



HRE USA

Human Rights Educators USA

2017 STRATEGIC OPERATING PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Human Rights Educators USA (HRE USA) is to promote human dignity, justice, and peace by cultivating an expansive, vibrant base of support for Human Rights Education (HRE) in the United States.

GOALS

HRE USA facilitates mutual collaboration and support to maximize members' efforts to:

- build a national movement for human rights education;
- further all forms of justice, including economic, cultural, and social;
- recognize international human rights and humanitarian law;
- empower educators and learners to continuously embody human rights principles and develop leadership;
- integrate HRE into formal and non-formal educational settings, such as schools, universities, and community organizations;
- promote the inclusion of HRE in national and state education policies, standards, curricula, and pedagogy;
- provide pre-service and in-service teacher training programs;
- provide HRE resources;
- contribute to global research and scholarship on HRE.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

HRE USA is committed to the basic human rights principles of human dignity, equality, and non-discrimination as inspired by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In all our undertakings, both as individual members and as an organization, we value diversity, inclusiveness, transparency, integrity, accountability, responsibility, compassion, and respect.

We believe that human rights education is transformative, empowers individuals and communities, and promotes the respect for and embodiment of human rights principles.

TEN-YEAR VISION

General:

- HRE USA contributes to the creation and maintenance of a culture of human rights in the United States.
- The fundamental principles of international human rights and humanitarian law are understood and respected by a growing proportion of the US population.
- HRE USA is nationally recognized as among the most significant educational and organizing vehicles for human rights, a source of valuable resources, and an influential arena for ideas about and advocacy for HRE.
- With our partners HRE USA assists learners of all ages to become advocates for human rights principles and contributors to programs that advance human rights and humanitarian standards.

Membership Engagement:

We have a consistent growth in membership each year with membership from every state, Our members include practicing pre-K- to university educators, policy makers, educational administrators, human rights advocates, pre-service educators and teacher educators, students, engaged community members, and scholarly societies

Policy and Advocacy:

- Our work has influenced the development of state educational policies to incorporate HRE as a central component of a pre-K-university education.
- HRE is embedded in national standards and in state standards in at least 15 states.
- We have contributed to substantive policy-making efforts on human rights education.
- We have created recognition of HRE in US reporting to the United Nations.
- We have brought to light issues of HRE implementation in the USA to the international stage through collaboration with our global partner, HRE 2020.
- We have a regular presence in both print and electronic media where major educational and policy initiatives are discussed and debated.
- We have a rich network of volunteer HRE policy and advocacy experts to assist our full time professionals.

Materials and Training Resources

- The HRE USA website is recognized by members as a preeminent resource on human rights education in the United States, supporting students, parents, teachers, administrators, activists, policymakers, and others with HRE policy and advocacy issues in the US.
- Our members value their access to a broad network of experts and advocates in the field and to diverse resources that can be used to advance HRE with varied audiences, as well as support for implementation of HRE through online and personal mentoring and guidance from network members.
- We have developed guides and many other resources that are used for HRE with a range of audiences, including K-12 classrooms, college and university settings, adult

education, and institutional settings, including judiciary, law enforcement, and health care personnel.

- Our materials enable the media, educators, and the general public to understand contemporary issues from a human rights perspective.
- When polled, approximately 50% of US educators at all levels will know where to find human rights lessons and resources.

Networking and Communications

- Through our networking, we help to leverage the impact of members' work.
- HRE USA's website increases national and regional interaction and collaboration among members.
- We have established partnerships with institutions of education to develop and implement programs in HRE in not only professional development programs, but also in other administrative processes, such as labor agreements, so as to have these institutions integrate human rights principles throughout.
- We have established partnerships with cultural and public institutions such as foundations, museums, and libraries in order to promote public learning about human rights.
- Our members value our training, information exchange, and support for campaigns, as well as national and regional conferences.

Administration:

- We have established secure and sustainable sources of funding for our initiatives.
- We have sufficient staff to support and sustain network activities, to develop projects, and to coordinate fund-raising for HRE USA.
- We have established a 501(c)(3) designation for HRE USA.
- We have established an accessible archive of network history.
- We have a strong affiliation with the University and College Consortium for HRE, in which HRE USA is a respected partner in research, practice, outreach, and advocacy for HRE.

FIVE-YEAR DIRECTION SETTING GOALS

Policy Setting and Advocacy Work:

Position HRE USA policy setting and advocacy work so as to move public policy to embed HRE in all areas of formal and informal education, including public education, public policy, and practice.

Research to Support Policy and Advocacy Work:

Contribute to research on the impact of HRE through direct project work and/or support for the research and policy work of HRE USA members.

Network Membership and Member Engagement:

Have an individual membership roster of at least 4000 members and an organizational roster of at least 100 members across the USA, where our members are actively engaged in our mission, help transform the work of HRE USA, and model our guiding principles.

Our membership includes practicing formal and non-formal educators, policy makers, educational administrators, human rights advocates, pre-service educators and teacher educators, students, engaged community members, and scholarly societies.

Increase the capacity of network members to share their resources and engage with one another.

