

BYLAWS
Of the
CHICAGO AREA READING ASSOCIATION
of the
ILLINOIS READING COUNCIL
Affiliate of the
INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION

Approved 6-2009
Local Council Bylaws Com
Next revision 2015

ARTICLE I – NAME AND AREA SERVED

The name of this organization shall be the Chicago Area Reading Association Council (CARA), serving the area of Cook County within the Chicago city limits and including those suburbs lying east of Route 50, north of 115th street and south of Route 90 line.

ARTICLE II – NATURE AND PURPOSE

A. NATURE:

The Chicago Area Reading Association Council shall be a professional organization of individuals who are concerned with the improvement of literacy.

B. PURPOSES:

- a. To upgrade the quality of literacy instruction at all levels.
- b. To stimulate the scholarly evaluation of innovations and procedures in the field of literacy at the local and national levels.
- c. To sponsor conferences for the discussion of contemporary issues in literacy.
- d. To provide the opportunity for teachers to peruse literacy materials.
- e. To further the goals of the International Reading Association.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

A. ELIGIBILITY:

Membership in the council shall be open to all persons engaged in the teaching or supervision of reading at any school level, to parents and to all others interested in the purpose of the council.

B. ACTIVE MEMBERS:

Membership in the council shall become effective upon payment of dues for one year.

C. COUNCIL DUES:

The Illinois Reading Council Board of Directors shall set dues for annual membership in the Chicago Area Reading Association. Dues are payable to the Illinois Reading Council.

D. STATE DUES:

Membership in the Chicago Area Reading Association automatically includes membership in the Illinois Reading Council.

Revised & Amended: March 10, 2009 pending IRC approval

E. INTERNATIONAL DUES:

Membership in the International Reading Association shall be strongly recommended. Dues to the International Reading Association, which provides members with benefits and services depending on the type of membership, may be paid directly to IRA Headquarters.

F. MEMBERSHIP CANCELLATION:

Membership may be suspended or cancelled only by a member's own withdrawal or through failure to pay dues.

G. IRA MEMBERSHIP:

The Chicago Area Reading Association Council shall be in good standing and entitled to representation at the meeting of the International Reading Association Delegates Assembly if at least 10 members have paid dues to IRA for the current year.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

A. COMPOSITION:

1. Number - The eight elected officers of the Chicago Area Reading Association shall be President, President-Elect, Vice-President, Immediate Past President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer.
2. Qualifications/Eligibility
 - a. Any member in good standing who is also a member of the International Reading Association is eligible to be an officer of the council.

B. TERM OF OFFICE:

1. All elected officers shall hold office for the fiscal year beginning July 1 to June 30th of the following year.
2. The succession to the office of President shall be a **four** year commitment to the Chicago Area Reading Association.
 - a. The President-Elect shall succeed to the office of President.
 - b. The Vice President shall succeed to the office of President-Elect.
 - c. The President, having served a one-year term, remains an officer as the Immediate Past President.
3. The terms of Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer shall be for two years.
 - a. The Recording Secretary and Assistant Treasurer shall be elected in even numbered years.
 - b. The Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected in odd-numbered years.
 - d. Neither the Recording Secretary, Treasurer, nor Assistant Treasurer may serve consecutive terms.

C. TIME OF ASSUMING OFFICE:

1. Each officer shall assume the duties of office on July 1.

D. DUTIES OF OFFICERS:

1. The President shall:

- a. Exercise general supervision of the Association.
- b. Preside at meetings of the Association.
- c. Represent the Association in its relationship with outside individuals and groups.
- d. Appoint committees as authorized by the Association or Board of Directors.
- e. Be an ex-officio member of all committees of the Association and keep in close contact with their work.
- f. Enforce the provisions of the Chicago Area Reading Association's Bylaws.
- g. Install new officers.
- h. Call and conduct meetings of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors.
- i. Appoint other special or ad hoc committees as needs arise.
- j. Design, coordinate, and disseminate to all members of the Board of Directors, a calendar of essential dates of activities of CARA.
- k. Coordinate the activities and supervise the affairs of CARA to insure the implementation of its purposes.
- l. Communicate with and supervise the programs of the various standing committees and special committees.
- m. Turn over all files to the President-Elect by the close of the CARA Spring Leadership Orientation Meeting.
- n. See that copies of the policy handbook, current bylaws, director of council officers, and committee chairs are prepared and distributed to all members of the Board of Directors.
- o. Notify each member of his/her appointment to a committee position.

