

Vermont Educational Opportunity Programs
Constitution and Bylaws

Updated April 9, 2014

Article I. Name

Section 1

The name of the organization shall be Vermont Educational Opportunity Programs, hereafter referred to as the Association.

Article II. Purpose

Section 1

The purpose of the Association shall be to bring together those persons who are involved in programs that provide students access and success in education at all levels, with the ultimate goal being the completion of a program of postsecondary education. The Association shall be particularly concerned with those students who, because of socioeconomic status, ethnic background, physical challenges and other obstacles to achieving their academic potential, find themselves in a position of disadvantage with respect to traditional students.

Section 2

The Association will focus on the following:

- Improving communications within the state, the region and the country among persons working in educational opportunity programs;
- Providing active linkage in the regional and national network of educational opportunity associations (New England Educational Opportunity Association [NEOA] and Council For Opportunity in Education [COE]);
- Promoting coordination of activities and sharing of successful practices among educational opportunity programs within the state;
- Responding efficiently and meaningfully to issues effecting the educational resources and environment of students involved in educational opportunity programs;
- Increasing the awareness of legislators, agencies, community groups, faculty and administrators about the educational and financial needs of low-income, minority, educationally disadvantaged and disabled students;
- Providing scholarship support for students demonstrating academic excellence;
- Promoting research, conference, and activities that may be necessary and sufficient to accomplish the purposes of the Association; and
- Providing leadership opportunities for TRIO, Gear Up and Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) professionals on a state and regional level.

Article III. Membership

Section 1

The membership shall consist of individuals interested in the purpose of the Association:

- a. Regular membership is available to those professionals employed by a TRIO, Gear

Up, or other EOP program in the state of Vermont who are committed to the purpose of the Association. Each regular member is entitled to one vote and is eligible to hold office.

- b. Student membership is available to persons who are currently in programs of secondary or postsecondary education and who are committed to the purposes of the Association. Student members are entitled to vote but are not eligible to hold office.
- c. Affiliate membership (i.e. alumni, retirees, other stakeholders) is available to those interested and committed to the purposes of the Association. Affiliate members are entitled to vote, but are not eligible to hold office.

Section 2

A member shall be dropped from membership for nonpayment of dues or other just cause as determined by the Executive Committee.

Article IV. Affirmative Action

Section 1

The Executive Committee will act in all matters according to the most current affirmative action policy adopted by the Association.

Article V. Dues

Section 1

Annual Association dues shall be established by the Executive Committee. Dues entitle members to all services and functions of the Association except the annual conference.

Article VI. Officers

Section 1

The officers of the Association shall be President, Past President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, State Liaison to NEOA, and Director Liaison (from the North Country TRIO Directors (NCTD) group).

Section 2

The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers of the Association and the Chairperson of each standing committee. All Executive Committee members shall be regular members of the Association.

Article VII. Duties of Officers

Section 1

The President shall be chief executive officer of the Association, preside at all general meetings of the Association, chair the Executive Committee, approve all designated chairs of committees subject to the confirmation of the Executive Committee, hold ex-officio membership on all committees, and serve on the NEOA Board of Directors. He or

she shall designate or chair the Advocacy, Communications and Public Affairs Committee. The President shall perform the duties customary to that office and such additional duties as directed by the Executive Committee.

Section 2

In the absence of the President, the President Elect shall act in the place of the President at all Association and committee meetings. He or she shall be the chairperson of the Association's annual conference committee and shall maintain all conference records, transferring those records to the incoming President-Elect.

Section 3

The Past-President shall serve as an advisor to the Executive Committee ensuring continuity with the Executive Board from one year to the next. The Past-President will also promote VEOP through encouraging staff members to participate and attend TRIO state and regional conferences and to seek leadership positions in VEOP.

Section 4

The Secretary shall perform the duties customary to the office and such additional duties as may be directed by the Executive Committee. The secretary shall attend and take minutes at each meeting and distribute to the Executive Committee in a timely fashion. The secretary shall give a report at each Executive Committee meeting and will amend minutes as needed. He or she shall be or shall designate the Chairperson of the Scholarship and Awards Committee.

Section 5

The Treasurer shall represent the Association in assuring that the receipts and expenditures of funds are in accordance with the directive of the Association as defined by the Executive Committee. Specific duties include submitting an annual budget to the Executive Committee for approval and submitted full financial reports prior to or at the annual meeting, at each Executive Committee meeting and at the state conference. He or she shall be or shall designate the Chairperson of the Membership Committee.

