

## **Constitution of the Georgia Science Teachers Association**

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### **PREAMBLE**

The Georgia Science Teachers Association is an incorporated non-profit association of professional science teachers whose primary aims shall be to encourage the development of science interests and abilities as a vital part of the total educational development of the students. The science teacher of today must be at once a dedicated professional educator, aware of the philosophy and function of education and of current practices therein; an enlightened citizen in terms of knowledge, understandings, appreciations, and behavior; competent in scientific endeavors, capable of making science a living force in the lives of children.

The aims of this Association shall be to cooperate with and support organizations and agencies which strive to improve science and science education, to encourage science teachers to participate actively in their local teacher organizations, to provide for administrators understanding and acceptance of the aims and objectives of this organization, to encourage an adequate pre-service and in-service training program for science teachers and to act as a professional clearing house for science teaching (instruction, outreach and challenges facing science education) of local and national significance.

### **Article I – MEMBERSHIP**

**Section A. Regular Member.** The regular membership shall consist of those professional educators who are primarily concerned with science teaching at any level, that is, anyone who teaches science in the classroom or elsewhere, or who trains and/or supervises science teachers. Full association rights and privileges are afforded to the regular member.

**Section B. Associate Member.** The associate membership shall consist of those persons interested in science teaching but whose responsibilities are not primarily those of the professional science educator. The Associate Members will not have the right to vote, nor will they be able to hold elective office in the Association but may be eligible for appointive office.

**Section C. Student Member.** All full time students enrolled in an organized science education curriculum at any college or university of the state shall be eligible for student membership.

**Section D. Honorary Member.** The status of Honorary Member of the Georgia Science Teachers Association may be awarded as recognition for outstanding service to the association and/or to the science education profession as a recipient of the Dallas Stewart Award, or be of outstanding service to persons not directly involved in science education.

**Section E. Membership Procedures.** One becomes a Regular, Associate, or Student Member by applying to the Association and paying an assessed fee commensurate with the membership status for a membership year that runs one year from the date of the current paid membership. GSTA provides membership options of one, two, or three year terms. The membership term begins when the application form and fee are received by GSTA. Honorary members are granted membership and complimentary conference registration at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Honorary Membership will be granted for an indefinite term and can only be terminated by a vote of the Board. Membership is not transferable.

## **Article II - STRUCTURE OF THE ASSOCIATION**

**Section A. Board of Directors.** The decision-making group for the Association is defined in Article IV, Section A, Paragraph 1, to carry out the goals and objectives of the Association. The Board is bound by the provisions of this Constitution.

**Section B. Board Records.** The Corporation is embodied in the record of proceedings of the Board of Directors and the annual meeting. The accounts shall be kept by the Executive Secretary Treasurer.

**Section C: Executive Board:** The Executive Board is the leadership group for the Board of Directors and is defined by Article IV, Section B, Paragraph 1. The Executive Board is also bound by the provisions of this Constitution.

**Section D. District Organization.** The Association is divided into twelve (12) districts. The purpose of organizing into districts is to promote membership in the Association and to provide more and better services to individual members. The District Director represents the interests of district membership on the Board of Directors.

**Section E. District Membership.** District membership is determined by the location of the educator's work place, not his/her personal residence.

**Section F. Strategic Planning.** The organization's Strategic Plan is designed to provide a shared mission and vision through changes in leadership, and allow the organization to prioritize the use of its resources. Along with this constitution it should guide the decisions of the Board of Directors in order to ensure that all organizational activities are in line with and support the organizations mission and goals. The Strategic Plan should be reviewed and revised by the full Board of Directors or by a committee appointed by the president, every five years.

**Section F. Position Statements.** Position statements are summaries of the organization's views regarding specific issues related to science education in the state of Georgia. These statements are reviewed annually by the Legislative Committee, who makes recommendations to the Board. Policy statements must be approved by the Board, before being voted on by the general membership. A majority of votes cast must be in favor of supporting each statement in order for it to be adopted as an official position of the organization.