Through its website, communications, and organization structure, HRE USA is a valued source of HRE resources and access to HRE expertise, as well as a hub for collective and collaborative work around HRE areas of interest.

Encourage and support members' leadership, activism, and advocacy, both within HRE USA and in their own work.

Networking and Communications

Work in close collaboration with the University and College Consortium for HRE and other institutes of higher education to support growth in membership, further advocacy efforts, and collaborate on shared campaigns.

Develop partnerships/collaborations with at least 1-2 institutions of higher education to develop and implement programs in human rights education in not only their professional development programs, but also in other administrative processes, such as labor agreements, so as to have these institutions integrate human rights principles throughout.

Infrastructure:

Have the capacity and dedicated resources to readily carry out administrative tasks, support smooth internal communications and follow-through on organizational commitments.

Financial Resources:

Secure funding from such sources as donations, member contributions, and outside sources to support an annual operating budget of at least \$150,000.

INTERNAL STRENGTHS

(Factors within HRE USA contributing to achievement of our goals)

1. We have received funding for and hired a highly qualified, part-time administrator.
2. We have secured a grant from the Puffin Foundation.
3. The committed volunteers who have come together collaboratively to share their expertise.
4. We have 400+ individual members and 73 organizational members.
5. Regional groups are growing and becoming more active.
6. Our existence as an organization is having notable impacts on HRE awareness in the larger community.
7. The time is right – there is a profound need for HRE USA.
8. The collective wisdom of our members and leadership is recognized.
9. We have a strong structural and principled foundation to build on.
10. Thriving liaison with Center for Transformative Action (CTA), our fiscal sponsor.
11. The Policy and Advocacy Group has been very dynamic.
 - Their work provided a way to present to NCSS successfully.
12. We have a strong Advisory Group of national and international HRE expert.
13. We have diversity in membership.
14. We demonstrate human rights principles as we work together.
15. We have developed strong governance and other administrative mechanisms in a short time, accomplishing a lot of the original strategic plan.
16. The skills and expertise of membership and the Steering Committee and HRE USA committees.
17. We have two good proposals for a website designer.
18. We have a dynamic website.
19. We have an outstanding monthly newsletter.
20. We have a person and process focused on developing the resource center on the website.
21. We have established a Memorandum of Understanding with Amnesty International to promote their Human Rights Friendly Schools program.
22. We have established the Edward O'Brien Award, the first award honoring the contribution individuals and organizations to HRE in the USA.
23. We have been increased visibility as the North American representative for Human Rights 2020.
24. We have entered close collaboration with the University and College Consortium for HRE.
25. We have supported the establishment of the HRE Community of the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) and have increased visibility at NCSS conferences.
26. We have advocated for and achieved a position statement by the NCSS in support of HRE.
27. We have the New Jersey Curriculum Integration Project and its publications under the HRE USA name.
28. HRE USA is working with several state Departments of Education and mentioned as a resource in the California Social Studies standards.
29. We have national participation in the Universal Periodic Review process.
30. We have on-going financial support from NEA.

INTERNAL WEAKNESSES/CHALLENGES

(Factors within HRE USA that are obstacles to achievement of our goals, listed in priority order. Number after each statement indicates of votes given at the December 2016 meeting.)

1. We need funding for more administrative support.
2. We don't have sufficient funds or a clear fundraising strategy: (10)
 - We need clarity on what constitutes membership and benefits for members, particularly in relation to including "dues" as part of fundraising;
 - We need a process for regular reporting of contributions;
 - We need a clear message of how funding support helps and is utilized.
3. We need more active engagement of members and leaders. (8)
4. We don't have a clear, unifying area for collaborative action: (8)
 - This is needed to galvanize regional groups, as well as members.
5. We need a coherent external communications strategy to members, stakeholders and the public. (6)
 - We don't have a social media presence.
 - We need to clarify who is part of our network and how to reach these entities.
6. We rely on volunteers who have very busy "day jobs." (5)
7. We need clear, prioritized initiatives, and we need to revisit our governance structure. (4)
8. Our internal on-line communication system is not working, including not having our archived documents readily available. (3)
9. It is unclear as to how the resource center can be an optimal tool for HRE USA. (3)
10. We need to clarify HRE USA's role as network and clearinghouse, and how we distinguish ourselves among other HRE organizations. (1)
11. There are parts of the country where we have no representation. (0)
12. Our working groups are not functioning consistently. (0)
 - There is a disparity between total members and active members.
13. There is a lack of clarity as to whom to go to within HRE USA with various organizational questions. (0)

EXTERNAL THREATS/CHALLENGES

(Factors outside of HRE USA that present obstacles to achievement of our goals. Number after each statement indicates of votes given at the December 2016 meeting.)

