

**SYOSSET TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**  
**Syosset Central School District**

**CONSTITUTION**

(As Amended - May 2011)

**Article I - Name**

The name of this organization shall be the Syosset Teachers' Association (STA).

**Article II - Purpose**

Mission Statement     The Syosset Teachers' Association (STA), a union of professionals, is dedicated to promoting the welfare of its members by providing a collective voice for their professional and personal needs. The STA is committed to quality public education and community involvement.

Section A     The Syosset Teachers' Association will serve as the collective bargaining agents for teachers, nurses, psychologists, therapists, tutors and summer school employees employed by the District directly.

Section B     The Syosset Teachers' Association will organize new membership units who apply for membership appropriately under the systems established by the Public Employee Relations Board (PERB).

Section C     The Syosset Teachers' Association will work cooperatively with the District and union affiliates to raise the quality of education in the District.

Section D     The Syosset Teachers' Association shall endeavor to promote close mutual relationships with other professional educational organizations sharing similar goals.

Section E     The Syosset Teachers' Association shall promote the welfare of children by supporting the best possible educational opportunity for all.

Section F     The Syosset Teachers' Association shall strive to eliminate discrimination in education in all its forms.

Section G     The Syosset Teachers' Association shall promote the welfare of active and retired educators.

**Article III – Affiliations**

The Syosset Teachers' Association is affiliated with the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the National Education Association

(NEA), the Long Island Federation of Labor (LI Fed), and the AFL-CIO. In addition, the Syosset Teachers' Association shall affiliate with any additional organization mandated by the NYSUT constitution and/or bylaws.

#### **Article IV - Membership**

There shall be the following membership categories: active and retired.

Section A 1. Active: All professional employees of Syosset Central School District, excluding administrators (i.e. Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, Directors, Principals, Assistant Principals, Chairpersons, Coordinators, Administrative Assistants) and Substitute Teachers are eligible for membership in Syosset Teachers' Association.

2. Retired: All educators who retire from District service are eligible for membership in the retired Educators Chapter of the Syosset Teachers' Association.

Section B Any person eligible for membership may become a member and/or remain in good standing by payment of annual dues.

#### **Article V - Elected Positions and Appointments**

Section A The officers of the Syosset Teachers' Association shall be a President, a Vice President and a Secretary/Treasurer. The officers shall be elected by the General Membership. In addition, Delegates to NYSUT and its affiliates will be elected by the General Membership based on the number stipulated by the specific organization. At-Large members of the Executive Committee shall be elected by the General Membership sufficient to make the Executive Committee no more than 10 elected members. The President, with the consent of the Representative Council, may appoint, for one year, An Executive Director, and/or a Chief-Negotiator and/or a Publisher, either from among the officers and Delegates or from the General Membership or from among full time employees. Delegates to NYSUT, At-Large Members of the Executive Committee, and appointees shall compose the Executive Committee of the Syosset Teachers' Association.

Section B The officers, the other members of the Executive Committee, the immediate Past President, the President(s) of REC STA (providing he/she/they retired from the District as Teachers, Nurses, Therapists or Tutors) and the Building Representatives and Alternates elected in buildings shall compose the Representative Council of the Syosset Teachers' Association.

Section C Officers, Delegates to NYSUT and its affiliates and At-Large members of the Executive Committee shall be elected for terms of three years at the May General-Business Meeting in election years. They shall assume office on July 1<sup>st</sup> of the

election year, or at the end of any contract negotiations already in progress, whichever is later.

Section D The elected officers and appointees of the Syosset Teachers' Association shall receive annual compensation for their time and effort. The amount of compensation for each office is to be determined according to procedures recommended by the STA Treasurer, endorsed by the Representative Council and presented to the membership at the May General-Business Meeting for discussion and vote. The resolution shall be presented as part of the next year's annual budget proposal.

### **Article VI - Meetings**

Section A General meetings of the Syosset Teachers' Association shall be held at least two times during the calendar school year at an hour and place designated by the Executive Committee or the Representative Council. With the exception of the May General-Business Meeting, the Representative Council may vote to waive a large general meeting and substitute identical general meetings at elementary, middle and high school levels.

Section B Special or emergency meetings of the general membership may be called by the Representative Council upon determination of need, or by the Executive Committee of the STA upon determination of need, or upon petition from twenty (20) percent of the members of the Association when presented to the President ten (10) days prior to the date requested for such a meeting. The President of the Association will make all arrangements for general meetings.