## **Article III – OFFICERS**

### **Election, Duties and Responsibilities, Terms of Office**

#### **Section A. Officers of the Georgia Science Teachers Association.**

Paragraph 1. Elected officers of the Association will be the President, Vice-President, President-Elect, Secretary, four (4) Members-at-Large and twelve (12) District Directors. These members at large shall represent the areas of (1) college membership; (2) High School membership; (3) middle school membership and (4) elementary school membership. A non-elected science supervisor/coordinator, member-at-large will also serve on the Board of Directors.

Paragraph 2. The science supervisor/coordinator position shall be considered a voting member of the Board of Directors and is to be named by GSSA biannually in even numbered years. The Publications Editor(s), Webmaster, the Executive Secretary/Treasurer, a Deputy Treasurer and Conference Registration Chair will be appointive offices. Such appointments will be recommended annually by the President and approved by the Board of Directors.

Paragraph 3. Any Georgia Science Teachers Association district may establish a district organization. The District Director will be responsible for administering the establishment of the district organization and election of officers and will serve as the chief executive.

Paragraph 4. Officers holding elective positions, except as noted below, must receive a plurality of votes of members voting by statewide ballot and shall hold office for a term of one (1) year or two (2) years or until a successor is elected and qualified. Offices of a one-year term include President, President-Elect, and Director. Offices of two (2) year term include Vice-President, Secretary, District Director, and five (5) Members-at-Large. The District Director must receive a plurality of votes of members in his/her district and shall hold office for a term of two years. Odd numbered districts will elect their directors in odd-numbered years; even-numbered districts in even numbered years. The two (2) Members-at-Large who represent (1) college membership and (2) middle school membership shall be elected in odd-numbered years. The two (2) Members-at-Large who represent (1) High School membership and (2) elementary membership shall be elected in even-numbered years. Terms of office shall begin with the Transition Meeting held no later than May 31st of each year. District and Level Directors may serve for no more than two consecutive, elected terms in the same position. The term of appointed office shall be indeterminate and appointment shall be recommended annually by the President and approved by the Board of Directors.

Paragraph 5. To provide that some continuity of administration will be maintained, the President-Elect will succeed the President. The Vice-President will become President-Elect in the event that the person elected to this office is unable to fulfill the responsibilities of the office. This policy of ascendancy pertains only to the President-Elect.

Paragraph 6. In the event that the office of State President is vacated during the term of office, the President-Elect will ascend to that office, fill the unexpired term, and continue in the office for one (1) full term. In the event the office of District Director is vacated during the term of office, the President shall appoint someone to fill the unexpired District Director's term.

## **Section B. Election Procedures.**

Paragraph 1. The State President shall, on or before November 15 each year, appoint a Nominating Chair. The Nominating Chair will prepare a slate of nominees, with written consent of the nominees, for those offices identified in Article III, Section A, Paragraph 1. The Nominating Chair should be neither a current Board Member nor a Candidate who is running for a position on the Board.

Paragraph 2. Any member of the Georgia Science Teachers Association may submit suggested nominees for state officers. These suggestions must be made in writing, must include the written consent of the potential nominee, and be received by the State President no later than December 5 each year.

Paragraph 3: To be eligible for office a candidate must be a current member of the Georgia Science Teachers Association prior to nomination. If running for a District Director that candidate must work in the district he/she is seeking to represent. If running for a Member-at-Large position, that candidate must be working in the level he/she is seeking to represent at the time of the election.

Paragraph 4. The Nominating Chair will prepare and distribute a ballot with voting information by February 1, with voting to be open for a minimum period of two (2) weeks, and the results to be announced on or before March 15 of each year.

Paragraph 5. Only regular members in good standing, i.e., members who have paid their assessed dues for the current membership year, will receive a ballot, and consequently be eligible to vote on elected officers.

Paragraph 6. It is the policy of the Georgia Science Teachers Association that candidates running for any office may not campaign at a state conference, association meeting, or by utilizing the GSTA website or social media resources. Use of GSTA meetings and resources to campaign provides an unfair advantage, thus using GSTA meetings and resources to campaign will be considered grounds for disqualification.

