

Policies and Procedures

Montana School
Counselor Association

Montana School Counselor Association Policies and Procedures

First Adopted August 13, 2007	Amended July 28, 2014
Amended January 26, 2010	Amended August 5, 2015
Amended April 16, 2011	Amended April 15, 2016
Amended April 20, 2012	Amended August 7, 2016
	Amended August 11, 2017

These are the Policies and Procedures for the Montana School Counselor Association first adopted in August of 2007. These operational policies guide the work of the Executive Board and the membership. They should be reviewed annually, but also may be changed by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board at any board meeting.

I. Legal Status

MSCA is a legal non-profit corporation with Articles of Incorporation filed with the State of Montana. MSCA has been designated as a 501c-3 non-profit corporation by the Federal Government. It is necessary that an annual report be filed each January with the Secretary of State (Montana). In addition, tax reporting is required based upon the organization's annual finance status. The 501c-3 status allows tax deductible donations. The organization also has an Employer Identification Number kept with the President's and Treasurer's files.

II. Affiliation

MSCA is a State Division of the American School Counselor Association chartered in accordance with ASCA's bylaws. MSCA was granted its first charter in 1982. That charter was most recently reissued on July 8, 2016 (and is good through 2021). MSCA is also a division of the Montana Counseling Association as is ASCA a division of the American Counseling Association.

III. Organization Direction and Planning

The work of the Montana School Counselor Association is guided by MSCA Bylaws, the Strategic Plan, and the Policies and Procedures. The job descriptions of the Executive Board guide the division of the work of the organization. All actions taken should support the organization's mission.

IV. Board Member Code of Ethics

As a leader who helps to promote excellence in the profession of school counseling, it is each board member's ethical responsibility to see to it that the work of Montana School Counselor Association board results in significant progress for the profession in Montana. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that board meetings operate as efficiently as possible. To not do so will only hinder the collective work towards advancement of the profession of school counseling. Annually at each Fall Executive Board meeting, each member of the MSCA

Executive Board will review and sign the Montana Board Member Code of Ethics. For a full copy of the Montana Board Member Code of Ethics, please see Appendix A.

V. Board Resolution Policy

The board is responsible and accountable for its actions, including actions taken by individuals that may undermine the efforts of the organization, the board or other individuals. For a full copy of the Montana Board Resolution Policy, please see Appendix B.

VI. Financial Policies

A. Financial Committee

The Finance Committee will be responsible for overseeing and managing the budget and financial records. The committee will consist of the President, President-Elect, Past President, and the Treasurer. **MSCA has contracted the services of Brent Russ, CPA of Missoula, MT for the purposes of consultation, tax filing, and records review.**

B. Financial Records

The Treasurer is charged with keeping the Financial Records of the organization. All expenditures and receipts are to be recorded and then reviewed three times a year by the finance committee. Quarterly reports are to be submitted to the Executive Board and an annual report will be provided to the membership at the Annual Meeting.

1. Audit

A professional audit or review will be conducted every four years.

C. Banking

MSCA has a business checking account and a savings account (currently at Wells Fargo Bank). Three members of the Executive Board are listed on that account at any time. They are the President, President-Elect and the Treasurer. These three officers will each be able to sign checks and will possess an association card for the account and will have online access to view the account.

A decision to change the bank utilized and to open or close an account for the Association will require a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Board.

Bank statements will be sent to the Treasurer monthly for reconciliation purposes and then filed with the Treasurer's files. The Treasurer, President Elect and President will review electronic bank statements monthly. In addition, records and bank statements are available for the finance committee review at any time. In addition, the Treasurer will give a copy of the deposits to the finance committee. Any officer or member of MSCA may request to view a statement and financial records with the Treasurer. A record of that will be maintained and submitted to the board. A log will be maintained of people who check the account.

This account is not to be used as a cash account and therefore cash will not be obtained

through the use of the debit card. All purchases made with the debit card are recorded in the Account Register with the identifying card number, ensuring that all purchases can be traced to the specific card used. The Debit Card Expenditure Form sent by the card user is then reconciled monthly with that statement by the Treasurer. (A copy of the Expenditure Form is included as Appendix C). At this time, the account has no regular user fees or monthly transaction fees associated with it.

