

POLICY MANUAL

B. ELECTIONS

1. Election Process and Candidate Requirements

- a. Declaration of Candidacy: The period for filing declaration of candidacy opens on September 1 prior to the election year. Candidates for the positions of President, Vice President-Secretary/Treasurer, NEA Director, Regional Directors, and delegates to the Representative Assembly (RA) must file a letter of candidacy with the President of NEA-Alaska stating the candidate's name, local association, membership category, and office sought. The filing deadline for President, Vice President-Secretary/Treasurer and NEA Director is at the end of the Delegate Assembly session on Thursday evening. The deadline for Regional Directors is Friday at 4:00 PM. A roster of candidates will be posted outside the assembly hall of Delegate Assembly and will be updated as candidacies are declared. The NEA Director will abide by NEA Campaign and Election regulations. The campaign period for NEA Director is limited to one year before the election.
- b. Election Guidelines: Upon receipt of a letter of intent, NEA-Alaska will provide each candidate with written election guidelines based on the Constitution, Bylaws and Board Policy. Candidates shall affirm in writing their receipt of the packet and their responsibility to read and abide by the guidelines. Candidates and campaign managers will be encouraged to attend an informational meeting for candidates following Delegate Assembly. NEA-Alaska will provide NEA guidelines to candidates for NEA Director.
- c. Nominations: Nominations for the positions of President, Vice President-Secretary/Treasurer, and NEA Director may be made from the floor of the Delegate Assembly at the time designated on the agenda. Additional nominations for Regional Directors and delegates to Representative Assembly may be made at the regional caucuses during the Delegate Assembly sessions. Nominations for Regional PACE Representatives, State Delegates and Delegates At-Large shall be made in regional caucuses and announced to the Delegate Assembly. Nominations should be with the knowledge and consent of the nominee. RA candidates must choose to run as either a regional or an at-large delegate.
- d. Speech Limits: Nomination speeches, including the second shall not exceed a total of three (3) minutes for each candidate for President, Vice President-Secretary/Treasurer, and NEA Director. Acceptance statements shall not exceed:
 - 1) Three (3) minutes for President, Vice President-Secretary/Treasurer, and NEA Director;
 - 2) One (1) minute for Regional Directors.
- e. General Election Administration: As provided in Article III of the Bylaws, the Vice President-Secretary/Treasurer shall conduct or oversee elections, and coordinate with staff of the Association in election planning and management. In the event the Vice President-Secretary/Treasurer is a candidate for NEA-Alaska office, the President shall select a director who is not a candidate for NEA-Alaska office to serve in the Vice President-Secretary/Treasurer's place. In

the event that a misprint, administrative or electronic error has or may disrupt the election process, the Vice President-Secretary/Treasurer may undertake corrective action, and/or make recommendations to the Board prior to Board certification, up to and including invalidating the election. The Board will consider the Vice President-Secretary/Treasurer's recommendations before certifying election results. A complaint about Vice President-Secretary/Treasurer action shall be processed under Section 10.

- f. Days Defined: As used in this Policy, "days" means calendar days, unless workdays are specified.
- g. Candidate Forum: NEA-Alaska will provide a candidate forum for all statewide officers. It will be recorded and distributed electronically to all members.

2. Candidate Biographies

- a. Use of Biographies: NEA-Alaska will include candidate biographies with ballots issued to all members, either by first class mail or through the electronic ballot, no later than ten (10) days after the close of Delegate Assembly. Candidates must strictly comply with the following requirements for biographies. Candidates will be asked to submit a photograph with their biographies. Candidate biographies must be submitted to NEA-Alaska by the close of Delegate Assembly. All biographies will be submitted electronically to NEA-Alaska's Confidential Executive Assistant by the deadline. The Confidential Executive Assistant will acknowledge receipt of biographies sent electronically. Biographies will be reviewed to determine compliance with the word limit before finalizing ballots. Any portion of the biographies exceeding the word limit will not be included.
- b. Word Limit: The total number of words included in the candidate biography shall not exceed:

