



**Continuum**  
TEACHERS ASSOCIATION  
**Dynamic Governance Structure**

**Membership:**

All members of the **Continuum Teachers Association (CTA)**.

**Pods:**

Small working groups, or committees, which attend to the running of the **CTA**.

Pods are created and dissolved according to the needs of **CTA**.

Some Pods are short-term with discrete, specific tasks.

Some Pods are long-term with abstract visioning projects or functional maintenance duties and implementing policies.

**Point Person (PP):**

Each **Pod** has a **Point Person** and, ideally, a **co-PP**, who work together to:

1. convene meetings
2. maintain records
3. see that the work of the Pod is carried out efficiently

Term of office for each PP is determined by the nature and the needs of the Pod, and the individual.

**Communications Coordinators (CCs):**

All communication to the **Membrane** and to the **Membership** goes through the Communications Coordinators.

The CCs are responsible for sending all communications and documents out to the Membrane and the Membership.

The CCs provide support for all Point People.

**Membrane:**

Made up of the **Point Person from each Pod** and the **2 Communications Coordinators**.

Having a **PP** from each **Pod** means that all Pods have a way to cross-pollinate and support each other to be in accordance with *CTA Vision*,

*Mission & Values, CTA Code of Ethics, and the Bylaws of the Continuum Teachers Association – A Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation.*

### **Board of Directors:**

As an incorporated 501(c)(6) non-profit organization we are required to have a Board of Directors.

There will be three Directors: President, Treasurer and Secretary.

The Board attends to the business of the corporation, filing taxes, annual reports, and the list of membership to the State of Pennsylvania.

Because of the overlap in job description, the Point Person from the Legal Pod serves as President, the Point Person from the Financial Pod serves as Treasurer, and one of the Communications Coordinators serves as Secretary.

Each Director will serve for a term of 2-3 years with a term-limit of two (2) consecutive terms.

These Point Person leadership positions are determined through consent election 3 months prior to the end of each term (see election process under “Pods and Their Responsibilities”).

*Exception: The initial terms for the three Directors will be staggered in order to provide consistency and avoid Directors vacating office at the same time. The President will serve an initial term of 2 years. The Treasurer will serve an initial term of 3 years. The Secretary will serve an initial term of 4 years. Please refer to Bylaws of Continuum Teachers Association – A Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation.*

### **Ethics & Meditation Council:**

The **EMC** provides integrity in upholding the relational guidelines as stated in the CTA Code of Ethics.

If needed, the EMC will hold hearings, in a council style process, regarding any transgressions of conduct within the Membership.

The EMC also functions as conflict resolution tenders, working with any unresolvable disagreements through a council process.

## The Decision-Making Process

### 2 Principles of Dynamic Governance Decision-Making:

#### Consent

Consent governs decision-making.

Consent seeks a decision with which everyone can live and for which there is no argued and paramount objection.

“Argued” mean reasoned or explained.

“Paramount” means all-important.

Rather than seeking agreement or the best or ideal decision, consent seeks a decision that is “good enough for now” in order to move forward.

#### Objection

Objection is different from a veto or a block.

An argued and paramount objection is a valid reason why a particular decision would prevent a member of the CTA from doing their job or otherwise supporting CTA *Vision, Mission and Values*.

The CTA Membership solicits objections because they provide useful information (feedback) to design a better policy.

The Membership uses reasons given for objections to improve a proposal so that all members can work toward the CTA *Vision, Mission and Values* more effectively.

#### **The Process:**

1. When issues or needs arise, a **Pod** is identified or created to address such.
2. The appropriate **Pod** develops a proposal.
3. The proposal goes to the **Communications Coordinators** who send it out to the **Membrane** to get initial feedback and to make sure it is in alignment with **CTA Vision, Mission and Values**.
4. If anyone on the **Membrane** has a paramount objection and feels the proposal needs more work they give feedback, suggestions and support, if

- needed, to the original Pod. Objections are the way for the **Membrane** to provide information in order to improve the proposal.
5. When the **Membrane** consents that the proposal is good enough, the **CCs** send the proposal out to the **Membership** for consent.
  6. The **Membership** has 7 to 14 days, depending on the urgency, to consent or express a paramount objection. If no answer is received it is counted as consent.
  7. Any **CTA Member** who has a paramount objection must be willing to work with the **Pod** that developed the proposal as a consultant until the member is satisfied that the proposal is good enough. Objections must be reasoned and argued and based on the ability of the objector to work productively toward the goals of the organization.
  8. The reworked proposal will then be resubmitted to the **Communications Coordinators** who will send it, first to the **Membrane**, and then back to the **Membership** for consent.
  9. Decisions are final when there are no remaining paramount objections, that is, when there is informed consent from all **CTA Members**.

### **Financial Decision-Making**

1. Each Pod will propose a budget range for what it might need to fulfill an envisioned project to the Financial Pod.
2. Any monetary requests under \$500 will be worked out directly with the Financial Pod based on previously budgeted and available funds.
3. Any proposal for an envisioned project with estimated costs of \$500 or more will be sent to the Communications Coordinators who will call a virtual meeting of the Membrane to review the proposal. The Membrane will work to find the balance between the Pod's financial request and the CTA's allowable budget.
4. *Consultation with the Financial Pod during the development of any proposal is strongly recommended.*

### **Communications Coordinators**

The **Communications Coordinators** are two (2) CTA administrators who coordinate the day-to-day work of the CTA.

They are the hub for flow of information between the Membrane and the Membership.

The **CCs** track who is in each Pod and for what length of time, providing support to the Point Person of each Pod.

The CCs ensure all Pods are aligned to the Vision, Mission and Values of the CTA.

