

# MAKING NSTU MEETINGS WORK



**A GUIDE FOR MEMBERS**



# C O N T E N T S

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## INTRODUCTION

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This booklet is designed to assist NSTU members to effectively participate in meetings. Members who volunteer to actively participate in their professional organization find that they are required to attend multiple meetings. NSTU meetings vary in type and frequency; however, the majority require decisions to be reached by way of motions. An understanding of fundamental rules of order as well as effective meeting strategies can benefit both meeting participants and the NSTU and result in positive meetings.

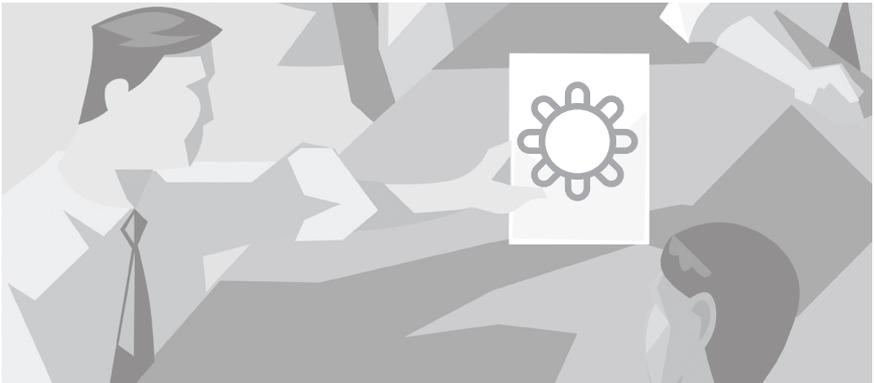


## DUTIES OF NSTU MEETING LEADERS

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As a team, NSTU elected officials are responsible for the general administration of the organization — providing vision and leadership; planning and implementing activities that address the organization's goals; involving the membership in the organization's activities; and, conducting effective meetings.

Authority for roles and responsibilities of NSTU leaders is granted in the organization's constitutions while delineation of specific tasks/duties of leaders are stipulated in the organization's operational procedures.



## NSTU MEETING CHAIRPERSON

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As the presiding officer of an NSTU meeting, the chairperson is responsible for controlling and expediting the discussion. To ensure a successful meeting, the chairperson must adhere to the following points.

1. Every member has the right to have the full attention of meeting participants.
  - No side conversations.
  - No unnecessary interruptions.
  - Respectful attention to speakers.
2. Discussion items are relevant to the objectives of the meeting.
  - Focus on the topic.
  - Rule out irrelevant discussion.
  - Draw out all facts about the topic.
3. Debate participation by the chairperson while serving as presiding officer is out of order.
  - Manage the discussion.
  - Ensure both sides are heard.
  - Do not arbitrarily end debate.
  - Call for the question.



## NSTU SECRETARY

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To assist the chairperson in effectively running a meeting, the secretary must adhere to the following points.

1. Assist with meeting preparations.
  - Prepare detailed agenda with chairperson.
  - Send notice of meeting to members.
  - Ensure pertinent documents are available for discussion.
2. Maintain a record of attendance at the meeting.
  - Design and implement a method of roll call.
3. Prepare an official record of the meeting.
  - Take accurate notes of the discussion.
  - Prepare minutes of the meeting.
  - Circulate minutes.
  - Ensure minutes are approved and signed.
  - Prepare an action register to accompany minutes.



The focus of the secretary's record is what is done, not what is said.

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## NSTU MEETING REQUIREMENTS

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NSTU meeting leaders and participants need to familiarize themselves with the following components to ensure that positive meetings result.

- Meeting Ground Rules
- Notice of Meeting Circulation
- Call to Order Procedure
- Establishment of a Quorum
- A set agenda
- Robert's Rules of Order
- Voting Practices
- Record Keeping
- Adjournment Procedures

## NSTU MEETING GROUND RULES

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Meeting ground rules are important in running an effective meeting as they provide guidelines for all members. It is helpful to post meeting ground rules and include them as resource information for meeting participants.

Ground rules should be developed by meeting leaders and presented to the general membership for adoption.

Ground rules ensure that all NSTU members are working from the same set of expectations.

A review of meeting ground rules should be conducted annually during the first meeting of the year.

Sample meeting ground rules are as follows:

### *NSTU Ground Rules*

1. Meetings start and finish on time.
2. Agenda items are timed and times appear on the printed agenda.
3. Agenda items are prioritized.
4. Diverse opinion is valued.
5. Decisions are reached by motions.
6. Action registers are completed for meetings.

## NSTU NOTICE OF MEETING

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Respect for NSTU members' schedules is shown when ample notice is given for a meeting.

Openness builds trust; therefore, wide distribution of NSTU meeting notices is encouraged.

NSTU Local general meetings should be scheduled on an annual basis in September and meeting dates posted in all educational worksites. For transparency reasons, NSTU Local Council meeting dates should adhere to the same policy — prepared annually and posted in all worksites.

NSTU emergency and special meetings are scheduled according to procedures outlined in constitutions. All constitutions stipulate that a Notice of Meeting is to be circulated within a designated time frame.

## CALL TO ORDER PROCEDURE

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To formally start an NSTU meeting, the chairperson announces a *Call to Order*. This call is noted in the meeting minutes with a time notation. A gavel used to commence the meeting adds an air of decorum to the proceedings.

## ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

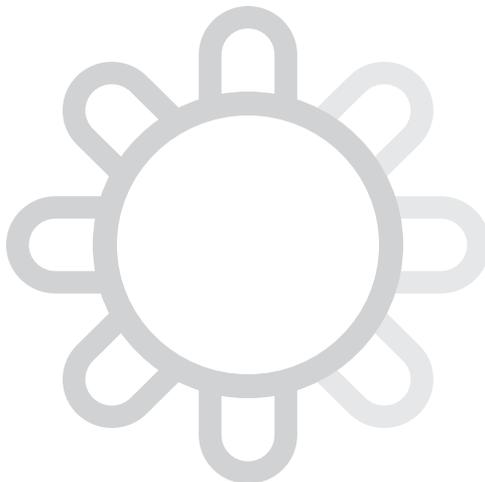
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In order to conduct official business, an NSTU meeting is required to have a specific number of members present (a quorum). Generally a quorum is 50% +1 of a Committee, Executive or Local Council as referenced in constitutions.

It is essential that the number to achieve a quorum be reasonable (i.e. reflective of the typical number of members attending a meeting). For example, general meetings are usually attended by Local Council members only; therefore, the quorum for a general meeting should be the same as that of a Local Council meeting.