### **Section C. Duties and Responsibilities of State Officers**

Paragraph 1. Acceptance of nomination and election or appointment to office make the duties and responsibilities indicated in the following paragraphs of this section obligatory. Any state officer who does not attend two consecutive Board of Directors meetings without submitting written reasons considered justifiable by Board of Directors consensus shall indicate by the absences the intention of vacating that office. The President shall be authorized to appoint someone to fill the unexpired term of the office.

Paragraph 2. Duties and responsibilities of the State President are:

- a. Shall be held accountable for all funds received by the Georgia Science Teachers Association and shall be solely responsible for the disbursement of said funds.
- b. Shall have the duty of planning the annual business meeting as part of the Georgia Science Teachers Association Annual Conference.
- c. Shall solicit funds from sponsors and maintain correspondence with sponsors for the support of the annual state-wide Science and Leadership Conference. The president shall serve as a member of the conference committee and assist in preparing the conference budget.
- d. Shall cooperate with and be generally available to organizations and meetings involved in science and science education activities; and shall otherwise be active in professional activities.
- e. Shall be responsible for maintaining the correspondence necessary for effective organization of the Association and shall be informed at all times of activities of districts and committees.
- f. Shall be accountable to the members of the Georgia Science Teachers Association for the activities of the Association.
- g. Shall take the initiative with the Board of Directors in leading the Association toward a definite and firm policy on all issues, regardless of nature, pertinent to science and science education.
- h. May appoint such committees as deemed necessary for the efficient operation of the Association.
- i. May delegate other duties and responsibilities as deemed necessary to subordinate officers, appointees, or committees.
- j. Shall take whatever action necessary to insure that all members receive adequate and advance notification of Association activities.
- k. Shall serve on the board of directors of the Georgia Science Teachers Education Foundation.
- l. Shall serve on the finance committee of the state organization.
- m. Shall support Strategic Planning Committee in implementation of the current Association's Strategic Plan.
- n. Shall, after completion of the term of office, serve one (1) year as the State Executive Director of the Association.

Paragraph 3. Duties and responsibilities of the President-Elect are:

- a. Shall assume duties and responsibilities of the President in the absence of same.
- b. Shall be chair of the program committee for the annual state-wide Science and Leadership Conference. These duties shall include:
  1. Selection of a conference program planning committee, which will assist with the review and selection of concurrent sessions and other items related to program.

Membership of this committee will include the vice president of the Association, Executive Director of the Association, and members to represent a cross-section of the membership.

2. Selection of a theme, logo, and conference strands for the conference and present to Board of Directors Board during transitional meeting.

3. Solicit and select presenters from those submitting applications for presentations at concurrent sessions and correspond as necessary

4. Schedule concurrent sessions into available time and space

5. Arrange and type program

6. Design program and have it printed.

7. Provide appropriate program information for appropriate electronic distribution

8. Will assist in the development of a conference budget.

9. Provide periodic updates of program to members of the ~~Executive~~ Board of Directors, Executive Director, and members of the program planning committee.

c. Shall cooperate with and be generally available to organizations and meetings involving science and science education, and otherwise actively participate in professional activities.

d. Shall assume those responsibilities delegated by the President.

e. Shall serve on the board of directors of the Georgia Science Teachers Education Foundation.

Paragraph 4. Duties and responsibilities of the Executive Director are:

a. Shall serve as chair of the annual Science and Leadership Conference and as such, be responsible for the overall quality, publicity and decision making of the conference. These duties shall include:

1. Selection of a local arrangements chair.

2. Formulation of a budget for the annual state-wide Science Teachers Conference and present this budget to the Board of Directors of the organization by the first meeting of the fiscal year. The Executive Director is responsible for approval of all expenditures related to the conference.

3. Secure speakers for the conference's general sessions, special events, and the awards ceremony.

b. Shall serve on the board of directors of the Georgia Science Teachers Education Foundation.

c. Shall serve as an advisor to the president and the Board of Directors.

