

**THE OHIO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION PLAN TO ACHIEVE ETHNICALLY DIVERSE
REPRESENTATION AT THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY**

Portland, Oregon

July 2-6, 2025

1. The Board of Directors of the Ohio Education Association (OEA) officially endorses the goal outlined in NEA policy 3-1(g), calling for Ohio's delegation to the National Education Association Representative Assembly to include ethnically diverse delegates at a percentage equal to the percentage of BIPOC population within Ohio's total population. In the 2020 U.S. Census, that percentage was 24%.
2. The Ohio Education Association is committed to taking such legally permissible steps necessary to achieve the goal referenced above.
3. The Association designates its Executive Director as having the overall responsibility for implementing the program activities described in this policy. The State Coordinator for Ohio is assigned the direct responsibility of implementing the program.

In the past, at the National Education Association delegate level, the Association has utilized its people of color engagement at the electoral unit level to achieve the stated goal on ethnically diverse representation. In the last 30+ years, the OEA has attempted to achieve its ethnically diverse representation goal by using an evolving version of the plan with strategic priority focus, specific goals, and implementations described below.

Goals

The OEA's goal is to seat not less than 24% of Ohio's delegates at the NEA convention to represent the ethnically diverse population of Ohio.

3-1(g) Plan Criteria

1. Evidence of Policy Commitment
 2. Responsibility, Accountability, and Leadership
 3. Promising Strategies for 3-1(g) Success
 4. Media, Messaging and Engagement
 5. State/Local Collaboration and Relationship Building
 6. Evidence of Statewide Commitment to Racial Justice
- **Goal #1 – Establish a clear connection between OEA's commitment to meeting the above referenced criteria for 3-1(g) and OEA's fourth strategic priority (Educate and organize OEA and its members to advocate for racial, social, and economic justice).**

Immediate

- Continue to connect the charges of the relevant Standing Committees to the criteria for meeting OEA's 3-1(g) goals.
- Continue to seek demographic information at OEA events such as standing committee meetings, the OEA Advocacy and Organizing Institute and OEA Summer Academy, that can be used to engage BIPOC OEA members.
- Continue to provide staff and members with opportunities to increase their awareness, understanding and support for OEA's fourth strategic priority.

Long Term

- Engage the work of the relevant standing committees and programs in the work around 3-1(g) and the fourth strategic priority.
- Continue the review OEA resolutions, Constitution and Bylaws, and all other related policies and procedures to determine consistency with and support of OEA's 3-1(g) plan. Since 2023 this work has been completed regarding OEA Resolutions, portions of OEA's Constitution and Bylaws and both the professional and administrative staff union contracts. OEA governance and staff continue to monitor all policies and practices to ensure the goals of the fourth strategic priority are embedded in all of the organization's actions and practices.

● **Goal #2 – Improving our messaging around the goals and importance 3-1(g).**

Immediate

- Continue to provide information to Ohio's New Educators (ONE), Aspiring Educators and OEA ONE and Mid-career member ambassadors to increase their knowledge and understanding of NEA's 3-1(g) goals and OEA's fourth strategic priority.
- Disseminate talking points related to 3-1(g) and the fourth strategic priority for use by local leaders and staff and educate local leaders on how and when to use the talking points in one-on-one conversations. OEA will continue to make use of the talking points developed in 2023.
- Provide Presidents of large locals with information on the rationale and organizational importance of engaging members around 3-1(g).

Long Term

- Utilize existing publications and social media platforms to educate and inform OEA members about the goals and importance of meeting NEA's 3-1(g) goals/criteria.
- Utilize the volunteer staff group to increase staff and member awareness of the rationale of NEA's 3-1(g) goals. The NEA racial justice timeline was rolled out for all OEA staff in April of 2023. The volunteer staff group is the outgrowth of that

experience. The group is continuing to look for ways to engage staff and local leaders in the importance of OEA's fourth strategic priority.

- **Goal #3 – Strengthen OEA's State/Local Collaboration and Relationships in support of its work on 3-1(g).**

Immediate

- Continue to use and publicize the rationale for OEA member self-identification by race, gender, and ethnicity developed in 2023 in OEA publications and at OEA events. This document will again be published in Ohio Schools Magazine and will be distributed at events such as OEA's MLTP as well as OEA minority caucus events.
- OEA is changing the process for engaging district leaders in the recruitment of members of color to run for state delegate positions to directly involve district leaders in meeting OEA's 3-1(g) goals.

Long Term

- Establish a committee composed of representatives of all OEA recognized caucuses for the purpose of strengthening OEA's relationships with its caucuses.
- Seek to Identify the barriers to the participation of members of color in local and state level programs and events during programs such as Leaders for Just Schools and MLTP.
- Revise OEA delegate allocation plan for 2026 to encourage greater participation by members of color.

Supporting Documents for OEA's 3-1(g) Plan:

- Relevant standing committee charges and any recommendations that emanate from the work of those committees.
- Relevant standing committee charges
- Sample of publications or social media posts related to OEA's 3-1(g) plan and OEA's fourth strategic priority.