1)	President	250 words
2)	Vice President-Secretary/Treasurer	250 words
3)	Regional Director	100 words
4)	NEA Director	250 words
5)	NEA RA Delegates	75 words

3. Preparation of Ballots

- a. The Vice President-Secretary/Treasurer shall approve the ballot for all elections.
- b. In the case of multiple offices to be filled, the wording on the ballot shall be "vote for no more than..." (the appropriate number and office to be filled). A write-in candidate line will be provided for all elected positions. For Electronic voting, the order of candidate names will be shuffled. For paper voting, the order of candidates in the paper ballot will be listed by random draw.
- c. The ballot for members who request paper ballots shall be mailed to members in envelopes marked "Ballot Enclosed." Paper ballots will include a business reply envelope addressed to the canvasser.
- d. NEA-Alaska member identification numbers shall be required for voting electronically or via paper ballot.
- e. Each local president and NEA-Alaska Board member will receive an email with the information that the ballots are available. Presidents and Directors should

ensure that members in that local are receiving their ballots and urge members to vote. Any discrepancies should be promptly reported to the Anchorage office no later than one week after ballots are available.

4. Election Schedule

- a. Pursuant to d., e., and f. below, NEA-Alaska will publish the calendar dates and times of the election schedule by November 1. The dates will be posted prominently on the NEA-Alaska website. The NEA-AKtivist edition published before the election shall state the dates that the NEA-Alaska election will be open and close.
- b. Up to five (5) days after the Saturday that Delegate Assembly is scheduled to close, candidates may verify their biographies with the Confidential Executive Assistant.
- c. By the 6th day after the Saturday that Delegate Assembly is scheduled to close, the opening and closing dates of the NEA-Alaska election will be emailed as a reminder to local presidents.
- d. Ten days after the Monday following Delegate Assembly, official ballots shall be available at noon. Biographies and election procedures shall be included or will be available electronically.
- e. Polling closes at noon ten days after it opens. Ballots must be received by the canvasser.
- f. The tallying of ballots shall be completed on the first business day after the close of the voting period.
- g. Within 48 hours after the tallying, the President will notify candidates of the results as outlined in 5.b., below.
- h. The Vice President-Secretary/Treasurer or substitute (refer to Section 1. e) shall prepare an elections report.
- i. Not more than ten (10), or earlier than seven (7) days after the voting closes, the Board of Directors shall certify the election, excluding any contested races as outlined in 5.c., below.

5. Canvassing

Canvassing for NEA-Alaska statewide elections will be completed by a qualified vendor.

- a. Counting Rules
 - 1) Ballots shall be tallied by region.
 - 2) To be counted, the ballot must be received, not postmarked, by the deadline.
 - 3) Valid ballots returned to the canvassing authority shall be counted, whether submitted in the provided business reply envelopes or not.

- 4) Envelopes may contain only one ballot. If multiple ballots are enclosed, none will be counted.
- 5) In races where a candidate loses by one percent (1%) or less an automatic recount will occur.

b. Notice to Candidates

After votes are tallied, the canvassing firm or canvassing committee shall notify the NEA-Alaska President of the results and confirm the results in writing. Within 48 hours of receiving the results, the President will notify statewide candidates of the election results by email, followed by telephone call, and will notify regional candidates by email. A single email notice will be sent to candidates running for the same office. The results will be clearly described as uncertified. Following such notice to the candidates, the results will be considered public and available to all members.

c. Board Certification

Preliminary results of the election will be sent electronically to the Board of Directors and local presidents after candidate notification and prior to Board certification. The vote tally by region shall be made available to the Board of Directors no sooner than seven (7), nor later than ten (10) days after the polls close, the Board of Directors shall certify the election in a conference call, except for races where a complaint has been filed and remains unresolved. In the event of a tied race, after the Board has certified the outcome of the race, and during the same meeting, the President will flip a coin to determine the winner in the presence of at least two (2) witnesses. Election results shall be published in the NEA-Aktivist. One year after the certification, NEA-Alaska may destroy any hardcopy ballots or voting materials.

