

CONSTITUTION
OF THE
ST. CROIX EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION

Adopted February 6, 1974

(Amended February 11, 1976, November 12, 1980, November 10, 1981,

April 14, 1999, February 9, 2000, April 2003,

May 2004, December 2005, March 2022)

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Saint Croix Education Association, Education Minnesota, National Education Association, and American Federation of Teachers, believing that the active participation of non-supervisory licensed educational personnel is essential for sound education in a democratic society, have joined together, as herein defined in this Constitution and Bylaws, for the purpose of exerting a collective and positive influence on education in Independent School District #834.

The Saint Croix Education Association shall provide a united voice for public education, leadership in education innovation, dedication to Minnesota students and families, and an unwavering commitment to the welfare of our members.

The Saint Croix Education Association shall be a local organization that provides ~~unstinting~~ professional service to its members by building and maintaining a strong, effective local and by promoting instructional advocacy. The SCEA shall be committed to democracy in the workplace and within the organization.

If any provisions of this constitution and bylaws conflict or violate the constitution and bylaws of Education Minnesota, NEA, or AFT, the provisions of the state and national organization shall supersede those contained herein.

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this professional organization shall be the Saint Croix Education Association, hereinafter referred to as the "Association" or "Local Association" or "SCEA"

ARTICLE II: PURPOSES

1. To work for the improved welfare of school children, the advancement of education as being vital to the future of our society, and the improvement of educational opportunities for all.
2. To develop and promote a continuing program to improve salaries, fringe benefits, working conditions, personnel policies and educational programs through formal negotiations and discussions with the School Board and its representatives.
3. To develop and promote the adoption of such ethical practices and standards of preparation as marks a profession.

ARTICLE III: AFFILIATIONS

The Saint Croix Education Association is affiliated with Education Minnesota, the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association and the St. Croix Labor Council in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of these bodies. Individuals will be members of Education Minnesota, the American Federation of Teachers, and the National Education Association.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1: Active membership in the Association shall be open to all professional personnel employed in the schools of Independent School District 834 in a position for which they must be certificated or licensed and who hold a valid Minnesota teaching certificate.

SECTION 2: Membership in the Association shall be in accordance with the constitution and bylaws of Education Minnesota, NEA, and AFT. The membership year shall be September 1 through August 31.

No one shall hold office or vote for officers in the Saint Croix Education Association who is not an active member of Education Minnesota, NEA, and AFT.

SECTION 3: Active membership shall be continuous until the member leaves the school system, resigns in writing from the Association, or fails to pay membership dues.

SECTION 4: The active categories of the Association shall correspond to the Education Minnesota membership categories.

SECTION 5: Revocation and Reinstatement of Membership:

A. The Executive Board of the Association may take action to suspend or revoke the membership of any person who has been found in violation of the Code of Ethics of the Teaching Profession or who has been found in excessive arrears in the payment of membership dues. Members being considered for suspension from membership in the Association shall be entitled to present their case to the Executive Board before final action shall be taken.

B. Any member whose membership in the Association has been suspended may be reinstated by action of the Executive Board if it determines that appropriate action has been taken to rectify the conditions leading to the original suspension.

SECTION 6. Member Discipline: No member shall be removed from office, censured, suspended, or expelled from membership without the right of a due process hearing, which will include the right of appeal.

A. Disciplinary action, in the form of censure, suspension for one calendar year, or permanent expulsion, shall not be taken against any member except for cause. Cause shall relate to conduct prejudicial to the purposes of the union which may include any or more of the following:

1. Failure to remain a member in good standing with Education Minnesota, AFT and NEA.
2. Substantial violation of the Minnesota Code of Ethics of the Education Profession.
3. Violation of local union policy in crisis situations affecting the entire school district.
4. Other good and sufficient cause whereby the conduct of the member would be prejudicial to the purposes of the union.

B. Such action shall be initiated by a complaint of a majority of the officers of the local union, with written notice to the member of the proposed action to be taken and the reasons thereof. Such notice shall also include the statement that the member has ten (10) calendar days in which to request an appeal hearing before the executive board, at which the member is entitled to a representative of their choice to answer the charges and examine those making said charges. Following the hearing, a decision by a simple majority shall be communicated, in writing, to the members, accompanied by a memorandum of findings of fact within ten (10) days of the close of the hearing. A tie vote shall indicate that no action will be taken.