Section C Regular meetings of the Representative Council shall be held monthly during the school year. The President of the STA, with the approval of the Representative Council, may cancel any Representative Council meeting in the event of inclement weather at his or her discretion or with the permission of the Representative Council.

### **Article VII - Retired Educators' Chapter**

Section A A Retired Educators' Chapter shall be established within the Syosset Teachers' Association for the purpose of:

- a) maintaining the ties of professional unity between active and retired school personnel of the Syosset Central School District
- b) representing and promoting the interests of retired school personnel, and
- c) providing a forum for the exchange of information of interest and benefit to retirees and for the expression of their views.

- d) providing access to NYSUT and affiliate membership benefits for retired District employees.

All privileges of membership in the Syosset Teachers' Association shall apply to retired members with the exception of voting on contract ratification or officers of the Active unit.

Section D All members of the Retired Educators' Chapter of the Syosset Teachers' Association shall simultaneously hold membership in the NYSUT and its affiliates on a retired member's basis.

Section E The Retired Educators' Chapter Presidents and Co-Presidents shall serve as members of the Representative Council of the Syosset Teachers' Association, providing that he or she was a member of the Syosset Teachers' Association in his/her last year of active service in the District. The REC delegate shall have full voting rights except on matters relating to the STA contract and the election of officers.

## **BYLAWS**

### **Article I - Rules of Order**

Robert's Rules of Order, New Revised Edition, shall be the authority on all questions of procedure not specifically stated in this Constitution or its Bylaws.

### **Article II - Duties of Officers**

#### Section A: Duties of The President:

1. shall preside at all meetings of the Association, the Representative Council, and the Executive Committee.
2. shall appoint all committee Chairpersons with the approval of the Representative Council.
3. shall direct the calling of and arrange for all General, Representative Council and Executive Committee meetings, except as stated in Section B, Article VI of this Constitution.
4. shall be empowered to act in an emergency for the Association, within the general framework of the Representative Council's policies, with the concurrence of a majority of the Executive Committee.
5. shall serve as first delegate to all assemblies and conventions of NYSUT and affiliated organizations.

6. shall meet with the Executive Committee prior to the first regularly scheduled Representative Council meeting to determine major objectives for the school year. This statement of purposes shall be presented to the Representative Council at the first Representative Council meeting for discussion and approval.

Section B: Duties of The Vice President:

1. shall assume the office of President if the office of the President becomes vacant.
2. shall be assigned further responsibilities by the President with the approval of the Representative Council.
3. shall serve as second delegate to all assemblies and conventions of NYSUT and affiliates.

Section C: Duties of The Secretary/Treasurer:

1. shall keep an accurate ledger of all receipts and expenditures of the Association. The Treasurer shall disburse funds only by check other than a petty cash fund not to exceed \$200.
2. shall maintain membership records and transmit membership dues to NYSUT and affiliates.
3. shall at each business meeting of the Association and at each business meeting of the Representative Council, render a financial report. The final financial report shall be in writing for distribution to Association membership.
4. shall pay all bills within the school year in which they have been incurred.
5. shall submit financial records of the Syosset Teachers' Association to an outside agency approved by the Representative Council for an annual audit and transmit this audit to the AFT according to AFT regulations.
6. shall transfer all duly audited financial records of the Association within the first week of assumption of office by the new Treasurer.

Section D: Duties of The Representative Council:

1. shall have full authority to speak, decide and act for the organization in any and all matters between General Meetings.
2. shall hear committee reports and shall direct, redirect, and/or approve committee actions.

3. shall authorize the establishment of all committees and shall approve all committee chairs.
4. shall function only if a majority of its members is present.
5. Each elected member or alternate shall have one vote except the President who shall vote only in case of a tie.
6. The Retired Educators' Chapter delegate(s) shall have full voting rights except on matters relating to the STA contract and the election of Association officers.

