

**POLICY TITLE: COSSA EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION (CEA)**

The COSSA Board of Trustees considers the welfare of all COSSA employees to be an important focus for their governance efforts, and welcomes the assistance and advocacy that the COSSA Educators Association provides for all COSSA employees. At the same time, the Board of Trustees recognizes that membership in CEA is voluntary, and no employee will receive any adverse consequence for not joining CEA, or not taking part in CEA's voluntary fundraising efforts.

**COSSA Educators Association (CEA)**

The COSSA Educators Association (CEA) is a voluntary association of COSSA employees, organized to support and improve the COSSA working experience. CEA is not an employee "union", although all COSSA employees are free to join the Idaho Education Association (IEA) and/or National Educational Association (NEA), or any other teacher union, such as the Northwest Professional Educators Association (NWP) or American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

The CEA President, or their representative, attends the COSSA Board of Trustees' monthly Board meeting to present a report of CEA activities, and CEA then passes information to all COSSA staff about what is happening with the COSSA Board and COSSA Administration. CEA is responsible for discreetly sending cards and memorials to staff; both to help them through hard times and to celebrate good times. CEA shows appreciation for our administrators on "Bosses Day", and acknowledges our office staff on "Administrative Assistants Day". CEA sponsors the all-employee staff Christmas party, and the all-employee staff end-of-the-year picnic. CEA is also responsible for managing the COSSA sick leave bank.

CEA administers an annual scholarship fund to award scholarships to COSSA students and Educational Assistants to further their education (normally awarded at the end of the school year). In order to raise funds for these scholarships, CEA conducts fundraisers throughout the school year, and has the ability to accept employee payroll deductions if employees choose to voluntarily elect this payment option.

**CEA Leadership**

CEA Officers include an elected President and Vice President; and appointed Secretary, Treasurer, and Hospitality Coordinator. Elections for President and Vice President are held annually. Appointed positions change when necessary.

## **CEA/COSSA Relationship**

Periodically, throughout the school year, CEA will organize an employee event or undertake fundraising projects that request donation, coordination, or assistance from other COSSA employees. In order to ensure no conflicts arise between official and voluntary projects, the following rules are established to ensure this coordination proceeds smoothly.

The following rules do not apply to requests for donations of funds from employees, administration, or the Board of Trustees. Those requests may be made at any time by any CEA member acting in an official capacity for CEA. No COSSA employee or Board member is obligated to donate to, or participate in, fundraising efforts, and no employee will receive any adverse consequence for not taking part in CEA's voluntary fundraising efforts.

1. Only the CEA Officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, or Hospitality Coordinator) can make official requests of COSSA administration or other COSSA employees for assistance with funds, supplies, or employee time and effort.

2. Any COSSA employee may inform any CEA officer of another COSSA employee who is suffering a hardship, mourning a loss, or celebrating a birthday, wedding, or other life-event. Usually, memorials or celebratory cards and gifts are only provided to CEA members.

3. CEA Officers will coordinate with COSSA Human Relations (HR) personnel for retirement gifts and honorariums. Usually, COSSA will fund retirement gifts, longevity gifts, special occasion plaques, etc, that are given to COSSA employees on special occasions such as retirement, years-of-service in 5-year increments, etc. See the policy section below on "funding CEA activities".

4. The CEA President, or their representative, is welcome to solicit donations from Board of Trustee members at monthly Board meetings as part of their monthly update to the Board.

5. Requests for assistance with food, such as from the Culinary Arts career-technical education program, or the COSSA Academy Food Service Department, must ensure that neither of these programs uses taxpayer funds to benefit CEA directly. Catering requests and requisitions will be used to ensure that COSSA administration assigns payment responsibility to appropriate (i.e., no student impact) sources of funds.

6. Requests for assistance, material/supplies, and/or employee time will be coordinated with the following administrators so that appropriate separation between voluntary and non-voluntary efforts are preserved, and employees are protected from allegations of inappropriate use of public funds:

a. Requests for career technical education (CTE) student labor, shop work, trade skills, materials, and/or CTE employee time and effort will be processed through the COSSA CTE Coordinator.

b. Requests for COSSA Academy student labor, materials, and/or Academy employee time and effort will be processed through the COSSA Academy Principal.

c. Requests for COSSA Special Education student labor, materials, and/or Special Education employee time and effort will be processed through the COSSA Special Education Director.

7. CEA is authorized to conduct raffles on COSSA school grounds as part of scholarship fundraisers. Consortium district rules regarding raffles apply on consortium district property.

### **Funding CEA Activities**

CEA Scholarships for students and staff are to be fully funded by the fundraising efforts of CEA personnel. No funds from COSSA may be directly transferred or used in any way to support these scholarships.

COSSA and CEA will cooperate on setting budgets for COSSA employee activities. COSSA will normally fund retirement gifts, longevity gifts, and special occasion plaques, that are given to COSSA employees on special occasions such as retirement, and years-of-service in 5-year increments, from “employee appreciation” accounts in the Academy, Special Education, and career technical education annual budgets. COSSA may also occasionally provide “employee appreciation” funds to help CEA provide the annual employee Christmas and spring picnic parties. The “employee appreciation” budgets are approved by the COSSA Board of Trustees at their annual Budget Hearing, and are audited annually by COSSA’s independent auditing firm.

### **COSSA Sick Leave Bank**

The COSSA Board of Trustees has determined that the COSSA Sick Leave Bank shall be managed by the CEA. Applications are available through the CEA Secretary, who shall call committee meetings when applications are received. The Committee shall consist of one COSSA administrator (normally not the program administrator to whom the applicant reports), the CEA President, the CEA Secretary, one certificated employee and one classified employee, both members in good standing of CEA, appointed as needed by the CEA Secretary; the same committee to govern both the Certified and Classified Banks. A quorum is considered a minimum of three committee members, and no member may fill two positions at the same time. The applicant’s program administrator will make a recommendation to the committee based on the applicant’s employment/absence history over the duration of their employment.

The actual details of managing the COSSA Sick Leave Bank are found in a separate Board of Trustees policy.

**Related Board Policy:    *Policy 309. Sick Leave Bank***

**LEGAL REFERENCE:**

None

**POLICY HISTORY:**

**Adopted:    August 16, 2021**