If a quorum is not present, agenda items requiring action via adopted motions cannot be addressed. If emergency business must be conducted, the meeting participants can take action if there is unanimous agreement among the members in attendance; however, the action agreed upon must be ratified at the next meeting which has a quorum.

Minutes of a meeting lacking a quorum shall report the actions taken with a notation that there was an absence of a quorum and that ratification will occur at the next scheduled meeting.



## NSTU AGENDA DEVELOPMENT

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It is useful to have written objectives for an NSTU meeting posted on a flip chart, on a bulletin board or printed on the agenda. This effective meeting tool helps focus NSTU members' attention on session activities while discouraging side conversations.

In sequencing agenda items, it is suggested that meeting leaders adhere to the following structure.

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Disposition of Minutes of Previous Meeting
4. Executive Member Reports
5. Committee Reports
6. Unfinished Business
7. New Business
8. Announcements
9. Adjournment

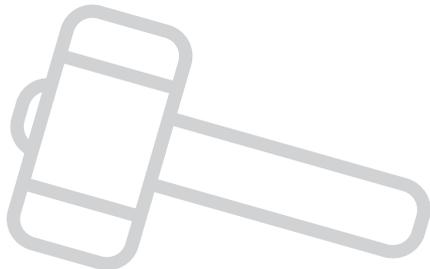
An NSTU meeting agenda is generally compiled by the president or chairperson in consultation with the secretary.

## NSTU RULES OF ORDER

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Parliamentary procedure actually assists in promoting positive debate among meeting participants by focussing discussion.

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union has adopted Robert's Rules of Order (current edition) as the official parliamentary authority to be following during meetings.



## VOTING PRACTICES

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Four main techniques are used to determine the status of formal motions: voice vote; show of hands; roll call; and, ballot.

A *voice vote* is an easy and quick technique that works well when a vote is clearly one way (Aye or Nay).

A *show of hands* gives an exact record of the vote in a timely fashion. This method requires a meeting leader (secretary) to attend to the counting activity.

A *roll call method* is useful for accountability purposes, as each member's vote is recorded by a meeting leader responsible for the recording activity (usually the secretary).

A *ballot procedure* is the most democratic voting method as it ensures secrecy; it is especially useful when a contentious item is under consideration.

Protocol regarding formal voting is as follows

1. The vote is taken when the chairperson restates the question following the completion of debate.
2. Generally, the meeting chairperson does not vote on a motion unless there is a tie vote result or there is a secret ballot vote.
3. When there is a 2/3 requirement for a vote, the 2/3 requirement refers to the votes cast.
4. A majority vote is achieved when the result is the majority (50% +1) of votes cast.
5. A plurality vote is executed when one candidate receives more votes than any other candidate on the ballot.
6. When a secret ballot vote is conducted, a motion calling for the destruction of the ballots is in order after a secret ballot has been completed.
7. If a vote on a motion affects an NSTU member personally, that NSTU member is in conflict of interest and cannot participate in the vote. The member should exit the assembly room while the vote is taken.

Often NSTU meetings involve informal decision making procedures – general consent. To avoid formalities, the meeting participants agree to discuss the issue with minimal use of parliamentary rules and achieve a decision by consensus.

## NSTU RECORD KEEPING

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The official record of the NSTU's activities is found in the minutes of meetings. Thus, accuracy of meeting minutes and distribution of minutes is a critical component in the stewardship activities of NSTU leaders.

Under the direction of the president or meeting chairperson, the secretary is charged with following duties.

1. Taking accurate notes during meeting.
2. Preparing official minutes of meeting's proceedings.
3. Circulating official minutes.
4. Recording approved minutes.
5. Conducting a roll call vote when required.
6. Counting a show of hands vote when required.
7. Preparing and sending notices of meeting.
8. Compiling an action register for each meeting.
9. Signing official documents (eg. minutes).
10. Corresponding with outside groups.



## ADJOURNMENT

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To bring official closure to a formal NSTU meeting, a motion to adjourn is frequently used. A mover and seconder are required before the motion to adjourn is voted on by meeting participants.

If an agenda has been approved and all business has been concluded, the chairperson can declare the meeting adjourned without a motion.

A presiding officer can adjourn a meeting when there is no quorum for the meeting.



# NSTU RULES OF DEBATE

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## PURPOSE

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1. To provide a standard basis for resolving questions of procedure.
2. To facilitate the smooth functioning of the meeting.
3. To ensure an orderly transaction of business.
4. To maintain decorum.
5. To preserve the rights of the minority.
6. To ascertain the rights of the majority.

## PROCEDURES

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The sequence of motion activity is as follows.

1. The mover obtains the floor.
2. The mover states the motion.
3. Another participant seconds the motion.
4. The chairperson restates the motion to open debate.
5. The chairperson oversees the debate.
6. The chairperson announces closure of debate.
7. The chairperson conducts the vote.
8. The chairperson announces the results of the vote.

The priority order of speakers on a motion is as follows.

1. The mover of the motion.
2. Alternate speakers for and against the motion.

## LINE OF AUTHORITY

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The chairperson of the meeting is central to the effective running of the meeting.

The chair is responsible for ensuring:

- that a member does not speak until recognized;
- that members address the chairperson and do not address one another directly;
- that personal names are not used in debate;
- that officers of the organization are referred to by their official titles.

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## NSTU RULES FOR AMENDMENTS

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To make a change to a motion, an amendment is used.

The major rule regarding an amendment is that it must be germane (i.e. relevant) to the topic.

Following a positive vote on an amendment, the meeting's chairperson must then call for a vote on the amended motion.

NSTU Special Rules of Order do not allow for consideration of sub-amendments.



## REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Brevity and clarity should characterize NSTU reports. Recommendations of a study or report accompany the report but are considered separately.

When presenting a report to bring closure to the committee's work without taking action, a motion to *file* the report is in order.

When a report is to be shared with an outside group, a motion to *adopt* is in order. Again, recommendations should be dealt with through separate motions.



## USE OF CLOSED SESSIONS

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The purpose of a Closed Session is for a group to discuss personnel and sensitive issues and reach decisions regarding these issues. Decisions agreed upon are then considered as main motions in Open Session.

Only members of that particular group may attend. Staff and others outside the group may attend on a request basis.