2. The President-Elect shall:

- a. Attend Board of Directors and Executive Committee meetings.
- b. Serve as presiding officer of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee in the event that the President is absent, incapacitated, or resigns.
- c. Assume the office of the President for the remainder of that term of office in the event that the President resigns or the office is otherwise vacated.
- d. Serve as Program Chair for CARA conferences and coordinate all functions of the Program Committee.
- e. Work closely with the Public Relations Committee to insure wide dissemination of information regarding conferences.
- f. Give to successor all appropriate information and materials by the close of the CARA Spring Leadership Orientation Meeting.

3. The Vice-President shall:

- a. Attend Board of Directors and Executive Committee meetings.
- b. Serve as presiding officer of the Board of Directors and the Executive

Committee in the event that both the President and President-Elect are absent, incapacitated, or resigns.

- c. Assume the office of the President-Elect for the remainder of that term of office in the event that the President-Elect resigns or the office is otherwise vacated.
- d. Assist the President-Elect in coordinating all functions of the Program Committee.
- e. Serve as Chair of the Membership Committee.
- f. Give to successor all appropriate information and materials by the close of the CARA Spring Leadership Orientation Meeting.
- g. Serve as a member of the Program Committee.
- h. Coordinate all external programs (special projects and activities involving facets of the community such as parent involvement programs, etc.).

4. **The Recording Secretary shall:**

- a. Attend Board of Directors and Executive Committee meetings.
- b. Keep a detailed, exact and permanent record of the proceedings of all meetings of the Association, Board of Directors and the Executive Board.
- c. Preserve and have available all official records of the Association.
- d. Maintain a file of communications and bulletins sent to the Association.
- e. Maintain a record of attendance at all Board of Directors meetings.
- f. Disseminate within 30 days copies of the minutes of each Board of Directors meeting to all members of the Board of Directors.
- g. Act as presiding officer over the Board of Directors and Executive Committee meetings in the event the President, President-Elect, and the Vice-President are absent, incapacitated, or resigns.
- h. Give to successor all minutes, permanent records, correspondences, and information by the close of the CARA Spring Leadership Orientation meeting.
- I. Cooperate fully with successor by turning over up-to-date records within thirty (30) days of retirement from office.
- j. Maintain a record of each Board Member that includes: phone numbers, years of service, type of service to CARA, educational background, professional status, business location, home, office and e-mail addresses.

5. **The Corresponding Secretary shall:**

- a. Attend Board of Directors and Executive Committee meetings.
- b. Attend to all general correspondences of the Association.
- c. Arrange for all typing of the Association except that which will be specifically handled by the officers in their prescribed duties.
- d. Provide stationery and envelopes.
- e. Send out notices to all CARA Board Meetings (two weeks in advance).
- f. Supervise all CARA mailings.
- g. Handle that correspondence which is designated by the President.
- h. Turn over files and correspondences to successor by the close of the CARA Spring Leadership Orientation Meeting.
- i. Serve as Chair of the Newsletter Committee and Editor of CARA NEWSLETTER.

