

CONSTITUTION OF THE BREVARD FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

ARTICLE I: NAME

Section 1. This organization shall be known as the Brevard Federation of Teachers, Local 2098, Inc.

Section 2. The Brevard Federation of Teachers shall be affiliated with the Florida Education Association (FEA), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), National Education Association (NEA), Space Coast AFL-CIO, Florida AFL-CIO and national AFL-CIO.

ARTICLE II: OBJECTIVES

1. To obtain for teachers the rights to which they are entitled in a free society.
2. To improve standards of teachers by promoting better preparation, encouraging relevant inservice training, and securing the working conditions essential to the best performance of professional service.
3. To encourage the hiring and retention of competent teachers, the maintenance of modern well-equipped schools, and the promotions of such educational programs and conditions that will enable their students to become productive members of the community.
4. To promote the welfare of students by providing better educational opportunities for all.
5. To fight all forms of bias or discrimination in education including, but not limited to: race, gender, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, age, or national origin.
6. To support and promote the ideals of democracy as envisioned in the Constitution of the United States of America, its Bill of Rights and other Amendments; to work for the passage and retention of just laws which will-improve the educational climate for students, teachers and other school personnel; and to encourage all stakeholders to exercise their proper rights and responsibilities under these laws.
7. To bring this Union into relations of mutual assistance and cooperation with other federations and associations of teachers.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Certified employees of the School Board of Brevard County, as listed in Article I of the current Collective Bargaining Agreement, are eligible for membership

Section 2: Retired Brevard Federation of Teachers members are eligible for membership in the Brevard Federation of Retired Teachers, Local 2098R.

Section 3: Principals, assistant principals, and all other administrative personnel are ineligible for membership. Members who move to administrative positions are automatically removed from membership as of the effective date of their change in status.

Section 4: A member in good standing is defined as one whose dues are current.

ARTICLE IV: EXECUTIVE BOARD OFFICERS

Section 1: The following officers shall be elected for three year terms: President, First Vice-President, and Second Vice-President.

Section 2: The following officers shall be elected to two-year terms: Two South Area Directors, two Central Area Directors, one North Area Director, two Directors-At-Large, Secretary, Political Coordinator, Treasurer, and Chief Delegate to Space Coast AFL-CIO Labor Council.

Section 3: In order to hold office, a member must be in good standing for at least one year prior to the election. Beginning with the spring 2011 election: To qualify as a candidate, a member must have attended at least 2 general membership meetings within the year before the election. To qualify as a paid, full time release officer, a candidate must have also attended at least 2 Executive Board meetings within a calendar year, or have served on the Executive Board previously.

Section 4: Terms for officers and delegates shall be from June 1 to May 31, or in the case of appointment by the Executive Board, from the date of appointment to May 31.

Section 5: A vacancy in any unpaid office shall be filled by an appointment of the Executive Board. The appointed person shall serve until the subsequent annual election.

Section 6: The offices of President, First Vice President and Second Vice President are paid, full time release, positions pending funding.

Section 7: The President may request the chairperson of a committee to send a non-voting, ex-officio representative to Executive Board meetings.

ARTICLE V: BUILDING REPRESENTATIVES

The term of Building Representative shall be 2 years from June 1 to May 31. The election of Building Representatives shall take place at each school or worksite in March of odd numbered years. Should a vacancy occur at a school, an election shall be held at that school site.

Section 1: Election of Building Representatives shall take place by secret ballot during March or when a vacancy occurs. The term of office shall be 2 years from June 1 - May 31. Any member in good standing may vote for or run for Building Representative. The BFT shall be notified immediately of the result of the election. All schools are eligible for at least one Building Representative and an alternate.

Article VI: DELEGATES TO CONVENTIONS

Section 1: Convention delegates shall be nominated and elected annually.

Section 2: In order to be a convention delegate a member must be in good standing for 6 months prior to nominations, and must have served as a building representative for BFT or be designated by the building representative.

