

ELECTIONS POLICY HANDBOOK

Student California Teachers Association

INTRODUCTION

The elections policy of the Student California Teachers Association (SCTA) shall adhere to fair campaign and election practices and shall be in accordance with California Teachers Association (CTA) policy and SCTA Constitution and Bylaws.

SCTA Constitution Article VI pertains to voting on amendments to the SCTA Constitution and Bylaws. SCTA Bylaws Article VI pertains to requirements for president and Article VIII pertains to nominations and elections.

CTA election rules shall prevail over election of SCTA State Council Representatives.

National Education Association (NEA) election rules shall prevail over election of SCTA representatives to the NEA Representative Assembly (NEA-RA).

Any violations of this policy may be grounds for disqualification.

ELECTIONS CHAIR

1. The SCTA Past officer serves as Chair of the Elections Committee.
2. The elections chair oversees the election process and sets the timeline for all elections.
3. In the event that the elections chair is unable to count ballots (NEA-RA and State Council), he/she will appoint two SCTA members.

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

1. An Elections Committee of four (4) SCTA members shall be appointed by the serving SCTA Executive Board. Alternates shall also be selected in case a vacancy occurs on the committee.
2. All Elections Committee members must be SCTA members in good standing. (exception: Past Officer)
3. The Elections Committee shall have representatives from both the north and south, and each member shall represent different campuses.
4. A member of the Elections Committee cannot be a candidate for a position, or campaign for any candidate.
5. The Elections Committee shall be responsible for ensuring a fair election and that voting procedures are explained and adhered to.
6. The Elections Committee shall publicize the election timelines in such a manner that every member has an opportunity to be aware of the election.
7. The Elections Committee may recommend changes to the Elections Policy Handbook. Any changes must be approved by the SCTA Executive Board at the March Board Meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF POSITIONS

1. Positions and duties of all elected Executive Board positions will be published no less than one month prior to the Representative Assembly (RA).

2. The elected positions are:

President
Executive Vice President
Secretary-Treasurer
Northern Regional Vice President*
Central Regional Vice President*
Southern Regional Vice President*
Ethnic Minority Representative#
Social Justice Advocate
Communications Editor
State Council Representative
NEA-Representative Assembly Delegates

*Must attend school in geographical region

#Must be an Ethnic Minority as defined by Article V. Section 2.c of the CTA Bylaws.

3. Positions and duties of the SCTA State Council Representatives and NEA-Representative Assembly Delegates shall be distributed in an all member mailing from the SCTA Elections Chair.

4. The members of the SCTA Executive Board shall assume their official duties at noon on Sunday of the fourth (4th) CTA State Council (normally May/June).

ELIGIBILITY

1. All SCTA members shall have the opportunity to nominate any SCTA member who meets the eligibility requirements for the office.

2. A candidate for any position must be an official member of SCTA.

3. A candidate must maintain SCTA membership during their term of office.

4. **A candidate must be present at the RA, but need not be a delegate to the RA in order to run.**

5. Eligibility of all candidates will be verified by the Elections Committee.

DECLARATION OF CANDIDACY

1. Any Candidate for office must submit a Declaration of Candidacy form based on the timeline established by the Elections Chair.

2. Official Declarations of Candidacy will be sent to the chair of the Elections Committee.

3. A candidate can only have one active declaration of candidacy form for an election year.

4. Candidates who have submitted a declaration of candidacy form for the given election year must withdraw their declaration before submitting a second declaration of candidacy form.

BALLOTS

1. Ballots shall include position and candidate's full name as submitted on the Declaration of Candidacy form.
2. The order of the candidate's names shall appear in the order of the current CTA alphabet by last name.
3. There shall be space for a write-in candidate for each position.
4. Election will be by secret ballot and the one person - one vote principle will be enforced.

STATE COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

1. CTA rules governing election of CTA State Council Representatives shall prevail.
2. The number of Representatives shall be determined by CTA according to SCTA membership totals.
3. An all-member vote shall be conducted by mail to determine State Council Representatives.
4. Candidate biographies will be 25 words in length.
5. A plurality vote is required to be a State Council Representative.

NEA DELEGATES TO THE NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY

1. NEA rules governing election of NEA Delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly shall prevail.
2. The number of Delegates shall be determined by NEA according to SCTA membership totals, as of March 15th.
3. An all-member vote shall be conducted by mail to determine the NEA Delegates.
4. The NEA Delegates may be elected by a plurality vote.

SCTA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

Declaration of Candidacy

1. Candidates must submit a declaration of candidacy form in order to campaign.
2. The declarations of candidacy shall be considered closed at the designated time of the first official day of the RA, in order for the name to appear on the ballot. All declared candidates must attend a mandatory candidates meeting.
3. Each candidate filing a Declaration of Candidacy shall receive a copy of the Elections Policy.
4. All candidates must receive an official nomination from the floor of the RA on the day of voting. A member who has not filed a Declaration of Candidacy may be nominated from the floor on the day of voting. A candidate who is nominated from the floor must run as a write-in candidate.
5. **A candidate must be present at the RA, but need not be a delegate to the RA in order to run.**

Campaigning

1. Campaigning may not begin until thirty (30) days prior to the Representative Assembly.
2. Campaign materials cannot include the CTA, SCTA, NEA, and NEA-SP logos.