- j. Cooperate with successor by turning over an up-to-date record of correspondence within thirty (30) days of retirement from office.
 - k. Send copies of CARA NEWSLETTER, conferences and meetings to the IRA State Coordinator, and Local Council Presidents.
6. **The Treasurer** shall:
- a. Attend Board of Directors and Executive Committee meetings.
 - b. Receive all dues and monies due the Association.
 - c. Issue a receipt for each cash remittance received.
 - d. Cash or deposit all checks received without delay.
 - e. Pay all bills incurred by the Association within thirty (30) days and request a receipt for each disbursement made by cash.
 - f. Keep and maintain accurate records of all receipts and disbursements as authorized by the Association.
 - g. Submit a written financial statement at each Board of Directors meeting to all in attendance.
 - h. Submit all books and records to the Auditing Committee Chair within 30 days of the end of the fiscal year.
 - i. Have the new Treasurer sign account cards and take over the account within 30 days of assuming office.
 - j. Function as Chair of the Budget Committee.
 - k. Have three authorized signatures for the bank: The Treasurer, President and Assistant Treasurer, with two signatures required for each check.
 - l. Keep payment authorization forms together with itemized bills from vendors and individuals to be submitted to the Auditing Committee. Bank Statements should be stapled to the vouchers monthly for record keeping.
 - m. Encourage the submission of all bills for payment in April and May so that the books can be closed.
 - n. Provide a projected budget for the coming year, which includes estimated revenue and estimated budget expenses.
 - o. Provide copies of the "Approval for Payment Form" to Directors at the first meeting of the Board of Directors.
7. **The Assistant Treasurer** shall:
- a. Attend Board of Directors and Executive Committee meetings.
 - b. Function as Co-Chair of the Budget Committee and assist the Treasurer as needed.
 - c. Serve as Chair of CARA conference exhibits by coordinating all activities related to the vendor's exhibits.
8. **The Immediate Past President** shall:
- a. Attend Board of Directors and Executive Committee meetings.
 - b. Function as Chair of the Past President Liaison Committee.
 - c. Serve as Chair of the Nominating Committee.

ARTICLE V – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A. COMPOSITION:

1. The Board of Directors shall consist of: the President, President-Elect, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Immediate Past President and 10 board members.
2. Other Past Presidents may attend in an advisory capacity.

B. FUNCTION:

1. The Board of Directors shall:
 - a. Exercise general supervision and control the property and affairs of the Association.
 - b. Decide all questions involving cooperation with other local professional organizations.
 - c. Supervise the execution of approved policies.
 - d. Renew individual membership in CARA and the International Reading Association.

C. TERM OF OFFICE:

1. The elected members of the Board of Directors shall serve for three (3) years, 3 or 4 members being elected each year.
2. The appointed members of the Board of Directors shall serve out the term of the member whose position was vacated.

D. MEETINGS:

1. The Board of Directors shall be empowered to hold meetings on the call of the president as it is deemed necessary. The president shall determine the time and place of such meetings.
2. There shall be no fewer than six (6) meetings per year, at least two (2) of which will be CARA Conferences.
3. If it is determined to be necessary, the corresponding secretary may arrange a meeting of the Board at the request of five (5) or more members of the Board of Directors.
4. The first meeting of the Board of Directors for the ensuing year shall be held immediately following the annual election to prepare plans for that year.

E. QUORUM:

1. Ten (10) members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum.

F. INTERIM REPLACEMENT:

1. The Board of Directors shall be empowered to fill such vacancies as may occur between elections in the offices of President, President-Elect, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Directors.
2. An Officer or Director absent from a total of three (3) CARA conferences, general functions, and/or CARA Board meetings (without valid explanation) or unable to fulfill CARA responsibilities and duties, may be dropped from office by the decision of the Board of Directors. Under special provisions said member

- may take a leave from the CARA Board by the decision of the Board.
3. The President with Board approval may appoint a replacement to complete the unexpired term of that Board member.

ARTICLE VI – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A. COMPOSITION:

1. The Executive Committee shall consist of: The President, President-Elect, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Corresponding Secretary and Immediate Past President.

B. FUNCTION:

1. The Executive Committee shall:
 - a. Identify and plan strategies that will implement the mission, goals, and beliefs of CARA.
 - b. Develop the agenda for Board Meetings.