D. Debit Card Purchases

When using the debit card to make purchases, a Debit Card Expenditure Form must be complete with receipts attached. These must be sent to the Treasurer by the last day of each month for reconciliation. The Treasurer will have his/her check card expenditure forms initialed by the President ~~each month~~ quarterly or at each person-to-person meeting, as a checks and balances safeguard.

E. Purchases

Purchases of goods less than \$250.00 must have prior documented approval of the President, unless specified in the budget. Goods for more than \$250.00 require documented approval in the minutes of the Executive Board, unless specified in the budget. All expenditures require receipts to go on file with the Treasurer, with the exception of per diem.

F. ~~Monthly~~ Expenses

At this time, MSCA does not have any regular monthly expenses. The Association pays no wages or salaries and does not have an Association office. ~~MSCA pays a stipend to conference coordinators, newsletter editor, and professional fees to our accountant. All other expenses are general operating expenses addressed in the budget.~~ Future expenses that are or may become regular monthly transactions must be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

G. Reimbursement Policy

MSCA members representing the Montana School Counselor Association at conferences, meetings, and events is subject to approval by the President of MSCA and the Executive Board. Representatives may be elected board members or other MSCA members appointed to act on behalf of the Association. Representatives of MSCA are expected to be fiscally responsible and make an effort to minimize expenses. The following is a breakdown of the expenses covered:

1. Lodging

MSCA will pay for a single room rate for the event for each representative. No set guidelines for costs per night are mandated as the Association recognizes that rates vary depending upon location and season.

2. Mileage

MSCA will pay roundtrip mileage from the representative's home city to the event

location at the current state government rate, which will be updated each January. When two or more representatives are traveling from the same home city to the same event, carpooling is strongly encouraged.

3. Meals

Meals for representatives will be reimbursed at the following rates:

In-State:	
Breakfast	\$5.00
Lunch	\$7.00
Dinner	\$12.00
Total	\$24.00
Out-Of-State:	
Breakfast	\$10.00
Lunch	\$15.00
Dinner	\$25.00
Total	\$50.00

Receipts for meals are not required and representatives may request meal payment in advance by submitting the MSCA Reimbursement Form to the Treasurer a minimum of 10 days prior to the event.

On occasion, when the Board hosts a lunch or dinner meeting/gathering, the Board will assume the cost of the meal for all attendees at the out-of-state rate. The Board will not pay for alcoholic beverages during this meal; however attendees may choose to purchase their own alcoholic beverages.

When determining meals to be reimbursed, representatives may begin on the day at the time they leave their home city. If meals are included as part of the conference, meeting, or event, the representative may not be reimbursed for those meals.

4. Travel

Travel to events should occur as close to the date and time of the event as is possible based on distance and time. MSCA will pay lodging and meals for the day before and the day after the event when time and distance require it.

Mileage and related expenses (i.e. parking fees, internet access), will also be paid to those representatives who are required to travel more than 15 miles by car to an airport when flying for MSCA purposes. Transportation costs to and from the site of the conference/meeting will also be covered.

H. Reimbursement Schedule

1. Before the Event

Travel reimbursements may be requested prior to the event as an advance per diem by completing the MSCA Reimbursement Form and submitting it to the Treasurer a minimum of 10 days prior to the event.

2. After the Event

Complete the MSCA Reimbursement Form, attach receipts for all expenses other than mileage and meals (hotels, shuttles, parking, internet fees) and submit the form to the Treasurer within 30 days of the event. The Treasurer will process the claim and send payment within 10 days of the receipt of the form.

The MSCA Reimbursement Form is located in Appendix D.

I. Standard Events Covered by Reimbursement

Representatives listed below will receive reimbursement for travel and expenses from MSCA providing that they do not receive reimbursement from any other sources.

1. Executive Board Meetings:

All elected and appointed Board Members.

