



EXECUTIVE BOARD ELECTION POLICY

Amended and approved by the MEA Representative Council on May 22, 2007

Election guidelines are necessary for fair campaign and election practices. The election process must be conducted in such a way that voters and candidates are satisfied that reasonable rules for ethical conduct will be followed in spirit as well as in practice.

No set of guidelines can anticipate or serve perfectly in every situation. Sound ethical practices by all provide the Association with capable and responsible officers and leaders.

Notification of Elections

A notice will be sent to the general membership of upcoming elections. The notification will contain the dates of the election, positions open for nomination, and election timeline.

Should the elections be interrupted due to unusual circumstances, the timeline will be adjusted and members will be notified of the changes.

Nominations

Nomination forms for open positions shall be sent to each active member. The consent of the individuals placed on the nomination form must first be obtained. Members may nominate themselves for any office.

Open nominations will be held for one week. It is the responsibility of the nominator to ensure that the MEA office receives the nomination form before the close of nominations established by the election timeline. When a nomination form is received, a confirmation phone call or e-mail will be made to the nominee and the nominator.

Candidates' names will be posted on the MEA web site in a timely manner as they are received.

Candidates are expected to abide by the terms and conditions set forth in the MEA Executive Board Election Policy.

Confirmed candidates will be announced at a Representative Council meeting prior to the election.

- Candidates will be asked to attend this Representative Council meeting.

Candidates' names will be randomly drawn at the same Representative Council meeting and placed on the ballot in the order drawn.

All MEA information listing candidates will be in ballot order, with the exception of the biography sheet, which will list candidates in alphabetical order.

Each candidate will be asked to complete a biography form.

Biographies must be submitted to the MEA office before the deadline established in the election timeline.

Uncontested Races

If after the nomination period closes there is an uncontested candidate for a position, that candidate shall be considered elected. Members will be notified and the election will be certified at the next Representative Council meeting. The same would hold true for a slate of candidates for a specified number of positions, such as delegates to the NEA or WEA Representative Assembly.

Campaigning

What is campaigning?

Campaigning is defined in this policy, as any activity initiated by the candidates or their designee(s) with the intent to influence a person's vote.

When can you campaign?

Campaigning begins after adjournment of the Representative Council meeting where candidates are announced and ends when polls close. Campaigning cannot occur during Representative Council or Executive Board meetings.

Candidates should refrain from formal campaigning during the student school day.

Each candidate will be provided with a list of MEA voting members and their building locations. This list may only be used for current MEA campaigning purposes.

Representatives are not responsible for disseminating candidate information or materials.

Forum(s)

At least one candidate forum may be scheduled. The voting committee will be responsible for setting the date(s), time(s), place(s), and regulations of each forum.

The forum(s) must allow for member participation.

Candidates may send a designee to represent them at any forum.

Ballots

Voting will be by secret ballot, which will be a non-duplicable ballot.

Ballots will be cast in a sealed ballot box.

The ballots will be prepared by the President and/or designee(s). The final draft of the ballot will be approved and signed by the President and/or Voting Chair.

Ballots shall include the names of all confirmed candidates and must include a space for a write-in candidate for each open position.

Candidates may have their name withdrawn from the ballot by submitting a request in writing to the President before the ballots are approved and signed.

A biography sheet will be included with the ballots.

No material promoting any particular candidate, other than the biography sheet, will be included with the ballots.

Members are responsible for marking their ballot correctly and returning it to the ballot box before the polls close.

Write-in candidates must be written in by the voter and in the appropriate space.

Erasing stray marks, darkening circles, changing a vote, adding candidates, or "cleaning up" ballots in any way by anyone other than the voter on his/her own ballot is not allowed.

Ballot items marked in such a manner that creates doubt as to the intent of the voter shall be presented to the Voting Chair for determination of validity.

The Representatives or their designee(s) will be responsible for picking up the ballots, signature sheets, and ballot boxes. Representatives or their designee(s) will sign for the ballots. Accurate records will be kept on the distribution and collection of ballots given to the Representatives or their designee.

One ballot will be distributed to every active MEA member by the Representative overseeing elections in their building.

- Representatives are required to individually hand the ballot to the voting member.
- Members must sign the voter signature sheet when they receive their ballot.
- Any Representative on the ballot may not oversee the elections.