C. MEETINGS:

1. The President shall call meetings at any time it is deemed necessary.
2. The president shall send notification of meetings through e-mail or telephone calls.
3. A record of the proceedings at the Executive Committee meetings shall be kept by the Recording Secretary.
4. The Executive Committee shall report to the Board of Directors at the next meeting of the Board.

D. QUORUM:

1. A majority of the Executive Committee members shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE VII – COMMITTEES

A. COMPOSITION:

1. There shall be such standing committees as are provided for in this Article, and such special committees as may be authorized from time to time by the Board of Directors or the membership.
2. All Committees shall serve for the term of the President.
3. The Chairperson of these committees shall be selected from the Board by the President with Board approval.
4. The President may either appoint committee members or leave their selection to each committee chairperson.
5. Each committee chairperson shall present a written report to each Board member at the Board meetings of the Association

B. STANDING COMMITTEES:

1. **The Archives Committee** shall:
 - (a) Keep historical records of council activities with sample programs and photographs which can be displayed at selected CARA meetings and/or

conferences.

- (b) Place a current copy of Bylaws with the year's records.
- (c) Place minutes of all Board of Directors meetings in the Treasurer's records.
- (d) Place complete conference program packets with the year's records.
- (e) Place current copies of the CARA NEWSLETTERS with the treasurer's records.

2. **The Awards Committee** shall:

- (a) Plan and monitor all awards given by CARA.
- (b) Secure Certificates/Plaques of Appreciation for Outgoing President, Corresponding Secretary, Recording Secretary, Treasurer and/or Assistant Treasurer to be presented at the Spring Leadership Orientation Meeting.
- (c) Coordinate the securing of financial grants from IRC.

3. **The Budget Committee** shall:

- (a) Obtain all records, books, and receipts from the Treasurer on or about July 1.
- (b) Check all accounts and records to verify the Treasurer's books.
- (c) After audit is complete and in order, submit all books, records, and materials to incoming Treasurer.
- (d) Present an audit and report to the Board of Directors preferably at the first regular meeting of the next fiscal year but no later than the second regular meeting.
- (e) Submit to the Board of Directors the proposed budget for approval at the meeting after the Spring Leadership Orientation Meeting. This budget shall include an ending cash balance equal to 25% of the anticipated expenditures.

4. **The Bylaws Committee** shall:

- (a) Designate the Bylaws Committee Chair to serve as Parliamentarian for the Association.
- (b) Review the Bylaws, Policies and Procedures: make recommendations for revisions: oversee the Bylaws amendment process as outlined in the council's current Bylaws.
- (c) Keep the Bylaws and Policies and Procedures in agreement by writing changes or additions to either simultaneously as needed.
- (d) Send one (1) copy of the Bylaws (as amended) to IRC.
- (e) Keep the CARA Bylaws in compliance.

5. **The Community Literacy Committee** shall:

- (a) Administer literacy awareness and literacy improvement projects in the area served by CARA.
- (b) Plan programs and projects that promote community literacy to apply to IRC and IRA Honor Council.

6. **The Family Literacy Committee** shall:

- (a) Plan programs and projects that promote family literacy, offer appropriate

activities for children, and offer parents ways to help their children become more effective readers.