2. Fall Conference (currently MEA/MFT) and Board Meeting:

All elected and appointed Board Members.

3. Spring Institute/Conference and Board Meeting:

All elected and appointed Board Members.

4. Board Approved State Committee Meeting:

Annually appointed board members to committees including, but not limited to, Advocacy Committee, Montana Association for Career and Technical Education (MACTE), Montana College Access Network (MCAN), Montana Behavior Initiative (MBI), and the School Mental Health Initiative.

5. ASCA Conference, Delegate Assembly and Leadership Development Institute (LDI):

The President and President-Elect attend and all expenses are paid for by MSCA. If one or more of these cannot attend, board substitutions may be made.

6. Western States:

The President and President-Elect attend and all expenses are paid for by MSCA. If one or more of these cannot attend, board substitutions may be made.

7. Other events representing MSCA with Board approval.

J. Annual Tax Filing

The Treasurer will complete the annual tax forms, including IRS form 990, to determine if the organization needs to file tax returns with the IRS. If the organization exceeds the income guidelines for not filing, the Treasurer will file IRS form 990, including tax forms related to speaker fees, by the May 15th deadline each year. MSCA will use the calendar year as its tax filing year. The Treasurer will report to the Executive Board during the summer meeting on the status of the tax filings.

VII. Records

A. Legal Documents

The President shall keep in the President's files the original legal documents of the organization. Copies of each shall also be kept with the Treasurer. **Electronic copies will be kept in Dropbox.** The following documents should be in those files:

1. ASCA charter
2. Articles of Incorporation
3. 501c3 application and designation
4. Annual Corporation report with the Montana Secretary of State
5. Minutes of the Annual Meeting
6. Contracts
7. Tax ID letter
8. Any tax documents filed (copies)

B. Minutes

The Secretary is responsible to record and maintain minutes of the Association and Executive Board meetings. Minutes should be distributed to the Executive Board within two weeks of each meeting. Minutes of the Annual Meetings are provided to the Association at the next Annual Meeting or upon request. Board members will have access to the minutes via the electronic record keeping system.

C. Financial Records

The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining the financial records of the Association (see section VI, B – Financial Records).

VIII. Meetings

A. Association

The Association will have an opportunity to meet two times annually. One meeting will be held in conjunction with the Fall Conference and the second, the Annual Meeting, will be held in conjunction with the Spring Institute/Conference.

B. Executive Board

The Executive Board will meet four times each year (quarterly). The board may have additional meetings, including virtual meetings, as needed.

Fall	In conjunction with the MEA/MFT Educators Conference the third week of October. The location is determined by MEA/MFT.
Winter	Meeting format to be determined by the executive board.
Spring	In conjunction with the Spring Institute/Conference, usually in April. Location is determined by the Executive Board.
Summer	Meeting format determined by the executive board.

IX. Job Descriptions

A. President

1. Shall serve as primary spokesperson and advocate for MSCA and school counselors in Montana.
2. Shall provide leadership and facilitate the work of MSCA.
3. Shall preside over all general meetings and Executive Board meetings of MSCA.
4. Shall oversee the work of the officers and the Executive Board to ensure the completion of the Mission of MSCA.
5. Shall serve as a regular member of the Bylaws and Policies Committee and the Finance Committee and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.
6. Shall represent MSCA or designate a representative to other organization and committees relevant to school counselors.
7. Shall communicate regularly with the membership through the newsletter and email communication.
8. Shall represent MSCA at the ASCA Delegate Assembly, Annual Conference, Leadership Development Institute (LDI), and Western States.
9. Shall prepare an annual report for ASCA and the membership.
10. Shall attend all Executive Board Meetings, the **Co-chair** Spring Conference, and the Fall Conference.
11. Shall perform such duties as are incidental to the office or as directed by the Executive Board.
12. Shall ensure that the educational opportunities identified within the Strategic Plan occur each year as scheduled.
13. Shall review the association's' documents which include; Bylaws, Policies and Procedures, Strategic Plan, Minutes, Financial Reports and other information pertinent to this position.
14. Shall oversee website review annually during the summer months following delegate assembly.
15. Shall renew website domain name.

