth representative/delegate to NYSUT's Annual Representative Assembly and the AFT's Biennial Convention.

Section 2—Appointed Officer

- A. The appointed officer of this Association shall be the Parliamentarian.

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Section 3—Removal of Officers

- A. A minimum of ten percent (10%) of the membership may at any time petition that a vote of confidence be given to a particular officer. Upon receipt of such a petition the president shall arrange for a special meeting of the general membership to be held within five (5) school days. Notice and purpose of general meeting will be given to the membership. The officer will be given the opportunity to present a full response. Should a majority of those present on such an occasion express a lack of confidence in the officer in question, a special vote of the entire membership shall be taken by secret ballot in the separate buildings within five (5) school days. The exact date shall be fixed by a majority vote of the Executive Council. Should the officer in question fail to receive a majority of the votes cast, he/she shall be removed from office immediately.

Section 4—Vacancies

- A. President
 1. Should the president temporarily become disabled, or should the office of the president become vacant, the Executive Council will immediately select a vice-president to fill this role.
- B. Vice-Presidents
 1. Should an office of vice-president become vacant for any reason it shall be filled by a special election. The general membership will be notified of said vacancy and the intent of the executive council to nominate a replacement. Said notice must be at least 15 days prior to the meeting which such nomination will be made, and will include the date of the secret ballot vote. Nominations shall be made at the first Executive Council meeting subsequent to the vacancy. Elections shall be made by secret ballot in the separate buildings no more than five (5) school days after the nominations are made. The president shall set the exact date. In all other respects the election shall be conducted in the usual manner.
 2. A special election does not need to be held for a vacant vice-president position if said special election is uncontested.
- C. Other Elected Officers
 1. Should the office of treasurer or secretary become vacant for any reason, it shall be filled within fifteen (15) school days by the President's appointee. Such appointee shall assume office upon two-thirds vote of the Executive Council and shall complete the term of the previous incumbent.

Bylaw III: Executive Council

Section 1—Composition of the Executive Council

- A. The Executive Council shall be composed of the elected officers, , building representatives from the teacher' bargaining unit and a secretarial and paraprofessional representative.
- B. Representation for the teachers' bargaining unit shall be according to the number of members in each building—one (1) representative for each fifteen (15) members or majority fraction thereof. The immediate past president shall advise the Executive Council and assist the president at the latter's request.

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Section 2—Voting Privileges of Members of Council

- A. Those members named in Section 1 shall have voting privileges on the Executive Council.

Section 3—Duties: The Executive Council shall:

- A. conduct the routine business of the Association;
- B. approve by a majority of the voting members all appointments of the president except as provided elsewhere in these bylaws.
- C. review proposals submitted by members and committee chairpersons and make recommendations regarding their disposition;
- D. develop Association policies and programs.

Bylaw IV: Meetings and Quorum

Section 1—Executive Council

- A. The Executive Council shall meet at least once a month during the school year, at the call of the president, or at the request of three (3) members of the Council.

Section 2—Agenda

- A. The president shall prepare an agenda for each Executive Council meeting and shall provide it to all Council Members at the meeting.

Section 3—Special Meetings

- A. Special meetings of the Executive Council may be held at the call of the president or upon written request to the Executive Council from ten (10) percent of the active Association membership.
- B. Business to come before special meetings must be stated in the call to the president.

Section 4—General Membership Meetings

- A. Executive Council meetings are open to the active general membership and, therefore, are to be considered General Membership Meetings.

Section 5—Quorum

- A. General Membership Meetings
 - 1. A quorum at a general membership meeting for which all members are requested to attend shall be at least twenty (20) percent of the active membership of the Association.
- B. Executive Council and Committee Meetings
 - 1. A majority of their elected or appointed members shall be a quorum for Executive Council and Committee Meetings.

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Section 6—Notice of Meetings

- A. At least three school days' advance notice must be given on all general and building meetings, unless an emergency, declared by the president, arises requiring immediate action by the membership.

Bylaw V: Building Representatives

Section 1—Qualifications

- A. Building representatives on the Executive Council shall hold active membership in good standing in the Association for a minimum of four years. Secretarial and paraprofessional representatives shall hold active membership in good standing in the Association for a minimum of four years.

Section 2—Elections

- A. Building representatives shall be elected on a yearly basis by members within the building they represent. The secretarial representative will be elected by the secretarial bargaining unit, and the paraprofessional representative will be elected by the paraprofessional bargaining unit. Term of office shall coincide with the fiscal year.
- B. Elections do not need to be held for building/unit representative positions that are uncontested.
- C. A chief building representative shall be designated by the building representatives in all buildings that have more than one representative.