BY-LAWS OF THE BREVARD FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

ARTICLE I: NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND DELEGATES

Section 1: Nominations shall be made at the February General Membership meeting.

- a. Notice shall be given to the membership at least fifteen days prior to the meeting that nominations will be in order. Nominations must be seconded by a member in good standing, and the nomination must be accepted in person.
- b. Members may run for only one office.
- c. Further nominations may be made in writing (no later than 2 weeks after the February nominating meeting) and sent to the BFT office. Such written nominations shall be seconded (by signature) by 20 members in good standing for Officers and 10 such members for Convention Delegates.
- d. Sample ballots shall be prepared and sent to each member in good standing within fifteen days following the nomination period.

Section 2: Elections shall be held in May of each year.

- a. Beginning in 2008, the President's three year term began. In 2009, the First Vice President's three year term began. In 2007, the Second Vice President's three year term began. Henceforth, one of the release time offices will come up for an election each year. The president's, first vice president's and second vice president's term is three years.
- b. All other officers shall be elected in May of each odd-numbered year to a two year term.
- c. Delegates shall be elected annually.
- d. In the case of a vacancy of a paid officer: Should the position of President become vacant, the remainder of his/her term shall be filled by the First Vice President. If the position of First Vice President becomes vacant, her/his term shall be filled by the Second Vice President. Should the position of Second Vice President become vacant, an election will be held as determined by the executive board.

ARTICLE II: VOTING PROCEDURES

Section 1: Votes on the contract or related contract issues are open to all members of the bargaining unit. BFT internal elections are open to BFT members only. A secret ballot must be ensured. All other provisions shall be determined by the elections committee in accordance with applicable laws.

Section 2: Absentee voting

1. Absentee ballots must be requested by signature from the BFT office at least 15 days prior to the scheduled May election date.
2. All absentee ballots must be returned by noon on election day.

3. Vote Tabulation: A simple majority of ballots cast shall be required to elect all Officers. In the event that no majority has been obtained, a run-off election shall be conducted.

ARTICLE III: DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND BUILDING REPRESENTATIVES

Section 1: The President shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Federation. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Federation and of the Executive Board. The President shall appoint members to all committees and delegates to Space Coast AFL-CIO Labor Council; shall sign all necessary papers and documents; and shall represent the Federation when and where necessary. The President shall have the primary responsibility and authority for the efficient administration of this local, but he/she may delegate responsibility to other Officers with the consent of the Executive Board. The President shall direct employees of the Union in their job responsibilities. In the event the Executive Board chooses to enter into written contracts with employees of the union, the President shall act as chief negotiator in such contract negotiations. In lieu of a contract with employees of the union, the President holds primary responsibility for their employment, termination, salary, benefits and professional development, using guidelines as set forth by the Executive Board. The President shall designate one member of the Executive Board to act as Parliamentarian. The President shall make a report to the membership at least once a year summarizing the accomplishments of the Federation outlining suggestions for the next year. The President shall keep the First (1st) Vice-President and Second (2nd) Vice-President apprised of Union business. The President shall keep the Executive Board apprised of any and all grievances.

Section 2: The Vice Presidents shall assist the President in enforcing the collective bargaining agreement (contract) and providing membership services.

Section 3 In case of the absence or disability of the President the First (1st) Vice-President shall take the chair, and in the absence of the First (1st) Vice-President, the Second (2nd) Vice-President shall take the chair. In the absence of the Second (2nd) Vice-President a designated Area Director shall take the chair.

Section 4: The First (1st) Vice-President shall act as the coordinator of all committees and shall keep himself/herself apprised of Union business.

Section 5: The Second (2nd) Vice-President shall assist the First (1st) Vice-President as coordinator of all committees and shall keep himself/herself apprised of Union business.

Section 6: The Area Directors and the At-Large Directors shall be responsible for the organization of Building Representatives, monthly Building Representative contacts, encouraging the active involvement of members in their respective areas, and ensuring that each school in their respective areas has a Building Representative.

