

MEA-Retired

The Commitment Continues

TO: Prospective New Chapter

FROM: Judy Foster, MEA-Retired President
Kay Walker Telma, MEA-Retired Vice-President
Dan Rudd, MEA-Retired Secretary-Treasurer

RE: Organizing an MEA-Retired Chapter

DATE: August 16, 2016

It has been brought to our attention that you may be interested in organizing an MEA-Retired Chapter in your area. Currently, we have many Chapters throughout the state. We welcome another Chapter to make it easier for our MEA-Retired members to attend meetings close to their homes. This gives all retired school employees the opportunity to **stay informed** about issues affecting their pension and health benefits, to meet with fellow retirees, to stay connected to MEA/MEA-Retired, and to help preserve public education for our children.

Enclosed is information to help you establish your local MEA-Retired Chapter. Let us know if we can assist you in starting your own Chapter. It is easy to begin a Chapter with as few as five MEA-Retired/NEA-Retired lifetime members.

Thank you for your interest, and we look forward to hearing from you.

O.K. So Why Should I Start an MEA-Retired Chapter?

Your MEA-Retired Chapter can be organized to fit your area needs and interests. You set your own dues and meeting schedules. Meetings may be held as often as you wish, with a minimum of two general membership meetings per year. Meetings may be held at breakfast, lunch, dinner, morning or afternoon coffee time. . .it only takes **Five** lifetime MEA-Retired members to start a local Chapter.

MEA-Retired Chapter meetings should provide information on subjects in which your members are interested. MEA-Retired staff and/or MEA-Retired officers are available to help with meeting presentations. **Remember** - your MEA-Retired Chapter provides another step in your connection with MEA and MEA-Retired.

As a lifetime member of MEA-Retired, you have the opportunity to start or join a local retired Chapter. The MEA-Retired Chapter provides a starting place for members who want to work actively in the local and state organization. A local Chapter keeps you in the loop because the local President, Region Director, and Coordinating Council representatives provide retirement and legislative information.

The MEA-Retired Constitution guarantees each local Chapter representation at the state MEA-Retired annual meeting. Through your local Chapter you have a direct voice in all levels of MEA-Retired. Representation of MEA-Retired is also found on the MEA PAC Council, MEA Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, MEA Screening and Recommending Committees, and the MEA Representative Assembly, NEA-Retired Annual Meeting, and the NEA Representative Assembly.

In unity there is strength. As local MEA-Retired Chapter members, you can collectively accomplish more than each individual member by himself/herself.

MEA-Retired and NEA-Retired were established to allow members to play a decisive role in guiding the future of education and making their own retirement years as secure as possible.

The local MEA-Retired Chapter provides an organized group of retirees willing to work for educational and retirement issues. It also provides an opportunity to meet new friends with common interests. Retirees can put their experience and talents to work by joining MEA-Retired/NEA-Retired.

You really **DO** get more **BANG** for your buck as an MEA-Retired/NEA-Retired lifetime member, and here is why:

- You are eligible to participate in group discount programs offered by MEA and NEA.
- MEA-Retired lobbies for retirement benefits.
- You enjoy the satisfaction that comes from being a part of an active and growing family of retired education personnel.
- You receive publications from MEA/NEA as well as MEA-Retired and NEA-Retired.
- You will have representation at the state and national levels.

AND REMEMBER

. . . . IT ONLY TAKES FIVE TO COME ALIVE!!!

O.K. So You Are Starting a MEA-Retired Chapter!