## GLOSSARY OF PARLIAMENTARY TERMS

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1. *Amend* to modify a motion under debate by inserting, by striking out, by substituting
2. *Appeal* to request that a discussion be held on the chair's decision resulting in a motion to sustain the decision of the chair
3. *Division* to verify an inconclusive voice vote through a hand vote
4. *Main Motion* to address the business of the assembly through discussion and debate of a proposal
5. *Parliamentary Inquiry* to request information of a procedural nature of the chair who may consult the parliamentarian for guidance
6. *Point of Order* to comment on the appropriateness of an action taken in terms of a violation of parliamentary rules
7. *Postpone* to avoid voting on a motion that may cause embarrassment (i.e. indefinitely postpone) or to move the discussion to another time
8. *Question of Privilege* to request a decision that concerns the comfort, convenience, rights of privileges of members
9. *Reconsider* to request that a motion previously dealt with by the assembly be revisited at the same assembly
10. *Refer* to transfer a proposal to a committee for discussion, study and/or decision
11. *Rescind* to change a motion previously adopted
12. *Withdraw* to allow the mover of a motion to remove it prior to a vote

# APPENDIX A: PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE AT A GLANCE

## RANKING MOTIONS

<b>RANKING MOTIONS</b>	Can Interrupt	Requires a Second	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required	Can be Reconsidered
<b>PRIVILEGED MOTIONS</b>						
Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn		S		A	M	R
Adjourn		S			M	
Take a Recess		S		A	M	
Raise a Question of Privilege	I				C	
Call for the Orders of the Day	I				C*	
<b>SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS</b>						
Lay on the Table		S			M	
Previous Question		S			2/3	R*
Limit or Extend Limits of Debate		S		A	2/3	R*
Postpone to Certain Time		S	D	A	M*	R
Commit		S	D	A	M	R*
Amend		S	D*	A	M	R
Postpone Indefinitely		S	D		M	R Aff
<b>MAIN MOTION</b>		S	D	A	M	R
KEY: * – SEE RRONR, TINTED PAGES C – CHAIR DECIDES AFF – AFFIRMATIVE ONLY I – CAN INTERRUPT ANOTHER WHO HAS THE FLOOR						

## NON-RANKING MOTIONS

NON-RANKING MOTIONS	Can Interrupt	Requires a Second	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required	Can be Reconsidered
<b>INCIDENTAL MOTIONS</b>						
Appeal	I	S	D*		M	R
Consider by Paragraph (Seriatim)		S		A	M	
Division of the Assembly	I				*	
Division of the Question		S*		A	M*	
Nominations and Polls, To Close		S		A	2/3	
Nominations and Polls, To Reopen		S		A	M	R Neg
Point of Order	I				C*	
Suspend Rules of Order		S			2/3	
Suspend Standing Rules		S			M	
Voting, Motions Relating to		S		A	M*	R*
Withdraw an Motion, Leave to	I*	S*			M	R Neg
<b>BRING A QUESTION AGAIN BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY</b>						
Rescind or Amend Something Previously Adopted		S	D	A	M* 2/3	R*
Reconsider		S	D*		M	
Discharge a Committee		S	D*	A	M* 2/3	R* Neg
Take from the Table		S			M	
KEY: * – SEE RRONR, TINTED PAGES C – CHAIR DECIDES						
NEG – NEGATIVE ONLY I – CAN INTERRUPT ANOTHER WHO HAS THE FLOOR						

# APPENDIX B: NSTU LOCAL CONSTITUTION MODEL

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## NSTU LOCAL CONSTITUTION

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### Article I

#### *Name/Definition*

- [1] A Local shall be a committee of the NSTU for purposes within the area of such Local, and when acting as such shall be under the control of the Council, subject to the said Act and these By-Laws.
- [2] This committee shall be called the \_\_\_\_\_ *Local* of the *Nova Scotia Teachers Union*, henceforth referred to as the "Local".

### Article II

#### *Mandate*

The mandate of the \_\_\_\_\_ *Local* shall be to advance and promote the teaching profession and the cause of education in Nova Scotia.

### Article III

#### *Membership*

- [1] A member of the \_\_\_\_\_ *Local* shall be an active or active reserve member of the *Nova Scotia Teachers Union* in a designated public educational site within the jurisdiction of the Regional School Board and the geographical boundaries of \_\_\_\_\_ or educational worksites as approved by the Provincial Executive.
- [2] Every NSTU member shall belong to a Local and no member shall belong to more than one Local.
- [3] A membership registry shall be conducted on an annual basis in the month of September. Amendments to the registry are permitted monthly up to December 1 to determine Council representation and to March 1 for Local rebate purposes. This registry shall be the official record of membership and shall be used for such purposes as Annual Council representation and Local rebates.

## **Article IV**

### ***Roles and Responsibilities***

- [1] Roles and Responsibilities shall be categorized as follows:
- (a) Local Executive – planning and implementation of the policies and directives of the Provincial Executive.
  - (b) Local Council – information sharing, problem solving and decision making.
  - (c) General Membership – information gathering and information sharing.
- [2] A member shall have the right to vote on all motions at general Local meetings

## **Article V**

### ***Local Executive***

*(Revision of this Local Executive Structure requires the approval of the Provincial Executive)*

- [1] The \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Executive* shall include the following from the active NSTU membership of the Local.
- (a) *President*
  - (b) *Immediate Past President*
  - (c) *First Vice-President*
  - (d) *Vice-President – Communications (Public Relations, Public Affairs)*
  - (e) *Vice-President – Professional Development*
  - (f) *Secretary*
  - (g) *Treasurer*
  - (h) *Provincial Executive Member(s)*
- [2] The \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Executive* may include Member(s)-at-Large.
- [3] The \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Executive* shall meet a minimum of six(6) times per year at a location determined by the *Local President*.
- [4] Table Officers shall be the President, First-Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and designated Vice-President(s) selected by the \_\_\_ *Local Executive* at its first meeting following the Annual General Meeting.
- [5] The *Local President* and First Vice-President shall serve as members of the *Regional Representative Council*.
- [6] All members of the *Local Executive* shall have voting privileges.
- [7] A quorum of the \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Executive* shall be fifty percent plus one (50%+1) of *Local Executive* members.

## **Article VI** **Local Council**

- [1] The \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Council* shall include:
  - (a) *Local Executive Members*
  - (b) *NSTU Representatives*
- [2] The \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Council* shall meet a minimum of five (5) times per year.
- [3] A quorum of the \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Council* shall be fifty percent plus one (50%+1) of the *Local Council* members.

