



New York State
School Boards
Association

Resolution Kit *2021*



Table of Contents

Introduction	2
2021 Resolutions Survey Results	3
2016 Sunsetting Resolutions	7
2021 Key Dates	9
Resolution Process and Timeline	10
Formulating Resolutions	11
Sample Resolution	12
Submitting Resolutions	13
Appendix	14
• NYSSBA Bylaws - Article 9. Committees	



Introduction

The resolutions process is an opportunity for members of the New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA) to establish the positions and beliefs of the organization. This annual process directs NYSSBA's advocacy efforts through the proposal of new positions and the continuation or discontinuation of those set to expire. Only boards of education that are members of NYSSBA and NYSSBA's Board of Directors may submit resolutions for consideration. Proposed resolutions, once adopted, may direct NYSSBA to advocate either for or against a wide variety of legislative and regulatory issues at both the state and federal levels.

This Resolution Kit is intended to provide a clear and helpful guide for crafting and submitting proposed resolutions. In this kit you will find the full results of the Resolutions Survey that was electronically distributed to NYSSBA's full membership on March 1, 2021, a detailed timeline of the full resolutions process and instructions for resolution submission. A member board may also submit its own resolutions and proposed bylaw amendments for consideration on any topic. All resolutions and proposed bylaw amendments must be received by **5 p.m. on July 16, 2021** to be considered by the Resolutions Committee.

The Resolutions Committee will meet in August to review and consider all resolutions and bylaw amendments submitted by member boards of education and the NYSSBA Board of Directors. At this time the committee will determine which resolutions and bylaw amendments to recommend for consideration by the voting delegates at the Annual Business Meeting. Regardless of the recommendations made by the committee, all resolutions and proposed bylaw amendments will be presented to the voting delegates. The members of the committee were appointed by their Area Directors. You can find a complete committee list below.

2021 Resolutions Committee Members

Chair: Anne Savage, Albany – Area 7

Area 1: Jodee Riordan, *Lewiston-Porter*

Area 2: Maureen Nupp, *Monroe 1 BOCES*

Area 3: Mary Weimer, *Scio*

Area 4: Jeanne Shields, *Bainbridge-Guilford*

Area 5: Russell Wehner, *Chittenango*

Area 6: Catherine Hollinshead, *Malone*

Area 8: Kerri Green, *Sidney*

Area 9: William Boss, *Orange-Ulster BOCES*

Area 10: Marjorie Schiff, *Katonah-Lewisboro*

Area 11: Charmise Desire, *Uniondale*

Area 12: Matthew Clareen, *Islip*

Area 13: Roseann Napolitano, *New York City Department of Education*

Big 5: Louis Petrucci, *Buffalo*

Caucus of Black School Board Members: Robin Bolling, *Westbury*

Fred Langstaff, NYSSBA President, Board Liaison, *Eastern Suffolk BOCES*

We encourage all member boards interested in submitting a resolution to contact the Governmental Relations Department directly for any assistance.

NYSSBA STAFF

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2021 Resolutions Survey Results

On March 1st an electronic survey was distributed to all individuals serving on NYSSBA member school boards. The survey is used to gauge member support on important issues. **The survey does not establish NYSSBA's positions. Official positions are established only by the voting delegates during NYSSBA's Annual Business Meeting.** A sample resolution has been drafted for any position that was supported or opposed by at least two-thirds of survey respondents.

You may choose to advance one or more sample – or any other – resolutions by following the resolutions process. Sample resolutions will be considered, and may be advanced on a contingency basis by the NYSSBA Board of Directors.

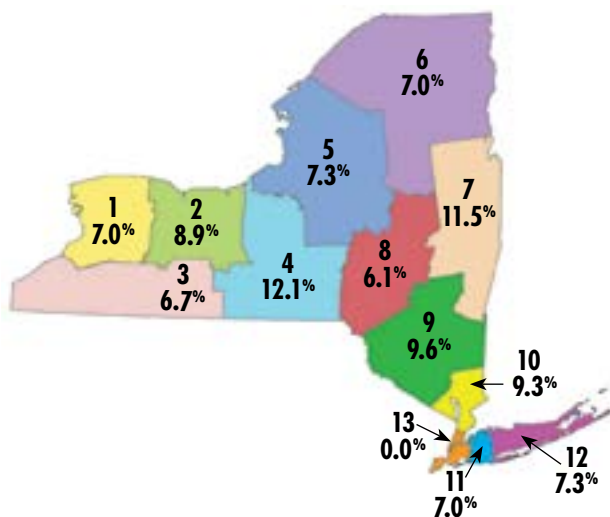
The survey was sent to 4,331 school board members in 662 school districts and BOCES whose boards are members of NYSSBA. A total of 452 individual responses were received from members representing 313 different district and BOCES boards. *[Note: not all percentages add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.]*

More than two-thirds of the 313 participating districts had one board member respond. The remainder of the participating districts submitted two, three, four or five responses as reflected in the table below.

