

Rochester Area Literacy Council
Rochester, New York
BYLAWS
Revised: May 2006

ARTICLE I- NAME AND AREA SERVED

The Council shall be called the Rochester Area Literacy Council, hereafter referred to as “the Council” or “RALC,” serving the Greater Rochester New York area.

ARTICLE II- NATURE AND PURPOSES

SECTION 1- NATURE: RALC shall be a professional organization of individuals who are concerned with the development of a literate community.

SECTION 2- PURPOSES: The purposes of the Council shall be:

- A. to improve the quality of reading instruction in all levels of education;
- B. to disseminate knowledge of reading and reading-related fields through Council sponsored conferences, meetings, workshops, newsletters;
- C. to develop an awareness of the importance of universal literacy;
- D. to foster literacy in the community;
- E. to promote interest in the RALC, the New York State Reading Association (NYSRA), and the International Reading Association (IRA).

ARTICLE III- MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

SECTION 1- ELIGIBILITY: Membership in the Council shall be open to: all persons currently or formerly engaged in teaching or supervision at any school level, parents, and all others interested in the purposes of the Council.

SECTION 2- ACTIVE MEMBERS: Membership in the Council shall become effective upon payment of Council dues for the fiscal year beginning July 1 and ending June 30.

SECTION 3- COUNCIL DUES: Dues for annual membership in the Council shall be set by the Executive Board and approved by the Executive Committee. Dues are payable to the Membership Chairperson on or before July 1 for the upcoming fiscal year. Anyone may join or renew membership after July 1 but will pay the full amount of dues before being deemed an “active member” as defined in Article 3, Section 2.

SECTION 4- ARREARS: Any member who has not renewed or paid Council dues by October 1 will be notified by the Membership Chairperson. If dues are not received by October 15, the person’s name will be dropped from the membership roster.

SECTION 5- STATE AND INTERNATIONAL MEMBERSHIPS: Paid members of the RALC automatically become paid members of the New York State Reading Association (NYSRA). Membership in the International Reading Association is strongly encouraged for all councils members, as is required of all Council officers, but IRA dues are not included in the RALC dues. The RALC shall be considered “in good standing” and entitled to representation at the meeting of the International Reading Association Delegates Assembly if at least 10 members have paid dues to the IRA for the current year.

ARTICLE IV- OFFICERS

SECTION 1- OFFICERS: The officers of the Council shall be the president, past president, president-elect, vice-president, treasurer, secretary and membership chairperson. Any member in good standing, who is also a member of the IRA (current IRA membership is mandatory), is eligible to be an officer of the Council.

SECTION 2- TERM OF OFFICE: The president-elect shall serve for one year and then automatically succeed to the office of president for one year. At the expiration of the term as president, the person shall become past-president for a period of one year. The terms of vice-president, treasurer, secretary, and membership chairperson shall be for one year. These officers may be re-elected to these positions, but may not serve more than three consecutive terms.

SECTION 3- ASSUMING OFFICE: Each officer shall assume the duties of office on July 1, following the spring election.

SECTION 4- DUTIES OF THE PRESIDENT: The president shall:

- act as the executive officer of the Council
- schedule and preside at all meetings of the Council
- act ex officio as chairperson of the Executive Board
- serve as a member of the Executive Board and Executive Committee
- be ex-officio member of all standing committees
- keep a record of all correspondence and communications related to the office of president
- exercise general leadership and supervision over the affairs of the Council, and, with other elected officers, bear ultimate responsibility for the affairs of the Council in implementing its purposes
- attend, or appoint an alternate to attend, NYSRA and IRA meetings
- act as the official NYSRA and IRA delegate
- oversee the general planning of annual programs
- in the absence of the treasurer, sign checks and make any other form of payment for expenses approved by the Executive Committee
- maintain a list containing the names of Executive Board members, along with their respective contact information.
- plan Executive Board retreats
- compose presidential messages for distribution to membership on a schedule as determined by the Executive Board
- assess the Council’s strengths and weaknesses and seek appropriate resources through local, state, and national organizations

- meet with the in-coming president to review the status of the Council
- assume other responsibilities for this office listed in the current IRA Leadership packet, as approved by the Executive Board, along with any other duties approved by the Executive Board.