The CCs receive notes from teacher meetings (the host of each of the 3 annual CTA meetings will insure that a volunteer takes notes, writes a summary report, and submits them to the CCs), and sends reports to the *Sense Of The Field* newsletter.

The CCs defend and promote the values of CTA, including Dynamic Governance, within running of the Association.

One Communications Coordinator serves as Secretary on the Board of Directors, in three-year term increments (after the initial start-up term of four-years).

In order to provide continuity, the second CC serves in two-year term increments and is prepared and available to step in as Secretary should the need arise.

## **Pods and Their Responsibilities**

All Pod responsibilities can change according to need.

All Pods work in consultation with each other to ensure the good health and fitness of CTA now and into the future. The PPs (or co-PPs in their place) will attend monthly Membrane meetings as consistently as possible to support this.

It is strongly recommended that individuals serve on no more than two (2) separate Pods at any one time.

The three (3) Board of Directors, Ethics and Mediation Council members, and the PPs of Financial and Membership will not serve on any other Pods for the duration their terms.

### **How the Pod leadership positions are elected:**

Pod leadership positions (Point Person and co-Point Person) are filled by conducting consent elections within each Pod.

Consent elections are an efficient way for groups, particularly committees and task forces, to select leaders from their ranks.

Elections take place through facilitated open dialogue that includes all candidates.

A Pod member steps forward to be the election facilitator.

She, or he, announces the responsibilities, qualifications, and term of office for any position on the Pod.

Any CTA Member can submit a nomination, including self-nomination, to the election facilitator prior to the date set for the Pod discussion and vote.

The nominator and nominee will each explain, in person or in writing, why the candidate being put forward is qualified. Discussion will help to clarify which candidates have the most compelling qualifications.

After all nominated candidates have been discussed, the election facilitator asks all members of the Pod, who are present, to vote.

Eventually, all of the information from the discussion organizes toward a preferred candidate that everyone consents to.

This is a simple and elegant process that can be applied any time someone needs to be chosen by a group for a task.

Because everyone has given their consent to the selected candidate, candidates feel fully supported, which avoids the political fallout from a situation in which some members of a group voted for a losing candidate.

An additional benefit is that this election process generates for the group valuable information about and common understanding around the open positions and the needs of the group that you simply don't get in traditional voting.

## **Descriptions of Pods**

**Audio-Visual** - Researches web platforms for video conferencing and local conferencing companies to use in areas teacher meetings are held; determines how the CTA wants this to work- audio only like a webinar, or live stream with video. Research the possibility of developing our own AV team for meetings. Research having a single source AV company that could supply support to all our meetings.

**Financial** - Plans annual budget; accepts and keeps record of dues; interfaces with financial institution regarding management of account, including writing checks; considers long-term financial planning; assumes responsibility for tax preparation in accordance with our 501(c)(6) status. Point Person serves as the Treasurer on the Board of Directors, in three-year term increments.

**Legal** - Implements 501(c)(6); makes sure any documents are in accordance with any legal requirements; available for consultation with other Pods; advises membership regarding copyright and trademark concerns; determines what certificates or forms, if any are needed from the membership, for example - proof of liability insurance. Point Person serves as the President on the Board of Directors, in two-year term increments.

**Membership** - Manages inquiries and application to join CTA in conjunction with the Welcoming Pod. Ensures that new members have consented to CTA's Vision/Mission/Values, and CTA's Dynamic Governance Decision-Making Process. Obtains information from the teachers as to what skills they offer to be used as a resource for the Pods. Maintains the Membership database shared with the Web Pod - keeps list of Members current. Informs Communications Coordinators when any new Members are added.

**Outreach** - Responsible for the way the CTA connects with larger global Community, i.e. the face we present to the world. Creates content for and updates on website and social media forums. Makes sure that all media forums, online or printed, are available to and reflect all current members. Creates links of connection with other resonant groups within and without the CTA. Continues to seek new ways for the CTA to interface with the larger global community. Collects and keeps current outreach mailing list generated by website inquires. Adds names of students who give permission, from teachers who send in their workshop/class lists.

***Sense Of The Field Newsletter*** – Publishes a quarterly CTA newsletter, at the equinox and solstices; sends out a call with deadline for submissions of articles, poetry, pictures, dives, research, etc. Sends final draft of each issue to Communications Coordinators and Outreach PP for review before sending out to the Global Body.

**Web/IT** - Develops, implements and maintains website; provides tutorial sessions for use by members if applicable; links with Outreach Pod to coordinate social media campaigns.

**Archives/Media Library** - Collects and maintains past and future history in Media Library; videos, print, audio recordings, newsletters, and dives collected from CTA members.

**Blog Team** collects and prepares blog contributions from CTA Members for posting on the website; team leader/editor coordinates with Website Administrator to schedule posting.

**Welcoming** – Tends and tracks the developing teachers interested in becoming members; provides support for the CTA Mentors; keeps the list of available CTA Mentors and active Mentees current on the Membership side of the website; ideally there is a Pod member representing each of the 3 primary meetings who will then be present at their respective meeting to facilitate the Welcoming ceremony for new members with their mentors.

### **Ethics & Mediation Council**

The **Ethics & Mediation Council** will provide integrity within the CTA by upholding relational guidelines of conduct within the Membership.

The CTA's Code of Ethics and any grievances will be tended to by this 3-5 person, consent-elected council.

**The EMC will review and examine reports of transgressions of conduct within membership**, unresolvable disagreements (particularly those regarding elected positions), and any cases of persistent lack of participation, including the non-payment of dues. Please refer to *Bylaws of Continuum Teachers Association – A Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation*.

Therefore, in order to best serve the integrity of the council process and to avoid potential dual relationships, it is strongly recommended that EMC members are not Communications Coordinators or on the Legal, Financial or Membership Pods while serving on this Council.

Established by informed consent 5.1.17