

**ASSOCIATION OF MASSACHUSETTS EDUCATORS OF STUDENTS  
WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS  
AMESVI**

**BYLAWS**

**Article I: Name**

The organization shall be called Association of Massachusetts Educators of Students with Visual Impairments, hereinafter referred to as AMESVI or the Association.

**Article II: Mission Statement**

Our goal as an association of professionals is to improve and enrich the lives of students with visual impairments through advocacy, professional development, and the education of others, including members of the general public, regarding the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments.

**Article III: Membership**

**Section A: Regular Members**

Regular Members shall be (1) persons who hold initial or professional Massachusetts licensure in education of the visually impaired; (2) persons who have graduated from AERBVI-accredited orientation and mobility programs and/or hold ACVREP certification (COMS); (3) persons who have graduated from AERBVI-accredited vision rehabilitation therapy programs and/or hold AERBVI certification as Vision Rehabilitation Therapists (CVRT); (4) persons who hold ACVREP certification as Low Vision Therapists (CLVT); (5) persons who hold initial or professional Massachusetts licensure in severe disabilities and who work predominantly with deafblind students and/or have completed an accredited degree program with a concentration in deafblind studies; (6) university personnel who prepare others to be educators in the field of visual impairment; (7) retired TVI's, O&M Specialists, CVRT's, and CLVT's; (8) administrators of specialized programs who currently hold or have held licensure or professional certification in the field of visual impairment and/or who administer programs which primarily serve students with visual impairments or deafblindness.

**Section B: Associate Members**

Associate Members shall be any other professionals who support the Mission Statement of the Association, including university students in the vision field, professionals in related fields who are serving visually impaired students, and paraprofessionals serving visually impaired students under the direction of TVI's/O&M Specialists.

### **Section C: Rights and Privileges**

Regular Members in good standing shall be entitled to all rights and privileges of the Association. Associate Members in good standing shall be entitled to all rights and privileges of the Association, with the exception of holding an elective position, serving on the Nominating Committee, and voting. The term "in good standing" shall be used to indicate those members whose dues are current.

### **Article IV: Dues**

Membership dues shall be paid on or before July 1 of each year. The amount shall be set in the spring every year by the Executive Board. New members joining after January 1 shall pay one half the annual dues.

### **Article V: Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year shall be from July 1 to June 30 of the following year.

### **Article VI: Executive Board**

#### **Section A: Board Members and Duties**

The Executive Board shall consist of a President, a President-elect, a President Ex-officio, a Treasurer, a Recording Secretary, a Corresponding Secretary, a Conference Committee Chair, and six Regional Representatives, one each from the South Shore/Cape region, Western Massachusetts, Central Massachusetts, and the Northeast region, and two from the Greater Boston region. Their duties shall include the following:

**1. President** - to convene and chair meetings of the Executive Board and of the general membership, and to develop and distribute an agenda for each meeting. The President shall oversee the work of the Association and its committees. After serving in this office for one year, the President shall become the President Ex-officio.

**2. President-elect** - to assist the President, as requested; to perform all duties of the President in the President's absence; and to oversee the publication of a newsletter. After serving in this office for one year, the President-elect shall become the President.

**3. President Ex-officio** – to assist the President, as requested; to chair the Nominating Committee; and to serve as a liaison to parents and other vision-related groups. After serving in this office for one year, the President Ex-officio shall retire from membership on the Executive Board.

**4. Treasurer** - to collect dues, maintain a bank account, pay the bills, keep an accurate record of all financial transactions, and report the financial status of the Association periodically to the Executive Board and annually to the general membership.

**5. Recording Secretary** - to keep accurate written minutes of all meetings of the Executive Board and of the general membership, and to maintain all reports, records, and archives of the Association.

**6. Corresponding Secretary** - to give notice of all meetings of the Executive Board and of the general membership, and to conduct the correspondence of the Association. The Corresponding Secretary shall maintain a current membership list and shall provide timely reminders to members regarding membership renewal.

