

Policy Category

ELECTION RULES

Policy Title

**COUNTING PROCEDURES FOR
GENERAL AND RUN-OFF ELECTIONS**

I. Ballot Receipt Procedure

1. As envelopes containing ballots arrive at the Headquarters office, they are date stamped and initialed. If an envelope arrives unsealed, it is sealed and noted as such in addition to being date stamped and initialed. A daily tally of envelopes by UniServ Unit is maintained.
2. Envelopes containing ballots are sorted by UniServ Unit and stored in the office safe until counting begins.

II. Counting Procedure

Prior to the convening of the Elections Committee, SDEA/NEA staff run ballots through the Scantron machine. The following procedure is followed:

1. The SDEA/NEA President, or designee, will be present to oversee the counting of ballots.
2. Any envelopes received with a postmark later than the prescribed date as established in SDEA/NEA Bylaw Article XI, Section 2, are set aside, without opening, to await decisions by the Committee.
3. Envelopes are opened and the number of ballots is verified. If an envelope contains more than one ballot, that is noted on the envelope.
4. Each individual ballot is checked for irregularities such as too many votes, not marked in pencil, erasures, or other irregularities that would not allow for proper scanning. These irregularities are noted and the ballots set aside for the Committee to decide whether the discrepancy warrants rejection.
5. Ballots are scanned by UniServ Unit and totals are recorded for each race and for the number of ballots run. The results are prepared for the Committee.
6. At this time ballots are still sorted by UniServ Unit and returned to the vault until the Committee arrives for their meeting.
7. Envelopes are retained until the SDEA/NEA Board of Directors certifies the election. Election results and ballots are retained for 1 year.

III. Duties of the Elections Committee

1. The Committee reviews all irregular ballots that have been set aside to determine if they will be counted. If the intent of the voter is clear, those ballots shall be counted by the Committee.
2. The Committee recognizes that the ballot is in three sections and the rejection of one section does not necessarily mean the rejection of the ballot as a whole. Those sections are as follows:
 - a. State Officers,
 - b. UniServ Unit Board of Directors and delegates to the NEA RA
 - c. At Large delegates to the NEA RA.Therefore, a ballot could be considered spoiled in one section but counted in the other two sections.
3. Envelopes containing ballots that were received after the deadline will not be opened and counted unless the Committee determines that there are extenuating circumstances.
4. Write-in votes invalidate that specific section of the ballot. Any other written comments on the ballot invalidate the ballot as a whole.
5. The counting of ballots will be done in a common area supervised by the Committee Chair.
6. The Committee hand counts the set-aside ballots that were determined to be valid. A system of checks and balance will be used when doing any counting. A common practice is for members to work in pairs for hand counting. In addition, a member does not count any ballots from the unit he/she represents.
7. Once the hand counting is complete, the Committee receives the results of the scanned ballots and compiles all tallies for a final count.
8. The Committee ranks candidates by number of votes received and designates alternates for the NEA-RA delegates.
9. The Committee Chair prepares a final election report that is forwarded to the SDEA/NEA Board of Directors for certification.

IV. Recounts

1. In accordance with SDEA/NEA Bylaw Article IX, Section 6, if a recount is requested, the Committee will determine the best procedure to complete the recount.

V. Notification

1. The SDEA/NEA President, or designee, will notify candidates of the outcome of the election after the meeting of the Committee. Candidates will be asked to supply an email address to use for notification.

Sandy Arseneault
President of the Board

Adopted October 1, 2011