I. REQUIRED STEPS FOR ORGANIZING A CHAPTER

- Step 1. Meet with at least five MEA-Retired Lifetime members who you think would be interested in forming a chapter.
- Step 2. Set up a second meeting to establish and name a Chapter and elect temporary officers (who must be MEA-Retired/NEA-Retired Lifetime members).
- Step 3. Complete and Adopt the prototype MEA-Retired Chapter Constitution and Bylaws. See attached Chapter Prototype (Appendix A).
- Step 4. Submit your adopted Constitution and Bylaws and a list of officers to the MEA-Retired Administrative Assistant (1-800-292-1934).
- Step 5. Obtain a list of MEA-Retired Lifetime members in your area from your MEA-Retired Board member for your Region or the MEA-Retired office (1-800-292-1934).
- Step 6. Send letters to area MEA-Retired Lifetime members eligible to join your chapter. Be sure to include your MEA-Retired Board member for your Region. Include the following information in the initial letter:
- Time and location of meeting
 - Reasons for organizing
 - Purpose of the meeting
 - Importance of their participation
 - Your name, address, telephone number, and email address so members may contact you with any questions

II. WHO ARE YOUR CHAPTER MEMBERS

- A local chapter shall be composed of MEA-Retired Lifetime members.
- Pre-retired subscribers and associate members such as retired MEA members who are not paid up lifetime MEA members may also join the chapter but do not have voting rights and cannot hold office.
- Chapter Officers shall be lifetime MEA-Retired/NEA Retired members.

III. AVAILABLE RESOURCES

A. Funding

- MEA-Retired
See attached Reimbursement Policy for Potential New MEA-Retired Chapters (Appendix B)
- MEA Region Councils and/or MEA Coordinating Councils
Some Region Councils and Coordinating Councils budget money for a retirement Chapter. An MEA-Retired Chapter could work with active members for funding.

B. MEA/MEA-Retired Working Together

The following is a list of possible suggestions for cooperative activities involving local education associations and MEA-Retired Chapters.

- Refer services for retired member concerns and questions regarding pension benefits, health care benefits, and legal counseling.
- Provide services to retired members, including printing, mailing, and meeting room space through your UniServ office.
- Facilitate pre-retirement seminars for current school employees.
- Work together with *Read Across America* activities.
- Promote lifetime membership in MEA-Retired/NEA-Retired to secure the future.
- Help screen MEA Scholarship applications.

The MEA-Retired office staff is available to help you. Remember this address:

MEA-Retired
1216 Kendale Blvd.
P.O. Box 2573
East Lansing, MI 48826-2573
1-800/292-1934 ext. 6264

Your MEA-Retired Board member for your Region or Alternate may be found on the MEA-Retired Web Page: www.MEA-Retired.org

Keep MEA-Retired/NEA-Retired working for you. Send in your lifetime membership application today unless you are already a pre-retired subscriber. The MEA-Retired Application Form is available at www.MEA-Retired.org then select "MEA-Retired Membership Form".

Appendix A

Chapter name _____ **MEA-RETIRED**

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We, the Retired School Employees of (the) _____
(geographic area), believing that retirees must institute their own self-government and secure proper recognition and responsibility for the well-being of their members, adopt this constitution.

ARTICLE I NAME

The name of this State of Michigan non-profit corporation shall be _____,
an Affiliated Chapter of the Michigan Education Association-Retired/National Education Association- Retired.

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

This Chapter shall be dedicated to the promotion of retirement with dignity, happiness, usefulness and adequate income through:

- A. promoting the social, professional, economic status and the general welfare of retired school employees.
- B. furnishing a practical basis for united action with others who are devoted to the cause of education.
- C. promoting voluntary participation by its members in civic and educational affairs.
- D. encouraging members to exercise their rights and privileges as citizens and to willingly accept leadership in civic affairs.

ARTICLE III Membership

SECTION 1. Membership

All retirees who meet the Lifetime membership requirement of MEA-Retired and NEA-Retired may, upon payment of Chapter dues, become members of this Chapter with full rights and privileges of membership.

SECTION 2. Associate Members

Associate membership of this Chapter upon payment of Chapter dues shall be open to current school employees, MEA Pre-Retired members, spouses of members, spouses of deceased former members and all other persons interested in the purpose and programs of this Chapter. Associate Membership status is ex-officio without voting rights or right to hold office. Chapter Associate Members shall not be included in the total membership count of the Chapter reported to MEA-Retired.

