



N.E.A

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The Constitution of the Nigerian  
Educators Association of New Jersey Inc.  
2nd Edition



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of New Jersey, Inc.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Nigerian Educators Association is to provide a united front, designed to inspire Nigerian Educators in the advancement of their careers, enlarge their knowledge base through collaborative activities, and expand their world vision and to develop expertise in order to confront challenges common to all members.

We will endeavor to enhance our members' technological training and developmental skills; attempting to evolve the highest level of leadership and demonstrate a strong image by producing a cadre of productive and inquiring student citizens.

## Motto

The motto of N.E.A. is Unity, Dedication, and Progress



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## Article I: Name

**Section 1:** This organization shall be known as “Nigerian Educators Association of New Jersey Inc.” (N.E.A.)

**Section 2:** N.E.A. is registered and incorporated in New Jersey State as a Not-for-Profit organization.

## Article II: Objectives

The Objectives of N.E.A. are to seek to:

- (a) Unite all Nigerian educators in New Jersey school districts under one umbrella.
- (b) Cultivate and promote the educational, social, cultural, and general well-being of its members.
- (c) Provide a forum for the discussion of educational/social issues concerning our members and the Nigerian community in New Jersey.
- (d) Act as a conduit for dissemination of information on educational opportunities.

## Article III: Organization

### Section 1: Membership

- (a) The membership of this association shall consist of all persons of Nigerian descent serving in an educational setting in New Jersey.
- (b) The burden of proof of eligibility to be a member shall be upon the candidate or applicant.
- (c) There shall be a standard application form for all prospective members.
- (d) The application shall set forth the complete text of sections 1 - 3 of this article, as adopted by the association.
- (e) All new members will undergo one year (1) probationary period during which they must fulfill all outlined financial obligations.

### Section 2: Membership Fees

- (a) Registration fees shall be no more than a nonrefundable \$100.00 per member.
- (b) Every member shall pay no more than \$20.00 per month or no more than \$200.00 in an academic year (10 months) as dues.
- (c) Official retirees shall pay no more than \$10.00 per month or no more than \$100.00 per academic year.

### Section 3: Financial Membership

A financial member is a member who is financially up to date. An up to date member is one who:

- (a) Does not owe more than two months of dues and levies
- (b) Does not owe pledges, donations, and all other financial obligations approved by the association
- (c) Meets all financial obligations required of him/her beginning at registration

### Section 4: Role of Members

- (a) All members shall execute their assigned duties and obligations to N.E.A. as defined in this constitution.

- (b) No members, except as provided herein, shall enter into any pledge or contract on behalf of N.E.A. without the consent of majority of the association: Article V, Section 1 (xi).
- (c) All members shall fulfill their financial obligations.

#### Article IV: Officers

The association shall have the following elected cabinet officers:

- (1) President
- (2) Vice President
- (3) General Secretary
- (4) Assistant General Secretary
- (5) Financial Secretary
- (6) Treasurer
- (7) Social Director
- (8) Provost

#### Article V: Duties of Officers

##### Section 1: President

The President shall:

- (a) Preside over all General, Cabinet, and Emergency Meetings
- (b) Be the spokesperson for N.E.A.
- (c) Present to the association, a proposed annual budget (which shall include projected revenues and expenditures from all cabinet members), year-end financial report, and an annual activity report of present and future programs
- (d) Schedule cabinet, general, and emergency meetings as need arises.
- (e) With the assistance of the General Secretary/Cabinet, decide on the agenda for Cabinet and General Meetings
- (f) In conjunction with the Treasurer or the co-signatory, sign all checks for appropriate expenditures on behalf of N.E.A.
- (g) Appoint an acting officer when vacancy exists upon the advice of the cabinet, pending an Emergency election
- (h) Present Cabinet decisions or recommendations at the general meeting
- (i) Not vote on matters affecting N.E.A. unless there is a tie.
- (j) Approve all correspondences emanating from individual cabinet members, unless the Association and/or Cabinet has given a prior approval.
- (k) Negotiate and enter into contract(s) with private or public entities upon consultation with, and approval by the Cabinet. All contracts, agreements or both with a total value of more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) per contract shall be approved by the association. Contracts, agreements, or both with a total value of no more than five hundred dollars (500.00) shall be approved with a simple majority vote of the cabinet.
- (l) Be an ex-officio member to committees, except Ethics and Disciplinary, Constitutional, Electoral, Caretaker committees
- (m) Be the custodian of the association's corporate documents.
- (n) Appoint all Committees except Ethics, Disciplinary, Electoral, and Care takers.
- (o) Hand over N.E.A.'s assets and liabilities to the in-coming president at the next general meeting following the swearing in ceremony.