## **Article VII** **NSTU Representative**

- [1] A NSTU representative is an active member of the NSTU assigned to an educational site within the geographical or educational site boundaries of the Local.
- [2] All *Nova Scotia Teachers Union* members shall be counted in the formula. Each educational site shall be represented by a minimum of one NSTU representative. Educational sites with fewer than twenty-five(25) members shall be represented by one(1) NSTU representative. Educational sites with twenty-six(26) to fifty(50) members may be represented by two(2) NSTU representatives. Educational sites with more than fifty(50) members may be represented by a maximum of three (3) NSTU representatives.
- [3] Alternative representatives may be named in numbers equal to the educational site representative allocation.
- [4] A representative shall be a member of the Local Council.
- [5] Under exceptional circumstances, a Local General Meeting may approve additional NSTU representatives at an individual educational site.

## **Article VIII** **Committees**

*(Revision of this Local Executive Structure requires the approval of the Provincial Executive).*

- [1] The *Local Executive* shall establish the following standing committees.
  - (a) *Finance*
  - (b) *Nominating*
  - (c) *Communications (Public Relations/Public Affairs)*
  - (d) *Professional Development*

- [2] The *Local Executive* may establish the following *Standing Committees*.
- (a) *Economic Welfare*
  - (b) *Resolutions*
  - (c) *Social*
  - (d) *Substitute Teacher*
  - (e) *Equity*
  - (f) *New Teacher*
- [3] The *Local Executive* shall appoint members to each standing committee on an annual basis.
- [4] The *Local Executive* may appoint ad hoc committees as circumstances dictate.
- [5] The *Local Executive* shall appoint members to other committees as required.
- [6] The *Local Executive* shall appoint members to assignments as requested by staff upon the direction of the Provincial Executive.
- [7] The *Local Executive* shall appoint additional members to the *Regional Representative Council*.
- [8] All *Standing Committees* of the Local shall be chaired by a *Local Executive* member.
- [9] The *Immediate Past President* or designate shall chair the *Resolutions Committee* and the *Nominating Committee*.
- [10] The *Local Treasurer* shall chair the *Finance Committee*.

## **Article IX** **Meetings**

- [1] *Annual General Meeting*
- (a) There shall be an *Annual General Meeting* of the Local held in May or June for:
    - (i) receipt of annual reports;
    - (ii) presentation of a financial statement;
    - (iii) presentation of a proposed budget for the upcoming year; and,
    - (iv) election of officers for the upcoming year.

[2] *General Meetings*

- (a) Including the *Annual General Meeting*, general meetings shall take place at least three (3) times per year during the periods:
  - Fall
  - Winter
  - Spring
- (b) The times and locations of these meetings shall be posted within all educational sites by the NSTU representative prior to September 30<sup>th</sup> in each school year.
- (c) The quorum for a general meeting shall be the number of active and active reserve members equivalent to fifty percent plus one (50% +1) of the \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Council* membership.

[3] *Special Meetings*

- (a) In the event of an emergency or other need, a special meeting shall be called by the *Table Officers* and/or the *Provincial Executive*.
- (b) A special general meeting to address a specified issue shall be called by the *Local Table Officers* upon the written request of five percent (5%) of the members of the Local. Five(5) working days notice of such a meeting shall be given to the general membership.
- (c) A special meeting shall consider only the business specified in the notice calling such a meeting.

[4] *Local Council Meetings*

- (a) Meetings of the \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Council* shall be called by the \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Executive*.

**Article X**  
***Elections/Voting Privileges***

- [1] Active and active reserve NSTU members of the Local have the right to vote in any Local election.
- [2] Active and active reserve NSTU members of the \_\_\_\_\_ *Local* are eligible to serve as *Annual Council* delegates.
- [3] Active NSTU members of the Local are eligible to be elected as \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Executive* members.

- [4] Active NSTU members of the \_\_\_\_\_ *Local* are eligible to serve as *NSTU Representatives*.
- [5] The \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Executive* shall be elected by secret ballot.
- [6] The term of office for all \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Executive* members except the *Immediate Past President* shall be two (2) years – starting August 1st and ending July 31st.
- [7] The term of office for the *Immediate Past President* shall be one(1) year – starting August 1<sup>st</sup> and ending July 31<sup>st</sup>.
- [8] Any \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Executive* position may be held by the same person for a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms.
- [9] Should any \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Executive* position except *Immediate Past President* remain vacant following elections at the *Annual General Meeting*, the *Nominating Committee* shall conduct a by-election at the next *General Meeting* of the Local.
- [10] In the event that the \_\_\_\_\_ *Local President* cannot fulfill duties or complete a term of office, the *First Vice-President* shall assume the duties of the \_\_\_\_\_ *Local President* in the interim. The *Nominating Committee* shall seek nominations for the position at the next *General Meeting* of the Local and conduct an election at that meeting. The term of office for this position shall be until the completion of the vacated term of office.
- [11] In the event that a \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Executive* member other than the *Local President* cannot complete a term of office, the position shall be filled through a by-election administered by the *Nominating Committee*. The *Nominating Committee* shall seek nominations for the position at the next *General Meeting* of the Local and an election conducted at that meeting. The term of office for this position shall be until the completion of the vacated term of office.
- [12] The term of office for NSTU representative shall be one (1) year, August 1<sup>st</sup> through July 31<sup>st</sup>.
- [13] The NSTU representative(s) and alternate representative(s) shall be elected by the individual educational site members no later than September 15<sup>th</sup>.
- [14] If the NSTU representative or alternate representative is unable to complete the term of office, the site shall elect another representative or alternate for the duration of the vacated term of office.
- [15] Delegate selection to *Annual Council* shall be based according to the procedures outlined in the \_\_\_\_\_ *Local's Operational Procedures*.

