

Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators Constitution and By-Laws

PREAMBLE

The Ontario Alliance of Black¹ School Educators affirms the inherent worth, dignity and educability of African Canadian people. The Alliance challenges forces that obstruct the achievement, development, and educational opportunities of youth and adults. African Canadian students throughout Ontario encounter problems that are directly related to their ethnic/cultural status. Based on the socio-economic disparity in which the gap between rich and poor is growing, those who already face structural racism and other forms of discrimination are particularly affected.

African Canadian educators and others directly or indirectly involved in the educational process must develop the necessary structures through which they can meet, share ideas and focus sharply on the unique problems which they and their students face.

The Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators will analyze and apply shared knowledge to the eradication of problems which stand as obstructions to quality education for all students and particularly African Canadian students.

MISSION

It is the mission of the Alliance to enhance and facilitate the education, health, safety and welfare of African Canadians. We aim to combat structural racism in all forms with respect to Black people.

ARTICLE I

Name of Organization

The name of the organization shall be The Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators (ONABSE).

¹ Black and African Canadian will be used interchangeably in this document.

ARTICLE II

Purpose and Functions of the Organization

The purpose of the alliance is to promote and facilitate the education of all students, African Canadian students in particular; to establish a coalition of African Canadian educators and others directly or indirectly involved in the educational process; to create a forum for the exchange of ideas and strategies to improve educational opportunities for African Canadians; to identify and develop African Canadian professionals who will assume leadership positions in education and to influence public policy concerning the education of African Canadian people.

The functions of the Alliance shall be:

- a. To work to eliminate and to rectify the effects of racism, harassment and sexism in education.
- b. To significantly raise the academic achievement level of all students and to place particular emphasis on that type of learning which builds positive and realistic self-concepts among African Canadian students.
- c. To establish and promote the degree of awareness, professional expertise and commitment among African Canadian educators necessary to enhance and contribute to the efforts of other educators and community persons.
- d. To provide financial and human resources for recruiting African Canadian school personnel, certificated and support personnel;
- e. To support training for all personnel to impact the education and socialization of African Canadian students.
- f. To meet and share ideas, proven programs and effective techniques for demonstrating that African Canadian students can learn.
- g. To research and promulgate positions on key educational issues which affect all children and students of African descent as it relates to public policies.
- h. Address the growing economic gap as experienced by the African Canadian Community.

ARTICLE III

Organization

Section I

Membership

Any person who serves in an administrative, teaching, supportive, supervisory, policy position, or who is associated with any phase of educational work shall be eligible for active membership. Parents and students may be members.

- a. Each member shall participate in the commission of his/her choice. Members are encouraged to select the commission which parallels their job functions. Selection of a commission shall be made upon establishing or renewing membership.
- b. A member is “good standing” when the payment of current dues has been confirmed.

The categories of membership shall include:

1. Individual
2. Student
3. Retiree
4. Life
5. Subscribing Life
6. Institutional
7. Corporate

SECTION II Commissions

The Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators shall be composed of a number of commissions, each of which shall be organized for the purpose of affording meaningful dialogue and participation of members in order to enhance the attainment of the goals of the organization.

Each commission will prepare and present, every two years, statements of beliefs, goals and plans of action that are consistent with the philosophy of the Alliance. Members of the organization will elect commission chairpersons during the main election. Each commission shall elect, by majority vote, a vice-chairperson, secretary, and other commission officers or representatives, as prescribed by the By-Laws. Such officers will serve terms that are concurrent with the terms of officers of the Alliance. The commissions shall select representatives or other officers as deemed necessary. If no one has been nominated or elected as commission chairperson or if an existing commission chair has been removed or resigned and no replacement has been found or elected, then the commission will be considered dormant.

The commissions are:

- a. **Higher Education Commission:** The function of this commission is to cover all aspects directly related to policies, programs and services of higher education. This may include review and assessment of delivery systems, teacher preparation, policies in education and administration.
- b. **Administration Commission:** The function of this commission shall directly relate to the administration of school districts and the operation and management of local schools.
- c. **Governance in Education:** The function of this commission shall be directly related to examining existing federal or provincial statutes and regulations or prevailing policies of local governing boards of school districts or institutions of higher education. Ensure that the most advantageous policies regarding the welfare of Black students and staff are in effect. Where analyses of existing statutes, regulations and/or policies suggest that modifications are

required, it shall be the responsibility of this commission to develop proposed new policy, regulation or legislation.

