

**GARDNER EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION
BY-LAWS**

**REVISED
August 2025**

**Approved by Membership Vote
9/12/2025**

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By-Laws
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Article I – Name of Association

The name of this organization shall be the Gardner Education Association. Therein after referred to as the “Association.” The Association is a unified affiliate of the Massachusetts Teachers Association and the National Education Association.

Article II – Objectives

- A. To maintain and improve the quality of education for all.
- B. To uphold the high professional standards and to advance the socio-economic well-being of education.
- C. To form a closer professional bond among educators and education support personnel.

Article III – Membership

- A. Active membership in the Association shall be open to all active professional personnel (see preamble - section 2 of the contract), paraprofessionals, tutors, and registered behavior technicians (RBTs) employed by the Gardner Public Schools who agree to abide by the Code of Ethics of the Educational Profession as adopted by the Massachusetts Teachers association and amended by the National Education Association.
Active membership shall be continuous until the member leaves, resigns from the Association, or fails to pay membership dues.
- B. Payment of annual dues is the obligation of each member. If

payment is not made by cash or payroll deduction, the member must reimburse the Association the full amount with an additional 10% interest charge.

- C. Retired membership is granted to those former active members, who retire after twenty (20) consecutive years of membership in the Gardner Education Association immediately preceding their retirement. A Certificate of Retirement from the Association will be given to them as well as one given from The Massachusetts Retired Teachers Association.

Article IV - Officers

Section 1. The officers of the Association shall be President/Co-Presidents, Vice-President/Co-Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, and Membership Chair. Upon the agreement of two candidates they shall be eligible for election as a team for Co-President and Co-Vice President.

Section 2. Powers and Duties of Officers

A. President/Co-Presidents

1. The President/Co-Presidents shall reside at all meetings of the Executive Board and general meetings.
2. Shall be the Executive Officer of the Association.
3. Shall be a member of all standing committees, including the Negotiation Committee, or assign a designee to attend committees in their absence.
4. Shall represent the Association before the public either personally or through his/her designee and shall perform all other duties usually attributed to this office.
5. Shall serve as chairperson of the Negotiation Committee for teachers' contract.

B. Vice President/Co-Vice Presidents

1. The Vice President/ Co-Vice Presidents shall preside at all meetings when the President is absent.
2. Shall perform all duties assigned to him/her by the President and will also be the Chairperson of the Sick Leave Bank Committee, Grievances, ESP affairs, and Labor Relations.
3. Shall meet regularly with the committee Chairpersons to discuss committee activities.

4. Shall assume all duties, functions, and power of President/Co-Presidents in their absences upon their request or upon resignation.
5. Shall serve on the Negotiation Committee as Chairperson for the ESP contract.

C. Secretary

1. The Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the boards and the general meetings.
2. Shall maintain official files and shall assist the President with Association correspondence.
3. Shall keep a full and accurate record of all business transacted by the Association correspondence.
4. Shall share monthly meeting notes within 5 days of the executive board meeting.
5. Shall keep a roll of officers and board members present at all Executive Board meetings and mark the absences as excused or unexcused. Shall insert into the minutes of each Executive Board meeting the names of all officers and members both absent and present.
6. Shall conduct the correspondence of the Association, preserve its documents and provide the Secretary of the Massachusetts Teachers Association with such information as required.

D. Treasurer

1. The Treasurer shall hold the funds of the Association and disburse them in accordance with budgeted authorization.
2. Shall bill the membership for all annual dues, collect dues from the membership, and transmit amounts due to the Massachusetts Teachers Association and the National Education Association according to a previously agreed upon plan of payment.
3. Shall maintain a roll of members and disbursements and shall report to each Executive board and general membership meeting.
4. Shall have all disbursements over \$500 be co-signed by the President/Co-Presidents of the Association.
5. Shall prepare and share out a monthly Treasurer's Report prior to each Executive Board meeting, showing a record of all transactions that have occurred during the month.

6. Shall prepare and present an annual written financial statement to each Executive Board member one week after the end of the fiscal year.
7. Shall keep the President and the Executive Board informed of the financial condition of the Association and assist the Executive Board in the drafting of the annual budget.

E. Membership Chair

1. Shall keep a list of the officers, faculty representatives, members of the committees and all members, including the retired members together with their addresses and contact information.
2. Shall coordinate with the Building Reps and Personnel Department of the Gardner Public Schools to update the roll with new hires and terminations.
3. Shall coordinate with the Treasurer and provide the Treasurer with an updated membership list one week before the start of the school year and updates when personnel are hired or terminated.
4. Shall keep GEA email database current with personal email addresses for all members of the Association and retirees.

