

# Constitution of the Social Studies Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association

---

1. **NAME:**

The name of this organization shall be the Social Studies Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association.

2. **OBJECTS:**

The objects of this council shall be to improve professional practice in the teaching of social studies by providing and facilitating professional learning opportunities.

3. **MEMBERSHIP:**

- A. **Regular Membership**—Active members of the Alberta Teachers' Association and associate members who are ineligible for active membership as specified in ATA bylaws are eligible for regular membership in this council. All such members shall be entitled to full privileges of Council membership including the rights to vote and hold office.
- B. **Life Membership**—Life members of the ATA, as specified in ATA bylaws, are eligible for life membership in the Council and are entitled to all the benefits and services of council membership except the right to vote and hold office.
- C. **Student Membership**—Student members of the ATA may join this council and shall be entitled to all benefits and services of council membership except the right to vote and hold office. There is no fee for student members of the Association to become student members of a specialist council.
- D. **Honorary Membership**—The council will consider honorary memberships for individuals who have made outstanding contributions to social studies. Honorary members of the ATA, as specified in ATA bylaws, shall be entitled to all benefits and services of council membership except the right to vote and hold office.
- E. Membership in specialist councils is not available to those individuals who, under the *Teaching Profession Act* and the Teacher Membership Status Election Regulation, are eligible to make an election of membership and elect associate membership or non-membership in the Alberta Teachers' Association.

4. **SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE:**

Persons who are ineligible for active or associate membership in the ATA, such as school support staff and parents, as well as retired teachers and nonactive teachers, may be connected with the Council by paying a subscription fee. Payment of the subscription fee includes entitlement to the council's publications as well as other services determined by the Council, but does not provide membership in the council.

5. **FEES:**

Membership and subscription fees shall be established by resolution at the annual general meeting of this council provided notice has been given 45 days in advance.

6. **OFFICERS:**

6.1 **Table Officers Committee**

6.1.1 **Membership**

The table officers of the council executive committee shall consist of a president, president-elect, secretary, treasurer, past-president, a PEC liaison member to be appointed by the Provincial Executive Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association, and an ATA Staff officer appointed by the executive secretary of the Alberta Teachers' Association.

6.1.2 **Voting Rights**

All table officers shall have voting rights.

6.1.3 **Term Lengths**

The president shall serve a two-year term. The president-elect shall serve a one-year term, being elected to coincide with the beginning of the president's second year of office. The secretary and treasurer shall serve one-year terms. The PEC liaison and staff advisor, being appointed by PEC and the Executive Secretary of the Alberta Teachers' Association, shall serve in their roles until new appointments by their respective bodies are made.

6.1.4 **Eligibility**

To be eligible to become an officer of the Social Studies Council, a candidate must be a regular member of the council.

6.2 Executive Committee

6.2.1 Membership

The executive committee shall consist of members of the table officers, the regional presidents (or designates), the editor of Focus, the editor of One World, the communications manager, one representative from Alberta Education, one representative from Alberta's universities, the conference director, and the chairs of ad hoc committees.

6.2.2 Voting Rights

Members of the executive committee who have voting rights are: the table officers, the regional presidents (or designates), the editor of Focus, the editor of One World, the communications manager, and the conference director.

7. **SUSPENSION OR REMOVAL FROM OFFICE OF SPECIALIST COUNCIL OFFICERS:**

The following mechanism will be used by the Provincial Association to deal with the suspension or removal from office of a specialist council officer or to assume responsibility of the operation of a specialist council under certain circumstances.

7.1 Provincial Association Intervention—In this section,

- (a) *investigated officer* means an officer of the specialist council whose conduct is under investigation pursuant to subsection 7.2;
- (b) *investigator* is the individual appointed by the table officers pursuant to subsection 7.2;
- (c) *specialist council officer* means the president, vice-president (or president-elect), past president or secretary-treasurer (or secretary or treasurer) of a specialist council or any other officer appointed or elected by a specialist council;
- (d) *Provincial Executive Council* means the executive council as defined in section 11 of the *Teaching Profession Act*;
- (e) *table officers* means the Association's officers as defined in Bylaw 37;
- (f) *executive secretary* means the chief executive officer of the Association or a person designated by the executive secretary; and
- (g) *staff officer* means a member of executive staff designated by the executive secretary.

- 7.2 Where the table officers have or receive information which leads them to believe that a specialist council officer
- (a) has neglected his or her duties to the extent that the proper operation of the specialist council is being negatively affected,
  - (b) is mentally incapacitated,
  - (c) is engaging in corrupt practices,
  - (d) is engaging in financial malpractice or
  - (e) has undertaken activities inconsistent with the principles and policies of the Alberta Teachers' Association,

the table officers may initiate an investigation into the conduct of a specialist council officer by appointing an individual to conduct an investigation and to provide a written report to the table officers within a specified time with respect to the results of the investigation.