## Article XI Finances

- [1] The fiscal year shall be from August 1<sup>st</sup> to July 31<sup>st</sup>.
- [2] Based on NSTU Membership Fees, a *Local Rebate* shall be determined by the *Annual Council* of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union.
- [3] A minimum of three signing officers shall be bonded for the disbursement of \_\_\_\_\_ Local funds and other banking purposes.
- [4] The signing officers shall be selected from the \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Table Officers*.
- [5] The \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Executive* may make expenditures up to 5% of the Local's budget to a maximum of \$3,000. without prior approval of the general membership.
- [6] \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Executive* members may receive honoraria as determined by motion at the *Annual General Meeting*.
- [7] When Local Council and Committee members are required to attend meetings, they shall be reimbursed at the provincial rate.
- [8] When attending \_\_\_\_\_ *Local* meetings, *NSTU Representatives*, *NSTU Local Committee Members* and *NSTU Local Executive Members* shall be eligible to claim family care costs in the amount approved by the *NSTU Provincial Executive*.
- [9] A minimum of ten percent of the Local's budget shall be designated for NSTU representative training.
- [10] The financial records of the Local shall be subjected to an annual review in accordance with guidelines provided by the *Finance and Property Committee* of the *NSTU*.
- [11] Local Reserves and Financial Assets
- The following guidelines shall apply to Local Reserve Funds and Financial Assets of the Locals:
- (a) While *Locals* of the NSTU are not required to have a Reserve Fund, from time to time *Locals* may have revenue greater than expenditures and therefore, have surplus funds that are in excess of cash flow needs that shall be transferred to a *Local Reserve Fund*.
  - (b) The monies shall be invested to maximize return while minimizing risk of loss keeping in mind the cash flow needs of the *Local*.
  - (c) The Fund may be used:

- i. when the *Local* incurs expenditures in the Operating Budget greater than the revenue received in a fiscal year (funds needed to balance the Budget);
- ii. when the *Local* incurs reasonable costs in prosecuting a legal strike; or
- iii. when the *Local* requires additional revenue in cases of emergency.

## **Article XII**

### ***Accountability***

- [1] Individuals in an elected or appointed leadership role, NSTU employees and others acting on the organization's behalf have the obligation to avoid conflicts of interest; the perception of conflict of interest; and, ensure that their activities and interests do not conflict with their responsibilities to the *Nova Scotia Teachers Union*.
- [2] \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Executive* and *Local Council* members are expected to fully attend as well as actively participate in all meetings of the *Local*.
- [3] \_\_\_\_\_ *Local Executive* members are responsible to fairly represent *Local Executive* decisions when speaking on issues addressed by the *Local Executive*.

## **Article XIII**

### ***Removal from Local Executive***

- [1] A member of the *Local Executive* may be removed from office for any of the following reasons:
- (a) continued gross or willful neglect of the duties of the office;
  - (b) failure or refusal to disclose necessary information on matters of organization business;
  - (c) unauthorized expenditures, signing of cheques, or misuse of organization funds;
  - (d) unwarranted attacks on a president or refusal to cooperate with the president;
  - (e) misrepresentation of the organization and its officers to outside persons; and
  - (f) conviction for a felony.
- [2] Examples of invalid grounds for removal are:
- (a) poor performance as an officer due to lack of ability;
  - (b) negligence that is not gross or willful;

- (c) a tendency to create friction and disagreement; and
- (d) mere unsuitability to hold office.

[3] Commencing Proceedings:

- (a) A notice of motion to remove an executive member may be moved by a member at a Local General Meeting. The threshold of acceptance for this vote will be 50% plus one of those members in attendance who vote.
- (b) A notice of motion to remove an executive member may be conducted by the local executive. The threshold of acceptance for this vote will be 50% plus one of the local executive.

[4] Notice of Motion

Members of the Local must be given 30 days notice of a Special General Meeting to remove a member of the Local Executive.

[5] Removal Procedure

The affected member must be given:

- (a) adequate notice of the motion (30 days);
- (b) a fair hearing (the opportunity to speak to the motion at the meeting called for the purpose of removal) scheduled as the single agenda item of a Special General Meeting of the Local;
- (c) the right to consult counsel at the member's cost (during 30 day notice of motion time frame);
- (d) a reasonable opportunity to present a defense (the opportunity to speak to the motion at the meeting called for the removal to be debated); and,
- (e) notice that failure by the member to attend the meeting will not delay the proceedings.

[6] The Vote

- (a) The vote will be conducted by secret ballot at a Special General Meeting of the Local.
- (b) Only active and active reserve members of the Local in attendance at the meeting are eligible to vote.
- (c) The affected member may request an observer to view the counting of ballots.
- (d) The threshold of acceptance for the vote will be 50% plus one of the eligible members attending the meeting who cast a ballot. Spoiled ballots will not be counted.
- (e) The result will be binding as of the release of the vote result.

## **Article XIV** ***Rules of Order***

The current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* governs the Nova Scotia Teachers Union in all parliamentary situations not provided for in legislation, By-Laws and Standing Orders.

## **Article XV** ***Operational Procedures***

- [1] *Operational Procedures* shall be established by a Local to address:
- (a) the duties and responsibilities of the *Local Executive*;
  - (b) the duties and responsibilities of committees;
  - (c) the duties and responsibilities of NSTU representatives;
  - (d) other areas deemed necessary by the *Local Executive*.
- [2] A Local's *Operational Procedures* shall be adopted, amended, or rescinded by a majority of the votes cast by members present at a *Local Council*, a *Special Meeting* or *General Meeting* provided that written notice of motion to adopt, amend, or rescind has been sent to all NSTU representatives or alternate representatives not less than ten(10) days prior to the meeting.

## **Article XVI** ***Amendments***

- [1] A Local's *Constitution* may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of votes cast by the members present at a *General Meeting* or *Special Meeting* convened for that purpose.
- [2] Notice of proposed amendment(s) shall be given to members ten (10) working days prior to the meeting.
- [3] Amendments to a Local's *Constitution* require ratification by the *NSTU Provincial Executive* at a scheduled meeting following approval by the Local's general membership.

# APPENDIX C: LOCAL OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

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## CONTENTS

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<b>Article</b>	<b>Title</b>
I	Duties of the Local Executive
II	Duties of the Local Council
III	Duties of the Table Officers
IV	Duties of the Local President
V	Duties of the First Vice-President
VI	Duties of the Vice-President – Communications
VII	Duties of the Vice-President – Professional Development
VIII	Duties of the Local Secretary
IX	Duties of the Local Treasurer
X	Duties of the Past President
XI	Duties of the Provincial Executive Member
XII	Duties of the NSTU Representative
XIII	Duties of Committees
XIV	Regular Meeting Protocols
XV	Leadership Training
XVI	Annual Council Delegate Selection Process
XVII	Amendments
	Appendix

## LOCAL OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

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*These procedures are provided as a guide. A Local should adopt these procedures as appropriate to complement the Local's Constitution.*

### **I. Duties of the Local Executive**

- [1] The *Local Executive* shall conduct the business of the Local under the direction of the *Local Council* and/or Local general membership.
- [2] The *Local Table Officers* shall present to the *Annual General Meeting* of the Local:
  - a financial statement;
  - a proposed balanced budget for the upcoming year;
  - a report of the Local's activities for the year; and,
  - a report of the Local's activities for the upcoming year.

