



MISSOURI RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION AND PUBLIC SCHOOL PERSONNEL

STATE OFFICE – LOCAL UNIT RELATIONSHIP

The Missouri Retired Teachers Association and Public School Personnel (MRTA) is a unique organization in that the MRTA ByLaws state in Article IV Organization, Section 3, “The local Unit shall be governed by its own bylaws/constitution in cooperation with the State Association and shall retain local dues.” Interpreted literally, this could be taken to mean that local units are free to conduct their business without regard to the state office or Board of Directors. It must be recognized that the local units are creatures of and have their existence out of the organization of the state association. Consequently, the concept of autonomy and independence cannot be taken literally to the exclusion of organizational principles. The goal of this organizational effort is to balance the organizational needs of the state with the appropriate level of autonomy for local units to function efficiently.

An association is an organization of people with a common purpose. Therefore, an organization such as MRTA cannot achieve its common purpose to benefit its people (members) if its component parts (local units) go any direction they please.

Effective organizations are composed of interdependent and coordinated parts that have common goals. All of the parts must cooperate and function as a coordinated whole within the framework of approved programs that provide a healthy degree of uniformity. In an effort to provide a degree of uniformity and direction toward the association goals for all MRTA units, the following framework is called for in Article IV of the MRTA Bylaws as follows:

State Office – The state office is the administrative headquarters of the association. It is staffed by an Executive Director, acting as the chief officer of the association, and appropriate staff. The state office is responsible for the day-to-day activities of the association and the implementation of policies and programs as approved by the Board of Directors.

MRTA Regions – MRTA is divided into 14 regions determined geographically by counties. These geographic units take into consideration major metropolitan areas, urban areas and rural counties. Each Region elects a Regional Vice President who is a voting member of the state office Board of Directors. Each Regional Vice President is the main point of contact between the state office and the Local MRTA Units.

Local Units – The MRTA recognizes 125 local units. The organizational components of the local units are authorized for creation under Article IV, Section 3 of the MRTA Bylaws. They are responsible for the cooperation and execution of requirements of the state ByLaws as well as the organizational and program recommendation of the Board of Directors.

In addition to the relationship with the state, local units play a broader role in serving the needs and interests of education retirees. The comprehensive nature of their role is reflected in the following purposes:

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PURPOSES OF MRTA LOCAL UNITS

- To serve as the organizational framework for the Missouri Retired Teachers Association and Public School Personnel.
- To provide a local membership opportunity for all education retirees and to encourage membership in MRTA.
- To conduct unit programs relevant to the interests of members and enhances attendance.
- To provide opportunities and to encourage participation in the programs and activities of MRTA.
- To serve as the backbone of efforts to protect both the PSRS-PEERS, and to protect our member's current benefits.
- To provide opportunities for education retirees to continue a life of service to their fellow retirees, their active colleagues, and their communities.
- To keep members informed on important consumer issues affecting personal safety, health and general welfare of retirees.
- To provide opportunities for fellowship and the nurturing of personal and professional relationships.

LOCAL UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STATE PROGRAMS

Specifically, local units are urged to comply with and support the following purposes:

1. Elect unit officers for terms as stated in the local unit bylaws.
2. Local units will provide updated information on unit officers and local committee chairs to the state office prior to the Leadership Workshop.
3. Provide and encourage full membership opportunities for every local education retiree drawing a benefit as a Missouri retired educator.
4. Support the state MRTA membership program by encouraging all local members to join MRTA.
5. Select qualified delegates to the MRTA Delegate's Assembly.
6. Select members including a Legislative Chairperson to contact local elected officials and to advocate for the MRTA Legislative agenda and cooperate with its implementation.
7. Participate in Retired Teachers Day activities, as recommended by the state office.
8. Participate in the state's community service program by submitting the cumulative unit hours to the state Community Service Committee Chair.
9. Send appropriate representation to all required meetings and workshops conducted by the state office.
10. Conduct the minimum number of six organized unit meetings where business is conducted. In an effort to support MRTA's programs, the local unit meetings should be scheduled throughout the year to coincide with the approved MRTA programs.

LOCAL UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STATE PROGRAMS

In cooperating with the state office, the local units are responsible for creating guidelines in the following areas:

1. Conduct election of unit officers.
2. Establish dues structure and the unit's fiscal operations.
3. Offer activities deemed appropriate for the local membership, in addition to the state programs.
4. Establish dates and locations for unit meetings and submit schedule to state office.
5. Determine unit membership eligibility to include all retired educators.
6. Establish local unit committees.
7. Establish a process to identify and encourage members to serve in leadership roles at the local and state level.
8. Plan and conduct programs to be presented at the local unit meetings.