Districts with:	# of respondents	% of respondents
one response	215	68.7%
two responses	66	21.1%
three responses	24	7.7%
four responses	7	2.2%
five responses	1	0.3%
	313	100.0%

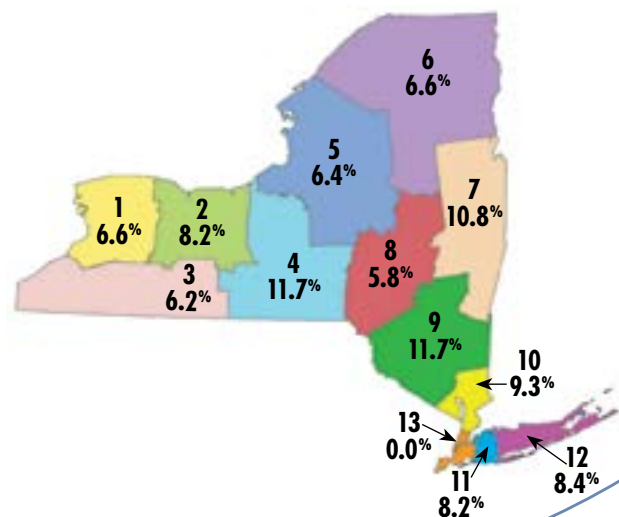
BOARD RESPONSES

The map below indicates the percentage of the 313 responding school boards that came from each of the 13 NYSSBA geographic areas.



INDIVIDUAL RESPONDENTS

The map below indicates the percentage of the 452 individual respondents that came from each of the 13 NYSSBA geographic areas.



2021 Resolutions Survey Results *cont.*

Questions that were supported or opposed by two-thirds or more respondents are highlighted in yellow throughout the survey. For your convenience, a sample resolution has been drafted for consideration for any issue that reached the supermajority (two-thirds) threshold. To advance a sample resolution, please follow the resolutions submission process.

1. Should NYSSBA support/oppose/be neutral on proposals that would provide tuition tax credits or educational vouchers that benefit private or parochial schools?

Support	12.6%	57
Oppose	65.6%	296
Be neutral	21.7%	98
Total		451

2. Should NYSSBA support/oppose/be neutral on proposals that would allow students with disabilities to be tested at their developmental age?

Support	78.6%	349
Oppose	7.2%	32
Be neutral	14.2%	63
Total		444

SAMPLE RESOLUTION: **RESOLVED**, that the New York State School Boards Association support proposals to allow students with disabilities to be tested at their developmental age.

3. Should NYSSBA support/oppose/be neutral on proposals that would increase state and federal reimbursements for school meals?

Support	92.4%	416
Oppose	3.1%	14
Be neutral	4.4%	20
Total		450

SAMPLE RESOLUTION: **RESOLVED**, that the New York State School Boards Association support proposals to increase state and federal reimbursements for school meals.



2021 Resolutions Survey Results *cont.*

4. Should NYSSBA support/oppose/be neutral on proposals that would generate new state revenues with the dedicated purpose of funding education?

Support	82.0%	370
Oppose	6.9%	31
Be neutral	11.1%	50
Total		451

SAMPLE RESOLUTION: **RESOLVED**, that the New York State School Boards Association support proposals that generate new state revenues with the dedicated purpose of funding education.

5. Should NYSSBA support/oppose/be neutral on proposals that would shift the overall funding of schools away from dependence on local school property taxes, thus increasing reliance on state aid?

Support	53.3%	236
Oppose	20.5%	91
Be neutral	26.2%	116
Total		443

6. Should NYSSBA support/oppose/be neutral on proposals to expand individual property tax exemptions without state funding?

Support	9.8%	43
Oppose	61.3%	268
Be neutral	28.8%	126
Total		437

7. Should NYSSBA support/oppose/be neutral on proposals to allow all school district voters to use non-excuse absentee ballots, upon request, for school board elections and budget votes?