6. [Election of Regional Directors to the Board of NEA-Alaska](#)

Regional Directors shall be elected by members of their regions following open nominations at Delegate Assembly. Regions shall be allotted seats on the Board of Directors according to one-person one vote. The number of seats calculated in accordance with the Bylaws will be presented each year to the Board at the November meeting. Unexpired terms of Regional Directors shall be filled at the next regular election to a designated one year seat.

7. [Ethnic Minority/Education Support Professional Representation on the Board of Directors](#)

If the Vice President-Secretary/Treasurer's Election Report demonstrates that ethnic minorities and/or Education Support Professional (ESP) are not represented in proportion to their membership in NEA-Alaska, the Board of Directors will immediately initiate the following process to elect ethnic minorities/ESP representatives to the Board of Directors.

- a. Nominations will be solicited from the membership at large.
- b. The nomination period will be open for ten (10) days after the Board of Directors certify the election results.
- c. Ballots will be available electronically or mailed to the membership at large within five (5) days after nominations close.
- d. Voting will be allowed for fourteen (14) days after ballots are available.

- e. Voting results and certification will follow the process as stated in section 5.b., c., above.
- f. The Ethnic Minority/ESP at-Large Director shall be seated at the first fall Board meeting.

8. Election of Delegates to NEA Representative Assembly

- a. Allocation: State delegates for Representative Assembly (RA) shall be allocated on a 1-1,000 (or major portion) ratio in each region. Of the total state delegates allocated to Alaska, the President and the Vice President-Secretary/Treasurer will be delegates by virtue of their office. Regional State Delegates will be allocated by the above formula. The remaining state delegates shall be at-large seats. NEA-Alaska will fund the number of state delegates allowed at the NEA RA. State delegates serve a one-year term.
- b. Election Process for State RA Delegates: Open nominations will be received at Delegate Assembly. Balloting for regional and statewide delegates shall take place concurrent with the regular NEA-Alaska statewide balloting after Delegate Assembly. The candidates in each race who were not elected will be designated as alternates in the order of highest number of votes cast.
- c. Guidelines for RA: The expectations of delegates will be provided to candidates (state and local) in written form prior to the election, and will include: participating in the NEA Fund For Children and Public Education, attending the Alaska State Delegate dinner, staying at the assigned RA hotel, arriving on time for caucus meetings, remaining at the Assembly until final adjournment; and a list of expected costs of political contributions expected from a delegate to NEA Representative Assembly.

9. Campaign Practices

This policy applies to all candidates for NEA-Alaska office. Unless a local affiliate has adopted its own guidelines, these guidelines will apply to local affiliate elections, with the exception of subparagraph(s).

- a. Filing to run for office: A member becomes a declared candidate at the time of filing the letter of intent. No financial support may be accepted prior to September 1. However, this in no way limits any member from exploring the possibility of becoming a candidate. Only candidates who have submitted a letter of intent to run for office may actively campaign, hold campaign events, or distribute campaign materials at NEA-Alaska events. Due to NEA Election regulations, the September 1 limit is inapplicable to the NEA Director's campaign. Refer to Section 1. A.
- b. Association Resources: No NEA-Alaska or local dues money, equipment, materials, staff time, or other resources may be used to support any candidate or to distribute campaign materials for a candidate running for Association office.
- c. Bulletin Space: Upon request, all candidates shall be provided equal access to space in the NEA-Alaska offices to display campaign material. A bulletin board shall be made available in each regional office for candidates running for statewide office (President, Vice President-Secretary/Treasurer, and NEA Director) to display campaign material. Each candidate will be provided equal

space on the bulletin board. Local presidents in each regional office will be consulted, as office space may dictate the size and location of the bulletin boards.