- d. **Program Development and Research and Evaluation:** The function of this commission shall be related to the review and assessment of the delivery system, expectations and results achieved of programs impacting black students, flowing from federal, provincial and local levels and to further provide qualifying data for applications to federal, provincial and local funding sources. Policies and administration of categorically funded programs are also examined.
- e. **Director's Commission:** This commission shall be composed of Directors and former Directors who will serve as visionary leaders to ONABSE and provide critical visionary and transformational leadership on African Canadian education. Their primary function is to share and extend that vision to the ONABSE membership. The Directors are encouraged to attend the Annual Directors Academy held in July.
- f. **Instruction and Instructional Support Commission:** The function of this commission shall be directly related to instructional strategies and programs and those supportive services delivered in a classroom setting.
- g. **Retired Education Commission:** This commission shall be composed of members who are no longer in the active work force. The function of this commission shall be directly related to the retention and continuing involvement of retirees in ONABSE, and the development of programs for enhancing the quality of life for ONABSE members.
- h. **Parents' Commission.** This commission shall be composed of members who are parents or court-recognized advocates and not active educators currently in the work force. The function of this commission shall be directly related to the motivation and collaboration of parents who support the ONABSE mission.
- i. **Student Commission:** Recruit students to become members of ONABSE with a focus on leadership development for aspiring future leaders.
- j. **Mental Health and Well-Being Commission:** The aim of this commission is to align with current education practices and initiatives to support our students, parents and community members in both areas – mental health and well being.

SECTION IV
The Executive Board

Executive Board shall be composed of the general officers of the Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators, presidents of the local/regional affiliates and the chairperson of each established commission. The president of the organization shall chair the meetings of the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall serve as the representative of the membership, and shall be empowered to make decisions regarding policies established by the Alliance when the membership is not in session.

- a. The Executive Board shall meet at least four times per year. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the president or by at least four members of the Board.
- b. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the members of the Board.
- c. Each member of the Executive Board shall have one vote and any official action shall require a majority vote.
- d. Excluding the office of president, when any general officer is unable to complete the term of office, the Board shall appoint a person to complete the unexpired term. In the case of Commissions, the chairperson-elect shall be designated to fill the unexpired term.
- e. An Executive Committee of the Executive Board may be established as deemed necessary. Such a committee shall be composed of the President, Secretary, Treasurer and two members of the Executive Board elected by the Board. This committee may act on issues assigned by the Board in the interim between Board meetings.
- f. The Executive Board shall determine the time and place of the annual general meeting of the Alliance and local forums and workshops throughout the year. The Executive Board shall meet at least once to conduct the official business of the Alliance. No other meeting shall be scheduled which conflict with this meeting.
- g. The Executive Board shall prepare an annual report for the membership. The annual report shall include the status of the Affiliate.

SECTION V
Affiliates

In order to implement its goals and objectives, the Alliance encourages and supports the establishment of other local affiliates in Ontario. The constitution of the local and provincial affiliates shall conform to the purpose and functions of the ONABSE Constitution and By-Laws. Each affiliate must be financial with ONABSE.

ARTICLE IV
Officers

SECTION I
Designation

The general officers of the Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators shall be the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. All officers shall be elected from among the Alliance membership. No two general officers shall be held by the same person.

SECTION II
Term of Office

A term of office shall be three years or until a successor is elected and installed.

SECTION III
Removal

Any person holding an elected or appointed office of the Alliance may be removed for good cause by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board whenever in its judgment, the best interests of the organization shall be served.

SECTION IV
Vacancies

If there is a vacancy for any reason in any office which is not Governed by provisions in these By-Laws for succession to office, the Executive Board shall select from the membership an officer pro tempore to perform the duties of the vacated office until the office is filled by a special election of the Membership at the next Annual General Meeting of the Alliance. In the event that a vacancy does not occur in the office of Vice-President, it will be filled at the next annual meeting or can be an appointment by the president.

**SECTION V
President**

The president shall have all powers and duties appropriate to the office of President. The President shall preside at all meetings. The President shall appoint the chairpersons of all standing and ad hoc committees, shall establish ad hoc committees, and shall establish other committees as needed. The President shall designate a Parliamentarian to preside at all business meetings and Historian. The president will vote only in case of a tie.

**SECTION VI
Vice-President**

There shall be a Vice-President whose Commission membership and local/regional affiliate must be different from that of the President. In the absence or disability of the President, the Vice-President shall perform the duties and exercise the powers of the President. The Vice-President shall also perform such other duties as shall be prescribed by the President.