## Section 2: Vice-President

The Vice President shall:

- (a) Perform the duties of the President in his/her absence.
- (b) Perform other duties as may be assigned by the president.

## Section 3: General Secretary

The General Secretary shall:

- (a) Record and circulate minutes of all General, Cabinet, and Emergency meetings.
- (b) Be the chief correspondence officer of the association.
- (c) Be the custodian of the original membership application forms
- (d) Maintain an expense account of no more than one hundred (\$100.00) dollars per year, depending on the availability of funds.
- (e) Hand over the Secretariat to the in-coming General Secretary at the next general meeting following the swearing in ceremony.

## Section 4: Assistant General Secretary

Assistant General Secretary shall:

- (a) Assume the duties of the general secretary in his/her absence
- (b) Perform other duties as may be assigned by General Secretary.

## Section 5: Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary shall:

- (a) Collect funds on behalf of the association.
- (b) Transfer all funds collected at scheduled meetings to the treasurer on the same day.  
Other than scheduled meetings, all other money collected, shall be transferred to the treasurer within 48 hours of receipt.
- (d) Maintain appropriate financial records of association.
- (e) Provide members with their current financial status upon request.
- (f) Provide annual Financial Statements at the end of the fiscal year ending June 30th.
- (g) Hand over to the General Secretary all completed original membership application forms
- (h) Have records of members' current financial status at all General Meetings.
- (i) Maintain and update the membership roster of the association.
- (j) Provide to the Electoral Committee on the first Saturday in June of the election year, a list of members in compliance with Article II and III (financial status of all members).
- (k) Formally hand over N.E.A.'s records to the in-coming Financial Secretary at the next meeting after swearing in ceremony.

## Section 6: The Treasurer:

The Treasurer shall:

- (a) Make all deposits on behalf of N.E.A. within two days of receipt of the money.
- (b) Be one of N.E.A.'s signatories to all accounts.
- (c) Reconcile N.E.A.'s bank statements on monthly basis.
- (d) Present all Financial Statements to the Cabinet, General membership or Auditors upon request.



- (e) Issue and receive all official receipts for all financial transactions – journal, purchase orders, requisitions, etc.
- (f) Formally hand over N.E.A.’s receipts, assets and liabilities accounts to the incoming treasurer at the next meeting following the swearing in ceremony.
- (g) Submit all financial reports, including auditor’s report of the outgoing administration within three (3) months of the audit.

**Section 7: Social Director:**

The Social Director shall:

- (a) Be the liaison officer of N.E.A.
- (b) Be responsible for all information and publicity of N.E.A.
- (c) In conjunction with the President, head the membership drive for N.E.A.
- (d) Formally hand over N.E.A.’s records to the incoming Publicity Secretary at the next meeting after the swearing-in ceremony.
- (e) Facilitate all extraordinary activities of the Association.

**Section 8: Provost**

The Provost shall:

- (a) Ensure that the meetings are conducted in an orderly fashion, including removing disruptive members from meetings.
- (b) Get directions from the president on procedures for meetings.
- (c) Ensure that no member speaks for more than the time allotted by the president.
- (d) Have N.E.A.’s constitution at all meetings.
- (e) Formally hand over N.E.A.’s assets to the incoming provost at the swearing-in ceremony.

**Section 9: Auditor**

The Auditor shall:

- (a) Be nominated and approved by the General membership as needed.
- (b) Present Financial/Audit reports to N.E.A as required by law.

**Article VI: Rights, Responsibilities, and Privileges of Members**

A full financial member shall have the following rights and privileges:

- (a) Attend all general meetings, join discussions, and vote on any motions.
- (b) Hold any office in accordance with the constitution (completed their probation of attendance [1 year] and has satisfied all financial obligations).
- (c) Receive circulars and notices prior to all meetings and scheduled activities.

**Article VII: Member Death Benefits**

A full financial member shall have the following death benefits.

- (a) In the event of the death of a certified financial member by the financial secretary and treasurer, N.E.A. shall donate no more than the sum of three thousand dollars (\$3,000. 00) towards funeral arrangement – payable to specified beneficiary on N.E.A records. N.E.A shall donate to a financial member, no more than the sum of one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) on the death of a spouse or child; and no more than two

hundred and fifty dollars (\$250.00) on the death of a parent depending on the availability of funds.

- (b) An immediate family member to a financial member is defined as said member's legal husband/wife, children, mother, and father as specified in N.E.A records.
- (c) Any registered "financial delinquent" member is automatically disqualified from any of the death or bereavement benefits or other benefits as outlined in this constitution.

## Article VIII: Other Benefits

### Section 1: Marriages

- (a) A member who is wedding will formally notify the N.E.A. and after meeting the traditional invitation requirements will receive a gift donation of no more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00), at the wedding ceremony.