SECTION 7. Right of Appeal: A member who is expelled or suspended from membership in the local shall have the right of appeal to the Education Minnesota Governing Board in accordance with such policies and procedures as the Board may adopt.

SECTION 8. Appeal to the American Federation of Teachers and National Education Association shall be governed by the policies and procedures adopted by the AFT and NEA.

SECTION 9. Lawsuits. No person shall initiate a civil action suit or proceeding in any court against the local or any of its officers, members, or employees on account of any discipline unless such person has exhausted the remedies of hearing and appeal as provided in this Constitution.

ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP DUES AND BUDGET

SECTION 1. State and national dues:

A. Dues shall be assessed in accordance with the dues categories and policies of Education Minnesota, AFT and NEA.

B. The Local Association shall be apportioned according to the one person/one vote standard.

SECTION 2. Local membership dues shall be determined by the Association in the following manner:

A. Budget Committee: A budget committee composed of Association officers and committee chairs will meet to establish a budget proposal and a dues recommendation for the following fiscal year. The proposed budget will then be presented to the Executive Board during their May meeting for approval and adoption.

B. Unified Dues: Members shall pay unified dues which shall include membership in this unit, Education Minnesota, the American Federation of Teachers, and the National Education Association.

C. Special Assessments: Additional special assessments may be requested by the unit members upon the presentation of valid need and the approval of the assessment by two-thirds of the voting membership.

D. Dues Payable: The annual dues of this unit are payable by October 15, or by payroll deduction.

E. Special Membership: Special membership classification for persons not eligible for active membership may be established by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board at any regular meeting. Such members shall, in no instance, have the right to vote, hold office, or represent the Association.

F. Retired Members: Teachers who have held active SCEA membership for five years may become retired members after retirement. Such active retired membership shall be non-voting.

Dues for the active retired membership shall be 10% of the local SCEA dues and will be due by October 15 of each school year. Retired members shall receive general minutes and mailing of all SCEA activities and local membership privileges upon payment of dues.

G. No net earnings shall inure to the benefit of any members.

H. The membership year shall be September one (1) to August thirty-one (31).

ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS

SECTION 1. Officers: The elected officers of the Association, who shall be members of this Saint Croix Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, and the National Education Association shall be a president, vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer.

SECTION 2 Powers of the officers

A. President: The president shall preside over meetings of the Executive Board and the general membership, and shall be the chief executive officer of the Association. THEY shall represent the Association and its members to the School Board of Independent School District #834 and before the public either personally or through delegates. They shall be member ex officio of all councils/committees. They shall perform all other functions usually attributed to this office.

During each school year, the SCEA president shall be entitled to release time as a teacher on special assignment in order to fulfill the duties of the SCEA president, as noted in the Master Agreement. It is the responsibility of the SCEA president to notify the Human Resources Department by April 1 of each respective year of his or her intent to be on reassignment for the succeeding school year. The district shall act as the fiscal agent in paying the SCEA president's full salary as determined by his/her placement on the current salary schedule and he/she shall receive benefits as though the teacher was employed under his/her normal teaching contract for the same contract time as provided for in the previous school year. A teacher eligible for benefits in the previous year would receive benefits. Calculation of salary and benefits for the coming year will be determined by May 1 and the SCEA will reimburse the district on a monthly basis for salary and benefits as needed, for the replacement teacher.

B. Vice President: The vice president shall perform all functions usually attributed to this office. He/she shall be an ex officio member of all standing councils. He/she shall act for the president in his/her absence and shall become president if the office becomes vacant.

C. Secretary: The secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the Executive Board and general membership, shall maintain the official files, and shall assist the president with Association correspondence.