- d. Candidate Travel or participation funded by Association: Association-funded travel and opportunities to appear at Association meetings shall be limited to those occurring by virtue of any office held by a declared candidate.
 - 1) Declared candidates may be selected as trainers and/or participants in Association programs only when other persons or participants, qualified according to NEA participation guidelines, are unavailable. This limitation is not intended to restrict member access to Association training or events. Campaigning is forbidden while training or events are in session.
 - 2) Campaigning by NEA-Alaska elected or appointed officials when traveling at NEA-Alaska expense must be incidental to the assignment and must not interfere with the performance of duties. Candidates for statewide office who host campaign events in hotel rooms provided by an association (national, state or local) shall pay the pro-rated cost for the night of lodging during which the event occurred. The candidate's cost is computed as follows: divide the daily rate for the room by 24 and multiply by the number of hours the candidate's room was used for campaigning. If the room cost is zero, the rate generally charged to members shall be substituted to determine the pro-rated cost.
- e. Local Affiliate Endorsements: In its regular course of business, the membership or governing body of an affiliate may endorse a candidate for NEA-Alaska office. An affiliate may not call a meeting for the sole purpose of issuing an endorsement and may not spend any funds in any other manner for this purpose. A local may disclose endorsements in its regularly published communications to its members without violating b. or e. of this section.
- f. Local Affiliate Voter Education and Equal Access: On a neutral basis, a local affiliate may make available to all candidates for a particular office, resources in the form of interschool mailbags, presentation time at affiliate meetings, voter forums, and publications (newsletters, websites, and social media), either free of charge or at a rate charged to all candidates.
- g. Release Time Officer/Candidates: Release time officers are funded by dues dollars. A release time officer may not personally campaign for office or seek the support of others to campaign on the officer's behalf during the normal operating hours of the Association. An exception is available for local release time officers who take personal leave to campaign or (where a leave policy is not in place) who promptly report to their governing board, in writing, the dates and times of personal campaign activity occurring during operating hours.
- h. Staff: NEA-Alaska staff may not assist in any state or local campaign activity, distribute campaign materials for a candidate running for Association office, or assist with GOTV (Get out the vote) efforts, with the exception of pre-authorized assistance in managing electronic voting and/or distributing approved information about all candidates on a neutral basis.
- i. Campaigning at Association Events: No campaigning for statewide office may occur during Association (local, state, or national) events, with the exception of a candidate's acceptance speech following nomination. An announcement or

invitation related to campaign events, needs or activities is considered to be campaigning. During recesses and before and after Association events, non-disruptive campaigning may occur, and campaign materials may be placed on tables and displayed in other designated locations.

- j. Delegate Assembly: At Delegate Assembly, each candidate for statewide office will be provided a table outside the main meeting room for campaign purposes. A candidate forum will be held for all candidates running for statewide office. The schedule for the forum will be designed to maximize audience and candidate participation. A neutral individual will be appointed by the President to facilitate the forum. The forum will be videotaped and the video will be published on the NEA-Alaska website (members only section) following DA.
- k. Direct Mail Candidate Communications with Members
 - 1) Upon a candidate's request, NEA-Alaska will authorize its current mail house to complete a one-time mailing to Association members on behalf of the candidate, at the candidate's cost.
 - 2) No candidate or campaign may distribute campaign material using member email addresses obtained through the candidate's service or position in local, regional or state office.
 - 3) NEA-Alaska will make one electronic mailing to Association members on behalf of all candidates, including campaign material submitted by candidates, subject to the Association's published formatting, length and time restrictions. The electronic mailing will include a link to the website of candidates for statewide office who provide a website link. Late or noncompliant submissions will be rejected, and NEA-Alaska will not be responsible for content. The electronic mailing may provide the contact and website information designated by the candidates.
- l. Disclosure of Source and Sponsor: All campaign material shall be accurate and clearly identify its source and sponsor. In the event that source and sponsor are the same, only sponsor need be noted.
- m. Get Out the Vote (GOTV) Drawings/Raffles: In verifying that the member is eligible to participate in the drawing or raffle, no GOTV drawing or raffle shall require disclosure of the member's vote.
 - 1) Local associations who conduct GOTV drawings or raffles shall advertise the activity on a standalone document with no reference to any candidate. The association shall clearly identify that it is the sponsor of the drawing or incentive.
 - 2) Candidates for statewide office may not conduct GOTV drawings/raffles.
- n. In Schools: Candidates may not campaign in schools during the student day.
- o. Local Officers as Candidates: During the campaign period, a candidate for statewide office who is also an officer of a local affiliate, shall be recused from the affiliate's discretionary election-related actions that are likely to create the appearance of a conflict of interest; such actions would devolve upon the next appropriate local officer. Discretionary actions include decisions about hosting or scheduling endorsement presentations, GOTV efforts, or voter education events, and election messaging through social media or the local's website or publications. Neutral, routine and customary actions of the local such as notifying local members that ballots are ready are not precluded by this provision. (Refer to section 3.e., above)