- (b) Maintain contact with the Parents and Reading Committee of the IRA and other state councils in order to receive information of parent involvement at the national and state levels.
 - (c) Collect and disseminate information dealing with parent involvement and concerns with instruction in reading.
 - (d) Submit Parents and Reading information through a column in the CARA Newsletter.
7. **The Honor Council Committee** shall:
- (a) See that all aspects of the IRA Honor Council program are completed by the established timelines.
 - (b) See that all aspects of the IRC Honor Council program are completed on time.
8. **The Hospitality/Social Committee** shall:
- (a) Secure hosts/hostesses to assist at conferences and events of CARA.
 - (b) Plan welcoming hosts/hostesses, name tags, folders, etc. for conferences.
 - (c) Extend courtesies to CARA members who have special events and or losses during the fiscal year.
9. **The Membership Committee** shall:
- (a) Plan comprehensive membership campaigns that encompass the local, state and international goals.
 - (b) Submit membership news for each issue of the CARA Newsletter.
 - (c) Design and implement a comprehensive membership campaign for CARA, IRC and IRA.
 - (d) Attend state IRC Board of Directors meetings.
 - (e) Provide CARA Board Members with copies of membership lists.
 - (f) Provide CARA Board Members with a list of members interested in functioning on committees.
10. **The Newsletter Committee** shall:
- (a) Direct the publication of CARA materials.
 - (b) Produce and distribute three newsletters per year, Fall, Winter and Spring.
11. **The Nominating Committee** shall:
- (a) Prepare a slate of two (2) candidates for each office to be elected according to the Bylaws.
12. **The Past-President Liaison Committee** shall:
- (a) Act as liaison between past CARA administrations and the current administration at the discretion of the Board.
 - (b) Meet at least once a year with other past CARA presidents.

(c) Encourage past CARA presidents to attend CARA functions.

13. **The Program Committee** shall:

- (a) Design and implement three (3) conferences for the year.
- (b) Provide the Board Members with a detailed outline of the proposed conferences for the year including the location, costs and presenters.
- (c) Be empowered to secure major speakers and make contracts for conferences with the approval of the Board of Directors.

14. **The Public Relations Committee** shall:

- (a) Publicize the activities of CARA and its members.
- (b) Be responsible for making initial contacts with local news media for publicizing CARA conferences and events where applicable.

15. **The Research and Evaluation Committee** shall:

- (a) Evaluate conferences to determine if they are effectively meeting the needs of members.
- (b) Disseminate analyses and syntheses of research findings to CARA members through a research column in the CARA Newsletter.
- (c) Conduct research projects.
- (d) Suggest researchers and speakers for CARA conferences and meetings.

16. **The Vendors Committee** shall:

- (a) Contact, receive monies and organize vendor exhibits at CARA conferences.
- (b) Write letters of appreciation to each participating vendor after a CARA conference.

ARTICLE VIII – MEETINGS OF ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

A. COMPOSITION:

- 1. The assembly shall consist of the Board of Directors and all other members of the council.

B. FUNCTION:

- 1. The assembly shall be the legislative body of the Chicago Area Reading Association Council and shall have full power and authority over the affairs of the council, within the limits set by these bylaws.
- 2. The assembly shall have authority to review decisions made by the Board of Directors to accept or reject them.

C. QUORUM:

- 1. At any CARA conference, a quorum shall consist of a minimum of fifty (50) members.

D. MEETINGS:

- 1. There shall be three conferences of this Association per year; one in the fall,

winter and spring. During these meetings, the President shall conduct needed business.

E. NOTIFICATION OF MEETINGS:

1. The Corresponding Secretary shall notify all members by mail at least 2 weeks in advance of meetings.

F. SPECIAL MEETINGS:

1. Special meetings may be called upon the recommendation of the Board of Directors or by a majority vote of a quorum at a regular meeting.

G. AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS:

1. The assembly of CARA shall have the power to amend these bylaws as stated in Article XII.

ARTICLE IX – NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A. ELECTION:

1. All officers, except the President and President-Elect, shall be elected in the spring.

B. NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

1. Nominations of all candidates for officers and board members shall be by a nominating committee consisting of the Immediate Past President as chair and four (4) members appointed by the President and approved by the Board of Directors at the February Board meeting.
2. To be eligible for an executive office, a candidate must have served as a CARA Board Member for at least one year.
3. Each nominee must be a member of the International Reading Association. Advance consent to serve if elected from each nominee shall be secured by the committee.
4. Newly elected officers and board members will receive an official letter of notification from the chair of the Nominating Committee.