D. Treasurer: The treasurer shall be the financial officer of the Association, shall maintain all financial records, shall disburse funds upon authorization of the Executive Board, shall transmit amounts due to Education Minnesota, for the payment of the unified dues of the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association and Education Minnesota. The treasurer shall provide monthly statements detailing all expenses for Executive Board Approval. The treasurer shall act as the chairperson of the budget committee. The treasurer shall report on all stipends to be paid to officers, committee chairs, and others at the first SCEA meeting of the school year, and, as new stipends are paid throughout the year, shall report at the next meeting following payments. These disclosures shall be entered into the minutes, published for the membership, and kept for members to review. An audit committee of SCEA members, appointed by the president with Executive Board approval, will conduct a financial review every year according to SCEA financial policy and Education Minnesota, AFT and NEA requirements. The audit report will be presented to the Executive Board at its regularly scheduled November meeting and will be made available to members on the SCEA website. A copy of the audit report, with a signed statement by the President that the report has been presented to the Executive Board, will be filed with Education Minnesota.

E. Immediate Past President: The immediate past president shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Executive Board for one year and will assist the president at the latter's request.

Local officers affiliated with Education Minnesota are covered by fidelity bonding.

SECTION 3: Terms of Office: The terms of officers shall begin on the first day of May of each even-numbered (non-bargaining) year for a term of two years ending on the last day of April of the following even-numbered year. Terms for executive officers shall be limited to three (3) consecutive terms for any one office. An officer may be reelected after a two-year hiatus and serve up to three (3) more terms before another hiatus.

SECTION 4: Vacancies: Vacancies which shall occur in any of the offices subsequent to the annual election shall be filled through nomination by the Personnel Committee, upon approval by the Executive Board. The nominee(s) shall be presented at the Executive Board one month prior to the vote to approve the appointment.

A. A vacancy in the office of the president shall be offered to the vice president who, upon acceptance, shall serve for the remainder of the uncompleted term.

B. If the vice president does not fill the vacancy, the office of president shall be filled by a special election at the direction of the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VII: ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND DELEGATES

SECTION 1: Nominations:

A. Prior to the first regular Executive Board meeting of an election year, personnel committee shall convene an election task force. No officer may serve on this committee. The election task force shall prepare a slate of candidates for association offices, Education Minnesota Delegates, American Federation of Teachers Delegates and National Education Association Delegates. Nominations from the membership shall be accepted by the committee until the regular March meeting of the Executive Board.

B. The task force shall report the names of all candidates at the regular March Executive Board meeting. The task force will also present balloting and election instructions at that meeting.

C. The task force shall publish brief biographical information for each candidate and make it available to all members.

SECTION 2: Balloting: On the Tuesday immediately preceding the regularly scheduled April meeting of each school year, members shall vote for officers/delegates by secret ballot according to procedures developed by the task force on elections and approved by the Executive Board. The task force shall collect and count all officially-marked ballots and report the results to the president to be published. New officers shall be installed at the regular May meeting of the Executive Board.

SECTION 3. Election Procedures: All elections shall be governed by applicable state and federal laws.

A. Each member must receive at least fifteen (15) days' notice of the procedures and deadlines to file as a candidate for the election and the date, time and place of the election.

B. Every member must have a fair and equal opportunity to participate in the election without unreasonable impediments.

C. Voting must be by secret ballot.

D. In a contested election, candidates must be allowed to station observers at the polling places.

E. Representatives of the competing candidates should be allowed to observe, but not actually participate in, the counting of ballots.

F. The used, unused, and challenged ballots, the envelopes used to return ballots, and other documents related to the election should be safely stored for one year in case there is a challenge to the election.

G. No union funds may be used to support any candidate.

H. The union should comply with reasonable requests to distribute campaign literature at the candidate's expense.

- I. Candidates have the right to inspect the membership list once within 30 days prior to the election. No candidate can have preferential access to the list.
- J. There shall be an open nomination process for all elections.
- K. Secure electronic voting shall be permitted, and records kept.

ARTICLE VIII: EXECUTIVE BOARD

SECTION 1. The Executive Board shall consist of the officers of the Association, the faculty representatives and the chairpersons of all standing committees.

SECTION 2. Authority: The Executive Board shall be the executive authority and policy making body of the Association. Any member of the Association may attend any meeting of the Executive Board and may speak on any issue before it.

