

**DORCHESTER RETIRED SCHOOL
PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION (title
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“Working for ALL Retired School Personnel”

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HANDBOOK

~Revised 2021~ (revision date added)

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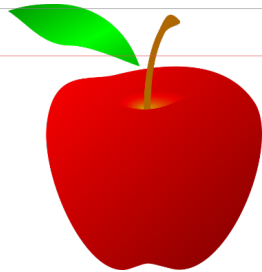
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MISSION STATEMENT

The Dorchester Retired School Personnel Association (DRSPA) is committed to promoting the well-being of our retired educators and school personnel by being a strong advocate for them on the local and state levels.

It is dedicated to encouraging a strong organization by providing fellowship and timely programming relevant to the needs of the organization. DRSPA is dedicated to excellence in education and life-long learning through community involvement, volunteerism and literacy projects.

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VISION STATEMENT

The Dorchester Retired School Personnel Association (DRSPA) is dedicated to promoting and protecting retiree interest, well-being and talents in an ever-changing community and world.

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CODE OF ETHICS

All members of the Dorchester Retired School Personnel Association are:

1. Committed to observe and promote the unity of all retired school personnel in friendship and fellowship.
2. Expected to reflect our faith in our schools by sharing our time, experiences, and talents to promote the education of all learners.
3. To safeguard the rights of retired school personnel to assess benefits and services without discrimination based on all legally protected classes.
4. To support the education of every learner without discrimination based on all legally protected classes.

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DRSPA HISTORY

A meeting of retired teachers of Dorchester County was called by Mrs. Medora Gray, ex-Chairman of the Emeritus Group of the Dorchester Educators in October 1966 in the meeting room of the Dorchester Educators. Five retired teachers attended. Medora Gray explained the purpose of the meeting and introduced Elizabeth Warren, Director of the South Eastern Region of the Maryland Retired Teachers Association, from Snow Hill. Miss Warren explained the benefits of having an organized group of retired educators, such as getting increased pensions and health insurance premiums at lower rates. She explained that there were many retired members in the state receiving less than \$100 per month. Since the older group was not eligible for Social Security, it was exceedingly difficult to cope with the ever-rising cost of living. She spoke of the efforts of the Maryland Retired Teachers Association to obtain lower rates for Blue Cross by collecting their premiums as a group, but Blue Cross would not agree.

The state association held two meetings a year--spring and fall. Dues for the state organization were \$1.00 per year and due November 1. Nearly all the counties in Maryland had such a group, but Dorchester did not. The group present from Dorchester agreed to form a chapter and elected Medora Gray as President. The other elected officers were Vice President, Elizabeth Farver; Secretary, Ruby Meredith; and Treasurer, Anna Collins. It was decided that Mrs. Gray should attend the next state meeting to learn more about the organization. The group agreed to be called the Dorchester Retired Teachers Association. At the next meeting in November, it was decided that the county dues should be \$1.00 per year. It was decided that before the next meeting, each member present would contact four retirees from a list provided and ask them to join.

The Dorchester Retired Teachers continued to meet regularly and by October 1969 had drawn up a constitution for the group which was presented to the membership and adopted in April 1970. A newsletter, to be titled "Glimpses," was begun in February 1976 by Mabel Wright and Alda Myers. Dorchester was the first county on the Eastern Shore to have a newsletter.

DREA HISTORY *continued*

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Sometime before 1993, the original constitution could no longer be located so during the presidency of Tom Flowers, a new constitution was written and adopted in 1993. That constitution was last amended in March 2018.

The issues facing this group through the years have remained constant: guarding the funding of our pensions and providing affordable health insurance. The state pension fund was at one time fully funded with more than a billion dollars and was secure. Then the legislature in 1992, agreed to invest a portion of the capital in a Venture Capital Fund to encourage new business. That venture lost more than three million dollars and since that time, our pension funding has been an issue for the legislature. Prior to 1973, when teachers retired, they were immediately removed from the health insurance provided to active employees.