Section 3. Terms of Office

- A. The President/Co-Presidents, Vice President/Co-Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Chair shall serve a two-year term and may run for re-election. The officers may run for an indefinite number of terms.
- B. The officers of the Association for the ensuing school year shall assume office on July 1 of that year.
- C. An election will be held during a term of office only when an officer leaves that position early as in such cases of retirement, change of employment, or personal reasons.

Section 4. Appointed Positions

A. Webmaster

1. The Webmaster shall be appointed by the Executive Board for a two-year term.
2. Shall maintain the Gardner Education Association Website.
3. Shall maintain GEA social media. All postings will not include confidential Association business.

Article V – Building Representatives

Section 1. Terms of Building Representation

- A. In each public school in Gardner staff members who are members of good standing of the Association shall elect for a term of two-years one building representative for each twenty (20) members or greater fraction thereof.
 - a. Good standing is defined as the following.
 - i. Dues are current
 - ii. No written disciplinary action within the previous school year.
 - 1. Should a member receive a written disciplinary warning during their term, they may finish off the current school year.
- B. The Building Reps for Gardner High School may also represent the Gardner Academy for Learning and Technology (GALT) School.
- C. An election will be held during a term of office only when a Building Representative leaves that position early as in such cases as retirement, change of employment or personal reasons.

Section 2. Duties of Building Representatives

- A. Building Representatives shall attend the regular meetings of the Executive board and the general membership meetings.
- B. Building Representatives shall be responsible for distributing Association communications to the members in their buildings, for keeping their members informed and shall further act as liaison from the members in their buildings to the Executive Board.
- C. At the start of the school year Building Representatives will provide members with dues payment information. However, it is the obligation of each member to make arrangements for his/her dues payment as stated in Article III Section B.
- D. Building Representatives will hold a monthly 10-minute membership meeting in the building within a week following the monthly Executive Board meetings to report back information/updates to members.

- a. They may also type notes specific to their building to have shared out by the secretary via email in addition to monthly 10-minute meetings, if they feel as if it will further reach membership.

Article VI – Executive Board

Section 1. Terms of Executive Board

- A. The Executive board shall consist of the officers and building representatives. It shall be the Executive Authority of the Association.

Section 2. Powers and Duties of the Executive Board

- A. Within policies established by the general membership, the Executive board shall be responsible for the management of the Association and shall carry out policies of the Association.
- B. It shall report its transactions to the general membership and suggest policies for consideration by the membership.
- C. It shall prepare an annual budget for the operation of the Association. It shall have the accounts of the Association audited annually.
- D. It shall establish committees it deems necessary.
- E. At the start of the school year, It shall establish the calendar for the Executive Board meetings and general meetings.
- F. It shall be represented at area MTA/TASC meetings and at other MTA sponsored meetings.
- G. It shall meet as necessary to hear a member's (griever's) claim and report from Grievance Chair and/or President/Co-Presidents and vote as committee on whether to move forward with arbitration.
- H. Decisions shall be made by the majority vote of those in attendance.

Article VII – Nominations and Elections

Section 1. Association Officers

- A. Any Association member who has worked consecutively for three (3) years and/or has professional status, and is in good standing is eligible for nomination as a candidate for President/Co-President, Vice President/Co-Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Membership Chair.
 - a. Good standing is defined as the following.
 - i. Dues are current
 - ii. No written disciplinary action within the previous school year.
 - 1. Should a member receive a written disciplinary warning during their term, they may finish off the current school year.
- B. Elections will be held prior to the end of the school year for the next school year's officers and may be conducted electronically per the instructions of the Association Secretary and upon the approval of the Executive Board.
- C. To be elected to any office, a candidate must receive a majority of the votes cast. In case of a tie vote, a special election will be conducted by a run off election.
- D. The results of the election will be published within 3 days of the election.

Section 2 Building Representatives on the Executive Board

- A. Building Representatives for each school will be elected by the building based membership.
- B. Any Association member who has worked consecutively for two (2) years and/or has professional status, and is in good standing is eligible for nomination.
 - a. Good standing is defined as the following.
 - i. Dues are current
 - ii. No written disciplinary action within the previous school year.
 - 1. Should a member receive a written disciplinary warning during their term, they may finish off the current school year.

Section 3. Delegates to the Massachusetts Teachers Association Annual Meeting

- A. The President/Co-Presidents shall be an automatic representative or delegate to the Annual Meeting and the Representative Assembly. If the President/Co-Presidents is/are unable to attend the Annual Meeting and/or the Representative Assembly, they shall designate an active member of the Association and his/her replacement.
- B. Any active member is eligible to be a candidate for office or delegate to the MTA Annual Meeting and Representative Assembly.
- C. Each candidate must be nominated and elected according to regulations set by the Massachusetts Teachers Association and National Education Association.

