AEA-Retired – AEA Board of Directors' Representation

Background

AEA and NEA governance representation is founded on the principle of one person-one vote so that all members have an equal voice within the association. The one person-one vote principle can be achieved using a variety of methods. For example, governance representation can be based on a fixed number of constituents. AEA uses that representation method for the AEA Delegate Assembly where members elect 1 delegate for every 25 members of their local constituency.

Because local association membership varies in size, governance representation for Regional Directors on the AEA Board of Directors uses a weighted vote method. Each Regional Director has a vote equal to the percentage of deviation from a statewide membership average. Directors elected at-large have a weighted vote of 100. The AEA Compliance Review Committee, as charged in AEA Bylaws, Article II, Section 8, monitors the electoral regions to assure compliance with the one person-one vote principle.

As the weighted vote range widens, representation becomes more unbalanced causing constituency groups to be over or under represented. AEA-Retired membership has grown steadily over the last 10 years while at the same time AEA active membership has declined. This has resulted in the weighted vote calculation on the AEA Board of Directors significantly favoring the retired membership constituency and diminishing the weighted vote of many active membership constituencies, such as rural or ESP at-large.

Specifically, the AEA Bylaws require the total active and retired membership be divided by the number of regional directors to establish the average number of members for each director. Each region's membership is then divided by that average to determine a region's weighted vote. Because AEA-Retired membership is significantly greater than any other local association, it skews the calculation of the average. Using today's membership figures, the weighted vote range on the AEA Board of Directors is a low of 49 for rural, active members to a high of 253 for retired members. All at-large members (e.g. Officers, NEA State Directors, ESP At-Large, and Ethnic Minority At-Large) have a weighted vote of 100.

NEA's Constitution, Article V, Section 1, defines the composition of the NEA Board of Directors and sets a fixed number of directors from the retired membership category. In contrast, AEA's Constitution instead structures all retired members into 1 governance region, Region 16.

The AEA Officers recognize this representation imbalance and want to <u>jointly develop</u> a long-term solution with AEA-Retired.

Design Concept

ONE possible solution to the representation imbalance would be to model the composition of the AEA Board of Directors after the NEA Board of Directors composition.

This would require an amendment to the AEA Constitution to define one director position for the retired members of the Association and additional language defining the Retired Alternate Director. The AEA Bylaws, Article II, Section 8 would also require an amendment to modify the calculation for weighted vote on the AEA Board of Directors to only include active members.

Frequently Asked Questions about the Design Concept

AEA Board of Directors' Representation

1. What is the representation on the NEA Board of Directors for retired members?
   The **NEA Constitution, Article V., Section 1. Composition**, states that the NEA Board of Directors shall consist of …"six (6) directors for the Retired membership of the Association…"

2. Will AEA-Retired still have a director on the AEA Board of Directors?
   Yes. AEA-Retired would have one director on the AEA Board of Directors that would represent retired membership and only be elected by AEA-Retired members.

3. Will AEA-Retired still elect an alternate director to serve in the absence of the AEA-Retired Director at an AEA Board of Directors' meeting?
   Yes. AEA-Retired would continue to elect an Alternate Director that would serve in the absence of the AEA-Retired Director.

4. Will the AEA-Retired Director still have the same rights and standing as other directors?
   Yes. The AEA-Retired Director will have all the same rights, privileges, and standing as all at-large directors on the AEA Board of Directors.

5. How does this change help the AEA Board of Directors?
   This begins to balance representation among all of our members. The AEA-Retired Director would have a weighted vote of 100, the same as an AEA Officer, NEA State Director, ESP At-Large Director, or Ethnic Minority At-Large Director. Without retired membership in the weighted vote calculation, the weighted vote range narrows to 57-155 without any further adjustments to regional representation.

6. How does this change help AEA's requirement for compliance with NEA guidelines?
   Using the weighted vote method for the AEA Board of Directors does comply with NEA Standards of Affiliation. However, the more narrow the range of weighted votes, the more balanced the representation becomes among all constituents.

7. Is this an attempt to silence AEA-Retired's voice on the AEA Board of Directors?
   No. This is a long-term solution to balance representation on the AEA Board of Directors and give all membership constituencies a fair and equal voice.

8. Does this change affect funding for the AEA-Retired Director?
   No. Funding, privileges, and responsibilities for all members of the AEA Board of Directors are defined in AEA Board Policy and the AEA-Retired Director would be governed by those policies just as all other directors.

9. Are there other changes to the AEA Board of Directors that are being considered in light of membership loss and cost effectiveness?
   Yes. The Compliance Review Committee is reviewing the regional director representation for the AEA Board of Directors. They are required to use January 15, 2012 membership figures to determine their final recommendation to Delegate Assembly. The number of regional directors on the AEA Board of Directors will be reduced as a direct result of AEA's membership loss. The number of directors and resulting local association assignments are still being evaluated.

AEA Delegate Assembly Representation

10. Does this change affect the number of AEA-Retired delegates at AEA Delegate Assembly?
    No. The weighted vote on the AEA Board of Directors has no impact on representation to Delegate Assembly. **ALL** local associations will continue to elect 1 delegate for every 25 members or any portion thereof.

11. How will AEA-Retired delegates be seated at Delegate Assembly?
    AEA-Retired delegates will continue to be seated together as a single delegation.

NEA Representative Assembly Representation

12. How does this change affect AEA-Retired delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly?
    NEA's Constitution, Bylaws, and Election Guidelines govern representation to the NEA Representative Assembly. This change only affects the AEA Board of Directors.

13. Will this change affect the funding for AEA-Retired delegates to the NEA-RA?
    No. The funding determination and process for all elected state, regional, and retired delegates would not be affected by this change.