Section E: Duties of Building Representatives:

1. Each school shall be entitled to have one Representative for every ten Syosset Teachers' Association members, or major fraction thereof, based on the building's number of members during the preceding year.
2. One Building Representative from each elementary and middle school, and two Building Representatives from the high school, shall be elected Head Representative. Informal Head Representatives may be selected to represent the Nurses' Unit, the school psychologists and the Therapists' Unit.
3. The Head Representative shall transmit to the teachers of his or her school all meeting notices and information and to the Executive Committee, the concerns of the teachers of his/her school.
4. The Head Representative shall chair the election of Representatives for the subsequent school year.
5. The Building Representatives shall meet regularly with teachers in their building to discuss Syosset Teachers' Association business, and shall report and vote in support of their views on the Representative Council.
6. The Building Representatives shall be responsible for the distribution of STA materials within the building
7. Building Representatives shall attend all meetings of the Representative Council. A Building Representative who is absent from three meetings may be replaced in an election conducted in the building by the Head Representative. A Head Representative who is absent from three meetings of the Representative Council will be replaced by an election conducted by the Vice President or his/her designate.

#### Section F: Duties of At-Large Members of the Executive Committee

Duties and responsibilities of At-Large members of the Executive Committee shall be assigned by the President with the approval of the Representative Council.

#### Section G: Duties of the Executive Director

Duties and responsibilities of the Executive Director shall be assigned by the President with the approval of the Representative Council.

#### Section H: Duties of the Chief Negotiator

Duties and responsibilities of the Chief Negotiator shall be to articulate the efforts of the STA Negotiating Team in all matters covered by Article IV of the Civil Service Laws, under the direction of the President of the STA.

#### Section I: Duties of the Publisher

Duties of the publisher shall include preparation of at least 5 issues of the publication *STA United*. Additional duties and responsibilities shall be assigned by the President with the approval of the Representative Council.

### **Article III - Nominations and Elections**

#### Section A: Nomination and Election of Officers:

1. The President shall appoint a Chairperson of the Elections Committee who shall preside over a committee of two or more members. This committee shall be approved by the Representative Council at the March meeting of an election year.
2. The Elections Committee is charged with the task of keeping the elections process of the STA fair. The committee will accept nominations for officers and delegates of the STA either by slate or by individual position. A slate shall be comprised of President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, and the appropriate number of Delegates and At-Large members as determined before each election by the Representative Council. An initial slate may be presented to the committee by the current president with the concurrence of all members named in the slate, after consultation with the sitting Executive Committee. If no slate is provided by the President, the Elections Committee will seek qualified nominees from among active members in good standing.
3. The Chairperson of the Elections Committee shall present a nominated slate of officers to the Representative Council at the April meeting of the Representative Council in election years.

4. Notices of the offices to be filled, the right to make nominations, and the time, place and proper form for submission of nominations will be published in the official STA publication, in individual notices to be distributed to each member and be prominently posted in each work site.
5. Nominations from the general membership in the form of a petition signed by twenty (20) members may be submitted to the Chairperson of the Elections Committee to be included on the ballot. The petitioner must oppose a specific candidate on the slate presented by the Elections Committee.
6. All nominations shall be closed twenty-five (25) days prior to the date of election. If candidates are unopposed, no balloting is required.
7. In accordance with the Landrum-Griffin Act, notice of elections and the names of the candidates for office shall be mailed to all members at least fifteen (15) days prior to the date of election.
8. The President or designee acceptable to the Elections Committee shall appoint tabulators from the members present.
9. Voting shall be by secret ballot. Absentee ballots will be made available upon written request of a member to a member of the Elections Committee up to three (3) days prior to the election. An absentee ballot must be returned to a member of the Elections Committee before the election to be counted.
10. A majority of the votes cast is necessary for election of officers and delegates of the Syosset Teachers' Association.
11. The results of the election shall be published. Ballots and tally sheets shall be kept for one (1) year.

Section B: Election of Building Representatives and Alternates:

Each school shall elect Building Representatives and the appropriate number of Head Representatives prior to the first Representative Council meeting of the school year. The election will be overseen by the Head Representative(s) from the previous year, or by an alternative determined by the STA Vice President if the former Head Representative is no longer employed in the building. Fair procedures, determined by individual buildings will be utilized for this purpose. Accusations of unfair practices will be adjudicated by the Representative Council as the first matter of business at the September meeting of the Council.

Section C: Election of STA-PTA Scholarship Fund Administrators:



As required by the STA-PTA Scholarship Fund, Inc./, two Fund Administrators shall be elected each year for a term of three years. This election shall be held at the last General Membership meeting of the school year.