Support	52.8%	237
Oppose	36.3%	163
Be neutral	10.9%	49
Total		449



2021 Resolutions Survey Results *cont.*

8. Should NYSSBA support/oppose/be neutral on proposals that would permit school districts to conduct ranked choice voting for board elections?

Support	23.2%	100
Oppose	38.7%	167
Be neutral	38.1%	164
Total		431

9. Should NYSSBA support/oppose/be neutral on proposals to require students and staff to receive a COVID-19 vaccine when available?

Support	48.4%	218
Oppose	22.9%	103
Be neutral	28.7%	129
Total		450

10. Should NYSSBA support/oppose/be neutral on proposals to restrict school district use of single-use products that are non-biodegradable?

Support	47.4%	213
Oppose	22.9%	103
Be neutral	29.6%	133
Total		449



2016 Sunsetting Resolutions

Each fall during NYSSBA's Annual Business Meeting, the voting delegates adopt official positions, which lay the foundation for the Association's advocacy agenda and priorities. Once adopted, each position remains a formal position for five years unless it is rescinded or the action the position calls for is accomplished.

The following resolutions were adopted during the 2016 Annual Business Meeting and are set to expire this year, unless reintroduced through the 2021 resolutions process.

STATE AND FEDERAL AID

RESOLVED, that the New York State School Boards Association opposes legislation that would provide tuition tax credits or educational vouchers that benefit private or parochial schools. *(2016)*

RESOLVED, that the New York State School Boards Association supports state legislation that would modify the reimbursement formula for school lunches. *(2016)*

RESOLVED, that the New York State School Boards Association supports changes that ensure that Special Act School Districts are treated equitably with all other public school districts, including a tuition rate that reflects public expenses. *(2016)*

RESOLVED, that the New York State School Boards Association supports legislation that ensures aid provided to districts is not correlated to the percentage of students taking state or federally required tests, recognizing parents will make decisions in the best interest of their individual children, independent of districts' overall requirements. *(2016)*

RESOLVED, that the New York State School Boards Association will support legislation that will fully restore funding withheld during the 2010-2016 Gap Elimination Adjustments (GEA). *(2016)*

RESOLVED, that the New York State School Boards Association calls upon the state Legislature and the Governor to reform New York State education funding in accordance with the following tenets to ensure adequate resources to public schools in the State of New York by providing for:

- a. Adequacy that provides sufficient resources to assure the opportunity for a sound basic education for all students; and
- b. Equity to distribute a foundation level of state aid for every student that is based on the actual cost of providing a sound basic education that fairly compensates for differences in community costs, needs and resources while precluding municipalities from using state aid to replace local education resources; and
- c. Flexibility to increase the percentage of operating aid so that boards of education retain the discretion to determine what educational programs best address local needs while local communities should not be restrained from determining the level of funding they will expend to support educational programs; and
- d. Predictability based on timely passage of the state budget and stable funding distributed through a consistent, uniformly applied formula that would not require annual manipulation by the Legislature and that would facilitate long-term planning by school districts; and
- e. Clarity by establishing a funding formula that is easily explained and understood. *(2016)*



2016 Sunsetting Resolutions, *cont.*

CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT:

RESOLVED, that the New York State School Boards Association supports state proposals affecting public education that:

- Provide access to programs that prepare students to be college- and career-ready;
- Achieve equity and adequacy in funding;
- Promote efficiency and cost-effectiveness;
- Advance high expectations for all students;
- Embrace innovative approaches and assessments;
- Foster community engagement and regional cooperation. (2016)

RESOLVED, that the New York State School Boards Association supports the appropriate use of technology to enhance academic programs. (2016)

RESOLVED, that the New York State School Boards Association calls upon the New York State Education Department to revise the current pathways toward achieving a high school diploma for New York students including the reinstatement of the Local High School Diploma, the use of performance-based assessments and multiple pathways to graduation, the modification of requirements for students completing a BOCES, career, or technical education program and the reinstatement of the Regents Competency Tests. (2016)

SPECIAL EDUCATION

RESOLVED, that the New York State School Boards Association supports proposals that would allow students with disabilities to be tested at their developmental age. (2016)

LOCAL MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

RESOLVED, that the New York State School Boards Association supports legislation enabling school districts and BOCES to create dedicated reserve funds to help offset the costs of all employee pensions (including teachers), and other post-employment benefits (OPEB) obligations. (2016)