Section 4. Reimbursement of Delegates

- A. Reasonable compensation will be provided to the delegate(s) by the Association for expenses incurred at the Annual Meeting subject to the approval of the Executive Board. A minimum payment of accommodation expenses, parking and a meal stipend of \$50.00 per day will be provided to each delegate and will be budgeted annually.
- B. Transportation and accommodations expenses and a \$50.00 per day meal stipend will be provided to the delegate(s) to the NEA Annual Convention.

Article VIII – Sick Leave Bank

Section 1. Membership

- A. Any member who has worked consecutively for 3 years and has accumulated a minimum of 20 days will be given the opportunity to join the Sick Leave Bank.
- B. Sick days may be granted only for a member's Prolonged illness And/or injury as determined by the sick bank committee.
- C. In September of a member's fourth year of employment, members who are eligible to join the sick leave bank will receive an email saying they are now going to be enrolled in the sick bank. Members must notify the executive board in writing if they wish to not participate in the sick bank no later than September 30th of the

members fourth year of employment. Participation in the Sick Leave Bank is voluntary.

- D. By joining a member will donate 1 of their accumulated sick days into the bank which will stay in the bank until needed.

Section 2. Donation of Days

- A. The member will not be asked to donate again unless the bank needs more days.
- B. Additional days may be donated by members at any time so long that it meets district and state requirements.

Section 3. Sick Leave Bank Use

- A. In order to use the Sick Leave Bank a member must have joined the bank and have exhausted all of his/her accumulated personal sick days.
- B. Sick days will be granted through the approval of the Sick Leave Bank committee.
- C. In the event that a member uses the Sick Leave Bank they will be required to pay back 5 days per year until the amount used is repaid.
- D. All other language under Article V Section 1 of the Unit A contract will be followed for all members.

Article IX – Meetings

Section 1. The official year of the Association shall be July 1 to June 30.

Section 2. Executive Board Meetings

- A. The Executive Board shall meet at least monthly during the school year on a schedule to be determined by the incoming Executive Board.
 - a. Should a school closure occur on the day of the scheduled meeting, the Executive Board will either meet via zoom, or the following week.
- B. Additional meetings may be scheduled for special circumstances.

Section 3. General Membership Meetings

- A. There shall be at least one general membership meeting each year, which shall be determined by the Executive Board.
- B. All general meetings must be announced a minimum of seven (7) calendar days in advance.
- C. The Executive Board shall prepare a tentative agenda for use at the meetings and shall circulate it to all members so that the members will have time to discuss it prior to the meeting.

Section 4. Special Meetings

- A. Special meetings of the general membership may be held at the call of the President/Co-Presidents or upon written request to the Executive Board from five percent (5%) of the membership
- B. Business to come before special meetings must be stated in the call or written message, which shall be sent to each Building Representative for the distribution to each member. Business shall be confined to these items.

Section 5. Quorum

- A. The majority of the members shall be a quorum for the Executive Board and Committees.
- B. A quorum for the general membership meetings shall be fifteen percent (15%) of the members.

Article X – Organization

Section 1. Standing Committees:

- A. Negotiation Committees
 - Upon the Association’s notification to the School Committee of its intent to renegotiate the contract the Negotiating Committees will be activated.
 - 1. The Committees shall negotiate with the School Committee on hours, wages and working conditions.
 - 2. With the aid of appropriate committees, it shall prepare proposals to be approved by the general membership prior to being placed before the School Committee.
 - 3. Upon reaching tentative agreement on all matters under negotiation, the teams shall prepare and submit its written

report to membership five days prior to the ratification meeting.

4. Procedures for ratification of an agreement shall be developed by the Executive Board prior to the negotiating and/or should be included in the local Association-School Committee contract.
5. It is recommended that any member who has worked for three (3) consecutive years will be eligible to serve on the Negotiating Committee.
6. Each Committee shall be composed of at least 1 representative from each building and/or discipline and a chairperson.
 - i. Members who are unable to fully commit to being on the Negotiation Committee are strongly encouraged to attend negotiation meetings as silent representatives.

B. Sick Leave Bank Committee

1. The Sick Leave Bank Committee shall consist of the Executive Board as noted in both the Teachers contract and ESP contract.
2. In the event that a member requests to utilize the Sick Leave Bank the committee shall respond to the request within 5 school days.