Section 3—Alternate Building Representatives

- A. Alternate building representatives shall be elected in the same manner as building representatives. Each building will be entitled to one (1) alternate building representative for every two (2) duly elected building representatives. An alternate may serve in the absence of any building representative at Executive Council meetings. Alternate building representatives shall hold active membership in good standing in the Association for a minimum of four years.
- B. The secretarial and paraprofessional units will be entitled to one alternate representative.

Section 4—Duties

- A. The building representative is expected to regularly attend Executive Council meetings, keep members in his/her building informed of Executive Council actions, and organize building meetings when needed.
- B. In addition to their regular duties, the chief building representative shall have the responsibility to organize elections within the building and organize and preside over building meetings. A minimum of one (1) building meeting will be scheduled each month that school is in session.
- C. Building representatives will represent the Association on a minimum of one (1) District or Association committee.
- D. Building representatives will work with the Grievance Committee to gather information as needed on potential grievance matters.

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Section 5—Removal

- A. Any building representative may be recalled by a majority vote of the Association's members in the representative's building.

Section 6—Vacancies

- A. Should a vacancy occur for any reason in the representation of a building to the Executive Council, it is to be filled by an election to be called before the next meeting of the Council. The date of such an election is to be determined by the remaining building representative(s); if none remain, by the president.
- B. Elections do not need to be held for building representative positions that are uncontested.
- C. If a position remains vacant after solicitations for candidates, the first member who offers to fill the vacancy will be appointed to the position.

Bylaw VI: Nominations, Elections and Voting Procedures

Section 1—Authorization

- A. Standing committees and such special committees and advisory councils as the Executive Council may deem necessary shall be appointed. Standing committees may include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Negotiation Committee
 - 2. Grievance and/or Ethics Committee
 - 3. Legislative and Resolutions Committee
 - 4. Membership Committee
 - 5. Public Relations Committee
 - 6. Trustees for Benefits Trust Board
 - 7. Elections Committee
 - 8. Political Action Committee
 - 9. Scholarship Committee
 - 10. Fundraising Committee
 - 11. Audit Committee

Section 2—Nominations and Election of Officers

- A. Nominations
 - 1. By March 1st, notice will be sent to all members detailing the election procedure. The active members of the Association may obtain a nomination form on the Association website or from a building or unit representative to nominate a candidate for president/delegate, vice-presidents/delegates, secretary/delegate, and/or treasurer/delegate during the month of March. The person being nominated must also sign the nomination form to demonstrate his/her willingness to run for office and delegate to NYSUT's Annual Representative Assembly and the AFT's Biennial Convention. Nomination forms must be delivered to the Committee on Elections by March 20.
 - 2. Votes will be valid only for those candidates who have followed the procedures set forth in Bylaw VI; therefore, write-in votes are invalid.

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B. Information on Candidates

1. Nominees must prepare and present a biography to the Committee on Elections for publication to the membership by March 20.
2. The Committee on Elections shall publish to the membership on or before March 30 brief information on each candidate and present these candidates at the general meeting in April.
3. Information on candidates may be published/distributed to membership via the Association newsletter, email, the Association website, or any other means deemed sufficient by the Elections Committee and approved by the Executive Council.
4. Elections for officers/delegates do not need to be held for positions that are uncontested.

C. Secret Ballot

1. Members shall vote for officers by secret ballot in each building on an election day in May determined by the Committee on Elections.
2. Elections do not need to be held for officer/delegate positions that are uncontested.

D. Absentee Ballots

1. Members who know in advance that they will be absent from work on Election Day may place their signed vote(s) in a sealed envelope with their name also written across the envelope's seal. The envelope should be given to a building representative on the member's last day of attendance before Election Day.
2. Members who are unexpectedly absent on Election Day may email the Elections Chair or call the Association phone and leave a detailed message indicating their vote(s). Upon return to work they must immediately follow the procedure specified above (Bylaw VI, Section D.1) to verify the authenticity of their vote.

Section 3—Voting Procedure

- A. A majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. Should no candidate receive a majority vote, a special election shall be held between the two candidates receiving the greatest number of votes; such election shall be held within three school days after the regular election.

Section 4—Balloting in Issues Other than Elections

- A. The Executive Council, by two-thirds vote, may request that any item be voted on by all members by secret ballot in each building. Such balloting shall take place within ten (10) school days after notice of such issue is posted in each building.

Bylaw VII: Parliamentary Authority

- A. 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 Executive Council may adopt.

Bylaw VIII: Fiscal Year

- A. The fiscal year of the Association shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30.

Bylaw IX: Amendments

- A. The procedure for amending the bylaws shall be the same as that for amending the constitution.