- [2] The *Local Executive* shall receive and disburse all Local funds in accordance with the *Nova Scotia Teachers Union* and Local policies.
- [3] The *Local Executive* shall regularly attend meetings and perform duties as required.
- [4] The *Local Executive* shall present written reports to *Local Council* and/or *Local General* meetings regarding their activities.
- [5] The *Local Executive* may assist educational sites in the selection of NSTU representatives.
- [6] All *Local Executive* members shall maintain a written record of their work and shall forward it to their successors.

II. ***Duties of the Local Council***

- [1] The *Local Council* shall encourage member involvement in the development of goals and objectives for the Local.
- [2] The *Local Council* shall assess ongoing programs of the Local.
- [3] The *Local Council* shall receive *Local Executive* and committee reports.
- [4] The *Local Council* shall address the views and concerns of NSTU representatives, thus providing direction to the *Local Executive*.
- [5] The *Local Council* shall debate and resolve routine concerns.
- [6] The *Local Council* shall propose motions for consideration at general meetings.
- [7] The *Local Council* shall provide a mandate for *Local Executive* action, subject to ratification at a *General Meeting*.
- [8] The *Local Council* shall periodically review the *Local Constitution* and *Operational Procedures*.

III. ***Duties of the Local Table Officers***

- [1] The *Local Table Officers* shall establish Local administrative procedures for adoption by the *Local Executive* on an annual basis.
- [2] The *Local Table Officers* shall call a special meeting in the event of an emergency or special need.

IV. ***Duties of the Local President***

- [1] The *Local President* shall be the official spokesperson for the Local on Local matters excluding bargaining unit issues.

- [2] The *Local President* or designate shall preside at all meetings of the *Local*, the *Local Council*, and the *Local Executive*.
- [3] The *Local President* shall prepare agendas for all Local meetings at which the *President* presides in consultation with the *Local Secretary*.
- [4] The *Local President* shall be an ex-officio member of all Local committees.
- [5] The *Local President* shall be a member of the *Regional Representative Council*.
- [6] The *Local President* shall dialogue with educational site administrators in consultation with educational site NSTU representative(s).
- [7] The *Local President* shall review the Local's *Constitution* and *Operational Procedures* during the first meeting of the *Local Executive* each year.
- [8] The *Local President* in consultation with the *Local Executive* shall appoint an Executive member responsible for substitute teacher concerns.
- [9] The *Local President* in consultation with the *Local Executive* shall appoint an Executive member as a *New Member Contact Person*.
- [10] The *Local President* in consultation with the *Local Executive* shall appoint an Executive member as an *Equity Contact Person*.
- [11] The *Local President* shall perform such duties as directed by the *Local*, the *Local Council*, and the *Local Executive*.

V. ***Duties of the First Vice-President***

- [1] The *First Vice-President* shall chair the *Economic Welfare Committee*.
- [2] The *First Vice-President* shall be a voting member of the *Regional Economic Welfare Council*.
- [3] The *First Vice-President* shall present the Local's views concerning improved working conditions for members to the *Regional Economic Welfare Committee*.
- [4] The *First Vice-President* may conduct economic welfare training in the Local under the direction of the *Regional Economic Welfare Committee*.

VI. ***Duties of the Vice-President – Communications***

- [1] The *Vice-President – Communications* shall chair the *Communications Committee* and the *Social Committee*.

VII. ***Duties of the Vice-President – Professional Development***

- [1] The *Vice-President – Professional Development* shall chair the *Local Professional Development Committee*.
- [2] The *Vice-President – Professional Development* may represent the Local on the *Article 60 Committee*.

VIII. ***Duties of the Local Secretary***

- [1] The *Local Secretary* shall record and maintain copies of the minutes of all meetings of the *Local*, the *Local Council*, and the *Local Executive*.
- [2] The *Local Secretary* shall prepare copies of the minutes for distribution prior to or at Local meetings.
- [3] The *Local Secretary* shall maintain a record of attendance at all meetings of the *Local*, the *Local Council*, and the *Local Executive*.
- [4] The *Local Secretary* shall maintain all official records of the Local including the *Constitution*, *Operational Procedures* and *Local Membership Registry* and ensure that appropriate revisions are processed.
- [5] The *Local Secretary* shall maintain a current list of contact information for *Local NSTU Representatives*, *Local Executive* members and *Local standing committee* members.
- [6] The *Local Secretary* shall forward to the *NSTU Central Office* names, and contact information for the *Local Executive* immediately following the *Annual General Meeting*.
- [7] The *Local Secretary* may circulate information regarding *Local* meetings and other events as directed by the *Local Executive*.
- [8] The *Local Secretary* may keep an *Action Register* for each *Local* meeting.

IX. ***Duties of the Local Treasurer***

- [1] The *Local Treasurer* shall chair the *Finance Committee*.
- [2] The *Local Treasurer* shall administer all financial matters associated with the Local and report to the Local, by means of a financial statement, at general meetings.
- [3] The *Local Treasurer* shall be responsible for an annual audit review of the financial records of the Local in accordance with guidelines prepared by the *Finance and Property Committee*.
- [4] The *Local Treasurer* shall prepare a proposed budget for approval at the *Annual General Meeting*.

X. ***Duties of the Past President***

- [1] The *Past President* or designate shall act in an advisory capacity to the *Local President* and the *Local Executive*.
- [2] The *Past President* or designate shall chair the *Nominating Committee*.
- [3] The *Past President* or designate shall chair the *Resolutions Committee*.
- [4] The *Past President* or designate may serve as *Local Parliamentarian*.

XI. ***Duties of the Provincial Executive Member***

- [1] The *Provincial Executive Member* shall perform tasks as outlined in the *Nova Scotia Teachers Union Guidebook*.

XII. ***Duties of the NSTU Representative***

- [1] The *NSTU Representative* shall request time on staff meeting agendas for NSTU updates.
- [2] The *NSTU Representative* shall organize a minimum of three (3) meetings per year with the NSTU members at the educational site in order to:
  - obtain member views on professional and economic matters;
  - disseminate information to members concerning Local and Provincial matters.
- [3] The *NSTU Representative* shall communicate educational site member concerns to the Local Council and work to resolve those concerns.
- [4] The *NSTU Representative* shall keep the educational site administrator informed of NSTU matters.
- [5] The *NSTU Representative* shall be knowledgeable about policies and procedures of the Local and Provincial NSTU.
- [6] The *NSTU Representative* shall direct member requests to the appropriate Local, Regional or provincial authority.
- [7] The *NSTU Representative* shall encourage new member involvement with Local activities.
- [8] The *NSTU Representative* shall attend Local Council and Local general meetings.
- [9] The *NSTU Representative* shall post agendas for Local general meetings.