**7. Conference Committee Chair** - to plan and coordinate conferences and professional development opportunities sponsored by the Association.

**8. Regional Representatives** - to promote communication among the members within geographical regions of the state, and to represent their concerns to the Executive Board.

The Executive Board shall approve the formation of new committees and projects and shall appoint the chairpersons of all committees. The Executive Board shall also appoint a Website Coordinator and Listserv Coordinator, who may serve indefinitely at the discretion of the Board.

The Board shall meet a minimum of four times per year to carry on the business of the Association.

### **Section B: Terms of Office**

The President, President-elect, and President Ex-officio shall serve one-year terms. The other officers and Regional Representatives shall serve two-year terms. No one shall hold the same elective position for more than two consecutive terms. No one shall hold more than one elective position at a time.

In odd-numbered years the Recording Secretary, the Treasurer, and three Regional Representatives (one each from Greater Boston, South Shore/Cape, and Western Massachusetts) shall be elected. In even-numbered years the Corresponding Secretary and three Regional Representatives (one each from Greater Boston, Central Massachusetts, and Northeast) shall be elected. A new President-elect shall be elected every year and, at the end of that year, shall assume the office of President. The outgoing President shall assume the role of President Ex-officio.

The Conference Committee Chair shall be appointed by the Executive Board to serve a two-year term and may be re-appointed to serve not more than two consecutive full terms.

### **Section C: Eligibility**

Only Regular Members in good standing shall be eligible to serve on the Executive Board.

Anyone nominated for an elective position must have been a member of AMESVI for at least one year preceding the nomination.

## **Article VII: Nominations and Elections**

### **Section A: Nominating Committee**

The Nominating Committee may be appointed in the fall of each year by the Executive Board. The committee shall be chaired by the President Ex-officio. It shall include two Regular Members who are not serving on the Board and who represent two different geographic regions.

The Nominating Committee shall actively seek nominations from the general membership. The Committee shall administer the annual election by preparing a slate of candidates and by sending, receiving, and tallying the ballots.

### **Section B: Elections**

Elections of officers and Regional Representatives shall be decided by a simple majority of votes cast through a ballot sent to Regular Members in good standing.

Elections shall be held in the spring of each year. The new Board members shall assume office on July 1, the beginning of the fiscal year.

### **Section C: Vacancies**

Should a vacancy occur on the Executive Board, the Board shall appoint a Regular Member in good standing to fill the position until the next election for said position, as outlined in Article VI, Section B. The person appointed to fill a vacancy may subsequently run for the same position for two consecutive terms.

## **Article VIII: Meetings of the General Membership**

The annual business meeting of the Association shall be held in the spring and shall be announced at least four weeks in advance. Other meetings may be scheduled by the Executive Board and must be announced at least four weeks in advance.

All meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order. A quorum shall consist of twenty-five percent (25%) of the voting membership and is required to vote on any motions or proposals.

Should a quorum not be present at a business meeting, voting may be conducted by ballot within 30 days to Regular Members in good standing. A simple majority is required for an item to pass, provided that the total number of ballots returned constitutes at least a quorum.

## **Article IX: Communication**

Members shall be notified of meetings in a timely manner by electronic and/or hard-copy versions. Minutes of all meetings shall be available to any member upon request.

The Association shall produce a newsletter that shall be distributed to all members at least two times a year. Contributions shall be encouraged from all members.

The Association shall endeavor to inform members of matters which require immediate attention, such as impending legislation.

**Article X: Amendments to the Bylaws**

Bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the general membership by a two-thirds majority of those present and eligible to vote. Written notice and the full text of the proposed amendment(s) must be provided in accessible format to the Regular Members at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.

Should a quorum not be present at the meeting, voting shall be conducted by ballot within 30 days to Regular Members in good standing. A two-thirds majority of those returning their ballots is required for the bylaw amendment to pass, provided that the total number of ballots returned constitutes at least a quorum.

Amended: April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011