Paragraph 5. Duties and responsibilities of the State Vice-President are:

a. Shall chair the membership committee of the Georgia Science Teachers Association.

b. Shall coordinate information regarding youth activities.

c. Shall serve on the program committee of the annual Science and Leadership Conference.

d. Shall serve as Parliamentarian during official meetings of the Georgia Science Teachers Association.

Paragraph 6. Duties and responsibilities of the State Secretary are:

a. Shall maintain the minutes of the Board of Directors for each official meeting.

b. Shall submit compiled minutes to the Executive Secretary after the Transition Meeting.

Paragraph 7. Duties and responsibilities of the Members-at-Large are:

a. Shall attend meetings of the Board of Directors and represent concerns of the membership in that instructional level.

b. Shall encourage membership.

c. Shall submit information, news, and at least one article for an instructional column in Observations or The Georgia Science Teacher according to the yearly specified publication schedule.

d. Shall assist conference coordinator with identification and solicitations of workshops for appropriate level.

e. Shall lead a Share-a-Thon session at conference to trade ideas among instructional level membership.

Paragraph 8. Duties and responsibilities of the State Executive Secretary/Treasurer are:

- a. Shall maintain membership files and regularly up- date membership information.
- b. Shall maintain Association financial records, make deposits and disbursements for the treasury as directed by the President.
- c. Shall prepare and publish an annual audit of all treasury records.
- d. Shall conduct business of the Association as directed by the President and/or Board of Directors.
- e. Shall maintain the archives of records regarding the business of the Association.
- f. Shall maintain financial records, make deposits and disbursements for the Foundation as directed by the Board of Directors of the Foundation.

Paragraph 9. Duties and responsibilities of the Publications Editors are:

- a. Shall be responsible for the collection, publication, and distribution of material constituting the official Georgia Science Teachers Association publications.
- b. Shall publish and distribute no less than three (3) issues of each publication per fiscal year.
- c. Shall make other mailings at own discretion or as directed by the State President or Board of Directors.

#### **Section D. Duties and Responsibilities of District Officers**

Paragraph 1. Acceptance of nomination and election to office make the duties and responsibilities in the following paragraphs of this section obligatory. Any District Director who misses two consecutive Board of Directors meetings without written reasons considered justifiable by Board of Directors consensus, or who fails to send a representative, thereby indicates the intentions of vacating the office. The State President shall appoint someone to fill the unexpired District Directors' term.

Paragraph 2. Duties and Responsibilities of the District Directors are:

- a. Shall coordinate staff development workshops within the district.
- b. Shall promote or encourage membership among potential members within the district.
- c. Shall act as a communications link with Georgia Science Teachers Association membership within the district.
- d. Shall submit district news, information, and reports to be published in GSTA's eObservations according to the yearly, specified publication schedule.
- e. Shall encourage the establishment of local Georgia Science Teachers Association chapters within the district.
- f. Shall coordinate district meetings as a part of the Annual Conference program.
- g. Shall attend meetings of the Board of Directors and represent the concerns of the district membership.

#### **Article IV - STATE COMMITTEES**

All committees of the Georgia Science Teachers Association formulated for whatever purpose must be representative of the Association, inclusive of all instructional levels and reflecting no biases with respect to race, sex, or origin.

#### **Section A. Board of Directors**

Paragraph 1. MEMBERSHIP: The Board of Directors for the corporation shall consist of the State President, State President-Elect, State Vice-President, State Secretary, Executive Director, four (4) Members-at-Large, one appointed Supervisor's Representative and the twelve (12) District Directors. The State Executive Secretary/Treasurer and the Publications

Editors shall attend all Board meetings. The designated Science representatives of the State Department of Education are recognized by the Association as advisors to the Board. In this capacity (as advisors) the State's Science representatives are encouraged to attend, as non-voting participants, the meetings of the Board of Directors.

Paragraph 3. MEETINGS AND DUTIES: It shall be the primary responsibility of this Board to plan all Association activities. The Board must plan a publicized annual meeting, the actual date and time to be set by the Board. It will commonly occur during the Annual Conference of the Association. Publicity will occur through The Georgia Science Teacher and GSTA Observations. Proxy and/or cumulative voting will not be allowed in matters of Association business. The State President may call additional meetings of the Board as needed. The Secretary will communicate dates and times of these called meetings to Board members. Roberts Rules of Order will govern all Association meetings.