SECTION 3. Powers of the Executive Board:

The Executive Board shall be responsible for the management of the Association. It shall adopt the budget, set Association dues, approve resolutions and other policy statements, and carry out the policies of the Association. It shall report its transactions to the members and shall take appropriate action on matters referred to it by the members.

- A. The Executive Board shall provide for the appropriate training for officers, faculty representatives and council chairpersons.
- B. Any action of the Executive Board may be submitted to a general referendum of the membership on petition signed by at least twenty-five percent of the members of the Association, including ten members of the Executive Board. The petition shall be presented to the president who shall announce the referendum and the procedures therefore.
- C. Powers not specifically delegated to the officers or other groups in the Association shall be vested in the Executive Board.

ARTICLE IX: REPRESENTATION

The Association shall have delegate representation to official meetings of affiliated organizations according to the procedures of such organizations.

SECTION 1. Chief Delegates: The president and vice president shall serve as chief delegates of the Association in accordance with Federal and State Laws. In the case of representational meetings of national affiliates, the delegate status must be printed on the ballots on which members vote to elect new presidents and vice presidents.

SECTION 2. Other Delegates: Other delegates allowed or required shall be elected according to procedures in compliance with state and national affiliates and Federal and State Laws and approved by the Executive Board of the Association.

SECTION 3. Eligibility: Official delegates of the Association shall have been members of the Association for one year prior to their election and shall maintain membership in good standing during their term of service.

ARTICLE IX: CONTRACT RATIFICATION AND STRIKE VOTE

SECTION 1. Contract ratification procedures:

A. Presentation to Executive Board: The SCEA negotiations team shall present the written details of a tentative new contract to the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall vote to accept the tentative agreement or to reject it and to distribute it to the general membership. If it is accepted, the Executive Board shall recommend support for the new tentative agreement by the general membership. If it is rejected, it will be presented to the general membership with no recommendation.

B. Distribution of Tentative Agreement: The tentative agreement shall be printed and distributed to the general membership as soon as possible after the executive board votes on the tentative agreement.

C. Membership meeting: The negotiating team shall conduct an informational general membership meeting to present the tentative agreement and to allow discussion and questioning.

D. Voting: Voting shall be conducted at a central location by faculty representatives from each building supervising the voting tables. The voting shall be conducted for two days. There shall be a system to provide for absentee ballots for members with legitimate reasons for not being able to vote in person.

E. Counting Ballots: Two SCEA members who are not officers or council chairs shall be responsible for counting ballots.

F. Secret Ballot: The vote shall be conducted by secret ballot and all members of the local shall have the right to vote. A majority of those voting is necessary to approve the contract

G. Ratification During a Strike: If the contract ratification meeting takes place while members are involved in a strike, only members of the bargaining unit who participate in the strike shall be eligible to vote on the proposed master contract. A majority of those voting is necessary to approve the contract.

H. Ratification While School Is Not In Session: If a tentative agreement is reached at a time when school is not in session, the president or an appropriate local officer available shall be

authorized to call a meeting for the purpose of ratifying the proposed agreement. A notice of the meeting shall be mailed to the membership within three (3) days of the tentative agreement. The meeting shall be held no later than ten (10) days after the date of the notice. Included with the notice will be an outline of the negotiated changes in the Master Contract.

SECTION 2. Strike Authorization: In the event that a contract cannot be reached between the local and the school district, the local shall conduct a strike vote at its discretion. Such strike vote shall be conducted at a general membership meeting called expressly for that purpose. The vote for a strike shall be by secret ballot. A two-thirds majority (66 2/3%) of the TOTAL membership must vote their approval of a strike action.

SECTION 3. Rejection Of Tentative Agreement: If a general membership meeting has been called for the purpose of ratifying the contract and the contract is rejected as set forth in Section 1, the local may conduct a strike authorization vote, at this meeting, as set forth in Section 2.

SECTION 4. Emergency Ratification Timelines: During a strike or in the event of an emergency, the executive committee shall have the authority to establish alternative timelines for notification and balloting.

ARTICLE X: AUTHORITY

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall be the official parliamentary guide for the Association on all such questions not covered by the Constitution, its Bylaws and such standing rules as the Executive Board may adopt.

ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution may be adopted by a two-thirds majority of the members of the Association by written ballot provided that amendment(s) have been introduced at a regular meeting of the Executive Board two weeks prior to voting and that copies of proposed amendments have been immediately distributed to Faculty Representatives for member discussion.

President

Jason Taverna

Date of Last
Amendment MARCH
2022

Secretary:

Debbie Drommerhausen

BYLAWS OF THE ST. CROIX EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

(Adopted February 6, 1974, Amended February 11, 1976; November 12, 1980, October 21, 1992, March 10, 1993, March 10, 1999, November 14, 2001, October, 2002, April, 2003, March 2022)

ARTICLE I: MEETINGS

SECTION 1. Regular Meetings: The Executive Board shall meet on the second Wednesday of each school month. The president will prepare a tentative agenda for each regular meeting

SECTION 2: Quorum: A quorum shall be a majority of the members of the Executive Board and Council chairs.

SECTION 3. Special Meetings: Special meetings of the Executive Board may be held at the call of the president or at the request of ten Executive Board members. The purpose of the special meeting shall be stated in a written notice to each board member.

SECTION 4. General Membership Meetings: The Executive Board may arrange for general membership meetings for the discussion of professional issues. The date, location and agenda shall be sent to all association members at least two weeks prior to the meeting. A general membership meeting shall be held on petition by twenty-five percent of the membership. The reason for the meeting must be included in the petition to hold a general membership meeting. The petition shall be presented to the president who shall promptly make arrangements for the meeting and notify all members of the association.

SECTION 5. Special Unit Meetings: Special meetings of the unit shall be held at the call of the president or by a majority vote of the Executive Committee or by petition duly signed by a majority of the members.

SECTION 6. Unit Quorum: A quorum shall consist of a majority of the total voting membership for the transaction of unit business.

ARTICLE II: FACULTY REPRESENTATIVES

SECTION 1 Election: Faculty members who are Association members in good standing and shall elect Faculty Representatives to the Executive Board for a term of two years. Eligible members shall have been employed by School District #834 by at least one year. There shall be

at least one representative from each School District #834 school building or administrative unit. One "at-large" representative will be elected from those members who do not serve more than 50% of their duty day at a single site. This site will be designated as "unattached." Each site shall be entitled to one representative and an additional representative when the membership reaches twenty-five with an additional representative for each additional twenty-five members. When more than one representative is elected, one shall be designated the senior representative, and the terms shall be staggered. Elections shall be held in April and representatives shall take their seats at the May meeting of the Executive Board.

SECTION 2. Attendance: Faculty Representatives shall attend all meetings of the Executive Board and the general membership. They shall notify the secretary in advance if they are unable to attend a meeting and shall take the necessary steps to inform themselves of any business conducted at these meetings.

SECTION 3. Duties: Faculty Representatives, with the senior representative presiding, shall call and conduct faculty meetings of Association members to discuss Association business, appoint faculty committees as required, organize and oversee subsequent elections of Faculty Representatives, enroll new members, and shall ensure that effective two-way communications takes place within the building and entire Association.

SECTION 4. Advocacy: Faculty Representatives shall appoint one faculty member who is an Association member in good standing to serve as a member rights advocate for the faculty members in their building. The names of the appointees shall be submitted to the Member Rights Council chair by October 1 of each school year.

ARTICLE III: STANDING COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. Structure: There shall be ten standing committees of the Association with the responsibilities as outlined below. Each committee may, with the approval of the Executive Board, organize special task forces to carry out specific activities.

SECTION 2: Membership: Committee members of the standing committees (except the personnel committee) shall be presented by the personnel committee and voted upon by the Executive Board. Each committee shall select its own chair annually.

SECTION 3. Meetings: Each standing committee shall meet as appropriate to carry out its responsibilities.

SECTION 4. Reports: The chairperson of each standing committee shall attend each regular meeting of the Executive Board and make such reports, orally or in writing, as appropriate. Each standing committee will maintain accurate records of activities and will present a summary

annual report of its activities and expenditures to the Executive Board at its regular April meeting.