- 7.3 In the course of the intervention under subsection 7.1, an investigated officer is entitled to have access to a staff officer for advice.
- 7.4 The table officers may, taking into account the nature of the alleged conduct and the urgency of the matter in question and any submission from the investigated officer, suspend an investigated officer from office pending the completion of the investigation and may terminate the suspension at any time if the table officers conclude that the suspension is no longer warranted.
- 7.5 The table officers may appoint another individual to assume the duties of the investigated officer during the period of the suspension.
- 7.6 The investigated officer may appeal a suspension from office under subsection 7.4 to the Provincial Executive Council by filing a notice of appeal with the executive secretary within 30 days of being notified of the suspension.
- 7.7 If an investigated officer appeals his or her suspension, Provincial Executive Council shall, as soon as practicable, consider representations of the table officers and the investigated officer and shall determine if the suspension should be continued pending the conclusion of the investigation or should be set aside.
- 7.8 During the investigation the investigated officer shall be provided with an opportunity to provide a response to the investigator with respect to the concerns about the investigated officer's conduct.
- 7.9 An investigated officer may, in the course of the investigation, submit his or her resignation to the executive secretary.

- 7.10 Where an investigated officer resigns in accordance with subsection 7.9, the investigation shall be continued with the cooperation of the investigated local officer and the resignation does not extinguish any liability that the investigated local officer may have with respect to acts which occurred during the period the office was held.
- 7.11 The investigated officer has a duty to cooperate during the investigation and the investigator may direct the investigated officer or any other member of the Alberta Teachers' Association to
- (a) answer any inquiries the investigator may have relating to the investigation;
  - (b) produce any records or other property in the investigated officer's possession or under his or her control that are or may be related in any way to the investigation;
  - (c) give up possession of any record for the purpose of allowing the investigator to make a copy and return the records within a reasonable time of receiving the records; and
  - (d) attend before the investigator for the purpose of complying with (a), (b) or (c) of this subsection.
- 7.12 In the event that the investigated officer fails or refuses to cooperate with the investigator, the failure to do so shall be noted by the investigator in his or her report to the table officers.
- 7.13 Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator shall submit a written report to the table officers and a copy of the written report shall be provided to the investigated officer.
- 7.14 The table officers, upon consideration of the report of the investigator, may make one or more of the following orders:
- (a) remove the investigated officer from office;
  - (b) restrict the investigated officer's eligibility for office in the future;
  - (c) if the investigated officer was suspended during the investigation, reinstate the investigated officer to office and impose any conditions or restrictions that the table officers consider appropriate in the circumstances; and shall advise the investigated local officer and Provincial Executive Council of their decision.

- 7.15 If the table officers remove the investigated officer from office, then the table officers may appoint another individual to assume the duties of the investigated officer until a new officer is elected or appointed to the position in accordance with this constitution.
- 7.16 The investigated officer may appeal the decision of the table officers under subsection 7.14 by filing a notice of appeal with the executive secretary within 30 days after being notified of the decision.
- 7.17 If an investigated officer appeals the decision of the table officers, Provincial Executive Council shall, as soon as practicable, consider representations of the table officers and the investigated officer and shall determine if the decision of the table officers shall be confirmed, varied or set aside.
- 7.18 In an appeal under subsection 7.7 or 7.17, the table officers may make submissions to Provincial Executive Council respecting the outcome of the appeal.
- 7.19 Official Trustee—Subject to a two-thirds majority vote, Provincial Executive Council may appoint an official trustee to conduct the affairs of the specialist council, subject to any terms and conditions the Provincial Executive Council considers necessary:
- (a) when the specialist council fails to comply with the requirements of section 6;
  - (b) when the specialist council fails to comply with the requirements of section 12;
  - (c) when the Provincial Executive Council considers it in the interests of the Association to do so.
- 7.20 The specialist council may appeal the appointment of an official trustee to a representative assembly.
- 7.21 An official trustee appointed under subsection 7.19 has the powers and duties conferred by the General Bylaws on a specialist council and conferred by this constitution.
- 7.22 On appointment of an official trustee to the specialist council, the officers of the specialist council cease to hold office as officers of the specialist council.
- 7.23 An official trustee continues in office until the Provincial Executive Council or a representative assembly determines that the official trusteeship is no longer necessary.