SECTION 3. Honorary Members

Honorary membership of this Chapter shall be awarded only by vote of the Executive Board. Chapter Honorary membership is ex-officio without voting rights or right to hold office and shall not be included in the total membership count of the Chapter reported to MEA-Retired.

ARTICLE IV OFFICERS AND GOVERNING BODY

SECTION 1. OFFICERS.

The officers of this Chapter shall consist of a President, a Vice President, a Secretary and a Treasurer. Terms of officers shall be for two years and shall commence on September 1.

SECTION 2. GOVERNING BODY.

There shall be a governing body known as the Executive Board that shall consist of the officers and the chairpersons of committees.

**ARTICLE V
DIRECT LEGISLATION**

INITIATIVE, REFERENDUM AND RECALL.

The rights of popular initiative, referendum, and recall shall rest with the MEA-Retired Lifetime members of the Chapter. To invoke the initiative, referendum or recall, petitions signed by at least ten percent (10%) of the retired Lifetime Members of the Chapter shall be required, provided that the number of signatures represents at least ten percent (10%) of the total membership as of December 31 of the previous year. Any measure proposed by initiative, referendum, or recall petition shall be either adopted or rejected without amendment at the next Chapter meeting following publication of the measure, provided a Chapter meeting is scheduled within sixty (60) day period. A special meeting will be called by the President in the event that a meeting is not scheduled within the sixty- (60) day period. A majority affirmative vote of the registered MEA-Retired Lifetime members present and voting shall be required for its adoption which shall take effect thirty (30) days later.

**ARTICLE VI
MEMBERSHIP AND FISCAL YEAR**

The membership and fiscal years shall be September 1 through August 31.

**ARTICLE VII
AUTHORITY**

Any part of this Constitution and/or Bylaws which is in conflict with the Constitutions and/or Bylaws of MEA-Retired, MEA, NEA, or the NEA-Retired Bylaws will be declared null and void.

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws may be proposed by resolution of the Executive Board or by a petition signed by fifteen percent (15%) of the total MEA-Retired Lifetime Chapter members and submitted to the Secretary. The following procedures will be used:

SECTION 1. Upon receipt of a proposed amendment to the Constitution or Bylaws, in accordance with the above, the Executive Board shall schedule a vote on the proposal.

SECTION 2. A copy of the proposed amendment, together with the recommendation of the Executive Board shall be sent to each MEA-Retired Lifetime member of the Chapter at least thirty (30) days prior to the vote.

SECTION 3. CONSTITUTION AMENDMENTS. A two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the registered MEA-Retired Lifetime members with voting privileges present and voting is required to adopt the proposed amendment which shall become effective September 1, unless otherwise provided.

SECTION 4. BYLAWS AMENDMENTS. A majority affirmative vote of the registered MEA-Retired Lifetime members with voting privileges present and voting is required to adopt the proposed amendment which shall become effective September 1 unless otherwise provided.

BYLAWS

**ARTICLE I
RULES**

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

**ARTICLE II
MEETINGS**

SECTION 1. General membership meetings shall be called by the President or the Executive Board as needed; however, there shall be at least two (2) general membership meetings each year. At least seven days' notice is required, specifying date, time, place and purpose of such meetings.

SECTION 2. The Executive Board shall meet before each general membership meeting and when a special meeting is necessary. After establishment of a calendar, the membership shall be notified of dates, times and places of meetings.

**ARTICLE III
QUORUM**

Those members with voting privilege present at a duly called General Membership Meeting shall constitute a quorum. A majority of members of the Executive Board or of a Committee present at a duly called meeting shall constitute a quorum.

**ARTICLE IV
DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

SECTION 1. **PRESIDENT.** Presides over meetings, appoints members of committees subject to approval of the Executive Board, is an ex-officio member of all committees except nominations and elections committee, represents the Chapter before the public, is executive officer of the Chapter, submits annual budget for consideration, is a delegate to the MEA-Retired Annual Meeting and performs all other functions attributed to this office.

SECTION 2. **VICE PRESIDENT.** Presides in the President's absence and performs duties as assigned by the President.

