

# **SOTA**

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**Seven Oaks Teachers' Association**

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January, 2015

## **Article 1: Structure and Meetings**

### **1.01 Executive**

- a) The President shall chair Executive meetings
- b) The Executive shall hold an annual orientation session. The purpose of the orientation will be
  - i. to familiarize new Executive members with the policies and procedures of the association
  - ii. to set goals and priorities for the upcoming year
  - iii. assign the responsibility of implementing those goals and priorities to members of the Executive
- c) The President shall provide a written report to each Executive and Council meeting.
- d) Chairs of standing committees shall provide a written report to each Executive and Council meeting
- e) The President shall represent the Association at regional and provincial meetings and shall act in a liaison role with the Manitoba Teachers' Society and other Association Presidents.
- f) The Executive shall establish ad hoc committees as needed. One member of the Executive shall be appointed to chair the committee. The President shall communicate the need for the establishment of such committee and solicit participation from the general membership.
- g) The Association shall maintain an office for the President and Vice President. The budget for the office(s) will be determined at the annual budget meeting.
- h) The Association shall annually have the financial statements duly audited or financially reviewed by an external accountant as determined by Council. The Treasurer will be responsible for submitting all records to the auditor. The audited/reviewed financial statements shall be kept on file in the Association office, and be available to Head Councillors on request.
- i) The President shall maintain communication with members of our community who affect public education policy and shall invite such members to address the membership at the request of Council.
- j) The Association shall adopt By-law II of The Manitoba Teachers' Society as the official rules of order at all meetings.

### **1.02 Council**

- a) The Vice President shall chair Council meetings
- b) Each school shall appoint/elect a representative to act as the Head Councillor. The role of the Head Councillor is as follows:
  - i. to act as the liaison person between the staff and the SOTA Executive and Council
  - ii. to attend all Council meetings, and ensure that other Councillors are also in attendance. If one or more Councillors is unable to attend, the Head Councillor will attempt to arrange for an alternate to be at the meeting
  - iii. to set a schedule of meeting dates and locations at the September meeting
  - iv. to ensure that all Councillors receive the agenda for each meeting, committee reports and other relevant information, which will be sent to schools approximately one week prior to the meeting by the Association President
  - v. to make regular SOTA reports to staff on issues raised at Council and information received from the SOTA office
  - vi. to ensure that SOTA Council minutes are stored and available to SOTA members in their school/workplace upon request.

- vii. to distribute material, handle tickets, or provide information for the SOTA newsletter
- c) The Association shall hold a biannual orientation session for Head Councillors within the first month of the school year. The purpose of the orientation shall be:
  - i. to review roles and responsibilities of Head Councillors, Councillors and Executive.
  - ii. to familiarize Head Councillors with the Collective Agreement, Constitution and Policies of the Association
  - iii. to review the goals and priorities as set by the Executive

### **1.03 External Committee Representation**

- a) If the Association is requested to provide representation on a committee or event external to the Association, in an official capacity, the Executive shall use the following procedures:
  - i. the Executive shall carefully consider whether or not the Association shall provide representation
  - ii. the President shall participate or appoint a designate to participate
  - iii. the Executive shall inform Council of the nature and mandate of the committee and the names of the Association representative(s)
  - iv. the representative(s) shall be required to report regularly to the Executive and Council on the work of the committee
- b) Any conclusions, recommendations, or policies resulting from the deliberation of any external committee on which Association representatives sit, be considered to have Association agreement/concurrence only after a specific motion(s)approving or accepting such conclusions, recommendations, or policies is passed by Council.

## **Article 2: Manitoba Teachers' Society Events**

### **2.01 Annual General Meeting**

- a) The following priority order shall be used to select the appropriate number of delegates to the AGM, as well as to select alternates:
  - i. Executive members
  - ii. Resolutions Committee members
  - iii. Council members
  - iv. General members
- b) All Association resolutions shall be approved by Council before submission.
- c) All nominations made by the Association for positions on the Provincial Executive shall be endorsed by Council.
- d) SOTA delegates shall not speak or vote against a resolution presented by SOTA

### **2.02 MTS Sports Tournaments**

For each sporting event sponsored by MTS, the Association shall allocate twice the amount of one entry fee to be divided equally by the number of teams wishing to enter.