**SECTION VII
Secretary**

The secretary shall keep minutes of the Executive Committee, the Executive, the Executive Board and membership meetings and shall perform other appropriate duties and functions as assigned by the President.

**SECTION VIII
Treasurer**

The treasurer shall be the Chairperson of the Budget Committee which shall study all official audit reports and make recommendations to the Alliance and shall serve on the Audit Committee. The treasurer in accordance with sound fiscal management procedures and policies as established by the Executive Board shall execute those procedures for signing with the president and disbursement of checks.

**SECTION IX
Commission Chairpersons**

The Commission Chairpersons or co-chairs will be elected from the membership and will serve a three-year term. The duty of the Commission Chairperson will be to conduct meetings at least four times per year and coordinate all other activities of the

Commission; represent the Commission as a member of the Executive Board; and assume other duties as prescribed by the Executive Board. The Commission Vice Chairperson will act in the absence of the Commission chairperson.

SECTION X

Corresponding Secretary

Position Voided.

SECTION XI

Parliamentarian

The Parliamentarian shall maintain order at all meetings. The Parliamentarian shall be responsible for providing a parliamentary procedures workshop, at a minimum of three hours annually for the Executive Committee members.

SECTION XII

Historian

The Historian will keep a historical record of all major events, maintain archives of the organization's programs and activities and a scrapbook containing articles, pictures, etc.

SECTION XIII

Immediate Past President

The term of office as Immediate Past President shall be for one year. The Immediate Past President shall chair the Past President Committee and assume such other responsibilities as shall be designated by the President.

ARTICLE VI

Standing Committees

The standing committees of the Affiliate are follows: Budget, Membership, Resolutions, Legislation, Nominations and Elections, Constitution and By-Laws and Provincial Conference. The duties and responsibilities of these standing committees shall be determined by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VII

Dereliction of Duties

Officers and Directors elected by the total membership (President, Secretary, Historian, Treasurer, Parliamentarian and Commission Chairpersons) who fail to fulfill the duties of the office may be considered to be derelict in his/her duties and may be removed from office as specified in the By Laws and Constitution.

Dereliction of duties may include any one of the following:

1. Failure to attend meetings (any officer missing a meeting must submit in writing in advance, a note to the President, or Vice-President in the absence of the President, or within five days of the absence, a note with an explanation.)
2. Failure to file reports (within two weeks of the meeting for Board Minutes, Committee Minutes and Reports, Treasurer's report, Conference Reports etc.). Reports must be sent to the President via e-mail or hard copy within the two week timeframe following a meeting. Missing the deadline more than twice will be just cause for review by the Executive Committee.
3. Failure to reply to directions from the President within one week of receiving a request or failure to reply more than twice will be cause for review by the Executive Committee.
4. Failure to provide Financial Reports or any other report requested by the President and/or Vice-President will be just cause for review by the Executive Committee.
5. Failure of a Commission Chairperson to conduct meetings at least four times per year.

In the event an elected officer or director misses three meetings (regular, called or committee) during a membership year, the officer or director may be removed from office if the Executive Committee considers the absences "unexcused". The Executive Committee will select a member to serve the remainder of the removed officer's term as specified in the By-laws.

In the event an officer or director is removed from office, the membership will be notified at the next regular meeting of the organization. The replacement for the removed officer or director will be named by the Executive Committee. The general membership will be notified if the position is up for election and/or if a replacement has been named to fulfill the term of that office.

ARTICLE VIII

SECTION I

Time of Elections

Executive and non-Commission officers of the organization shall be elected in the Fall every three years following the Annual Conference or the Annual General Meeting and one year after the election for the Commission Chairs has taken place. Commission Chairs of the organization shall be elected in the Fall every three years following Annual Conference or Annual General Meeting and one year before the election for the Executive and non-Commission officers has taken place.

SECTION II

Nominations

- a. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall be composed of one Executive Board member elected by the Board and three members elected by the general membership. The Chairperson for the Nominating Committee is to be appointed by the President. The Chairperson shall not be a nominee for election while chair of the Nominating Committee.
- b. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall set up objective criteria for the selection of at least two persons to run for each of the official offices of the organization as stated in the By-Laws.
- c. Nominations may be made from the floor by members in good standing at the Annual General Meeting in the interim year and nominations will remain open for six weeks following the Annual General Meeting. Any Member may make additional nominations after the Annual General Meeting. A Member may nominate him/herself. The Nominations and Elections Committee will vet the candidates and create the slate of candidates.
- d. The slate of candidates will be presented to the Executive Board in late August or early September.
- e. The election campaign will begin in early September and will last for a period of six weeks.
- f. Ballots and slate will be mailed to membership in mid-October for voting that will remain open for a two week period. **“MAIL IS DEFINED AS ELECTRONIC AND/OR GENERAL POSTAL”**.