In 1973, Dorchester County was permitted to remain in the insurance program but had to pay all the cost of the insurance. It was not until 1994 that the Dorchester County Board of Education agreed to use funds provided by the Dorchester County Commissioners to provide a financial stipend to each retiree base upon years of service. All these advances were due to the efforts of the membership who campaigned for these improvements.

The name of the organization changed on February 28, 1989 to reflect the broadening of membership to include non-professional educational staff such as administrative and secretarial staff, instructional aides, cafeteria staff, technology staff, maintenance and custodial staff, and bus drivers and bus assistants.

Early 2020, the Executive Board presented a proposal to update the name of the organization to confirm it is, without exception, for all educational staff. The proposed name was determined to be Dorchester Retired School Personnel Association. After acceptance, the concept was presented to the membership through the Glimpses newsletter with the option to accept or reject. The proposal was accepted. Effective July 1, 2021, the organization will be known as Dorchester Retired School Personnel Association and will continue to include administrative staff, secretarial staff, instructional aides, cafeteria staff, maintenance staff, custodial staff, technology staff, bus drivers, and bus assistants.

(Source: Previous minutes of organization dating back to October 7, 1966.)

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HISTORY OF THE OTIS TRICE SCHOLARSHIP

Ann Moore retired from DCPS in June in 1995 and moved in with her dad, Otis Trice, a retired principal with 43 years of service. He began at Hoopers Island in 1930, went to Hurlock after 6 years, and remained there until 1951 when he was transferred to Cambridge High School. His wife had died the previous December. In October of 1995, Ann's dad insisted that they go to the Retired Teachers meeting, which was held at the old Immanuel Church on Peach Blossom Avenue. Doris Rae was president at the time and before Ann came home, she was President-Elect. Her dad was extremely interested in the organization. He and her mother had always attended the meetings together. The scholarship program began while Doris Rae was president. It started exceedingly small and began as a book fund for recipients. The fund was awarded to one student from each of our high schools, who was planning a career in education and was awarded annually. The scholarship depended on the amount of funds raised. It was much small in earlier years. Ann's dad died in September of 1999, while Marlene Hubbard was president. She made a motion that the program be named for Ann's dad. It was voted on by the group and it passed. Otis Trice's middle name was Milton; therefore, the scholarship was named Otis M. Trice Scholarship. Since the early days, fundraising has made it possible to award a student from CSDHS and NDHS each \$1500.

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CONSTITUTION OF THE DORCHESTER RETIRED SCHOOL PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION

(Revised October 2021)

Article I. Name

The name of the organization shall be the Dorchester Retired School Personnel Association, herein afterward abbreviated as DRSPA (amended April, 2021).

Article II. Purpose

Section 1. To encourage members to continue their interest in educational planning and programs of Dorchester County and of Maryland;

Section 2. To provide information and programs to keep the members abreast of actions of the Maryland Legislature and the Congress of the United States that affect them;

Section 3. To work in conjunction with the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association on programs and activities that promote the interests and well-being of retired school personnel;

Section 4. To improve the well-being of members;

Section 5. To provide a forum for retired school personnel to express their ideas, concerns, and beliefs to those persons who are in decision-making roles that will affect them; and

Section 6. To operate as a non-profit, non-partisan, and non-sectarian organization as has been defined in Section 501c (4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

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Article III. Membership

Section 1. Active Membership

- a. All educational school personnel who are receiving payment from the Maryland State Teachers Retirement/Pension Systems, or any person who has worked three years in the system, are eligible for membership upon payment of annual dues;
- b. All personnel who qualify under **Section 1** who previously resided in other jurisdictions of Maryland may become members of DRSPA;
- c. All personnel who qualify to receive payment from teacher pension or retirement programs in other states or the District of Columbia may become members of DRSPA;
- d. All *retired* Dorchester County Plubic Schools personnel, Dorchester Educators, school bus drivers, and school bus contractors may, upon payment of dues to DRSPA, enjoy full membership in DRSPA.

Section 2. Emeritus Membership

- a. When members reach the age of 90, Emeritus Membership will be awarded, and that member shall be exempt from future payment of dues.
- b. Emeritus members shall be entitled to participate in all activities of the association, including chairing a committee, voting, and holding elective office.