SECTION 5- DUTIES OF THE PAST-PRESIDENT: The past-president shall:

- serve as a member of the Executive Board
- act as chairperson of the Awards Committee
- assume other responsibilities for this office listed in the current IRA Leadership packet, as approved by the Executive Board, along with any other duties approved by the Executive Board.

SECTION 6- DUTIES OF PRESIDENT-ELECT: The president-elect shall:

- serve as a member of the Executive Board and Executive Committee
- act as chairperson of the Nominating Committee
- act as co-chairperson of the Program Committee
- attend NYSRA and IRA Delegates Assemblies.
- in the event that the president is unable to serve, the president-elect shall become president until the next election.
- assist the president in any official duties deemed necessary by the president
- assume other responsibilities for this office listed in the current IRA Leadership packet, as approved by the Executive Board, along with any other duties approved by the Executive Board.

SECTION 7- DUTIES OF VICE-PRESIDENT: The vice president for program shall:

- serve as a member of the Executive Board and Executive Committee
- keep permanent and official records of all programs
- act as co-chairperson of the Program Committee to develop plans
- assume other responsibilities for Vice President as listed in the current IRA Leadership packet, as approved by the Executive Board, along with any other duties approved by the Executive Board.

SECTION 8- DUTIES OF TREASURER: The treasurer shall:

- serve as a member of the Executive Board
- maintain accurate and up-to-date records
- have custody of the funds of the Council deposited in the name of the Council.
- sign checks as approved by the Executive Committee
- develop a proposed budget in co-operation with the Finance Committee
- prepare records for an annual audit
- provide the Executive Board and Assembly with financial statements at each scheduled meeting
- turn over to the succeeding treasurer all funds, accounts, and books of the treasurer by June 15 of the year of retirement
- assume other responsibilities for this office listed in the current IRA Leadership packet, as approved by the Executive Board, along with any other duties approved by the Executive Board.

SECTION 9- DUTIES OF SECRETARY: The recording secretary shall:

- serve as a member of the Executive Board
- ensure that duplicate permanent copies of the minutes of all meetings are kept on file with one copy being given to the president
- turn over to the succeeding secretary all official Council records and correspondences by June 15th of the year of retirement
- be responsible for the timely distribution of the Council newsletter and other correspondence to the Membership, minimally four times as year or as approved by the Executive Board
- be responsible for preparing and distributing correspondence/recognition to individuals, school districts, or other entities on behalf of the Council, which must be signed by the President and approved by the Executive Board.
- circulate proposed amendments to the membership, as noted in Article XIV
- co-ordinate with the Executive Board the completion and submission of any IRA/NYSRA award applications prior to deadlines
- upon the approval of the Executive Board, submit articles and program information to the editors of NYSRA and/or IRA publications prior to respective deadlines
- assume other responsibilities for this office listed in the current IRA Leadership packet, as approved by the Executive Board, along with any other duties approved by the Executive Board.

SECTION 10- DUTIES OF MEMBERSHIP CHAIRPERSON: The membership chairperson shall:

- serve as a member of the Executive Board
- coordinate with the treasurer to collect dues
- keep an accurate computerized record of the total membership including names, contact information, and school affiliation
- provide every Executive Board member with a current membership list
- in conjunction with the Executive Board, plan ways, including an annual membership campaign, to secure new members and to retain current membership
- notify non-paying members by October 1 that they will be deleted from the roster unless dues are paid
- turn over to the succeeding Membership Chairperson all membership documents and materials by June 15 of the year of retirement
- assume other responsibilities for this office listed in the current IRA Leadership packet, as approved by the Executive Board, along with any other duties approved by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE V- EXECUTIVE BOARD

SECTION 1- COMPOSITION: The Executive Board shall consist of all Council officers, as noted in Article IV Section 1, the chairs of all standing committees, as noted in Article VIII, and four Regional Representatives, as noted in Article VI. The President shall serve as chairperson.