Section 7: The Secretary shall maintain minutes of all membership and Executive Board meetings. The Secretary should have at each meeting a copy of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Federation.

Section 8: The Political Coordinator shall keep the membership informed of political activities and events. The Political Coordinator shall also keep all affiliates of the Federation apprised of its political activities. The Political Coordinator shall be a liaison between the candidates and the Brevard Federation of Teachers and assist the Federation in political action. The Political Coordinator shall be the chairperson of the Brevard TIGER Board.

Section 9: The duties of the Treasurer shall be:

1. To be chairperson of the Budget Committee and be responsible for a yearly review of the budget.
2. To keep adequate records available at all times for review by the Executive Board, any other authorized reviewer, and to assist in an independent yearly review.
3. To pay all bills authorized by the budget, retaining vouchers or invoice for same.
4. To report to the Executive Board at each monthly meeting.
5. The budget will be completed and prepared for a vote of the Executive Board at the August meeting. The budget will be presented to the general membership for a vote of those present at the August general membership meeting. A simple majority vote is required for acceptance of the budget.

Section 10: Duties of the Chief Delegate to the Space Coast AFL-CIO Labor Council: With the other delegates, the Chief Delegate shall attend the monthly meetings of the Space Coast AFL-CIO Labor Council, and make a report to the Executive Council and to the general membership at the regular meeting.

Section 11: The duties of the Officers shall also include any duties deemed necessary by the President with the approval of the Executive Board.

Section 12: The duties and responsibilities of the Building Representative(s) shall be as follows:

- a. To be responsible for the distribution of all information from the BFT office.
- b. To maintain communication
 - With worksite members
 - With BFT Executive Board contact
 - Between BFT office and members needing services
 - By being on the agenda at all faculty meetings for informational purposes
 - By keeping the BFT bulletin board current
- c. To have school represented at BFT meetings.
- d. To chair school level BFT meetings.
- e. To recruit new members.
- f. To conduct all school based voting and coordinate administrative evaluations.
- g. To attend BR trainings.

ARTICLE IV: THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1: The Executive Board of this Federation shall consist of elected Officers.

Section 2: Executive Board members shall not hold more than one position on the Executive Board. It is highly recommended that Executive Board Members not serve simultaneously as a Building Representative, nor should they act as a Building Representative. However, it is not the intention of these by-laws to prohibit an Executive Board member from serving as a Building Representative.

Section 3: The Executive Board shall administer the policy of this Federation as set by the membership. It shall have the power to act for the good of the Federation in emergency situations where the policy cannot be set by the membership.

Section 4: The chairperson of the Executive Board shall be the President of the Federation.

Section 5: The Executive Board shall meet at least once each month throughout the calendar year. The time and place of the Executive Board meeting shall be set by the Executive Board and announced on BFT's website and in its publications. In order to conduct business and hold binding votes, a quorum must be present. A quorum shall be defined as 2/3 of the Executive Board, rounded to the nearest whole number.

Section 6: The Executive Board, using prudent business practices, shall have the power to make contracts and incur liabilities which may be appropriate to enable it to accomplish any or all of its purposes; to borrow money for Federation purposes at such rates of interest and terms and conditions as they may determine; to issue notes, bonds and other obligations by mortgage, pledge or deed of trust of all or any of its property or income. Expenditures beyond approved budget items of more than \$100 shall be brought to the Executive Board for approval. For expenses which cannot wait until the next Executive Board meeting, Executive Board members shall be given the opportunity to vote by electronic transmission (telephone, e-mail, fax, etc.) or in writing. In case of an emergency, this may be waived, and the expenditure shall be reflected in the next meeting's Treasurer's Report.

Section 7: The Executive Board shall work with the Collective Bargaining Team for the purpose of negotiating with the School Board of Brevard County. It may assist in preparation of bargaining goals and may present these to the general membership.