SECTION 5. Titles and Responsibilities:

A. Negotiations: This committee shall have the responsibility of overseeing all aspects of the Master Agreement negotiations. The chair shall appoint committee members to the Negotiating Team and / or the Quality Steering Committee (QSC).

1. Negotiating Team: Shall have five (5) members to represent the Association in formal contract negotiations with the School Board.

2. Quality Steering Committee (QSC): Shall have at least five (5) members to represent the Association in discussions of policies and practices with the School Board.

B. Instruction and Professional Development: This committee shall have responsibility for assessing members' professional needs, developing and implementing programs for the improvement of the profession and the instructional program of the school district. It shall also be the Association liaison with the school district's Staff Development, Continuing Education and Human Relations Committees.

C. Governmental Relations: This committee shall have responsibility for maintaining effective communications among the Association, its members and elected legislative or governmental bodies. It shall develop and promote programs to promote involvement of members in civic responsibilities.

D. Member Rights: This committee shall have at least one representative from each building or administrative unit in the school district. The chair will provide training for the advocates. The council shall have the responsibility for assisting in the processing of all grievances that arise in the school district, for the education of the membership in member rights issues, and for developing Association positions on matters affecting member rights and responsibilities under Minnesota State Statute, the Master Contract, and the Teachers' Code of Ethics.

E. Communications: This committee shall have responsibility for communication activities of the Association to ensure that effective communication exists within the Association and between the Association and its various publics.

F. Community Relations: This committee shall have responsibility for developing and implementing programs to maintain and improve relations between the SCEA and the communities of School District #834.

G. Economic Services: This committee shall have responsibility for informing members of the economic services, travel programs, and other benefits offered by the Association, and for coordination with the programs and services offered by the state and national associations.

H. Membership Development: This committee will have the responsibility to organize and direct programs to enroll and retain members in the Association and maintain accurate membership rosters.

I. Personnel: This committee will have the responsibility of increasing member engagement in Association activities. The Personnel Committee will identify members interested in various Association positions and will report to the executive board its recommendation for filling the position(s) and all names of interested members. This Committee will consist of one faculty representative from each site.

J. Equity: This committee of 7-10 members will be responsible for identifying underrepresented groups within the district and building partnerships with those groups. It shall serve as a conduit for voices to be recognized, elevated, and mobilized as critical stakeholders. It shall connect diverse individuals with leadership opportunities, and assist the Association in ensuring its activities are conducted in the most equitable ways possible. This committee acknowledges the systemic barriers which exist within our school system and shall engage in the work that must be done collectively to remove these barriers. The committee recognizes the privilege and responsibility to shape policy, practices, and procedures that will lead to more just and equitable conditions for every student and will allow for the full participation of all members of our staff and school community. The committee will act with intention and purpose to ensure that all policies, practices, and procedures reflect the core beliefs of equity, access, and inclusion for all.

SECTION 6. Relation to the Executive Board: It shall require and assist Council Chairpersons to define their immediate and long-term objectives, to develop action plans, to implement their action plans, and to evaluate their Councils' progress during annual reports to be presented at the April Executive Board meeting.

SECTION 7. Relation to the State and National Associations: The Standing Councils shall seek to understand and relate to the objectives and programs of corresponding units of state and national organizations and shall take advantage of services they have to provide.

ARTICLE III: REPRESENTATION

The Association shall have delegate representation to official meetings of organizations with which it is affiliated according to the procedures of such organizations.

1. The president and vice president shall serve as chief delegates of the Association. In the case of representational meetings of national affiliates, the delegate status must be printed on the ballots on which members vote to elect a new president and vice-president.
2. Other delegates allowed or required shall be elected according to procedures approved by the Executive Board of the Association, which shall also determine expense allotments for all delegates.
3. Official delegates of the Association shall have been members of the Association one year prior to their election, and shall maintain their membership in good standing during their term of service.

ARTICLE IV: AUTHORITY

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall be the official parliamentary guide for the Association on all such questions not covered by the Constitution, its Bylaws and such standing rules as the Executive Board may adopt.

ARTICLE V: AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended by majority vote at any regular meeting of the Executive Board provided that proposed amendments have been sent to members of the Executive Board at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the voting shall be conducted.