SECTION 2- FUNCTION: The Executive Board shall exercise general supervision over and administration of the property and affairs of the Council. It shall report its actions to the membership at Assembly meetings and at other times, and by such means, as the Board may decide. Duties include, but are not limited to, reviewing and/or acting upon:

- a. the creation of ad hoc committees
- b. budgets
- c. programming
- d. chairs of standing and ad hoc committees
- e. the work of all committees, including reports and proposals submitted by committee chairpersons
- f. utilize services and resources provided by the NYS IRA Coordinator and IRA headquarters.

SECTION 3- MEETINGS: The first meeting of the Executive Board shall be held no later than June 15th. A minimum of five (5) meetings per year shall be held; any additional meetings may be called by a majority vote of the elected officers. The agenda shall follow the “Board Meeting” format as outlined in the current IRA Leader’s Packet.

SECTION 4- REMOVAL OF AN EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER FROM OFFICE:

An Executive Board member who has been determined as being unable to perform the duties of office, shall be removed from office by majority vote of the Executive Board. An interim appointment shall be made by the Executive Board until the next regular election.

SECTION 5- QUORUM: A quorum for a meeting of the Executive Board shall consist of half or more of its members.

ARTICLE VI- REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

SECTION 1- REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES: Four Regional Representatives shall be appointed by the Executive Board. Representatives will be Council members, but not elected officers. To the extent possible, and at the discretion of the Executive Board, representatives will represent varying levels of education and a variety of geographical areas within the greater Rochester area.

SECTION 2- FUNCTION: Regional Representatives will serve as members of the Executive Board for a period of two (2) years, beginning July 1 of the year of appointment, or upon Executive Board approval in the case of a mid-term appointment, and serve as official liaisons between their respective region and the Council.

ARTICLE VII- EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

SECTION 1- COMPOSITION: The Executive Committee shall be composed of the president, who will serve as chairperson, the president-elect, and the vice president.

SECTION 2- FUNCTION: The Executive Committee shall:

- Serve as members of the Executive Board and be subject to all applicable provisions as noted in Article V.
- Authorize all council expenditures
- Consult the NYS IRA Coordinator and/or IRA headquarters, if at least two (2) of its three (3) members deem it necessary, to address an unusual and/or serious matter, and to act upon any advice or direction provided.

SECTION 3- MEETINGS: The Executive Committee shall meet only as necessary, at the request of any Executive Committee member.

ARTICLE VIII- ASSEMBLY

SECTION 1- COMPOSITION: The Assembly shall consist of all active Council members other than elected officers.

SECTION 2- FUNCTION: The Assembly shall

- receive regular updates and reports from the Executive Board, as noted in Article V.
- serve in an advisory capacity to the Executive Board
- participate in the processes of nominating and electing candidates to serve as Council officers, as noted in Articles IV and IX.
- participate in meetings, as noted below in Section 4.
- participate in a non-binding vote on any item for which a “Sense of the Assembly” is requested by the Executive Board.
- Propose a Bylaws amendment, as noted in Article XIV.
- Vote to adopt any Bylaws amendment, as noted in Article XIV.

SECTION 3- QUORUM: A quorum is required in order for voting to take place. A quorum shall consist of at least 10% of active members. In the event that there is not a quorum, voting will be tabled until the next meeting.

SECTION 4- MEETINGS: The Assembly of the Council shall meet at least four (4) times annually. The agenda shall follow the “Local Council Meeting” format as outlined in the current IRA Leader’s Packet.

SECTION 5- NOTIFICATION OF MEETINGS: The Executive Board shall set the calendar for all meetings of the Assembly, with the President presiding. The membership shall be notified, by mail and/or electronic means, at least two (2) weeks in advance of the date, time, location, and purpose of an Assembly meeting.

ARTICLE IX- NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1- ELECTION: All officers, except the president and past-president, shall be elected annually, by no later than March 31.

