

Birmingham Education Association

ELECTION COMMITTEE

General Practices

**(Note: Association by-laws require compliance with
MEA Region Election Guidelines as listed below)**

Elections Committee Responsibilities

Neutrality

- As a matter of ethics, Committee members should refrain from endorsing candidates or contributing to their campaign.
- Committee members can accept campaign literature from candidates, but should be careful not to display it.
- Committee members can attend candidate functions, if they also attend functions of other candidates for the same office.

Responsibilities of the Chair

- Verify, Total and Report Votes
- Oversee elections of the Assembly
- Report Results of elections to the assembly. A written copy is filed with the office of the Executive Director (Steven Amberg)

Volunteers

Any volunteer involved in the counting of ballots will be required to remain with the Committee or a Committee member until the results are announced to the Assembly. The purpose of this requirement is to avoid any appearance that vote results are prematurely known to persons other than those in attendance during the counting process.

Observers

Each candidate is entitled to name an observer. Observers are permitted in the counting areas. They may not touch anything or interfere in any way with the election.

Preparation of Election Ballots

Rotation of Names

The appearance of candidate names on ballots is rotated. If there are two candidates, half of the ballots will list Candidate A first and half will list Candidate B first. If there are three or six candidates, there will be three rotations with each candidate appearing at the top on one third of the ballots. If there are four, five, seven or more candidates, they will appear on two rotations. The rotation to be used is listed with information on preparation and printing of ballots.

Content of the Ballot

The word “Ballot” appears at the top of each ballot. Under this, the name of the office appears. Instructions for completion of the ballot follow this heading information. Generally this is simply an instruction to “Please vote for two” or “Please vote for one” Candidates’ names appear following the instructions with a voting box to the left of each candidate.

Counting Ballots

- The Elections Committee Chair does not usually participate in counting ballots in order to supervise and be available to deal with questions or problems.
- Elections are by simple majority of the membership.
- Teams of at least two people count ballots.
- One person checks the Signature Envelope against the staff roster.
- Ballots with signatures that are not on the building roster are to be set aside to be verified against another building roster at the end of the count. (This may occur if a BEA member services more than one building and is not teaching at their assigned building on Election Day.)

Spoiled Ballots

Ballots are spoiled when:

- They are left blank
- More votes are cast than permitted on that ballot.
- The mark can’t be clearly determined.
- If a non-BEA member’s name is entered as a “write-in”.

The Elections Committee Chair is responsible for designating ballots as “spoiled”.

Storage

After ballots are counted and totals agreed upon by the Committee, the total count is entered on a sample ballot.

The ballots, and record of the total count are rubber-banded together with the tally sheets used.

The Committee Chair stores the ballots in one green voting bucket which is clearly marked: BEA Annual Elections April 23,2008. Ballots to be kept until April 23, 2009.

Report to the Assembly

The Committee Chair reports results of the election to the Assembly. These are reported for each office. Each name is read followed by the number of votes cast for that candidate. After reading all names and votes for an office, the Chair says, “You have elected_____”

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Building BEA Representative OR Elected Alternate Responsibilities on Election Day

Election Area

The election area needs to be defined and made known to all BEA members. (The Green ballot bucket is to be prominently displayed in either the Staff Lounge or the Main Office of each school building.) NO campaign materials may be displayed in this area on Election Day.

Prepare the Ballot Box (Green Bucket)

1. Remove contents from the bucket before sealing it with the enclosed straps – once sealed the Bucket can only be opened by the Elections Chair, at the BEA office on election day. The contents are:
 - Signature Envelopes
 - Secret Ballot Envelops
 - Ballots (contested elections will have rotating candidate listing – see below)
 - Election Instructions are taped to the outside of the green bucket.

Timing of Election

- At 4:00 p.m. polls are closed and the Building Representative removes materials.
- Building Representative delivers the Bucket to the Elections Chair, at the BEA office by 4:30 p.m. – preceding the scheduled Representative Assembly. Ballots delivered after the end of the Representative Assembly meeting will not be counted.
- Unless the Building Representative is an elections committee volunteer they are to exit the counting area.