### Section 2: Retirements

- (a) A full financial member upon retirement shall receive no more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) from the association dependent on the availability of funds.

### Section 3: Graduation/College Benefits - for children of financial members

- (a) Upon informing the organization of their children's graduation from high school, the graduating child shall receive a congratulatory plaque from the association.
- (b) A financial member graduating from college shall receive full support of members and be honored if invited to such occasion.
- (c) Only one such invitation per financial member per fiscal year.

## Article IX: General Meetings

### Section 1: Time and Venue

- (a) General Meetings shall be held bi-monthly on the third (3rd) Saturday. The academic year begins in September and ends in June.
- (b) The venue of each General Meeting shall be at a specified member's home or alternate venue as per the prepared roster
- (c) General Meetings shall begin by 4:00 pm promptly.
- (d) General Meetings shall not exceed three (3) hours in length.
- (e) The language of the meeting shall be English.

### Section 2: Attendance

- (a) Every member is required to attend at least four (4) out of six (6) scheduled meetings per fiscal year
- (b) Three unexcused absences in a year shall result in an inquiry letter to that member from the secretary or phone call to such members.
- (c) If a member has paid his/her dues for the year but is a no-show, no-call, the member shall be fined the sum of \$50.00
- (d) If a member has not paid dues for a whole year and is a no-show, no-call, he/she has forfeited membership status.

### Section 3: Quorum

- (a) Quorum shall constitute at least one-third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) of registered members.
- (b) All decisions by the Quorum shall have a binding effect on the entire membership.
- (c) There shall be no revisiting of matters and decisions to latecomers.
- (d) Meetings shall be guided by Robert's Rule\*

## Article X: Discipline/Impeachment

### Section 1: Officers

- (a) An officer may be impeached for conduct unbecoming, as determined by the majority of the members at a well-constituted general meeting.
  - (i) Failure to carry out their duties as an officer
  - (ii) Fighting/physical altercation/confrontation
  - (iii) Uncalled for/Unnecessary outbursts
  - (iv) Physical or verbal abuse and/or threats of physical violence
  - (v) Sexual innuendos
  - (vi) Misappropriation of funds
  - (vii) Misuse or abuse of office
- (b) An order for impeachment shall be filed in writing by the joint complaint of at least two (2) members of the association.
- (c) Any officer accused of official misconduct or conduct unbecoming shall be given an opportunity for a fair hearing.
- (d) Impeachment shall carry a vote of one-third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) of members present at the meeting
- (e) Any impeached officer shall hand over all the properties of the association no than one week (1) from the day of impeachment.
- (f) An impeached officer will not hold any office until four (4) years after impeachment, and can never hold the same position from which he/she was impeached.

### Section 2: Impeachment Procedures

- (a) To start an impeachment process two members (2) of the association must support such motion.
- (b) The President and/or Secretary shall notify the officer of the impeachment process and set up time and date for said hearing.

### Section 3: Members

- (a) A member shall be subject to disciplinary action for conduct unbecoming as determined by the majority vote at a well-constituted meeting. Examples of conduct unbecoming include but not limited to the following: verbal and/or physical abuse, outbursts or other uncontrollable behaviors, and physical and/or physical confrontation.
- (b) The motion for a disciplinary action against a member shall be by at least two (2) financially up to date members.
- (c) Upon receipt of this motion, the executive shall refer the matter to the disciplinary committee.
  - (i) The disciplinary committee shall then look into the matter and report to the house at a stipulated time.

- (ii) The member shall have a fair hearing during the proceedings/investigations
- (iii) The disciplinary committee shall make recommendations including disciplinary actions if needed warranted or appropriate.
- (d) If a member is in possession of the N.E.A.'s property, either in written form or otherwise, and fails to produce such documents/properties to the audit committee, said member will be fined no more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00), after which, the member will be forced to return the property.

## Article XI: Amendments

- (a) Amendments to this constitution shall be initiated by any three (3) financial members through a written petition.
- (b) The initiators shall collect signatures of no less than 1/3 of the members and submit to the president at least three weeks in advance of a general meeting.
- (c) The president shall present the section to be amended to the general meeting where it will be deliberated on and voted upon

## Article XII: Solicitation of Funds

- (a) The N.E.A. may solicit or accept funds from outside sources only for specified projects vis-à-vis training and professional development for members of N.E.A.
- (b) The administration must ensure that such funds are spent for the intended purpose; consistent with standard operating procedures and N.E.A.'s constitution/by-laws.

## Article XIII: Illegal Conduct

The N.E.A. shall not be responsible for any member's illegal acts/behavior resulting in an arrest, indictment, and/or conviction.

## Article XIV: General Elections

A notice for general election shall be well-advertised and communicated to the members sixty days (60) prior to the date of election.