Section 3. Honorary Membership

Honorary membership may be awarded to a person who has made great contributions to DREA and who is nominated by a member of good standing in DREA and elected by a majority vote at any of the four meetings of the association. Honorary members may not vote, chair a committee, or hold office in the organization.

Section 4. Associate Membership

- a. Associate membership may be accorded upon payment of dues to members' spouses or surviving spouses who are supportive of the goals and purposes of DRSPA;

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- b. Associate members shall be entitled to participate in all activities of the association and shall be eligible for all benefits, except the chairing of a committee, voting and holding elective office; and
- c. Associate membership may be accorded, upon payment of dues, to currently employed school personnel and their spouses.

Article IV. Affiliation

Section 1. This Association shall be affiliated with the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association (MRSPA), which is affiliated with the National Retired Teachers Association (NRTA), a division of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).

Section 2. Any local organizations concerned with the educational programs of the State of Maryland and Dorchester County.

Article V. Finance

Section 1. **Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of DRSPA shall be July 1 to June 30.

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Section 2. **Membership Dues**

- a. The annual dues of DRSPA shall be recommended by the Executive Board, subject to the approval of the membership at the next general meeting;
- b. Any increase in dues shall be effective the second fiscal year following the adoption of the change at the Annual Business Meeting; and
- c. Dues shall be payable annually.

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Section 3. **Budget**

The budget shall be prepared and presented for action at the Annual Business Meeting by the Executive Board.

Section 4. Audit

The Executive committee will appoint three auditors to review the financial records annually at the end of the fiscal year with the cooperation of the Treasurer and presented to the Executive Board.

Section 5. Assets

The Treasurer will place any excess funds accumulated in the checking account in an interest-bearing account.

Article VI. Officers

Section 1. Elected Officers

The elected officers of the DRSPA shall be President, President-Elect, immediate Past President, Secretary, Correspondence Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section 2. Qualifications

Officers shall be active members of DRSPA.

Section 3. Terms of Officers

- a. The term of office of the President shall be two years.
- b. The term of office of the Immediate Past President and President-elect shall be for two years.

Article VII. Executive Board

Section 1. The elected officers of DRSPA, the chairpersons of committees, the co-Chairpersons, and the Past President shall comprise the Executive Board. The Past President serves in an advisory capacity without a vote for a period of two years only.

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Section 2. **Duties**

- a. The Executive Board shall conduct the business of DRSPA between General Meetings;
- b. The Executive Board shall periodically examine the organizational structure and operating procedures of DRSPA; and
- c. Shall develop recommendations for the future direction of DRSPA.

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Article VIII. Meetings

Section 1. **Annual Meeting**

The annual business meeting of DRSPA full membership will be the general meeting held in the month of March. Meetings may be virtual by online technology if unforeseen circumstances dictate.

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Section 2. **General Meetings**

Three additional general meetings will be held in the months of October, December, and May.

Section 3. **Executive Board Meetings**

A minimum of four regularly scheduled board meetings will be held each year. Dates and times for the Executive Board meetings will be determined by the President and the members of the Executive Board at the first Board meeting of each fiscal year.

Section 4. **Rescheduling Meetings**

At the discretion of the President with concurrence of three (3) additional Executive Board members, a general meeting or Executive Board meeting may be rescheduled.

Article IX. Elections

Section 1. Elections shall be held at the Annual Meeting in March.

Section 2. The term of officers shall be for two years and shall begin at the May Meeting.

- a. The President-Elect shall automatically succeed to the presidency.
- b. The President shall automatically become the Past President.

Article X Amendments

The Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of members present at the Annual Business Meeting, provided that the proposed amendment has been presented in writing to the membership 30 days before the meeting.

BY-LAWS OF THE DORCHESTER RETIRED EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

Article I. Duties of Officers

Section 1. President

- a. The President shall preside at all regular, special, and executive meetings of the organization. The President shall represent the organization at state and regional meetings;
- b. The President shall represent DRSPA at all meetings of civic, professional, and fraternal groups which invite representation from DRSPA;
- c. The President shall call attention of the members of any situation influencing their well-being and ask support for activities required to meet such a situation;
- d. The President shall be ex-officio member of all committees, except the Nominating Committee; and
- e. The President shall, in consultation with the Executive Board, appoint standing committee chairs and appoint ad hoc committees as the need arises.