Section 6

The State Liaison represents the Association on the NEOA Board of Directors. The State Liaison will be responsible for coordinating TRIO, Gear Up or EOP activities in the state including but not limited to:

- a. Creating crisis mobilization strategies at the state and regional levels;
- b. Developing state-level strategic plans and organizational structures to foster state and community support for TRIO, Gear Up or EOP;
- c. Recruiting and promoting TRIO, Gear Up or EOP leadership from/at the state level;
- d. Disseminating information about NEOA and VEOP to membership within the state; and
- e. Coordinating fundraising efforts (e.g. Fair Share).

The State Liaison is expected to attend and present a state report at meetings of the NEOA Board.

Section 7

The Director Liaison shall ensure that information is shared between NCTD and the Executive Committee. The Director Liaison shall coordinate the Vermont TRIO Day at the State Legislature.

Article VIII. Elections

Section 1

The Association Past- President or designee shall serve as the Chair of the Nominations and Election Committee consisting of three regular members. The Nominations and Election Committee shall invite the membership to submit nominations to be presented at the Annual Meeting. The Nominations and Election Committee shall invite nominations from the floor at the Annual Meeting.

The Nominations and Election Committee shall conduct the election (with secret ballots) and tabulate the results at the Annual Meeting; a majority vote shall determine the results.

Article IX. Meetings

Section 1

- a. One annual meeting of the membership shall be held at the annual NEOA regional conference. During the NEOA state caucus, the membership will conduct the business of the Association and elect officers. .
- b. The members present at an official business meeting of the Association shall constitute a quorum.

Section 2

- a. In addition to the state caucus, the officers of the Association will conduct a minimum of five additional meetings. Notice of all meetings of the Association shall be sent to each member at least fifteen days prior to the meeting.
- b. A majority of members of the Executive Committee present at an official business meeting shall constitute a quorum.
- c. The Executive Committee shall have the authority to carry on all business of the Association between meetings of the membership.

Article X. Committees

Section 1

There shall be four standing committees: the Conference Committee; the Advocacy, Communications and Public Affairs Committee; the Membership Committee; and the Awards and Scholarships Committee.

Section 2

The President-Elect will chair the Conference Committee. The Committee will consist of

those members interested in working on the annual conference but will generally include representation from the TRIO Gear Up or EOP programs (Student Support Services, Gear Up, Talent Search, EOC, Upward Bound, EOP programs).

Section 3

The President or designee will chair the Advocacy, Communications and Public Affairs Committee. This Committee will be responsible for publicity, press releases, governmental relations and other advocacy efforts within the state and the region.

Section 4

The Treasurer or designee will chair the Membership Committee. The Committee will promote Association membership and coordinate membership records and the receipt of dues.

Section 5

The Secretary or designee will chair the Awards and Scholarships Committee. This committee will coordinate the solicitation and selection of nominees and recipients for awards and scholarships.

Section 6

Any other committees will be ad hoc and appointed by the President with the approval of the Executive Committee.

Article XI. Finances

Section 1

No part of the net earnings of the Association shall benefit any officer of the Association or any private individual. Nor shall either be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the assets upon dissolution of the Association.

Section 2

Reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the Association affecting one or more of its purposes.

Section 3

Upon dissolution of the Association, its assets shall be devoted exclusively to educational endeavors as may be selected by the majority vote of the sustaining Association membership consistent with the purpose of the Association.

Article XII. Affiliation

Section 1

The Association may affiliate with other organizations committed to similar purposes. The regular membership must approve such arrangements by a simple majority of those attending the Annual Meeting, when the Executive Committee has recommended affiliation, and when all members have received a fifteen-day notice of the motion to

affiliate.

Section 2

Affiliation under this article involves only a friendly, mutually helpful relationship and implies no loss of independence by the Association or the affiliate.

Article XIII. Amending Procedures

Section 1

A proposal for amendment, supported with the signatures of three regular members, shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee.

Section 2

The Secretary shall send notices of proposed amendments to each member of the Association not less than fifteen and not more than thirty days before the next annual meeting. Two-thirds of the membership present at the annual meeting must approve the proposed amendment(s) to effect its adoption.

Section 3

A similar procedure may be implemented if deemed necessary by the Executive Committee. Members must be notified at least fifteen days, but not more than thirty days, before the final count of the proposed amendment and of the procedure to vote. Two-thirds of the members must approve the proposed amendment with a quorum of the total membership voting to effect its adoption.