- [10] The *NSTU Representative* shall distribute material received from the Local, Regional or Provincial NSTU to members on site.
- [11] The *NSTU Representative* shall conduct educational site votes.
- [12] The *NSTU Representative* shall coordinate the collection of the annual *Membership Registry*.
- [13] The *NSTU Representative* shall promote a united teaching profession.

XIII. ***Duties of Committees***

- [1] Duties of the *Communications Committee* shall include:
  - [i] maintaining contact with the local media and issuing news releases with the approval of the *Local Executive*;
  - [ii] promoting teacher image through publicity of programs of local interest;
  - [iii] coordinating and maintaining internal communications with members via newsletter/website;
  - [iv] ensuring the circulation of information received from Local leaders and Local Committees to the general membership and other interested stakeholders;
  - [v] sponsoring, coordinating, and hosting a variety of activities for Local members as directed by the Local Executive.
  - [vi] maintaining and updating a contact file of MLAs, MPs, municipal council members, school board members, and other persons with an interest in public education;
  - [vii] meeting with MLAs in order to maintain an open line of dialogue between the Local and the government;
  - [viii] attending school board meetings and preparing reports for circulation.
- [2] Duties of the *Economic Welfare Committee* shall include:
  - [i] Coordinating with and supporting the work of the *Regional Economic Welfare Committee*.
- [3] Duties of the *Finance Committee* shall include:
  - [i] administering the audit review for the year;
  - [ii] preparing a proposed budget for approval at a general meeting;

- [iii] overseeing the production of a financial report for review and consideration by the *Local Executive* and the *Local Council*;
  - [iv] developing and revising *Guidelines for NSTU Local Expenditures*.
- [4] Duties of the *Nominating Committee* shall include:
- [i] circulating a notice of election for Local Executive positions to all NSTU representatives three (3) weeks prior to the *Annual General Meeting*;
  - [ii] overseeing the election of Local Executive positions;
  - [iii] providing NSTU representatives with the results of the elections;
  - [iv] overseeing the election of Annual Council delegates;
  - [v] establishing guidelines for election of NSTU representatives;
  - [vi] administering the selection process for Local committee membership.
- [5] Duties of the *Professional Development Committee* shall include:
- [i] organizing professional development activities, seminars, and workshops for the Local;
  - [ii] providing cooperation and communication between teachers and the board with respect to professional development;
  - [iii] advising the *Local Executive* regarding professional development issues;
  - [iv] liaising with the provincial *NSTU Professional Development Committee*;
  - [v] preparing criteria and selecting successful applicants for scholarships and bursaries sponsored by the Local.
- [6] Duties of the *Resolutions Committee* shall include:
- [i] forwarding the name of the Resolutions Committee Chairperson to the NSTU office by October 1<sup>st</sup> of each year;
  - [ii] calling for resolutions and informing the membership of submission procedures and time lines;
  - [iii] distributing copies of resolutions to members prior to the *General Meeting*;

- [iv] assisting members in the preparation of resolutions and accompanying briefs;
  - [v] submitting approved resolutions to *Annual Council*;
  - [vi] briefing the Local's delegation to *Annual Council*.
- [7] Duties of the *Social Committee* shall include:
- [i] sponsoring, co-ordinating, and hosting a variety of activities for Local members as directed by the *Local Executive*.

XIV. **Regular Meeting Protocols**

[1] The agenda at a *Local General Meeting* shall include:

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting
3. Correspondence
4. Reports
  - President
  - Treasurer
  - First Vice-President
  - Vice-President – Professional Development
  - Vice-President – Communications
  - Regional Representative Council Member
  - Provincial Executive Member
  - Staff Liaison Officer
5. Unfinished Business
6. New Business
7. Announcements
8. Adjournment

[2] The agenda at a *Local Council Meeting* shall include:

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting
3. Correspondence
4. NSTU Representative Forum
5. Reports
  - President
  - Treasurer
  - First Vice-President
  - Vice-President – Professional Development
  - Vice-President – Communications
  - Regional Representative Council Member
  - Provincial Executive Member
  - Staff Liaison Officer
6. Unfinished Business

7. New Business
8. Announcements
9. Adjournment

[3] The agenda at a *Local Executive Meeting* shall include:

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Executive Meeting
3. Correspondence
4. Table Officers Report
5. Committee Chairpersons' Report
6. Regional Representative Council Report
7. Executive Roundtable
8. Unfinished Business
9. New Business
10. Announcements
11. Adjournment

**XV. Leadership Training**

1. The *Local Table Officers* shall be responsible for providing a minimum of two(2) inservice sessions annually for *Local Executive* and *Local Council* members on the topic of governance principles and practices. Such activities to include roles and responsibilities, fiduciary obligations, and constitutional requirements.
2. In consultation with the NSTU staff officer responsible for *NSTU Representative Training*, the *Local Executive* shall sponsor leadership training on an annual basis for all *Local NSTU Representatives*.

**XVI. Annual Council Delegate Selection Process**

In accordance with the NSTU Model Local Constitution, *Article X – Elections/Voting Privileges*, each Local shall determine its Annual Council delegation selection process by way of motion at a Local General Meeting. The approved process shall be recorded in this section of this document.

**XVII. Amendments**

These *Operational Procedures* may be adopted, amended, or rescinded by a majority of votes cast by members present at a *Local Council* or *Local General Meeting*, provided that written notice of motion to adopt, amend, or rescind has been sent to all NSTU representatives or alternate representatives ten (10) days prior to the meeting.