B. President-Elect

1. Shall, in the absence of the President, assume the role of the President with all of its authority and responsibility.
2. Shall, upon request, serve as an advisor to the President and the Executive Board.
3. Shall serve as Ethics Chair and have the task of reviewing the ASCA Ethical Guidelines and assisting the membership in understanding the ethical standards of the profession as defined by ASCA.
4. Shall serve as the chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee.
5. Shall serve as a member of the Finance Committee.
6. Shall represent MSCA at the ASCA Delegate Assembly, Annual Conference, and Leadership Development Institute, LDI.
7. Shall co-chair the annual Spring Conference and attend the Fall Conference.
8. Shall submit articles/information to each newsletter relevant to school counselors.
9. Shall review the association's documents which include; Bylaws, Policies and Procedures, Strategic Plan, Minutes, Financial Reports and other information pertinent to this position.
10. Shall prepare an annual report for the membership.
11. Shall mentor new Executive Board members

C. Past-President

1. Shall attend all meetings of the Executive Board.
2. Shall provide support as necessary to the President and the Executive Board.
3. Shall perform such duties as may be requested by the President or the Executive Board.
4. Shall serve as chair of the Bylaws and Policies Committee.
5. Shall serve as a member of the Finance Committee.
6. Shall chair the annual Fall Conference and in a capacity to be agreed upon by the MSCA Board, help with the facilitation of the annual MSCA Spring Conference.
7. Shall submit articles/information to each newsletter relevant to school counselors.
8. Shall review the associations' documents which include; Bylaws, Policies and Procedures, Strategic Plan, Minutes Financial Reports and other information pertinent to this position.
9. Shall prepare an annual report for the membership.

D. Secretary

1. Shall attend and record all meetings of the Executive Board, the general membership and any committee meetings as appropriate.
2. Shall prepare and send minutes to the President and the Executive Board within two weeks of the meeting.
3. Shall maintain the permanent file of the organization. The Secretary's file (currently held in Dropbox) should contain all the minutes of the organization, the current Bylaws, Policies and Procedures, Strategic Plan, past newsletters, minutes of any committee meetings, and any correspondence.
4. Shall administer and maintain a web-based file storage and sharing program for the

- association, which includes backing up the files quarterly. **Files are currently stored in Dropbox.**
5. Shall maintain on-line historical records of the association, which includes backing-up the files quarterly. Currently these are housed in Google drive.
 6. Shall, in capacity to be agreed upon by the MSCA Board, help with facilitation of the annual MSCA Spring Conference and assist with the Fall Conference as appropriate.
 7. Any mailings will be sent to the Secretary for printing and mailing, unless otherwise designated by the board.
 8. **Shall monitor the membership through the website.**

E. Treasurer

1. Shall develop, in cooperation with the finance committee, a financial plan of action and budget for the Executive Board for consideration and revision at the summer meeting with final adoption at the October board meeting.
2. Shall inform the Executive Board of the financial status of the organization through quarterly financial reports or when requested by the President.
3. Shall suggest financial policy statements and make fiscal recommendations to the Executive Board.
4. Shall prepare and present a financial report to the membership at the annual meeting.
5. Shall transact all financial business of the Association.
6. Shall keep accurate records of all monies received and disbursed.
7. Shall update and maintain the membership database as new and renewal memberships arrive.
8. Shall collect and organize conference registration information and fees.
9. Shall attend all Executive Board meetings, the Spring Conference and the Fall Conference as well as other meetings appropriate to the position and the organization.
10. Shall chair the Finance Committee.
11. Shall ~~prepare and file appropriate tax paperwork each spring as necessary coordinate with accountant to ensure taxes are prepared and filed annually.~~
12. Shall maintain and review the Treasurer's records and association's documents which include; Bylaws, Policies and Procedures, Strategic Plan, Minutes Financial Reports and other information pertinent to this position.