SECTION III

Voting

- a. All members in good standing shall be eligible to vote.
- b. A majority vote of members voting will be required. When necessary, a runoff election between the two top candidates will be held.
- c. All ballots will be forwarded to the Secretary to be held for twelve months following the election.

- d. The results of the election shall be announced to the Executive Board and membership in November.
- e. Installation of officers shall be done at the annual general meeting or annual conference, or at a meeting in the early part of the following calendar year.

ARTICLE IX
General and Annual Meetings

There shall be an Annual General Meeting of the membership. This meeting shall be held at such time and place as the Executive Board will determine. The time of the Annual General Meeting should facilitate maximum participation of the membership. Members shall be notified of said meeting not less than 90 days prior to the date thereof. During the Annual General

Meeting, the following kinds of meetings will occur:

a. Membership and Executive Board combined Meetings:

There should be at least one combined meeting of the membership and the Executive Board to conduct the official business of the organization. No other meetings should be scheduled which conflict with the combined meetings. A quorum shall consist of members present.

b. Commission Meetings:

There shall be a least one meeting of each Commission in order to address pertinent pedagogical topics and concerns as they relate to the purposes of the organization and to conduct official commission business. A quorum shall consist of members present.

In addition, the following meetings may occur:

a. General Assembly Meetings:

A general assembly meeting may be held to promote the goals and purposes of the Alliance and to acquaint the host community with the organization's activities. Such meetings will be open to the public.

b. Plenary Meetings:

Plenary meetings may held to present relevant topics of interest and concern to the Membership.

c. Caucus Meetings:

Caucus meetings may be called by an Commission as deemed feasible by a majority of its membership.

SECTION II

Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Alliance may be called at the discretion of the President upon approval of the majority of the members of the Executive Board or at the written request, submitted to the President, of at least a third of the general membership in good standing. Written notice of such special meetings shall be mailed to the membership at least 30 days prior to the date of the meeting. The business of the special meeting need not be limited to the agenda as listed on the notice.

SECTION III

Other Meetings

Commissions may hold other meetings throughout the year as deemed feasible by their members. Members of standing, ad hoc, or other committees shall be authorized by the President.

ARTICLE X

Dues

Dues shall be recommended by the Executive Board and determined by the Membership by majority vote.

ARTICLE XI

Amendments

The Constitution and By-Laws may be amended at the Annual General Meeting if the following criteria are met:

- a. The proposed amendment may be submitted in writing to the Executive Board.
- b. Upon certification of the President that requirement “a” above has been satisfied, the amendment shall be submitted to the membership for its consideration. Such amendments shall require an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members voting.

ARTICLE XII

Order of Business

Unless altered or suspended at any meeting by a majority vote of the members present, the Following shall be the order of business at meetings of the organization.

- a. Ascertainment of members present
- b. Reading of minutes of previous meeting
- c. Report of Officers
- d. Report of Nominations and Election Committee
- e. Report of Commissions
- f. Report of other committees
- g. Unfinished business
- h. New Business

ARTICLE XIII

The most recently published edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all official meetings of the Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators, when it does not conflict with the **By-Laws of the organization.**

ARTICLE XIV

Conflict of Interest

- a. Any Director, Officer or member who has a financial or fiduciary interest in, or the appearance of such an interest in, a matter which comes before ONABSE shall bring such genuine or apparent conflict of interest to the attention of the Executive Board and shall abstain from voting on such matter unless it is determined that no conflict of interest exists.
- b. Any person who has knowledge of such genuine or apparent conflict of interest on the part of any Director, Officer or member must bring such conflict of interest to the attention of the Executive Board, orally or in writing, and the Director, Officer or member will abstain from voting on the matter unless it is determined by the Board that no conflict of interest exists.
- c. When any member of the organization, or an interested third party, brings to the attention of the organization the claim that a genuine or apparent conflict of interest exists, the organization will vote to determine whether an actual conflict of interest exists.
 1. If the majority of those voting determine that, in fact, a conflict does exist, the member with the conflict of interest shall abstain from voting on the matter.
 2. If the majority of those voting determine that no conflict of interest exists, the member may vote on the matter.