SECTION 2- NOMINATING COMMITTEE: The nominating committee shall:

- be chaired by the president-elect and

- composed of at least three (3) additional members appointed by the president, who may not be officers, and approved by the Executive Board.
- prepare a slate of qualified candidates for offices, as noted in Article IV,

SECTION 3- NOMINEE QUALIFICATION: To be qualified candidate, each nominee must be a current member of the International Reading Association and the Council.

SECTION 4- MODE OF NOMINATION AND CANDIDACY: The Nominating Committee shall solicit the names of qualified nominees from the membership at an Assembly meeting and/or by other means prior to February 15. Members may nominate themselves or other members. The Nominating Committee shall secure consent from each nominee in order for the nominee's name to appear on the ballot. A nominee who meets qualifications as stated above in Section 3 shall be considered a candidate for the office sought.

SECTION 5- MODE OF ELECTION: The Nominating Committee shall present the slate of candidates to the Assembly at a meeting to be held between February 16 and March 31. If there is more than one candidate for an office, the Assembly shall vote by secret paper ballot, and simple majority of votes cast shall determine the winner. Ballots shall be counted by the Nominating Committee, and the results reported to the Assembly by the president-elect. If there is a single candidate for an office, the secretary shall cast a unanimous vote, therein electing the candidate to the office. The current president shall be responsible for reporting the newly elected officers to IRA and NYSRA before April 15 using the official forms provided.

SECTION 6- TERM OF OFFICE: Each elected officer shall assume the duties of office on July 1 following the spring election and shall continue until June 30 of the following year.

SECTION 7- VACANCY OF OFFICE: In the event of a vacancy in any office, an interim appointment shall be made by the Executive Board.

SECTION 8- RE-ASSIGNMENT OF DUTIES: In the event that an officer cannot perform an assigned duty, it shall be re-assigned by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE X- COMMITTEES

SECTION 1- STANDING COMMITTEES: There shall be such standing committees as specified in this Article, Sections 6-15. There should be a carry-over of at least two (2) members on each standing committee from year to year.

SECTION 2- NUMBER OF STANDING COMMITTEES: The number of standing committees may be increased or decreased upon the recommendation of the Executive Board and with notification to the general membership.

SECTION 3- NUMBER OF MEMBERS ON STANDING COMMITTEES: The number of members on standing committee should be no fewer than three (3), unless otherwise determined by the Executive Board.

SECTION 4- CHAIRPERSONS OF STANDING COMMITTEES: The chairpersons of each standing committee shall be appointed yearly, by the president, with the approval of the Executive Board except as otherwise specified in these by-laws. These chairpersons shall serve as members of the Executive Board.

SECTION 5- MODE OF APPOINTMENT AND TERMS OF STANDING COMMITTEES: Appointment of members of standing committees shall receive approval from the Executive Board and shall serve for the term of the president unless otherwise specified in the charge to the committee.

SECTION 6- PUBLICITY COMMITTEE: The Publicity Committee shall:

- provide assistance in publicizing all Council meetings, programs, and activities
- maintain close contact with persons representing various interests in reading including public and nonpublic school administrators and teachers, college administrators and teachers, parents, the public librarians and other interested parties
- be responsible for maintaining a network of liaisons throughout the Council and the community for the purpose of disseminating information
- present a status report at all Executive Board and Assembly meetings

SECTION 7- PROGRAM COMMITTEE: The Program Committee shall be comprised of the president-elect and the vice-president as co-chairpersons and a minimum of two (2) additional members at-large appointed by the co-chairpersons. The Program Committee shall:

- develop program and budget proposals for future programming and present these to the Executive Board for approval by January 15th
- develop, organize and implement plans for approved programs
- present a status report at every Executive Board meeting.

SECTION 8- NOMINATING COMMITTEE: The Nominating Committee shall function as defined in Article IX of these bylaws.

SECTION 9- FINANCE COMMITTEE: Members of the Finance Committee shall be the president, president-elect, past-president, vice president, and treasurer, who will serve as chairperson. The Finance Committee shall:

- examine the income and expenditures of the Council
- be responsible for preparing the annual budget prior to May 1
- arrange for an annual audit with the results of this audit being presented to the Executive Board prior to June 1
- present a status report at all Executive Board and Assembly meetings

SECTION 10- LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE: The Legislative Committee shall be responsible for informing members of pertinent federal and state action, either proposed or actual. The Committee chair shall act as the liaison with the NYSRA and IRA Advocacy/Legislative contact persons. The Committee will present a status report at all Executive Board and Assembly meetings.