Voting

Only active members of the Marysville Education Association may vote.

Voting instructions will be given to each member.

Elections will be held for five consecutive school days.

- Polls will open at the beginning of the workday on the first day of elections.
- Polls will close at the end of the workday on the fifth day of elections.

Representatives will make every effort to distribute the ballots to each voting member on the first day of elections.

The Representatives will place the signature sheet in the ballot box after all ballots have been distributed.

Members will be notified of the location of their building's ballot box(es).

The ballot box must be secure and placed in a non-student area in each building.

Representatives or their designee(s) will be responsible for returning the ballot boxes to the MEA office after the polls close the last day of elections. Any extenuating circumstances that would prevent this needs to be brought to the attention of the Voting Chair as soon as possible where a determination will be made.

Counting of Ballots

All ballots will be counted by the voting committee the next school day after the polls close or sooner, as to be determined by the voting committee. This will be included in the election timeline.

All ballot boxes will be accounted for, and included in the final total.

Ballot boxes will be opened by voting committee members, once the ballot counting process begins. This process will be explained to the committee members and observers at the time of the ballot counting.

If a ballot is determined to be invalid, the Voting Chair will show the invalid ballot to the voting committee and the observers and will explain why the ballot is invalid. Final decisions regarding invalidation of a ballot(s) will be made by the Voting Chair.

Should the results of any races have a difference of five percent or less of the ballots cast, the ballots will be re-tallied until two sequential tallies match.

Observers

Each candidate may ask one observer to be present during the ballot-counting process.

Executive Board candidates may not be present when ballots are counted.

The Voting Chair will explain to the observers and the voting committee their roles in the ballot-counting process.

Observers may not discuss results with anyone prior to the release of the results posted on MEA's web site.

During counting, observers may not engage in conversation, except with the Voting Chair regarding concerns.

Observers may not interfere with the counting process.

The Voting Chair has the authority to remove anyone interfering with the counting process.

If a valid objection is raised during the counting process, it will be resolved by the Voting Chair.

The observer may only report to their candidate what they observed themselves during the counting process. The candidate will need to contact the Voting Chair for specifics regarding any irregularity.

No other reporting of the counting process by observers is permissible.

Election Results

The Voting Chair will notify the candidates by phone of the results for their race.

No results will be posted on the MEA Web site until all the candidates have been notified.

The names of the newly elected officers will be posted on the MEA web site the following day and in the next edition of the *Frontline*.

The total number of votes cast and the total number of votes per Executive Board candidate will be published on the web site.

Results are considered "unofficial" until the elections are certified by Representative Council.

Run-off Elections

If no person receives the majority (majority is 50% plus one) of votes cast, a run-off between the top two candidates for that position will be required.

Run-off elections will be held in a timely manner.

All terms and conditions of the first election are applicable to the run-off elections.

Challenging an Election

In case of a challenge, the candidate shall present in writing to the Voting Chair any concerns regarding voting procedures, infraction of the rules, or the election. This challenge must take place within three (3) days of the results being posted on the web site.

The voting committee will review and rule on the concerns and will respond in writing to the candidate within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the challenge.

The candidate shall have the right to appeal the decision of the voting committee to the MEA Executive Board. The appeal must take place within five (5) calendar days after receipt of ruling. The MEA Executive Board shall make the final decision on the appeal.

No Executive Board member who is running for the challenged position or who challenges the election may be involved in the discussion or rule on the appeal.

Certifying the Election

The Voting Chair will submit the election results to the Representative Council in a written report.

The Representative Council shall certify the qualifications of candidates and validity of elections of officers at the first Representative Council meeting following the election.

The President's designee(s) shall keep the secret ballots until the end of the school year in case a question should arise concerning the ballots or the election.

Concurrent Elections

MEA Executive Board elections may be held concurrently with the WEA Representative Assembly Delegate and NEA Convention Delegate elections. When more than one election is conducted on the same ballot, the terms and conditions set forth for balloting and voting in the MEA election policy will be in effect.

State and/or National elections conducted by the Marysville Education Association will be governed by the guidelines provided for those specific elections.

Adopted and approved by Representative Council on January 18, 2005
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