Section 2. President-Elect

The President-Elect shall preside at meetings and assume the duties of the President in the absence of the President.

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- a. Shall succeed to the Office of President at any time the Office of President becomes vacant.
- b. If a vacancy arises in the office of the President-Elect, the Executive Committee shall select one of the members of the association to fill the unexpired term.
- c. Shall perform such duties as are prescribed by the President and/or the Executive Board and be an ex-Officio member of all committees, except the Nominating Committee.

Section 3. **Secretary**

Shall take the minutes of meetings, keep records, and take care of correspondence as assigned by the President.

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Section 4. **Correspondence Secretary**

- a. The Correspondence Secretary send acknowledgements and appreciation notes to membership and organizations on behalf of DRSPA.

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Section 5. **Treasurer**

- a. The Treasurer shall receive the dues for each member either from the state or directly from the membership chairperson;
- b. The Treasurer shall approve all of dues and other monies paid by members of DRSPA;
- c. The Treasurer shall reimburse the officers for organization expenses and defray other expenses necessary to carrying out the objectives, goals, and purposes of the organization after these expenses have been approved by the President;
- d. The Treasurer shall keep accurate accounts of all receipts and disbursements, and submit a statement at each meeting;
- e. The Treasurer shall approve the payment of all financial obligations of DRSPA;
- f. The Treasurer shall approve the investment of funds;
- g. The Treasurer shall submit reports for the Annual Business Meeting, General Meetings; and the Annual Audit; and
- h. The Treasurer shall sign checks in accordance with DRSPA procedures.

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Article II. Vacancies

If a vacancy in the office of either the Secretary or the Treasurer shall occur, the President with approval of the Executive Board shall appoint a member of the association to fill the unexpired term.

Article III. Committees

Section 1. **Nominating Committee**

A Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the President at the fall general meeting every two years to prepare and present to the membership at the spring general meeting a list of nominees for the offices for the next term of two years.

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Section 2. **Standing Committees**

The President, in consultation with members of the Executive Committee, shall appoint the chairperson of each committee. The Standing Committees are: Membership, Legislative, Constitution-Bylaws, Consumer Education, Scholarship, Nominating, Member Benefits, Education & Protective Services, Public Relations, Publicity, and Community Service.

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Section 3. **Duties of Standing Committees**

Duties of Standing Committees shall parallel with those as listed in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association (MRSPA).

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Section 4. **Special Committees**

Special Committees include Health Benefits, Sunshine, Newsletter, Necrology, Education, Archives, and others appointed by the President as

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the need arises.

Article IV. Membership

- Section 1. Any member who has paid annual dues during a fiscal year shall be considered an active member during that year, eligible to participate in all association activities.
- Section 2. Any member who has not paid dues after July 1 shall be notified in writing that he/she is in arrear and if said dues are not paid within sixty days of the date of the notice, shall be dropped from membership. The provisions in this section may be waived when the Executive Committee recognizes extenuation circumstances.
- Section 3. Membership lists, which include member names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses may be developed and distributed to the membership, but shall not be dispensed to companies, organizations, or individuals not connected with the Dorchester Retired School Personnel Association. A member may send a written request to the membership chair to delete his or her address and telephone number from the list before publication.

Article V. Finance

- Section 1. **Regular Checking Account**
These funds come from membership dues and monies raised in special projects and are used for routine expenses.
- Section 2. **Regular Savings Account**
This account holds any excess funds accumulated in the checking account. The monies in this account may be used as approved by the Executive Board.
- Section 3. **Scholarship Savings Account**
This money comes from projects designated for the scholarship fund

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and from donations. Interest accrued from matured Certificate of Deposit shall be placed in the Scholarship Fund Account.

Section 4. **Certificate of Deposit**

The CD is reinvested upon maturity at a favorable rate.

Article VI. Nondiscrimination

DRSPA shall function in all matters and under all circumstances in accordance with the applicable local, state, and federal laws and statues pertaining to nondiscrimination.