## **Article IV - Vacancies**

### **Section A**

1. In the event of a vacancy in the Office of President, the Vice President shall succeed him/her for the balance of the term of office.
2. In the event of the vacancy of either the Vice President or the Secretary/Treasurer, the position shall be filled by a member of the current Executive Committee, nominated by the president with the consent of both the majority of members on the current Executive Committee and the Representative Council.
3. In the event of a vacancy on the Executive Committee, of one year or less, the President shall appoint a replacement with the approval of the Representative Council. In the event of a vacancy of more than one year, a general election shall be held.

### **Section B**

Any member of the Association may call for the removal from office of any member of the Executive Committee. A motion bearing the signatures of at least fifty (50) members of the Association must be presented in writing to the Representative Council at least ten (10) days prior to the date of a General Meeting called to act upon the motion. The representative Council must distribute to each building at least three (3) copies of the motion bearing the signatures of the petitioners and containing documentation of charges leading up to the motion.

Action on the motion is to be taken at the General Membership meeting to be held no sooner than ten (10) days after receipt of written motion and charges by the Representative Council and no later than twenty-one (21) days after receipt of said motion by the Council. Affirmative action upon the motion requires a 2/3 vote of all members present and voting at the General Meeting called for the purpose.

## **Article V Quorum**

A quorum for all General Meetings of the Syosset Teachers' Association shall consist of twenty-five percent (25%) of the members of the association. In the absence of the required quorum, all

announced business to be conducted at that meeting shall be acted upon by the Representative Council.

## **Article VI - Voting**

All votes taken at General Meetings of the Association shall be by a show of hands unless a motion is properly introduced and carried calling for another form of ballot on a particular issue. The President or presiding Officer at all General Meetings shall appoint tabulators from among the members present. Balloting for election of officers shall follow the procedures as specified in Article III of the Bylaws.

## **Article VII - Dues**

Section A The amount of dues of the Association shall be approved by a vote of the General Membership of the Association at the last General Meeting of the school calendar year as part of the budget approved for the following year. Such dues will take effect the following school year.

### Section B: Agency Shop Fee

Every member of the bargaining unit who is not a member of the Syosset Teachers' Association shall, within 30 days after the initial date of employment or within 30 days after this section becomes effective, whichever is later, pay to the Association an agency fee. Such fee shall be equal to 100% of the membership dues of the Association, including such state and national dues as are required of the membership.

Said full amount shall be deducted from each teacher's paycheck not later than 30 days of receipt of a list of non-members.

Any person making service fee payments to the STA in lieu of dues under agency fee provisions in the collective bargaining agreement, shall have the right to object to the expenditure of his/her portion of any part of an agency shop fee deduction which represents the employee's pro-rata share of expenditures by the organization in aid of activities or causes of a political or ideological nature only incidentally related to terms and conditions of employment.

Such objections shall be made, if at all, by the objector individually notifying the STA President and/or Treasurer of his/her objection by registered or certified mail, during the period between September 1 and September 15 of each year. If the agency fee is implemented after September 1, objections must be filed within 15 calendar days of said deduction of agency fee.

The approximate proportion of service fees spent by the STA for purposes eligible for agency fee exceptions shall be determined annually, after each fiscal year of the STA, by the STA's officers. Rebate of a prorated portion of his/her service fees

corresponding to such proportion shall be made to each individual who has filed a notice of objection in a timely fashion, as provided above.

If an objector is dissatisfied with the proportional allocation that has been determined on the grounds that it allegedly does not accurately reflect the expenditures of the STA in the defined area, an appeal may be taken by such person to the Executive Committee within thirty (30) days following receipt of such rebate or receipt of notice of such allocation. The appeal shall be heard at the next regular meeting of the Executive Committee, which shall render a decision within thirty (30) days after hearing the appeal.

If the maker of the appeal is dissatisfied with the Executive Committee's decision on the appeal, he/she may submit an appeal to be adjudicated in a hearing before an agreed upon arbiter from the American Arbitration Association for final and binding resolution. The arbitration shall be conducted according to the labor arbitration rules of the American Arbitration Association.

Costs for the arbitration shall be borne equally by the STA and the individual filing the appeal.

### **Article VIII - Amendments**

The Constitution and Bylaws of the Syosset Teachers' Association may be amended by a 2/3 vote of the membership present and voting at any General Meeting of the Association, providing notice of all proposed amendments has been given each Association member at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting at which the amendment is to be voted upon. A review of the Constitution and its By-Laws shall take place every five (5) years.

Amended May 2011