- p. Nonmember Participation in Campaigns: Association state and local elections are internal political procedures, limited to members. Members may provide campaign contributions to a candidate. A candidate may invite family members to attend campaign and/or voter education events, and may accept personal contributions from the non-member relatives. Candidates for NEA Director must comply with NEA campaign rules and federal law.
- q. Pre-distribution Review of Campaign Material: At a candidate's request, the Chair of the Elections Policy Violations Review Committee (EPVRC) will review campaign material submitted by the candidate prior to distribution. If the Chair provides a written approval of the material, the approval shall create a presumption that the material *as submitted* does not violate this Policy, in the event of a later complaint. Electronic proofs or descriptions may be submitted in lieu of the actual physical item or document. The Chair will be present and available at Delegate Assembly to review campaign material. The Chair may designate a member of the EPVRC to cover for the Chair at Delegate Assembly.
- r. Use of NEA-Alaska Logo or Name: The NEA-Alaska logo may not be used by candidates on campaign material. NEA-Alaska's name may not be used in a campaign to suggest endorsement by NEA-Alaska. Candidates may not use NEA-Alaska in their campaign's registered Website Domain names unless the domain name minimizes the possibility of confusion regarding the use of NEA-Alaska resources and endorsement by NEA-Alaska. An example of an acceptable domain name would be "Jones for NEA-AlaskaBoard.com." The use of the NEA logo or the symbol of the united education profession is prohibited by NEA campaign policies.
- s. Violations and Complaints Reporting: Any alleged violations of this policy shall be formally reported to the President in writing on the form provided on the NEA-Alaska website as soon as possible, not to exceed ten (10) days after the challenger knew or reasonably should have known of the alleged violation, or five (5) days after the polls have closed, whichever occurs sooner. The President will submit this violation to the Elections Policy Violations Review Committee as soon as possible and the committee will work to expedite their investigation. The NEA-Alaska Board of Directors will postpone certification of the election result for any race affected by an election complaint that has not been finally resolved by the Board. (Refer to section 5.c.) Any member eligible to vote in the affected race may file a complaint.

10. Elections Policy Violations Review Committee (EPVRC)

- a. Committee purpose and composition: The Elections Policy Violations Review Committee (EPVRC) is responsible for expeditiously reviewing election or campaign complaints, making necessary factual findings and recommending response or action to the full Board. The Committee shall be composed of three (3) NEA-Alaska members and two (2) alternates not currently serving on the Board of Directors, appointed by the President and confirmed by the Board of Directors. Terms shall be for two (2) years, on a staggered basis, and members may be reappointed once. No member of the EPVRC may participate in any way in NEA-Alaska election campaigns while serving on the committee. A member of the committee shall not be a candidate for any office or offer any support to a