2021 Key Dates

July 16, 2021 – Deadline for Submitting Proposed Resolutions or Bylaw Amendments

- Proposed resolutions or bylaw amendments must be received by NYSSBA before **5 p.m.** on **July 16th** to be considered by the Resolutions Committee.
 - Any resolution submitted after this time will be **late** and can only be considered for review and vote by the membership during the “Other Business” portion of the Annual Business Meeting.
 - Proposed resolutions or bylaw amendments must be submitted using the Proposed Resolution Submission form found **HERE** and must be emailed directly to Danielle Grasso at **advocacy@nyssba.org**.
 - An electronic confirmation will be sent upon receipt. Contact Danielle Grasso if you do not receive confirmation.
- We encourage you to contact NYSSBA Governmental Relations staff for assistance prior to submitting your final proposal.*

August 30, 2021 – Distribution of the Proposed Bylaw Amendments and Resolutions Book

- The book will be distributed electronically to all member boards and posted to the NYSSBA website by this date.

September 17, 2021 – Deadline for Submitting Amendments and Rebuttals to Proposed Bylaws and Resolutions

- Amendments to proposed resolutions and rebuttals and statements to proposed resolutions must be received by NYSSBA before 5 p.m. on September 17th.
- Rebuttals and statements of support may be submitted for proposed bylaws, but proposed bylaws may not be amended.
- Rebuttals and statements must be on school district letterhead. Amendments must be submitted using the NYSSBA Amendment Request form found **HERE** and emailed directly to Danielle Grasso at **advocacy@nyssba.org**.

September 27, 2021 – Distribution of the Voting Delegates’ Guide – Proposed Bylaw Amendments and Resolutions

- The guide will be distributed electronically to all member boards and posted to the NYSSBA website.

October 18, 2021 – NYSSBA’s Annual Business Meeting, Virtual

The 2021 Annual Business Meeting will take place in a virtual format, much like last year’s business meeting. Additional details will be released in the coming months.

- Delegates assemble to consider proposed resolutions and bylaw amendments.



Resolution Process and Timeline

As NYSSBA members, you are in the best position to identify those issues in need of discussion and possible action by NYSSBA. The resolutions process sets the agenda for the Annual Business Meeting each fall, which then sets the course for NYSSBA's advocacy agenda for the coming years.

There are many opportunities for boards of education to participate in and influence this process, and we urge you to take advantage of them. The following outlines the steps in that process:

January – March

At the beginning of the year, NYSSBA area directors are asked to appoint a representative from their area to serve on the Resolutions Committee.

In March, an online survey is distributed to all school board members whose districts are members of NYSSBA. The survey is used to gauge member support on important issues, including the continuation of some expiring or "sunsetting" positions or related issues. **This survey does not establish NYSSBA's positions. Official positions are established only by the voting delegates during NYSSBA's Annual Business Meeting.** A sample resolution is drafted for any position that is supported or opposed by a minimum of two-thirds of survey respondents. **Your district may choose to advance one or more sample, or any other resolution or bylaw amendment, by following this process.** The Board of Directors may advance resolutions, including those originating from the survey, or bylaw amendments.

April – August

The Resolution Kit, which includes the full results of the Resolutions Survey, is electronically distributed to NYSSBA's full membership. This kit provides member boards of education with resources for submitting resolutions and proposed bylaw amendments for consideration by the voting delegates at the Annual Business Meeting.

In addition to advancing any of the resolutions from the survey, a member board may also submit its own resolutions and proposed bylaw amendments for consideration on any topic. All resolutions and proposed bylaw amendments must be received by the close of business on July 16th to be considered by the Resolutions Committee. Member boards should consider sharing draft resolutions with NYSSBA Governmental Relations staff in advance of submission, to ensure that they are drafted in accordance with NYSSBA bylaws.

The Resolutions Committee meets in August to review and consider all resolutions and bylaw amendments submitted by member boards of education and the NYSSBA Board of Directors. At this time the committee will determine which resolutions and bylaw amendments to recommend for consideration by the voting delegates at the Annual Business Meeting. Regardless of the recommendations made by the committee, all resolutions and proposed bylaw amendments will be presented to the voting delegates.

Resolutions that are not recommended by the committee should not be deemed opposed by the committee. Those resolutions that are not recommended will be accompanied by an explanation as to why they were not recommended.