F. Level Vice-Presidents

1. Shall serve as a resource and spokesperson for MSCA, promoting the needs and interests of counselors at the represented level in the state of Montana.
2. Shall submit article/information to ~~each~~ newsletter(s) relevant to counselors at the represented area.
3. Shall, in a capacity to be agreed upon by the MSCA board, help with facilitation of the annual MSCA Spring Conference and assist with the Fall Conference as appropriate.
4. Shall facilitate level sharing at conferences whenever offered.
5. Shall attend **all** MSCA board meetings.
6. Shall review the association's' documents which include; Bylaws, Policies and

- Procedures, Strategic Plan, Minutes, Financial Reports, and other information pertinent to this position.
7. Shall attend conferences/trainings to help further their ability to better provide leadership and serve as a resource and spokesperson for the represented counselors in the state of Montana.
 8. Shall correspond with their level group a minimum of four times a year.
 9. Shall prepare an annual report for the membership **in the fall**.

X. Communications

A. Newsletters

1. Publications

- a. The newsletter will be published ~~at least three times per year~~ **five times a year by ASCA with contributions from MSCA Board Members or Affiliate contributors**, according to the following schedule:
 - ~~September 15 (contribution deadline August 15)~~
 - ~~January 15 (contribution deadline December 15)~~
 - ~~March 15 (contribution deadline February 15)~~
 - August**
 - October**
 - December**
 - February**
 - April****MSCA will autonomously publish one issue per year in the Fall.**
- b. All newsletter publications will be electronically distributed ~~in PDF form~~ to all MSCA members by ~~the President ASCA~~, **with exception of the one MSCA issue.**
- c. All newsletter publications will be published to the MSCA website.
- d. Complementary newsletters may be mailed or emailed to persons or organizations as a means of communication from MSCA.

2. Content

- a. Each Executive Board member, with the exception of the Treasurer and Secretary, ~~must will~~ submit an article relevant to his/her area of representation for ~~each~~ newsletters ~~within the time frame requested on a rotating basis~~.
- b. Article submissions from persons, other than the Executive Board, ~~will may~~ be included provided they meet the mission **and approval** of MSCA. If an article submission is deemed to be too lengthy, the editor may shorten the script and could provide a link on the MSCA website where more information will be available if deemed appropriate by the board.
- c. Submission information may include, but is not limited to:
 1. Best practices.
 2. Conference opportunities.
 3. Programs and services.
 4. General information pertaining to counseling issues.

3. Editor Duties

- a. Publish ~~three~~ **one** newsletter a year and special issues as necessary.
- b. Solicit news from Executive Board members.
- c. Decide format, style, content and layout of newsletters.
- d. Edit all copy received from contributors.
- e. Submit a camera-ready copy to the President for final review according to time frames established by the Executive Board.
- f. The Editor will be compensated \$100.00 per issue.

4. Advertising

- a. Advertisements for each newsletter may be submitted according to the following fee scale:

1/8 Page	50.00
1/4 Page	75.00
1/2 Page	125.00
Full Page	150.00

- b. The editor reserves the right to reject any advertising that does not support or is in conflict with the organization's mission. MSCA also reserves the right to reject any advertisers whose mission does not support the mission and vision of the Montana School Counselor Association. MSCA does not endorse any product to advertisers as an organization. MSCA offers these advertisements as a service to our members. It is the responsibility of each person to investigate the validity of each advertiser's claims regarding their service or products. MSCA accepts no responsibility for the service or advertiser themselves.
- c. Advertisements must be received by the Editor at least one month prior to the to the publication of the newsletter.
- d. Fees for advertisements will be directly to the Editor who will then forward payment to the Treasurer on the Newsletter Advertisement Form. A copy of the ad will be attached. Those should be submitted within 10 days following the receipt of the ad and payment. (See Appendix D for Newsletter Advertisement Form and Guidelines).
- e. Editor Contact Information: Brandi Fox, PO Box 1205, Laurel MT, 59044, 406-560-4117, bobcatgrad@hotmail.com