Section 2. Non-standing Committees (formed when required)

A. Committee on Professional Development

1. See Article XIII Section 2 of the Unit A Contract

B. Committee on Public relations

1. Shall develop public understanding for the purposes and programs of the Association, the values of public education and in cooperation with the administration the educational philosophy and programs of the schools. It shall develop procedures by which the Association can work cooperatively with parents in public, fraternal and social organizations through all available channels of communication.

C. Political Action Committee

1. Shall have broad concern for local, state and national legislation affecting the interest of school, teachers and the

Association. It shall encourage members to exercise and oversee the work of the following:

- i. Local Legislation – It shall be the responsibility of this committee to study pending local legislation and promote activities in the support of the desirable legislation.
- ii. State Legislation – It shall be the responsibility of this committee to study pending state legislation and promote activities in the support of the desirable legislation.
- iii. Federal Legislation – It shall be the responsibility of this committee to study legislation before the Federal Congress and develop activities in the support of desirable legislation.

D. Committee on Professional Rights and Responsibilities or Ethics

1. Shall develop Association positions on all matters pertaining to rights of leaves, administrative discipline and dismissal, and grievance procedures and shall compile data for the support of such positions in negotiations.
2. Shall develop a program of orientation to the Code of Ethics for the members of the Association.
3. Shall advise the general membership on implementation procedures for the Code of Ethics.

Section 3. Functions

- A. Membership on committees is voluntary
- B. Chairpersons shall be elected by the members of the committee

Section 4. Meetings

- A. Each standing committee shall meet regularly. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson.

Section 3. Reports

- A. Each committee shall choose a secretary who shall record the activities of the committee
- B. The secretary shall report regularly to the Vice President of the Association
- C. Each chairperson shall report to the general membership meetings
- D. The chairpersons shall prepare a written report which the Executive Board shall file as part of the records of the Association.

Article XI – Finance

- A. The annual local dues for Association members shall be determined by the Treasurer and voted on by the Executive Board. Changes in the dues structure will be made as determined necessary by the Executive Board.
- B. All paid in full dues of Association members must be received by the Treasurer by October 1st.
- C. The Fiscal Year shall be July 1 to June 30.
- D. Any member whose dues have not been paid by the due date of that said year will be required to have their dues paid by payroll deduction in the following year.
- E. The President/Co-Presidents, Vice President/Co-Vice Presidents, Treasurer, Secretary, and Membership Chair shall have their Association dues paid in full for the duration of their term of office. The President/Co-Presidents shall be paid a \$1,500.00 stipend each, the Vice President/Co-Vice Presidents a \$1,000.00 stipend each, the Treasurer a \$500.00 stipend and the Secretary a \$500.00 stipend, the Membership Chair a \$500.00 stipend, and the Webmaster a \$500.00 stipend.
 - a. Should there be only one President or Vice President, they only receive one of the stipends.
- F. Building Representatives shall be paid a \$500 stipend.
- G. The Chairperson for the Teachers contract shall be paid full dues as a stipend. Members of the Teachers Negotiation Committee shall be paid half (1/2) active teacher membership dues as a stipend. Members of the ESP Negotiation Committee shall be paid half (1/2) active teacher membership dues as a stipend. The

- Chairperson for the ESP Negotiation Committee shall be paid the same amount as the Chairperson on the Teachers contract.
- H. All members of the Executive Board will be allowed 2 excused absences from the regularly scheduled monthly Executive Board meetings. Any more than 2 absences will result in their stipend being prorated.
 - I. All stipend values for all positions will be post tax.

Article XII – Rules and Procedures

- A. All general and Executive Board meetings of the Association will be conducted according to Robert’s Rules of Order, newly revised.
 - a. https://committees.bakersfieldcollege.edu/curriculum/meetings/2023_08_31/supporting_docs/CC-08_31_2023-VIII_C_Roberts-Rules-Cheat-Sheet.pdf
- B. The President/Co-Presidents may appoint a Parliamentarian to assist at general meetings.

Article XIII – The Amendment Process

- A. These By-Laws may be amended by a two thirds (2/3) vote of those members present and voting at any regular meeting of the Association, provided that copies of the written notice of the proposed amendments have been sent to all members of the Association at least two calendar weeks in advance of the General Membership Meeting
- B. The By-Laws of the Association may be revised by the Negotiation Committees during contract Negotiations.

Article XIV – Ratification

- A. Bylaws shall become effective upon ratification by two thirds (2/3) vote of those members present and voting at the general meeting called for the purpose of ratification.
- B. Contractual Ratification shall require a simple majority vote by those members present and voting.