SECTION 3. SECRETARY. Keeps accurate minutes of all meetings of the Chapter and Executive Board, maintains official files, assists the President with Chapter correspondence, and informs the MEA-Retired office of newly elected officers and other significant actions.

SECTION 4. TREASURER. Deposits funds of the Chapter and disburses them according to decisions of the Executive Board, maintains roll of members, keeps accurate accounts of receipts and expenditures, reports to each meeting of the Chapter and Executive Board, prepares annual financial statements for membership and assists in drafting annual budgets. The Treasurer shall be bonded and the Chapter shall provide for an annual audit of the books.

ARTICLE V POWERS OF EXECUTIVE BOARD

SECTION 1. Upon the Executive Board shall rest the duties, responsibilities and authority for conduct of the Chapter in all matters except as provided in this Constitution and Bylaws.

SECTION 2. The Executive Board may, at any time, refer matters to the general membership for consideration.

ARTICLE VI NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

SECTION 1. The President shall appoint an Elections Committee, which shall establish election procedures that guarantee that all elections shall provide for open nominations, secret ballot voting procedures, and preservation of ballots for at least one (1) year.

SECTION 2. The Executive Board shall certify the Elections Committee report and publish results of the election.

SECTION 3. Election of officers shall be conducted no earlier than April 1 nor later than June 30 of each election year.

**ARTICLE VII
VACANCIES**

SECTION 1. A vacancy in the position of President shall be filled by the Vice President until a general election is held and a new President is elected.

SECTION 2. The President, with the approval of the Executive Board, shall appoint a Chapter member to a vacancy in the position of Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer. The appointee shall serve out the remainder of the unexpired term.

**ARTICLE VIII
DUES**

Dues of the Local Chapter shall be determined by the Executive Board.

**ARTICLE IX
RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERS OF THE CHAPTER**

SECTION 1. All members shall receive appropriate information from the Chapter, i.e. the local newsletter.

SECTION 2. Any member may attend an Executive Board meeting.

**ARTICLE X
COMMITTEES**

There shall be a Nominations and Elections committee and any other committees as needed.

Attached is a prototype of the Chapter Administrative Policies and Procedures which you can add to in order to meet Chapter needs. You need to make sure they don't conflict with the Constitutions of either your Chapter and/or MEA-Retired.

Chapter name _____ **MEA-RETIRED**

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

(Chapter Name) MEA-Retired Administrative Policies shall be developed, adopted, and amended by the Chapter's Executive Board only as necessary for matters not already covered by the Chapter's Constitution and Bylaws, MEA-Retired Constitution and Bylaws and/or MEA Constitution and Bylaws and Administrative Policies.

Suggested Standing Rules

1. Seek to establish a mutual workable relationship with active school personnel of the area.
2. Send to meetings and workshops informed representatives who can express the opinions of the group.
3. Consider making use of state and national officers as resource people in planning programs.
4. Encourage all members to participate actively in Chapter programs.
5. Memorials for deceased members of the Chapter shall be a voluntary collection and contributed to the organization designated by the survivors. If none is designated, the recipient may be determined by the Executive Board.
6. Process for determining delegates and alternates to the MEA-Retired Annual Meeting.

Appendix B

REIMBURSEMENT POLICY FOR POTENTIAL NEW MEA- RETIRED CHAPTERS

1. Potential new chapters of MEA-Retired will be reimbursed up to \$500 for initial “start up” costs.
2. The potential new chapter will send a reimbursement voucher with receipts to the MEA-Retired staff secretary. Vouchers must be submitted within 30 days of expenditures.
3. When the MEA-Retired president approves the request, the MEA-Retired staff secretary will convey this approval to the MEA Finance Department.
4. MEA Finance Department will then send a check for the requested amount (up to \$500) to the chapter representative of the potential new chapter.

MEA-Retired President
1216 Kendale Blvd.
P.O. Box 2573
East Lansing, MI 48826-2573
1-800-292-1934

Lisa Andros
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