8. **MATERNITY, PARENTAL AND ADOPTION LEAVE:**

- 8.1 Executive and committee members who request a leave of absence for maternity, parental and/or adoption leave shall be granted this leave by the executive for up to one year or the end of their term, whichever occurs first.
- 8.2 The executive may opt to fill the role in an acting capacity in accordance with the established procedures for that role.
- 8.3 Any benefit, access or privilege associated with the position is suspended during the period of leave and shall be reinstated once the member resumes their position, except for contractual obligations with respect to a seconded position.
- 8.4 This leave is not contingent on any decisions made with respect to a leave of absence from employment.

9. **COMMITTEES:**

This council shall maintain standing committees as outlined in council guidelines. The executive committee or the council board may appoint such additional committees as are necessary to carry on the work of the council.

10. **ADVOCACY:**

Any representation, action or communication this council wishes to make to any organization, government department, or other agency shall be conducted through the Provincial Executive Council or other regular channels of The Alberta Teachers' Association.

11. **REGIONAL COUNCIL:**

The executive committee of this council shall encourage and shall have authority to grant recognition to regional councils, to establish the boundary of regions, and to establish regulations governing the organization of regional councils not inconsistent with this constitution or guidelines of The Alberta Teachers' Association.

12. **REPORTING ACTIVITIES:**

This council shall submit annually, not later than August 31, an audited financial statement, a statement of assets and liabilities, an annual report of program and activities and a copy of the current constitution to The Alberta Teachers' Association.

13. **MEETINGS:**

Council Board—The council board shall be the executive and administrative body of this council. It shall meet at least two times per year and shall conduct the affairs of the council between annual general meetings.

Executive Committee—The executive committee shall meet separately from the council board at least two times each year in order to deal with the affairs of the council.

Annual General Meeting—This council shall hold an annual general meeting for which a 45 day notice will be provided and the agenda of which shall provide for the topics listed below:

- 13.1 Adoption of minutes from the preceding annual general meeting and any special general meetings held in the interim.
- 13.2 Annual reports from the president and the treasurer.
- 13.3 Reports of committees.
- 13.4 A financial statement for the preceding fiscal year.
- 13.5 A budget.
- 13.6 Revisions to the fees for membership.
- 13.7 Amendments of this constitution for which the required notice of motion has been served.
- 13.8 Election of officers.
- 13.9 Other business.

14. **QUORUM:**

(a) Annual General Meeting: The quorum for the annual general meeting shall be the members in attendance. (b) All Other Meetings: Quorum shall consist of a majority of voting members of executive or committee.

15. **REPLACEMENT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

- (a) Any member of the executive who misses two meetings, without permission of the executive, during their term of office shall be deemed to have abandoned their position. The member may appeal in person to the executive committee to seek reinstatement should extenuating circumstances exist. If the member is not reinstated, the position may be filled by a member appointed by executive to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.
- (b) Any member of the executive of the council or regional who has been deemed to be delinquent in fulfilling his/her responsibilities by a two-thirds vote of the executive conducted by secret ballot shall be removed from the executive committee.

The position may be filled by a member appointed by executive to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.

16. **AMENDMENTS:**

After a 45 day notice of motion to amend the constitution has been provided, this constitution may be amended by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present at the annual general meeting of the council, subject to ratification by the Provincial Executive Council of The Alberta Teachers' Association.

17. **NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:**

After the same notice of motion that is required for amendments to this constitution, the Social Studies Council, by majority vote of those present at the annual general meeting may, subject to approval by Provincial Executive Council, join or affiliate with national or international organizations representing the same special interests or cancel its membership or affiliation with national or international organizations.

Constitution of the Social Studies Council, p 10

PEC approval: 1986 11 24

TOC approval: 2001 01 05

Revised 1997 11 27, 2001 01 11

Amended by Provincial Executive Council 2005 04 07 (legislated membership changes)

Amended by Provincial Executive Council 2006 06 15–16 (membership changes)

Amended by Provincial Executive Council 2007 09 20–21 (suspension or removal of officers)

Amended by Provincial Executive Council 2007 10 25–26 (PEC liaison voting changing)

Amended by Provincial Executive Council 2011 06 16–17

Amended by ATA Table Officers Committee, 2014 09 09

Amended by ATA Table Officers, 2015 05 25 (student membership fee change)

Amended at SSC AGM 2016 10 15

Approved by ATA Table Officers 2016 11 28

Amended by Provincial Executive Council 2017 04 07 (maternity, parental and adoption leave)

Amended at SSC AGM 2018 10 12

Approved by ATA Table Officers 2018 11 15

clo, 2018 11 02

R:\PD Data\CONSTITUTIONS\Specialist Councils\Current\SSC Constitution 2018 11.doc