The resolutions, proposed bylaw amendments and the committee's recommendations are compiled to produce the *Proposed Bylaw Amendments and Resolutions Book* that is distributed electronically to the membership. Each member board has the right to submit an amendment, rebuttal or statement of support to the resolutions or the recommendations of the Resolutions Committee. These amendments, rebuttals or statements of support must be received by September 17th.

September

Any amendments, rebuttals and statements of support received by the September 17th deadline will be incorporated into the *Proposed Bylaw Amendments and Resolutions Book* to create the *Voting Delegates' Guide – Proposed Bylaw Amendments and Resolutions booklet*. This publication is distributed electronically to all members prior to the Annual Business Meeting. This booklet serves as the discussion guide for the agenda at the Annual Business Meeting.

October

The Resolutions Committee meets again in advance of the Annual Business Meeting to consider if any new information will require changes to its original recommendations.

Resolutions adopted at the Annual Business Meeting become official position statements of NYSSBA. Once enacted, positions remain active for five years in accordance with NYSSBA bylaws, unless acted upon, rescinded or rendered moot. Bylaw amendments remain in place until amended or repealed.

Failure to adopt a resolution does not set a NYSSBA position or repeal an existing position. While NYSSBA staff take careful notes and allow the conversation to inform their work, only the affirmative adoption of a resolution sets NYSSBA positions.



Formulating Resolutions

A well-crafted resolution provides NYSSBA with a clearly stated goal while providing flexibility to advocate for school boards' positions and pursue solutions that meet member needs.

Before drafting a resolution, review NYSSBA's 2021 Position Statements (www.nyssba.org/positions) to determine whether there is currently a position on the books that addresses your issue. Current positions should not be repeated. Proposed changes to positions should be addressed through the resolutions process.

Tips for drafting a resolution or bylaw amendment *(See page 12 for a sample resolution):*

- 1. Single Resolved Clause:** Begin your resolution or bylaw amendment with a single "resolved" clause as stipulated in Article 9, Section 2 of the NYSSBA Bylaws (see Appendix, NYSSBA Bylaws, Article 9).
 - The "resolved" clause is what delegates actually vote upon. Delegates are not voting on the wording of the rationale. Instead, the "rationale" is intended to support the "resolved" clause, which is your resolution.
 - Do not include "whereas" clauses. If you have more than one issue, submit more than one resolution or bylaw amendment.
- 2. Clear Call to Action:** Specify what action you are calling for NYSSBA to take, e.g., to support or oppose a specific issue. Resolutions should be worded broadly enough to provide NYSSBA the latitude to achieve the resolution's goal. Your rationale should be concise and persuasive in support of the resolution.
- 3. Statewide Significance:** Resolutions should be broad in scope. They should have a statewide impact or at least be relevant to most school boards in the state. NYSSBA is a statewide organization and its positions should represent all member boards.
- 4. Timely and Responsive:** Proposed resolutions should be responsive to current events and issues.

Please consider contacting NYSSBA Governmental Relations Staff to aid in the drafting of your resolution.



Sample Resolution

1 — — **SINGLE RESOLVED CLAUSE** — — **2** **CLEAR CALL TO ACTION**

— — **{RESOLVED,}** that the New York State School Boards Association **{oppose legislation}** — — — —

at the state and/or federal level that would provide tuition tax credits or educational vouchers for private or parochial schools.

RATIONALE

Allocation of any public funds to nonpublic schools diverts much-needed resources from public education. It establishes dissimilar standards for students attending different publicly supported schools, and diminishes both the impetus and effectiveness of reforms to public schools, which continue to be responsible for educating the vast majority of the state's children.

The foundation of our democracy has been built on the concept that all children, regardless of their race, gender, religion or economic status, are entitled to receive a free public education. Publicly funded tuition tax credits and educational vouchers divert money from public schools and undermine the ability of such schools to appropriately serve their students. Private schools are free to control which students gain admission to their schools and are free to expel students who do not measure up to their academic or behavioral standards. Additionally, as a rule, private schools are not required to follow state-imposed educational mandates or engage in collective bargaining.

Therefore, there is no merit to the argument by proponents of educational vouchers and tuition tax credits that they will force public schools to be more competitive. Perhaps most importantly, public funding of private school tuition tax credits and/or vouchers would **{initiate an annual competition}** for state funding that (particularly in lean years) would have a devastating effect on traditional public schools. It would be **{unconscionable}** for the state to initiate such a program while in violation of a Court of Appeals order declaring the state in violation of the state constitution

4 **TIMELY AND RESPONSIVE** — — **{(by virtue of underfunding public schools)}.**

3 **STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE**

It is imperative that NYSSBA continue its long-standing position in opposition to these programs that significantly threaten the future of public education.