SECTION 11- BYLAWS COMMITTEE: The Bylaws Committee shall continuously study the bylaws of the Council to ensure that the bylaws are meeting the Council's needs and to recommend proposed changes to the Executive Board and the Assembly. At least one member shall be a current Council officer, preferably the past-president, president, or president-elect. The Bylaws Committee will present a status report at Executive Board and Assembly meetings, as directed by the Executive Board.

SECTION 12- AWARDS COMMITTEE: The chairperson of the Awards Committee shall be the past president. The Awards Committee shall:

- be responsible for nominations for awards presented by the Council
- serve as a conduit of information regarding awards available from NYSRA and IRA to the general membership
- present a status report at all Executive Board and Assembly meetings

SECTION 13- AD HOC COMMITTEES: An Ad Hoc committee may be formed and charged to complete a specific task for a specified period of time. During this period an Ad Hoc committee shall present a status report at Executive Board and Assembly meetings, as directed by the Executive Board. Ad Hoc committee chairpersons are not members of the Executive Board.

SECTION 14- NUMBER OF MEMBERS ON AD HOC COMMITTEES: The specific number of members on a committee will be determined by the Executive Board, but shall be no less than three (3).

SECTION 15- MODE OF APPOINTMENT OF, AND DISSOLUTION OF, AD HOC COMMITTEES: Appointment of a chairperson and members to an ad hoc committee shall be made by the president with the approval of the Executive Board. An Ad Hoc committee shall dissolve after the time specified in the initial charge, unless renewed by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE XI- REPRESENTATION AT THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLIES

SECTION 1- REPRESENTATION AT THE ANNUAL IRA ASSEMBLY: Representation of the Council at the IRA Delegates Assembly shall be in accordance with the bylaws of the IRA (Article VI, Section 1), which reads in part as follows:

“Each local council of 10-50 members who have paid current dues to the (International Reading) Association shall be entitled to one delegate and an additional delegate for each 50 additional members who have paid current dues to the Association...One person may represent only one council in the Assembly. A council may send an alternate for each delegate; an alternate may vote only when the delegate is absent.”

The president-elect or designee shall act as the official Council Delegate.

SECTION 2- REPRESENTATION AT NYSRA ASSEMBLIES AND OTHER MEETINGS: Representation of the Council at NYSRA assemblies shall be in accordance with that specified in the NYSRA bylaws, or by action of the RALC Executive Board in the absence of a specific

NYSRA bylaw directive. The past-president or designee shall act as the Official Council Delegate.

ARTICLE XII- PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the proceedings of the Council, except in cases governed by the bylaws and special rules adopted by this Council.

ARTICLE XIII- DISSOLUTION

In case of the dissolution of this Council, any assets remaining after paying or making provision for payment of all the liabilities of the Council will revert to the IRA.

ARTICLE XIV- AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1- ORIGIN: An Amendment to the bylaws shall be proposed by a quorum of the Executive Board, the Bylaws Committee, or a majority of the voting members present at an Assembly meeting, provided that a quorum of members has been declared (refer to Article VIII, Section 3).

SECTION 2- PROCEDURE FOR AMENDING: A proposed amendment may be adopted by an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present at a Council meeting provided that a quorum has been declared (refer to Article VIII, Section 3). A proposed amendment must be presented for discussion and possible modification at an Assembly meeting in which a quorum is declared. Following this meeting, the proposed amendment must be circulated to each member by US or electronic mail. At least thirty (30) days must pass from the date of circulation before the Assembly may vote on the proposed amendment.

SECTION 3- INCORPORATION: Adopted amendments shall be incorporated into these bylaws, and become effective immediately. The Bylaws Chair, at the direction of the Executive Committee, shall send a copy of the complete Bylaws, as amended, to IRA Headquarters and to the NYS IRA Coordinator.