**Appendix**

List of Local Educational Sites

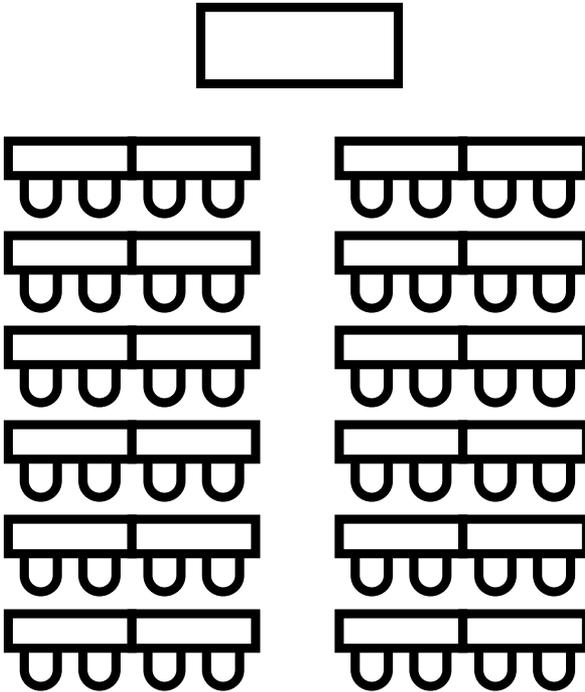
# APPENDIX D: MEETING ROOM SEATING PLAN TEMPLATES

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## CLASSROOM

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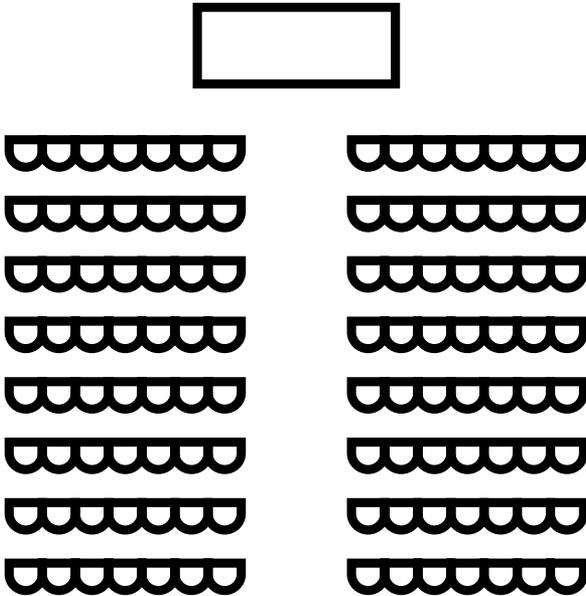
This format can accommodate most group sizes and is ideal when extensive notes are to be taken.



# THEATRE

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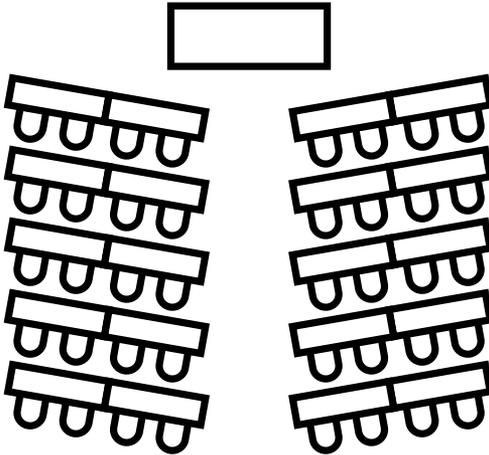
Appropriate for larger groups and lecture-style presentations when minimal print materials are required.



## HERRINGBONE

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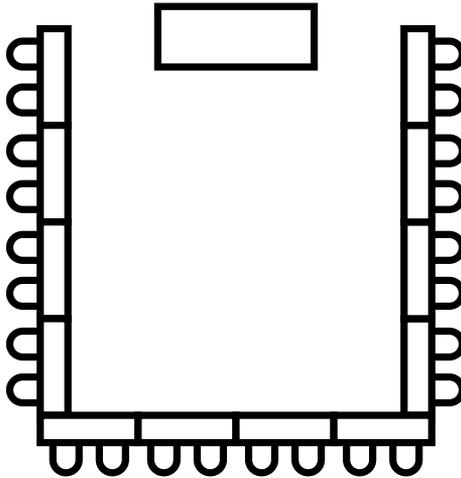
This format encourages audience participation, and is useful when aisle microphones are to be used.



## U-SHAPE

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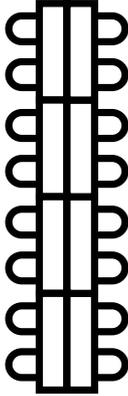
Excellent for groups of 10 to 30, allowing eye contact and encouraging participation.



## CONFERENCE/BOARDROOM

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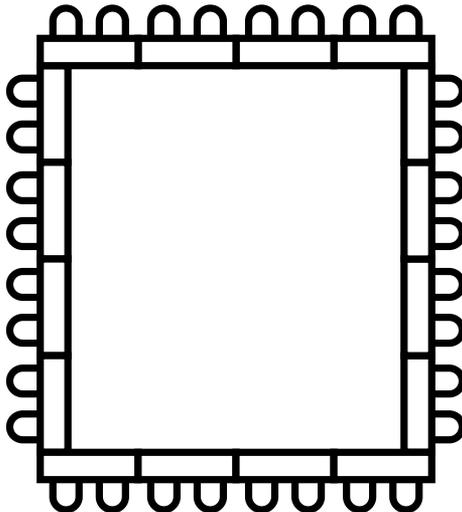
Ideal for intensive group work, with 24 or fewer participants.



## HOLLOW SQUARE

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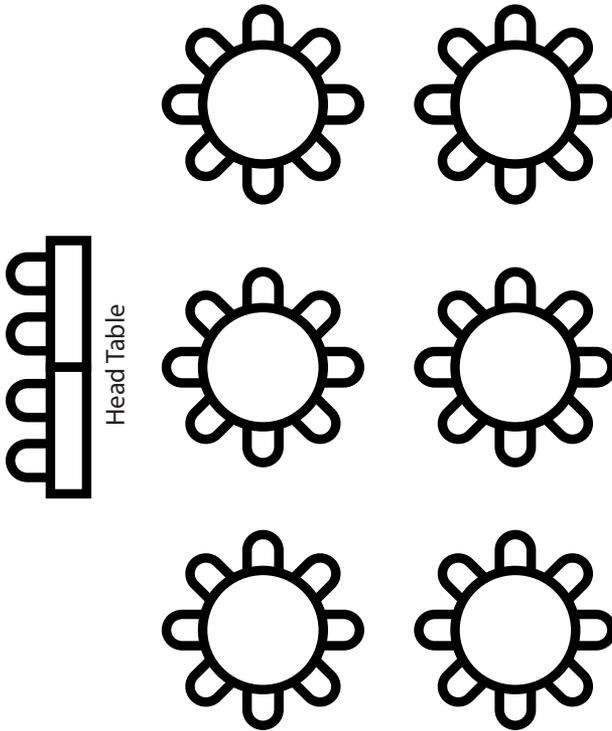
For groups of up to 40, this format facilitates group discussion.



## BANQUET (ROUNDS OF 8 TO 10)

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A very effective format when small group work is to be done.



## RECEPTION/LOUNGE STYLE

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An informal setup for smaller group in which a more relaxed and casual atmosphere is appropriate.