Policies

The OEA codifies its goals of achieving ethnically diverse representation and engagement by the following Bylaws and Policies:

1. OEA Constitution, Article 5 Section 1(a) The Board of Directors shall be composed of the three elected officers, the six (6) at-large members elected by the Representative Assembly, three (3) of whom shall be elected from the membership of the education support professionals, the Ohio NEA Directors, and no more than one (1) representative per unit elected as prescribed in Article III herein. BIPOC (i.e., black, indigenous, and people of color) representation shall be guaranteed to be at least proportional to the Association's BIPOC membership.

2. Bylaw 8-3c(8), Each committee shall be composed of One (1) member from each recognized OEA caucus for a term of 3 years.
3. OEA Board Policy 340.040, Article 8, Section E, (OEA-Retired) At-Large Representative; The election of the At-Large representative shall be by a statewide plurality vote except that, when the ethnic-minority membership of the Advisory Council falls below the proportion of ethnic-minority membership in the OEA-R Division, the ethnic-minority candidates for an At-Large position with the largest number of votes shall be elected.
4. OEA Board Policy 320.020, Appointments to Committees; Each committee must be comprised of a cross-section of the membership, taking into consideration the OEA EEO policy, age, experience, rural, suburban or urban residency, work assignments, political and geographic balance. The President may appoint up to three additional committee members in order to achieve the desired balance.

OEA's Resolutions Report, which sets forth the beliefs or positions of the Association, also contains language in Section I that is consistent with the goals of NEA policy 3-1(g).

Procedures

NEA delegates from affiliated local associations shall be elected on the basis of one for each 150 NEA members (or major fraction thereof) within the unit or from local association clusters not to exceed 150 NEA members.

1. Approximately 55 local associations within OEA will be eligible to elect three (3) or more local delegates. The OEA will urge these locals to identify ethnically diverse members and encourage them to seek election as NEA delegates. These locals will be prompted to set as a minimal target the election of at least one (1) person of color as a delegate and one person of color as a successor delegate.
 - a. In the past, these larger locals have developed effective, legally permissible programs resulting in the nomination and election of a proportional number of ethnically diverse delegates and alternates. The Association will continue to work with these locals to achieve the same results for 2024-2025.
2. Although some of the remaining locals have few ethnically diverse members, the OEA will use direct mail to request its local associations to identify members that are people of color and to urge them to seek election as delegates.
3. Based upon 108,029 members (excluding Aspiring Educators and NEA-Retired), state delegates are elected in 36 electoral unit areas of one (1) delegate per 1,000 members. Approximately 29 of the 36 electoral unit areas will elect three (3) or more delegates and with the remaining electoral units electing two (2) delegates each.
4. Similar to the past in that each electoral unit that is eligible to elect three (3) or more delegates, the Association will urge leaders to strive to elect at least one (1) delegate and one (1) successor delegate (alternate) who are ethnically diverse members.

5. In addition to the established electoral unit elections, the OEA will conduct a state-wide election for any remaining At-Large seats not filled by the electoral unit elections. This allows BIPOC candidates an additional opportunity to be elected as a delegate. The OEA expects that its past successful practices and this additional opportunity for members of color to run as a delegate will assist in achieving the desired proportional ethnically diverse representation of state delegates will continue.

Implementation

1. Announcing the official OEA Board of Directors endorsement of the policy set forth in NEA Bylaws 3-1(g), in the OHIO SCHOOLS magazine.
2. Communicating via mail and email to all OEA members that self-identified as people of color, about the plan and urging them to seek election as NEA delegates
3. The OEA President sends materials to all local association presidents that describe the policy, plan, and procedures for nominating individuals for NEA delegate and urging them to encourage ethnically diverse members to seek election as NEA delegates. The mailing, which will be sent in December, will include copies of the plan and the declaration of candidacy form.
4. All delegates shall be elected by the membership of the electoral unit (including Higher Education members) to be represented and shall be in accordance with the NEA Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules.
5. An additional statewide At-Large election will take place to elect delegates to any unfilled electoral unit seats.
6. NEA delegates from affiliated local associations shall be elected on the basis of one for each 150 NEA members (or a major fraction thereof) within the unit or from local association clusters not to exceed 150 NEA members.
 - a) Approximately 55 local associations within OEA will be eligible to elect three (3) or more local delegates. The OEA will urge these locals to identify ethnically diverse members and encourage them to seek election as NEA delegates. These locals will be prompted to set a minimal target for the election of at least one (1) person of color as a delegate and one person of color as a successor delegate.
 - b) Although some of the remaining locals are smaller and may have fewer ethnically diverse members, the OEA will use direct mail to request its local associations identify members who are people of color and urge them to seek election as delegates.

Though the approximate number of potential Ohio NEA delegates is 720, Ohio anticipates a total seated delegation of approximately 250; 241 excluding retirees and aspiring educators. The OEA believes that the procedures described above will help to reach the goal of achieving at least 58 people of color as delegates or 24%.