### **Section B. Executive Board**

Paragraph 1. MEMBERSHIP: The Executive Director, President, President-Elect, Executive Secretary/Treasurer, Vice-President and Secretary make up the Executive Board.

Paragraph 2: DUTIES: The primary responsibilities of the Executive Board include proposing an annual budget, making recommendations to the Board of Directors and making emergency decisions that represent the entire board when calling a meeting for the entire Board is not practical. They are held accountable to the larger Board of Directors and bound by the provisions of this Constitution.

Emergency situations are defined as those where the President determines that a matter requires action of the Executive Board where (a) a full Board meeting cannot reasonably be arranged in time for the needed action; and (b) the subject of the needed action involves either confidentiality concerns or is one of immediate financial necessity. In these circumstances the Executive Board is permitted to take action but is required to report to the full Board of Directors of their action(s) at the next regular Board meeting.

### **Section C. Nominating Committee**

Paragraph 1. MEMBERSHIP: The membership of this committee shall be the State President a Nominations Chair, and up to two additional members, reviewed by the Executive Board and appointed by the State President.

Paragraph 2. DUTIES: The duties of this committee shall be as stated in Article III, Section B,

Paragraph 3. In the event that the Chair of the Nominating Committee is nominated for an office, the State Executive Secretary/Treasurer shall conduct the election or the President will appoint someone to run the election.

### **Section D. Awards Committee**

Paragraph 1. MEMBERSHIP: The awards committee shall be comprised of a chair, appointed for a three year term by the president, a Foundation representative, and the level representatives for elementary, middle, secondary, and college. Each level representative shall form a subcommittee composed of a majority of classroom teachers for the purpose of evaluating the awards nominations/applications. The chairperson shall be responsible for receiving applications and communicating with all nominees/applicants and the district representatives concerning the final selection.

Paragraph 2. DUTIES: The awards committee shall serve as a link between Board of Directors of the Association and the Georgia Science Teachers Education Foundation. Annual awards in

recognition of meritorious service to science and/or science education will be presented by this committee at the annual business meeting. Each committee shall determine the criteria for those awards, the nature of the awards to be given, and ascertain worthy recipients.

Paragraph 3. Criteria for the awards should be published in the Georgia Science Teachers Association's various publications to enable members to make nominations for the various awards.

### **Section E. Budget Committee**

Paragraph 1. MEMBERSHIP. The Budget Committee will consist of members of the Executive Board and a Deputy Treasurer. Advisors from the field of finance, commerce, or management can be appointed at the discretion of the president.

Paragraph 2. DUTIES. The committee shall develop, monitor and report on the annual budget and any special funding secured through grants, contracts or awards. The annual fiscal budget should be developed with input from the president, the executive secretary-treasurer and chairs of the standing committees and Foundation and presented to the full board for approval prior to the beginning of the fiscal year.

### **Section F. Advocacy Committee**

Paragraph 1. MEMBERSHIP. Membership of this committee shall consist of a chair appointed by the President, the President, President-elect, Executive Director and additional members as deemed necessary. The Legislative Advocate shall serve as an advisor.

Paragraph 2. DUTIES. The committee shall communicate with the Legislative Advisor regarding current activity in the Georgia General Assembly, the Georgia State Board of Education, and the Georgia Department of Education, the Governor's office, and other policymaking bodies and will discuss the appropriate actions of the Georgia Science Teachers Association. Duties further include an annual review of the organization's policy statements and to make recommendations for necessary revisions. Members of this committee will attend meetings of the Georgia General Assembly, Georgia State Board of Education, and other appropriate meetings as deemed necessary. The Chair of this committee will communicate Legislative updates the membership at large in a timely manner.

### **Section G: Media Review Committee**

Paragraph 1. MEMBERSHIP. Membership of this committee shall consist of the publications editor(s), webmaster, and additional members as deemed necessary, and appointed by either the Executive Director or President.