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Article VII. Amendments

The Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of members at the Annual Business Meeting, provided that the proposed amendment has been presented in writing to the membership 30 days before the meeting.

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MEMBERSHIP

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is **DRSPA** (Dorchester Retired **School Personnel** Association)?

- An organization of retired Board of Education personnel in Dorchester County, MD.
- The following retiree groups are eligible for membership: teachers, administrators, administrative secretaries, technology staff, instructional assistants, food service staff, custodial and maintenance staff, and bus drivers and assistants.
- Retirees from Maryland and other states are also eligible to join.

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• Q. What does **DRSPA** do?

- Works locally to protect the health and pension of retirees.
- Works with the Dorchester County Board of Education to address the needs of retirees and their health benefits.
- Provides scholarships to Dorchester high school students pursuing a career in education.
- Provides support to students of Dorchester County Public Schools through volunteer work and other activities.
- Provides information to members through our newsletter and website, www.drsparetireeducators.com
- Works collaboratively with other groups in Dorchester County to build a strong, healthy community.

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Q. How does **DRSPA** work with MRSPA?

- **DRSPA** works actively with MRSPA to support and protect our retiree benefits.
- Supports a “unified membership” in both organizations to provide increased protection of members’ retirement benefits.

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- DRSPA members work with state committees and attend leadership meetings to keep local members informed of key issues regarding retiree health benefits and relevant legislation.

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Q. What is MRSPA (Maryland Retired School Personnel Association)?

- An organization of retired education school personnel in Maryland.
- An affiliate of AARP/NRTA.
- Maintains a collaborative working relationship with a network of state and local retired educators' associations.

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Q. What does MRSPA do?

- MRSPA is the only organization that works exclusively for retired school personnel.
- MRSPA is the only organization that advocates solely for the funding of the Pension Retirement Trust Fund.
- MRSPA advocates for its members' interest locally in Annapolis and nationally in Washington, D.C.
- MRSPA is represented on the Maryland Retirement/Pension system Board of Trustees.
- Collaborates with other organizations that advocate for retirees and/or seniors, including AARP Maryland and United Seniors of Maryland.
- Keeps members informed of legislation proposed in the General Assembly related to retiree issues.

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Q. How does MRSPA work with DRSPA?

- MRSPA provides DRSPA with a connection to important information related to our interests as retirees such as health and pension benefits.
- MRSPA officers and staff keep in direct contact with DRSPA officers and committee chairs to provide current information related to legislative action, membership needs, state scholarships, and other benefits available.
- MRSPA provides opportunities for local members to engage in state level meetings and leadership roles.

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- Much information is provided to all members by MRSPA through their website, mrspa@mrspa.org.
- MRSPA provides the leadership to help DRSPA advocate and work towards the well-being our members.

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OFFICERS

| <u>Officer</u> | <u>Responsibilities</u> |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <u>President</u> | <p><u>Presides at all meetings</u></p> <p><u>Represents DRSPA in the community</u></p> <p><u>Is ex-officio members of all committees, except nominating committee</u></p> <p><u>With approval of Executive Board, shall appoint any vacancies of officers</u></p> <p><u>Appoints committee chairs with approval of Executive Board</u></p> <p><u>Calls regular and special meetings</u></p> |
| <u>President-Elect</u> | <p><u>In the absence of the President, has the powers of, and performs all the duties of the President.</u></p> |
| <u>Secretary</u> | <p><u>Takes the minutes and maintains a full record of all business transacted at regular, special, and Executive Team meetings.</u></p> |
| <u>Correspondence Secretary</u> | <p><u>Will send cards of acknowledgement (thank you, etc.) to membership and organizations on behalf of DRSPA.</u></p> |
| <u>Treasurer</u> | <p><u>Receives and deposits membership dues and other monies paid by members of DRSPA.</u></p> <p><u>Receives and posts income and expenses for DRSPA.</u></p> <p><u>Make payment for all financial obligations of DRSPA.</u></p> <p><u>Keeps an accounting of the investment of funds.</u></p> <p><u>Prepares all financial reports for DRSPA.</u></p> <p><u>Prepares State and Federal financial reports.</u></p> |

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Prepares reports for the Annual Business Meeting and Annual Audit.