3. No local dues may be used for campaign expenses. A candidate may not accept direct or in-kind contributions from a local (CTA, SCTA, NEA, and NEA-SP) in the way of assets, facilities, staff, equipment, mailings, good will, and credit.
4. No campaign materials may be placed on any official RA table (including but not limited to registration and head table.) Campaign tables will be provided.
5. No campaign materials or campaigning shall be permitted within 25 feet of the voting area (i.e., pamphlets, buttons, stickers, etc.)
6. There shall be no staff involvement in the election process, including the financial assistance to candidates.
7. All campaign materials (except pins, buttons, and food products) shall carry an identification of source of sponsorship. For example: "Paid for by the Committee to Elect Energizer Bunny, U.S. President."

Financial Disclosure

1. A financial disclosure form must be submitted by the candidate to the Elections Committee 30 minutes prior to candidate speeches. The financial disclosure form will have space for campaign contributions and expenses. Receipts for expenditures must be submitted with the form (items or service received free of charge must be included).
2. It is recommended that each candidate spend no more than \$50.00.

Speeches

1. Each candidate will answer pre-determined questions selected by the Elections Committee.
2. Candidates may choose which question or questions they wish to respond to.
3. All members will be notified of questions at least 1 month before the Representative Assembly.
4. Each candidate will receive 3 minutes to respond to questions.
5. Candidates will respond in the following order:
 - President
 - Executive Vice President
 - Secretary-Treasurer
 - Regional Vice Presidents
 - Ethnic Minority Representatives
 - Social Justice Advocate
 - Communications Editor

Ballots

1. The Positions on the ballot shall be listed in the following order:
 - President
 - Executive Vice President
 - Northern Regional Vice President
 - Southern Regional Vice President
 - Ethnic Minority Representative
 - Secretary-Treasurer
 - Communications Editor

Voting Procedure

1. The Elections Committee will determine the voting location and announce the voting times and place at the meeting of the Representative Assembly.
2. Each delegate must have official voting documents (i.e. delegate name tag) in order to vote.
3. Each delegate will sign the voting register upon receipt of the ballot and will be verified at that time.
4. If there is the same number of candidates nominated as there are positions available for that office, those positions may be filled by acclamation through a vote of the Representative Assembly delegates prior to ballot voting.

Election Results

1. Ballots will be considered invalid when:
 - more votes are cast than the number of positions available for a given office. (i.e. two persons indicated for President or three for Regional Vice President)
 - stray marks appear on the ballot
 - write-in candidate's name is unclear
2. A candidate running for any single position office (President, Executive VP, Secretary-Treasurer or Communications Editor) must receive a simple majority (50% + 1) of the valid ballots cast in order to win.
3. In the event no candidate receives a majority vote, a run-off election shall be held between the two candidates receiving the most votes. A plurality vote shall determine the winner in the run-off election.
 - Each candidate in the run-off shall be given no more than one minute to speak.
 - The voting times and location of the run-off election shall be announced to the Representative Assembly by the Elections Committee.
 - In the event of a tie vote, the winner shall be determined by a coin toss.
4. In the case of offices with multiple positions (Northern Regional Vice President, Southern Regional Vice President, and Ethnic Minority Representative):
 - If there are only 3 candidates running, a plurality vote shall determine the winners.
 - If there are 4 or more candidates running for a position, candidates receiving a majority (50%+1) shall be elected.
 - a. If at least one candidate receives a majority vote, a run-off election shall be conducted among the next two (2) candidates receiving the most votes. A plurality vote shall determine the winner in the run-off election.
 - b. If no one receives a majority vote (50% +1) a run-off election shall be conducted among the top three candidates receiving the most votes. A plurality vote shall determine the winners in the run-off election.
 - In the event of a tie vote, the winner shall be determined by a coin toss.
5. At least two of the members of the Elections Committee must be present to tally the ballots. The Elections Committee shall prepare the official tally sheet for the election.

6. Each candidate may select one observer (not a candidate) to be present when votes are counted. The name of the observer must be submitted to the Elections Committee prior to the voting. The observer must follow rules of conduct as determined by the Elections Committee.
7. The results must be announced and posted prior to the end of RA.
8. The official tally sheet and ballots must be kept at the SCTA office for one year.

Challenge Procedure

1. Any challenge to the eligibility, procedure, voting, or tallying must be filed as a signed written statement with the Chair of the Elections Committee within 24 hours of the alleged incident. The report must be supported by sufficient evidence.
2. The Elections Committee shall conduct an investigation and report their conclusions to the RA delegates.

Violations

Any violation of this policy can disqualify a candidate and/or delegate from running and/or voting at the SCTA Representative Assembly.