Paragraph 2. DUTIES. This committee shall develop, review or revise publication policies and guidelines for material and information included in the Association's printed or electronic media. This includes the GSTA website, eObservations and social media outlets. Together these committee members should work to recommend clear and consistent publication practices across all forms of media. An annual review of the established guidelines should be conducted and recommendations made to the Board of Directors.

### **Section H. Special Purposes Committees**

Committees for special purposes may be named by the State President or District Director as needed.



## **ARTICLE V--MEETINGS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

**Section A. Business Meeting.** The Association business shall be conducted by membership present at the annual meeting, announced at least 30 days prior to the date of the scheduled meeting.

**Section B. Rules.** Robert's Rules of Order, the current revised edition, shall govern the business meetings of State and District Association groups.

**Section C. District Meetings.** Business meetings of the District Association shall be conducted at a time determined by the District Director.

**Section D. State-wide Meetings.** There will be an Annual Conference of the entire Association for the purpose of bringing both the membership and other interested professional people information and experience in the field of science and science education, and to bring to the participants current ideas and practices in the field of science teaching and related topics. In the event NSTA has scheduled either a Regional or National Conference in Georgia a state conference may not be scheduled.

**Section E. Additional Meetings.** Additional meetings shall be encouraged, especially at the district level, where such might serve to promote the aims and objectives of the Association as set forth in the Preamble of this Constitution.

## **ARTICLE VI -- FINANCES**

**Section A. Fiscal Year.** The Fiscal Year shall be determined by the Board of Directors.

**Section B. Membership Year.** Membership shall run one year from the date of the current paid membership.

**Section C. Budget.** The Executive Board will prepare the annual budget for approval by the Board of Directors. Amendments and corrections to the budget will be completed and approved by the Board of Directors as needed.

**Section D. Dues.** Dues will be assessed by the Board of Directors, in the amount necessary to meet the needs of the annual budget.

**Section E. District Activities.** Districts that have their own chapter organization or hold local conferences and/or workshops may collect fees necessary to sponsor their events.

## **ARTICLE VII -- GEORGIA SCIENCE TEACHERS EDUCATION FOUNDATION**

**Section A. Purposes.** The Georgia Science Teachers Education Foundation shall serve as a non-profit, tax-deductible corporation of Georgia Science Teachers Association. The goal of the Foundation is to distribute scholarships and awards for promoting science education. The Foundation shall accept real or personal gifts from individuals or corporations.

**Section B. Board of Directors.** The decision making group of the Foundation shall consist of a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will be comprised of members of Georgia Science Teachers Association and may have as members representatives from business and industry, communications, marketing, and science related areas. The president, president-elect, director, chair of the awards committee and executive secretary-treasurer of the Association will serve on the Board of the Foundation. Other members of the Association may be appointed to the Foundation's Board of Directors. The officers of the Board of Directors will consist of a chair, vice-chair, secretary and director. The executive secretary-treasurer of the Association

shall serve as the treasurer of the Foundation. The chair is appointed for a three year term by the president of the Association.

**Section C. Meetings.** The Foundation has to have at least one annual meeting to be held at the time and place determined by the Chair of the Board of Directors.

**Section D. Finances.** The Foundation is financed by the membership of Georgia Science Teachers Association and by contributions from the business and charitable community. Funds for awards shall be allocated by the Board of Directors of the Association.

**Sections E. Awards and Scholarships.** The Foundation will establish awards, scholarships and grants to science professionals and their students throughout Georgia. The nature and number of the awards will be determined by the Board of Directors of the Foundation. The awards program will be administered by the chair of the awards committee.

#### **ARTICLE VIII – AMENDMENTS**

**Section A.** This Constitution should be reviewed at least every five years, but may be amended at any time. Amendments must be made in writing and seconded by any member, and submitted to the Board of Directors for review. A simple majority approval by this Board shall require that the amendment be submitted to the regular membership by distributing a ballot. The amendment shall be considered passed when approved by a two-thirds majority of voting members.