B. Website

1. **Site Information** – The Montana School Counselor Association will maintain a website at www.mtschoolcounselor.org The domain name is registered with Network Solutions (www.networksolutions.com) by ~~Barb Holden-Renee~~ **Schoening** and paid through 1/17/2024. The account number is 27040008. ~~Montana State University/Bozeman-Timberlake hosts the site.~~
2. **Content** – The website will serve as a communication tool for counselors and other

individuals interested in School Counseling and school counselors in Montana. The following content will be on the website:

- a. Current Executive Board.
- b. Bylaws of the organization.
- c. Montana School Counseling Program Model.
- d. ~~Journal for School Counseling (maintained by Dr. Mark Nelson).~~
- e. Best Practices.
- f. ASCA and MSCA Conference Information.
- g. Current MSCA Information.
- h. **President's message and Member Spotlight**
- i. **Pictures**
- j. Other information and links relevant to MSCA.

3. Management

- a. Information will be posted to the site under the direction of the President in consultation with the President-Elect or Newsletter Editor.
- b. Board members should also review the site periodically to provide suggestions or corrections when appropriate.

4. All content shall support the mission and goals of the Montana School Counselor Association (MSCA).

C. E-mail

1. An electronic database will be maintained by the Treasurer and Secretary, **via Timberlake**, as part of the membership roster.
2. The President will use the electronic database for the distribution of news or newsletters provided to the membership. All full membership electronic communication will come from the President.
3. The database will not be provided to other organizations for their use. Information may be submitted to the President for forwarding to the membership, provided it fits with the goals and purposes of MSCA.
4. The Treasurer will supply Level Vice-Presidents with an electronic database for their level. Information sent to their constituency should also be sent to all board members.
5. Any communication directly affecting the Association in a negative way or having any kind of legal ramification should be directed immediately to the President. The President will address the board for further consultation once fully informed of the situation.
6. E-mail communication should not be considered confidential communication.
7. Board members will adhere to the highest ethical standards when dealing with all electronic communication.
8. Board members will use best practice and blind cc their electronic email databases when sending emails.

D. Mail

1. The board will determine what items will be mailed to the full membership.

2. The board may apply for the Postal Service Non-Profit rating at any time that the board determines a savings would occur for the organization.
3. The board will follow financial protocols regarding mail by gaining the correct authorization before mailing items out. Receipts will be submitted under the financial protocols.

E. Social Media

1. The board will utilize social media to promote the activities and interests of MSCA.
2. Social Media will be regulated by the President or designee.
3. The board will observe all ethical practices when utilizing social media.

XI. Awards

A. Board Member Recognition – Upon expiration of their terms, or when they are no longer serving on the board in another capacity, board members will be recognized by the association. Exception: the President will be recognized at the end of the Presidential Term. The Treasurer and Secretary will be responsible for procuring appropriate acknowledgments to be presented at the Fall Membership Meeting. Note: Personal recognition from the board to board members or officers will occur at board meetings.

B. School Counselor of the Year Award/Advocate of the Year Award

1. Each year at the Spring Conference these awards will be presented by the association.
2. MSCA will recognize a school counselor and an advocate of the year.
3. Nominees may not be current board members.
4. Nominees must be in current position for at least three years.
5. The appointed board member will be responsible for getting the nomination form out, sending nominations to board members, tallying votes, procuring plaques/awards and presenting them at the conference, and contacting local newspapers of the winners. A letter will also be sent to the recognized school counselor/advocate's district.
6. The school counselor of the year will be submitted by MSCA to ASCA for the national award and will help facilitate the process.

C. Lifetime Achievement Award

1. MSCA will honor members with a lifetime achievement award on the occasion that the Board deems appropriate.

D. RAMP School Recognition

1. School Counseling programs meeting RAMP qualifications will be recognized at the Spring Conference and on the website.

Appendix:

- A. MSCA Board Member Code of Ethics**
- B. MSCA Dispute Resolution Process**
- C. MSCA Debit Card Expenditure Form**
- D. MSCA Reimbursement Form**
- E. Newsletter Advertisement Form and Advertising Guidelines**