



## Trent Durham Student Association

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# Chairperson moved to hired

December 6, 2021

## OVERVIEW AND HISTORY

Historically, the chairperson of the TDSA board has been an elected position, similar to the rest of the board directors. However, the role of chairperson is, in many ways, very different from their director counterparts. For example, directors are not expected to be experts nor do they get paid for being a director; chairperson however is paid and they have a more involved role and outlined responsibilities. These include planning the board meetings, ensuring materials are sent out in time, and chairing the board meeting. In addition to the differences in the roles, some of the other reasons for changing the chairperson role to hired include ensuring that the role is easily accessible to students from a variety of backgrounds and ensuring that the best person fills the role. In terms of making the role accessible, TDSA recognizes that running in elections can pose a barrier for students. By moving the role to hired, students who may have experience but not feel comfortable running for elections are able to apply. Finally, when a position is hired, TDSA can give all applicants an equitable hiring process to ensure that the role is filled in the best way possible. In order to make these changes, there are 2 minor changes that must be made to TDSA's bylaws, which must be voted on by the membership (that's you!).

## PROPOSED CHANGES

Below are the two changes that TDSA is proposing to change. The number before refers to the bylaw number, should you wish to find the section in TDSA's existing bylaws. The first change is changing "elected" to "hired" in 5.2.2., and the second is the creation of a new bylaw, 5.2.6., which will outline the transition period for the chairperson.

5.2.2. One (1) ~~hired elected~~ Chairperson (non-voting)

5.2.6. ~~The official date of transition for the hired chairperson shall be May 1st of each year. No chairperson shall serve beyond this point with the exception of those re-hired to a new contract by the corporation.~~

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## ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

To ensure accountability, throughout both the hiring process and the hired chairperson's contract, we have lined out some measures that TDSA will be taking, should this proposal pass.

### HIRING PROCESS

1. During an election period
  - a. The voting members of the hiring panel will consist of the chief electoral officer, an outgoing board member, and a student at large representative.
    - i. The observer (non-voting) members of the hiring panel will consist of the executive director and incoming president.
  - b. Candidates will be presented to the outgoing board of directors for board approval, as is consistent with TDSA policy and procedure for appointments
2. During the rest of year
  - a. The voting members of the hiring panel will consist of the chief electoral officer, a board member, and a student at large representative.
    - i. The observer (non-voting) member of the hiring panel will consist of the executive director.
  - b. Candidates will be presented to the board of directors for board approval, as is consistent with TDSA policy and procedure for appointments.

### ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGHOUT THEIR CONTRACT

1. Chairperson would remain as accountable to the board of directors as a whole
2. **Reporting structure** would remain the same
3. Policy 13 (Discipline) would be updated to reflect that this role is hired now, for example adding a new policy line
  - a. 13.3.3. The board, subject to a 2/3 rds vote, may terminate or impose what sanctions or requirements they see fit on any chairperson or full time staff provided said action is consistent with the law.

## GOALS

1. Move the chairperson position to be hired, rather than elected, to ensure that the role is equitably filled by the best qualified student

## REQUEST

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BIRT TDSA Membership approves the changes to the TDSA By-laws as outlined in the supporting memo in order to change the chairperson position from an elected position to a hired position starting in May, 2022.

## **STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS**

### **Students**

This could be seen as removing a director position from students, thus lowering the amount of student involvement; however, this would be a misconception. In the chairperson's current format, the chairperson does not vote (unless in the case of a tie) and instead their position and tasks are more focused on the operations and logistics of the TDSA board of directors. By moving it to a hired position, TDSA instead is able to open it to students who may not have otherwise considered the role, because of the public nature of elections, thus actually improving student involvement.

### **Directors**

Overall, there should be minimal impact on the board of directors, as the roles and responsibilities of the chair are not changing. Instead, executives should request at least one director assist with the hiring process.

### **Executive Team**

By moving the position to hired, this allows flexibility in two ways. First, TDSA can give potential chairpersons a better understanding of their role and actively look for those who have previous experience. Secondly, should there be a need for reprimations, this provides executives with a variety of options to ensure that every member of the TDSA is meeting their responsibilities and is held accountable.