Signs checks as approved by DRSPA's Finance Committee.

Executive Board

President, President-Elect, Secretary, Correspondence Secretary, Treasurer, and committee chairs are members of the board.

The Executive Board performs the business of DRSPA throughout the year and presents business items to the entire membership at DRSPA general and business meetings.

COMMITTIES

| COMMITTEE | PURPOSE/GOAL |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Consumer Education | To promote the well-being of the membership by helping them obtain the services and appropriate information to become informed consumers. |
| Legislative | To provide information to members regarding legislation which will affect members, schools, and older persons. To attend the MRSPA Legislative meetings and workshops. |
| Membership | To recruit, retain, and regain members and plan for growth in membership for MSRPA and DREA. |
| Nominating | To present a slate of officers at the annual business meeting during years when vacancies occur. |
| Constitution and By-Laws | To review the By-Laws for needed revisions and to evaluate recommendations received from the membership and to report findings and recommendations to the Executive Board for consideration at the annual business meeting. |
| Public Relations/Publicity | To develop strategies which help DRSPA work toward achieving its goals. |
| Scholarship | To promote and maintain the local DRSPA Otis Trice Scholarship and determine the local recipients. To promote the MRSPA Scholarship Fund within DCPS for those employees working toward a teacher certification program. |
| Finance | To prepare and present a budget to DRSPA members at the annual business meeting. |
| Member Benefits | To provide information to members regarding all benefits provided through MRSPA and DCPS. To represent members during benefit negotiations. |
| Community Service/Involvement | To encourage individual members to be involved with and publicize community service programs and activities . |
| Fundraising | To provide fundraising activities for DREA projects. |
| Pre-Retirement Events | DCPS Events / DRSPA Retiree Reception |
| Education | To provide activities to support students in our schools (mentoring, guidance, assisting staff, tutoring , etc.) To provide information and activities for Dorchester County Public Schools/Community with emphasis on Black History Month, Early Childhood Month, American Education Week. |
| Publications/Newsletter/Social Media | To provide members with information related to the goals and events of the organization. Glimpses DRSPA Newsletter Facebook DRSPA Website DRSPA Handbook |

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| | |
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| Sunshine | To send cards to membership (get well, sympathy, special events) from the <u>DRSPA</u> organization. |
| Necrology | To remember members who have passed away during the current year. |
| Archives | To collect and maintain information related to <u>DRSPA</u> . |

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OVERVIEW OF PROJECTS

DUDS

To provide clothes to schools for students needing extra clothes or a change of clothing while in school.

Book Depot

Book Buggy

Little Free Libraries

Free Libraries and Book Nooks are provided throughout Dorchester County communities to provide reading books to all ages to promote literacy.

Wellness Race and Family Walk

Members volunteer to walk in this community event.

Staff Appreciation Day

Members volunteer to take refreshments to each DCPS school's staff in recognition of the work they do.

Fundraising Projects

Funds raised to support projects.

RESOURCES AND LINKS

DRSPA Website:

<http://dorchesterretiredteachers.weebly.com/>

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DRSPA Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/DorchesterRetiredEducators>

Email:

dorchesterretirees@gmail.com

MRSPA Office Mailing

Address:

8379 Piney Orchard Parkway, Suite A

Odenton, MD 21113

Office Telephone: 410-551-1517 / Toll Free: 877-625-6782

Fax: 410-551-0874

Website: www.mrspa.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/MRSPA1945

Email: mrspa@mrspa.org

AARP

Website: www.aarp.org/md

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AARPMMD

Twitter: @aarpmmd

Telephone: 866-542-8163

NRTA-AARP's Educator Community

NRTA merged into AARP in 1982. NRTA works closely with a network of 50 states and 2,700 local retired educators' associations to further the interests of 50+ educators.

MRSPA & DRSPA

"The only organizations in the state that work exclusively for retired school personnel."

Affiliated with NRTA: AARP's Educator Community

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