## **Article 3 Association Procedures**

### **3.01 SOTA Scholarship**

- a) The SOTA award is given to a graduating student who is planning to enter a post-secondary program of study leading to teacher certification in Manitoba.
- b) The amount of the SOTA award is to be determined at the annual budget meeting.
- c) Awards will be made each year to the three best applicants. Where possible, one scholarship will be awarded to a student in each high school.
- d) The decision as to which students will receive the SOTA Scholarship will be made by a selection committee appointed each year by the Executive. Applicants will be required to submit a 500-word essay to the selection committee detailing their future goals and suitability for the teaching profession. As well, the essay should include descriptions using the following criteria:
  - i. Evidence of the applicant's interest and ability in academic studies
  - ii. Evidence of the applicant's participation in school activities; for example athletics, drama, clubs, etc.
  - iii. Evidence of the applicant's involvement in leadership activities in the school; for example student council, volunteer activities, etc.
  - iv. Three references including one from a SOTA member from the student's high school
- e) A special presentation of the scholarship will be made to the recipients at the annual SOTA reception.
- f) The President (or designate) will present the scholarship at the annual convocation ceremonies upon request by the high school.
- g) Provided that documentation from the post-secondary institution is presented when claiming the scholarship, recipients of the award may choose one of the following options:
  - i. Receive half of the scholarship amount upon acceptance into a program that leads to teaching certification and half upon acceptance into a Bachelor of Education degree program
  - ii. Defer the total scholarship amount to be paid upon acceptance into a Bachelor of Education degree program.

### **3.02 Charitable Donations**

In the event of a member's death, a donation of one hundred dollars (\$100) shall be sent to the first named charity as requested in the deceased member's obituary. If no charity is mentioned, the donation shall be made to a charity as designated by the Executive.

### **3.03 Recognition and Retirement**

- a) The Association shall host annually an event to recognize teachers who have been SOTA members for twenty-five years and SOTA members who are retiring. The event will take place in June and will be open to all SOTA members.
- b) Recognition for twenty-five years of membership

Teachers who have been members of the Association for twenty-five years shall receive a gift in recognition of their service. The gift will be presented at the annual SOTA recognition/retirement event.

- c) Retirement
  - i. The Association shall host annually an event in honour of retiring members
  - ii. Retiring members shall receive a gift from the Association in recognition for their service

- d) New Teacher Recognition

The Association shall host annually an event to recognize new SOTA members. The event will take place in the fall.

#### **Article 4: SOTA Publications**

- a) The SOTA website will contain the following publications:
  - i. the Collective Agreement
  - ii. the SOTA Constitution
  - iii. SOTA policies
  - iv. Information pertaining to employee benefit and insurance plans
  - v. Other information as required

#### **Article 5: Strike of Unionized Employees**

- a) Association members must continue to perform the duties required of them by contract and statute.
- b) Association members should respect other employees' right to strike and should not participate in strike-breaking activities.
- c) Association members must cross orderly picket lines. Unless there is a genuine risk of violence against them, members would be in breach of their individual Limited Teacher-General and Teacher-General contracts and the Public Schools Act prohibiting against teachers striking.
- d) Association members should not solicit volunteer help in the event of a strike. Volunteers must have official School Board Approval prior to their admittance to classrooms.
- e) Association members should not perform any tasks normally performed by striking employees (e.g.; secretarial, maintenance, custodial, clerical).

#### **Article 6: Voting Procedures**

- a) In all cases where membership votes are taken, the Head Councillor shall act as the returning officer in the school.
- b) Voting for the election of SOTA Executive members shall be done in accordance with the Constitution.
- c) Voting for the ratification of the Collective Agreement shall be done in accordance with the Constitution.
- d) The Association shall hold a referendum vote on any issue that will result in mandatory participation in a benefit plan. A two-thirds majority is required for the vote to pass.

## **Article 7: Policy Amendments**

- a) Any amendments or additions to the SOTA Policy shall be made using the following procedure:
  - i) Notice of motion provided to Council in writing
  - ii) amendments or additions will be approved by simple majority of Council.