1. The Trump administration advocates policies that violate human rights principles.
2. Limited information and negative perceptions in the USA about the UN and international human rights (e.g., American Exceptionalism and fear of treaties). (9)
3. Lack of a document that articulates the importance of HRE. (8)
4. Corporatization of education makes it difficult to integrate HRE in the curriculum. (3)
5. HRE USA, as well as member organizations, are competing for limited funding, and/or are operating within the paradigm of limited funding for NGOs. (7)
6. Many like-minded groups don't realize their connection to human rights, social justice, and HRE. (7)
7. The profusion of HRE resources/organizations creates confusion. (6)
8. HRE intersects with Social Studies education, which is highly politicized. (5)
9. The geographic vastness of the USA and differences in how HRE is perceived and discussed in different regions (e.g., hostility toward the United Nations in general and to HRE in numerous areas.) (3)
10. HRE educators are extremely busy and challenged to stay engaged. (3)
11. Academic territoriality, along with not seeing a connection to HRE. (3)
12. Well-funded opposition to HRE. (2)
13. Confusion in the USA between human rights and Constitutional rights. (2)
14. Global corporatism is antagonistic to economic rights. (0)
15. Hijacking of the term "HRE" creates confusion. (0)
16. Multiple regulatory bodies addressing education standards at the national, state and district levels. (Nat'l, State, District) (0)

EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES

(Factors outside of HRE USA that support achievement of our goals, listed in priority order. Number after each statement indicates of votes given at the December 2016 meeting.)

1. We can attract more allies by articulating the connection of HRE to the work of different organizations focused on such issues as social justice and civil rights. (11)
2. Trump administration policies offer greater opportunities to build opposition alliances
3. greater opportunities for alliances to oppose potential from the in-coming Trump administration.
4. The University and College Consortium for HRE and the greater opportunities for collaboration it offers.
5. New opportunities to work with the Human Right Resource Center in Minnesota.
6. HRE can provide a vehicle to unify initiatives that support empowerment of people against the challenging political landscape, such as articulating that healthcare is a human right. (10)
7. There are now national and state level standards that can incorporate HRE. (8)
8. Teaching programs like Teach for America, and after-school programs could incorporate HRE. (8)
9. The Internet provides a vehicle for communicating connecting and collaborating about HRE. (7)
10. HRE provides a vehicle to address interest at the university level in demonstrating the practical significance of what is being taught.
11. HRE can resonate with deeply held democratic values of people across the USA and be a unifying concept. (6)
12. HRE can be a vehicle to address widespread alarm about increasing violence/bullying. (5)
13. Increasing number of non-traditional allies interested in HRE, including scientists and engineers. (5)
14. Social Emotional Learning is recognized as important in education, and HRE is a link to supporting this. (4)
15. HRE could be applicable to high schools already have community action initiatives. (4)
16. There is a growing movement toward the right to an education and what that means. (3)
17. Opportunity to demonstrate the importance of HRE in advancing the quality of life for people. (2)
18. Some of the growing social movements in the USA and abroad use HR as a framework. (2)
19. With increased sense of being commodities, people are searching for more meaning, which HRE can provide. (1)
20. More educational institutions are offering an HRE emphasis (USF, Columbia, UConn), and Pam Bruns has started a directory of these. (0)

21. We can learn from international partners that have successfully organized around HR. (0)
22. Growing number of HR and HRE non-profit organizations. (0)
23. There is revolt against standardized testing and a desire for curriculum/framework that provides meaningful learning. (0)
24. HRE can be integrated into social movement organizing. (0)

PRIORITY ISSUES TO ADDRESS OVER THE NEXT YEAR

1. We don't have sufficient funds or a clear fundraising strategy: (10)
 - We need clarity on what constitutes membership and benefits for members, particularly in relation to including "dues" as part of fundraising;
 - We need a process for regular reporting of contributions;
 - We need a clear message of how funding support helps and is utilized.
2. We need more active engagement of members and leaders. (8)
3. We need a clear, unifying area for collaborative action to galvanize regional groups, as well as members: (8)
4. We need a coherent external communications strategy to members, stakeholders, and the public. (6)
 - We don't have a social media presence.
 - We need to clarify who is part of our network and how to reach these entities.

NOTE: The issue of relying on volunteers is a priority, however, is viewed as being dealt with by addressing the 4 priorities noted above, by providing clear areas of action for volunteer engagement.

PRIORITY EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ADDRESS EXTERNAL CHALLENGES

1. We can attract more allies by articulating the connection of HRE to the work of different organizations focused on such issues as social justice and civil rights. (11)
2. HRE can provide a vehicle to unify initiatives that support empowerment of people against the challenging political landscape, such as articulating that health care is a human right. (10)
3. There are now national and state level standards that can incorporate HRE. (8)
4. Teaching programs like Teach for America, and after-school programs could incorporate HRE. (8)
5. The Internet provides vehicle for connecting and collaborating. (7)
 - There are many different ways to communicate about HRE.
6. In education at the university level there is interest in demonstrating the practical significance of what is being taught, and HRE provides a vehicle to address this. (6)
7. HRE can resonate with deeply held democratic values of people across the USA and be a unifying concept. (6)
8. There is widespread alarm about increasing violence/bullying, and HRE can be a vehicle to address these issues. (5)
9. Increasing number of non-traditional allies interested in HRE, including scientists and engineers. (5)