Submitting Proposed Resolutions and Bylaw Amendments

Required Steps:

- Proposed resolutions or bylaw amendments must be submitted using the **Proposed Resolution Submission Form** found by clicking **HERE**. Please indicate if the school board president, superintendent or board clerk is the one submitting on the board's behalf.
- If any portion of the proposed resolution/bylaw amendment or rationale exceeds the space provided, please submit any additional sheets at the same time.
- **All proposed resolutions or bylaw amendments must be submitted via email directly to Danielle Grasso at advocacy@nyssba.org.**
- A confirmation email regarding the receipt of your proposed resolution or bylaw amendment will be sent to you within 48 hours of submission. If you do not receive one, please contact Danielle Grasso directly at danielle.grasso@nyssba.org.
- **Designate one contact person** who has the authority to modify the resolution or bylaw amendment in consultation with the Resolutions Committee.
 - The designated contact person must be available during the **Resolutions Committee meeting on August 9, 2021 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.** to respond to any committee member's questions regarding the proposed resolution. This person should not be a member of the Resolutions Committee. Include the name of the contact person and a daytime telephone number when submitting the resolution.
- All proposed resolutions and bylaw amendments submissions must be received by **5 p.m. on July 16th**.

We encourage you to submit your proposed resolution or bylaw amendment as early as possible. This allows NYSSBA Governmental Relations staff to review the materials, contact you for clarifications and answer any questions you might have.



NYSSBA BYLAWS - ARTICLE 9. COMMITTEES

ARTICLE 9. COMMITTEES (*As amended October 29, 2016*)

A. There shall be:

1. An Executive Committee of the board of directors, consisting of not more than eight members of the board of directors established annually by the board at the last meeting of the year of the board. Terms of office for the Executive Committee shall begin on January 1 following the meeting in which such members are chosen and shall continue for one year. The composition of the committee shall be as set forth in board policy. The committee shall have such powers as may be specifically delegated to it by the Board consistent with this paragraph of these Bylaws and the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law. The Board may vest the committee with the authority to:
 - a. Approve the Association's participation as *amicus* in cases of statewide interest to NYSSBA's membership, upon its own initiative or when requested to do so by a member board.
 - b. Approve the commencement of litigation on matters of statewide importance in court or before administrative agencies, either upon its own initiative or when requested to do so by any member board, except that lawsuits initiated to collect monies or fees owed to the Association may be authorized by the executive director.
 - c. Review matters that are brought to it by the executive director and to act upon such matters as appropriate, except that the committee shall not have the authority to alter or amend any policy established by the Board of Directors.

A majority of the total membership of the committee shall constitute a quorum. Any action taken shall require a majority of the full membership of the committee. It shall meet upon the call of the chair or upon the written request of three members of the committee addressed to the executive director. Such written request shall state the purpose(s) of the meeting and, upon its receipt, the executive director shall issue the call for the meeting. The notices of all meetings shall be sent so as to reach the members of the committee at least five days prior to the proposed meeting.

2. A Resolutions Committee, consisting of one school board member from each Association area, and one member from one of the five large city school boards, appointed by the president at the first meeting of the newly elected board of directors subject to confirmation by the board. The committee shall review, but may not amend, resolutions and bylaw amendments submitted to it by any member board or the Board of Directors.

Proposed resolutions or bylaw amendments must reach the Association office before the close of business on a date set annually by the Association. Such due date shall not be later than August 1 or the Monday following August 1 if this date falls on a Saturday or a Sunday. Each resolution shall consist of a single "resolved" clause without "whereas" clauses, and shall address only one subject. A brief rationale statement may be included with each resolution or proposed Bylaw amendment.

The Resolutions Committee shall present a report of its recommendations to NYSSBA membership in a printed document for action at the annual business meeting. A resolution adopted at an annual meeting shall remain in effect and shall be part of NYSSBA's active program for five years, unless sooner rescinded, reaffirmed, implemented or enacted.

3. Other committees as the Board of Directors determines; the members of such committees to be appointed by the president, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors; and such committees shall report at such times and at such places as the Board of Directors may determine.

- B. At the request of the President, any committee appointed by the Board of Directors may meet by means of a telephone conference or similar communication permitted by the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law. Notice of such meeting shall be given to members of the committee at least 24 hours prior to such meeting.





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