Section 8: The Executive Board shall be kept informed of all grievances. It shall determine whether grievances shall be submitted for arbitration.

Section 9: The Executive Board shall approve all committee appointments.

ARTICLE V: Removal from Office

Section 1: A member, Officer, or Building Representative may be expelled, suspended, or recalled for acts detrimental to the Federation upon the presentation of written charges signed by at least two-thirds of the Executive Board and approved by two thirds of the building representatives present at a scheduled building representative meeting.

Section 2: The Executive Board shall furnish to the accused member notice of the charges at least ten business days prior to the date on which the Board considers the charges. The accused member has the right to be present, with counsel if he/she so desires, and address the Board when his/her case is considered.

Should the member be expelled, he/she shall have the right of appeal to the membership at the general membership meeting following his/her expulsion, suspension, or recall. If two-thirds of the members present vote to reinstate him/her, he/she shall be reinstated with the full rights and duties of membership.

ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES

The President shall seek volunteers to chair and serve on all committees.

Section 1: Standing Committees (All committees shall report to the Executive Board.)

- a. An Elections Committee shall be established in October to establish guidelines for the May election. These guidelines shall be in compliance with the Employment Labor-Management Standards and Disclosure Act of 1959 (the Landrum-Griffin Act). This committee shall be comprised of members of the BFT retiree chapter and / or members not seeking election. The election committee shall create internal voting procedures, or delegate running the election to an external agency, pending approval by the Executive Board. Voting procedures must allow reasonable provisions for all members in good standing to vote. These procedures shall also describe the methods of counting ballots, announcing results, and certifying the election. The election committee is responsible for the provisions of Article II of these by-laws.
- b. A Budget Committee shall be established yearly for the purpose of proposing an annual budget. This committee shall be chaired by the Treasurer.
- c. A Membership Committee shall be established for the purpose of training Building Representatives and recruiting new members.
- d. The Collective Bargaining Team shall be chosen by the President for the purpose of negotiating the Collective Bargaining Agreement. The President shall serve as chief negotiator, or may appoint a designee.
- e. The Minority Affairs Committee shall study concerns related to minorities and recommend courses of actions for these concerns.
- f. The Exceptional Education Committee shall study concerns related to exceptional student education and recommend courses of action for these concerns.
- g. The Community Engagement Committee shall be instrumental in guiding and sustaining the Union's work with community partners.

Section 2: Ad Hoc Committees

The President may establish ad hoc committees as needed or requested. The ad hoc committee shall report to the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VII: DUES

Section 1: Yearly membership dues shall not be in excess of the following amount: 1.55% of a beginning teacher's salary, plus required pass through amounts from AFT, FEA, and Florida AFL-CIO, Space Coast AFL-CIO. The Executive Board shall have the power, by simple majority vote, to adjust dues within the above formula.

Section 2: Dues for part-time teachers shall be 70% of the regular membership dues. Members who are part time teachers shall be counted in determining the delegate strength of the local at all state and national conventions.

Section 3: Dues shall be paid by payroll deduction. Those members currently paying membership by check as of September 30, 2009, may continue to do so.

ARTICLE VIII: GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Section 1. General Membership Meetings and/or Regional membership meetings shall be held at least five times per school year.

Section 2: Robert's Rules of Order shall be observed.

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION/BY-LAWS

This Constitution and By-Laws may be amended by a majority of members voting by secret ballot at a General Membership Meeting provided that specific written notice of the contemplated change(s) will be provided to all members in good standing no later than 15 days prior to a general membership meeting. After discussion at that General Membership Meeting the reviewed Constitution/Bylaws shall be posted on the BFT website and in Union publications. Balloting shall occur at the next General Membership meeting.

This Constitution/By-Laws shall be reviewed by a Constitutional Revision Committee at least every three years. Copies of older BFT constitutions shall be kept on file in the BFT office for reference and historical purposes. The final draft from the Constitution revision committee shall also be kept on file.