C. MODE OF ELECTION:

1. The Nominating Committee shall present its slate of nominees by mail thirty (30) days prior to the spring conference.
2. If the voting is to take place at a meeting of the council, the president shall give an opportunity to propose nominations from the floor for each office after the slate from the Nominating Committee has been presented including a short vita of each nominee. Voting shall be by ballot and there shall be two (2) or more nominees for each vacant elective office. Space shall be provided on the ballot form for the names of candidates nominated from the floor. A plurality of the votes cast shall constitute an election. In case of a tie, a ballot naming the nominees tied for most votes shall then be distributed. The results of the election shall then be announced.
3. If voting is to be by mail, the ballot and a short vita of each nominee shall be mailed to each active member of the council at least four (4) weeks prior to the date the ballots are to be counted. There shall be two (2) or more nominees for each vacant

elected office. Space shall be provided for write-in candidates, and the date for return of the ballot shall be clearly stated on the ballot. On the date specified on the ballot, the votes shall be counted by the Nominating Committee and the results reported to the president in office at the time. A plurality of the votes cast shall constitute an election. A tie shall be broken at the next council meeting.

D. ANNOUNCEMENT:

1. Announcement of officers and directors elected for the ensuing year shall be made at the close of the final meeting of the Association of the fiscal year or by mail via the CARA Newsletter.
2. The President shall be responsible for reporting the newly elected officers to IRA Headquarters and to the IRA State Coordinator using the official forms provided by IRA.

E. LEADERSHIP ORIENTATION MEETING:

1. Before the beginning of the new fiscal year, a Leadership Orientation Meeting take place to induct the new officers and Board Members, to discuss the duties of the Board position as per the CARA Bylaws, and to basically better ensure the smooth transition of the Board Members and the smooth functioning of the Association.
2. Each officer, committee chairperson and board member shall receive appropriate materials explicitly detailing their duties and responsibilities. These materials shall be passed on to their successors the following year.

ARTICLE X – REPRESENTATION AT THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLIES

A. REPRESENTATION ANNUAL IRA ASSEMBLY:

1. Representation of the council at the Delegates Assembly of the International Reading Association shall be in accordance with the bylaws of the International Reading Association as specified in the current International Reading Association bylaws which read as follows:
“Each local council in good standing of 10-50 members who have paid current dues to the International Reading Association shall be entitled to one delegate and an additional delegate for each 50 additional members who have paid current dues to the Association... One person may represent only one council in the Assembly. A council may send an alternate for each delegate; an alternate may vote only when the delegate is absent.”

B. REPRESENTATION ANNUAL STATE/PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY:

1. Representation of the Chicago Area Reading Association Council at the annual state/provincial assembly shall be in accordance with that specified by the bylaws of the state/provincial council.

ARTICLE XI – PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

A. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY:

1. The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the proceedings of this council, except in cases governed by the constitution, bylaws, and special rules adopted by this council.

ARTICLE XII – AMENDMENTS

A. ORIGIN:

1. Amendments of this Constitution may be proposed by:
 - a. A quorum of the Board of Directors
 - b. The Bylaws Committee or;
 - c. A petition signed by 50 members of this Association.
2. All amended bylaws shall be sent to the IRA State Coordinator for approval after presenting them to the members for adoption, pending IRC approval.

B. PROCEDURES FOR AMENDING:

1. After thirty (30) days notice to the entire membership, voting on proposed amendments shall take place, by secret ballot, at any regular meeting of the Chicago Area Reading Association or by mail.
2. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of those present or responding shall be necessary for the adoption of amendments to these bylaws.

C. INCORPORATION:

1. Amendments adopted as described in B above, shall be incorporated into these Bylaws.
2. Copies of all amendments shall immediately be sent to the IRA State Coordinator.

ARTICLE XIII - DISSOLUTION

A. DISSOLUTION:

In case of the dissolution of this council, any assets remaining after paying or making provision for the payment of all liabilities of the council shall revert to the International Reading Association.