- candidate running for election during their term. A quorum of two (2) EPVRC members is required for committee action.
- b. Candidate Notice and Witnesses: Candidates who have any complaint(s) filed against them shall be notified within three (3) calendar days of the date of filing. The candidate shall be given the chance to speak with the EPVRC about the complaint(s) before the committee renders a decision on its merits. The EPVRC may interview witnesses, complainant, and/or candidate(s) in any order deemed appropriate and to expedite determination.
 - c. Exclusion Requests: A member who has filed a complaint and asserts that a member of the EPVRC cannot be impartial may submit a written exclusion request to the Chair. The request shall state the grounds for assuring bias. A timely exclusion request will be addressed by the EPVRC as a priority action. The Chair shall prepare a written response to the exclusion request and forward the response to the Board for decision. Pending Board action on the request, the EPVRC Chair may request participation of the alternate committee members, in addition to the regular committee, in order to avoid delay in committee action. The Board will determine appropriate action to take with regard to the exclusion request.
 - d. Required Elements of Complaint: Review by EPVRC – Using the form provided on the NEA-Alaska website, a complaint concerning the election shall specify the policies or rules which have been violated, provide the dates and locations of the events that are being challenged. Identify names of individuals who have pertinent knowledge, and attach any evidence or documentation of the violation. The Chair of the EPVRC will notify the candidate who is the subject of the complaint that a complaint has been filed, and if the complaint states a *prima facie* violation of NEA-Alaska policy, shall schedule a time for the candidate to respond. In the event a *prima facie* violation is not found, the candidate and complainant will be notified of such determination. For violations of NEA Campaign and Elections Guidelines, the committee shall also notify NEA. The EPVRC will determine the facts relevant to election or campaign complaints by reviewing the type of evidence normally considered by prudent persons in deciding serious matters, including interviews or statements of witnesses who have firsthand knowledge of relevant facts. The EPVRC may grant the candidate an opportunity to provide factual information, and relevant mitigating circumstances if applicable. The committee and chair shall keep confidential information about submitted items until the Board has decided the complaint.
 - e. Referral by EPVRC: The committee may delegate all or part of the fact-finding to a neutral third party. Any delegation of fact-finding shall be accompanied by a specific assignment or set of questions for the reviewer, plus a deadline for completion of the review.
 - f. Recommendations by Committee to Board: The EPVRC shall submit a written summary of its findings to the President to provide the Board of Directors, and if the EPVRC finds merit to the complaint, the summary shall include one or more recommendations for action based on the seriousness of the infraction. The candidate who is the subject of the complaint will be given an opportunity to respond to the committee's findings and recommendations at the Board meeting, in person, or by submitting a written statement. A copy of the committee's summary may be provided to the candidate by the committee

prior to the Board meeting only if the candidate agrees in writing to maintain the confidentiality of the EPVRC's conclusions and recommendations until after the Board had decided the matter.

g. Board Determination: The Board of Directors shall determine the appropriate action on the complaint or complaints reviewed by the Committee. Any Board action in response to alleged campaign violations must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors. The Board may reject, modify, or accept the committee's summary. The Board's decision is the final decision of NEA-Alaska.

h. Examples of Violations and Actions:

Level	Example of Violation:	Example of Actions:
I	1. No attribution statement of payment on distributed campaign material 2. Deadline for submitting biography and photo missed	1. Letter to candidate *If repeated, apply Level II 2. Letter to candidate; missing information not included in material provided to members
II	Campaigning in NEA-Alaska offices	Letter to candidate, notice on website stating name of candidate and infraction *If repeated, apply Level III
III	Use of local and/or state union resources including materials and/or staff time	Letter to candidate, notification of all local presidents, notice on website stating name of candidate and infraction, other reparative action *If repeated, apply Level IV
IV	Blatant and/or repeated use of local and/or state union resources or opportunities by virtue of office held for campaign purposes	Letter to candidate, notification of all local presidents, and all members; notice on website stating name of candidate and infraction; disqualification of candidate(s). Disqualification shall be for the office which the candidate filed a letter of intent and shall remain in effect for the election cycle in which the infraction occurred unless the candidate has been disqualified for a second time. Repetition may justify disqualifications for longer than one election cycle. *If all declared candidates for specific office are disqualified, a new special election for that office will be held with additional candidacy filing period.
V	Voter fraud, suppressing votes	All penalties from Level IV, plus voiding of election results from affected Region(s) and new election.