Section 1: Election of officers shall be held in November. On the day of the election:

- (a) All officers except auditors shall be elected as stipulated in the constitution at the general meeting.
- (b) Nominees and candidates must be full financial members
- (c) Nomination for each office shall come from the floor and shall be by one member and at least seconded by another member.
- (d) Candidates for any nominated office shall be full financial members, and meet attendance requirements and other standards as stated in the constitution.
- (e) A nominee shall indicate acceptance.
- (f) Officers shall be elected by secret ballot.

- (g) A winner shall be determined by the majority vote cast for that particular office.
- (h) Presidential nominee must make formal presentation before the election.

## Section 2: Returning Officers

- (a) The returning officer shall be financially up to date.
- (b) The returning officer announces the candidates
- (c) The returning officer has voting rights
- (d) The returning officer collects the ballots
- (e) The winner(s) shall be announced immediately – on the day of election

## Article XV: Tenure of Office

- (a) Election of officers shall be held every three years
- (b) Nomination and Election of officers shall be at the November general meeting of that year

## Article XVI: Grievance Resolution

- (a) Any member, who is in dispute with a fellow member, must present the case to the executive before taking any legal action.
- (b) No member shall sue the association, or other members, without first allowing the association to mediate in the situation.
- (c) In a situation where the executive cannot resolve the issue, an Ad hoc committee of three to five shall be formed.

## Article XVII: Due Process

Definition: Due process is hereby defined as the right of members to bring any issue of concern to the general house for deliberation and determination.

- (a) In a conflict, a member shall not sue the association or individual member(s) without first seeking due process; thereby allowing the N.E.A. to mediate.
- (b) In a conflict, member(s) shall not support the opposing party either financially or otherwise.
- (c) In a conflict, N.E.A. members shall not present false accusation, either written or otherwise against the N.E.A. or any individual member in the court of law without due process.
- (d) If any member(s) is found in violation of Article XVII (section I-III);
  - (i) His/her membership shall be terminated with immediate effect.

## Article XVIII: Miscellaneous

- (a) Funeral attendance (wake and burial if in the US) is compulsory when the deceased is a financial member. Failure to attend yields a fifty dollars (\$50.00) fine unless prior permission is granted by the president.
- (b) Any member appointed to perform any assigned duty on behalf of the N.E.A; who accepts the responsibility; but fails to perform the duty shall pay fifty dollars (\$50.00) to the association.

- (c) Lateness at general meetings at 4:30 p.m attracts a fine of five dollars (\$5.00). After 6:00 PM any member arriving at the meeting is deemed to be absent from said meeting.
- (d) Hospitalization, accidents, deaths, examinations (with proof), documented health issues, and travels outside the tri-states area are the only acceptable reasons to be granted absence from meetings and funerals.
- (e) A Non-Sufficient Fund (NSF) or bounced check from a member attracts a fine of thirty-five dollars (\$35.00).
- (f) Misuse/Abuse of N.E.A Assets carries a \$500.00 fine and/or expulsion in addition to damages incurred by NEA.
- (g) Payments of debts and/or fines must be made by next meeting from the date said fines were imposed.
- (h) All payments must be made with checks or money order payable to NEA. Absolutely no cash transaction.
- (i) A member who cannot meet his/her attendance and financial obligations due to unemployment or terminal illness shall notify NEA in writing. Any member who does not inform NEA in any form or manner shall be responsible for his/her obligations to NEA.

#### Robert's Rule

*According to Robert's Rules, a quorum is the minimum number of voting members who must be present at a properly called meeting in order to conduct business in the name of the group. A quorum should consist of "as large as can be depended upon for being present at all meetings when the weather is not exceptionally bad." In other words, at best, a quorum is just an educated guess. <http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/roberts-rules-for-defining-a-quorum.html>*

# Constitution Amendment Committee

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Ilum Ifegbu  
NEA President

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Honorable Elliot Isibor  
Committee Chairman

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Mrs. Allima Adeoye  
Committee Member

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Mrs. Blessing Chimezie  
Committee Member

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. (Mrs.) Chinedu Okoye  
Committee Member

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. (Mrs.) Christy Ikwuegbu  
Committee Member

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Mrs. Caroline Onyesonwu  
Committee Recording Secretary

Adoption Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Oath of Office

I (We) \_\_\_\_\_ do solemnly swear that I (We) will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Nigerian Educators Association of New Jersey Inc. (NEA). I (We) will serve, abide, preserve, protect and defend its Constitution. So help me (us) God.

X

NEA President

X

NEA Vice President

X

General Secretary

X

Assistant General Secretary

X

Financial Secretary

X

Treasurer

X

Social Director

X

Provost

X

Auditor





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