

2012 Structuring & Other Bylaws Changes ~ Background and Introduction

Members of the NCDA Board adopt a continuous improvement model based upon both short-term and long-term strategic goals. In reviewing the association's bylaws, the NCDA Board identified Articles which require minor editing and updating, while other Articles require a more in-depth review and explanation.

As has happened in the past, board discussions last year raised the question of whether the current board structure was most effective and efficient. Outcome goals for any changes included increased representation by constituency group, cost savings, continuity, position preparation and improved voter participation. Identified areas examined the applicability of the Regional Trustee structure, the committee liaison roles, timing of board terms, diversity of board membership, overall size of the board, and the length of service for those in the presidential roles as well as the elections timing and process.

At the NCDA Board meeting in October of 2011, members brainstormed options for examining these issues. A task force was charged with examining options and submitting specific proposals for the board to consider at the February 2012 meeting. These proposals addressed two main concerns:

- **Applicability of the Regional Trustee System.** As our association becomes more global and technology helps to overcome boundaries, how relevant is the Regional Trustee system? Would the association be better served by a Constituency Trustee system reflecting the variety of members' work settings? A Constituency Trustee system would ensure a spot on the board for each major constituency group, thus avoiding a situation in which all board members work in the same setting. And, one trustee position will remain the main liaison responsible for the state divisions.
- **Balancing Experience and Freshness.** Does our board have a good mix of experience and new ideas? Does the current system support adequate preparation for leadership roles? Is the current system open and transparent in the recruitment of and the making space for, new board members? Are there inconsistencies in the various board roles?

Based on these questions, the task force presented a series of proposals for the board to consider at the February 2012 meeting. Since amending the bylaws and governance structure is a significant change for the association, the board agreed to require a 2/3 majority rather than a simple majority vote for any proposal to be referred to the membership. The following bylaw change proposals were approved by the board by unanimous vote except for abstentions and absence and will be presented at the 2012 Annual Membership Meeting in Atlanta:

1. Proposal to change the organizational structure of the Trustees from a Regional Trustee model to a Constituency Trustee model. Specifically, the proposed new positions are:
Trustee for School Career Counselors & Specialists

Trustee for Higher Education Career Counselors & Specialists
Trustee for Agency & Private Career Counselors & Specialists
Trustee for Counselor Educators & Researchers
Trustee for State Associations (Task Forces for Emerging and Established Associations)
Trustee At Large

2. Proposal to create a president elect-elect position on the NCDA Board.
3. Proposal to change in the length of term service for the Secretary and Treasurer from a two-year term to a three-year term, consistent with the Trustee positions, to provide improve continuity.
4. Proposal to remove the ACA Governing Council rep from the NCDA Board so as to better differentiate the rep's primary responsibility to ACA. In other words, this person serves as the NCDA representative on the ACA Governing Council rather than the other way around.
5. Option to begin voting for the election at the conference, immediately after the slate of candidates is finalized.

These five proposals require changes in several Articles of the NCDA Bylaws. If approved during the 2012 Annual Membership Meeting, these changes will be sent to all NCDA members for a general vote. We hope you will agree that updating the NCDA bylaws in this way will better ensure proper representation of all members and chapters, provide continuity, reduce board costs and create successful NCDA's governance for the future.