

BRISTOL FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
LOCAL 1464, CFEPE, AFT, AFL-CIO

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I NAME

This organization shall be known as the Bristol Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 1464, AFL-CIO.

ARTICLE II OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this organization shall be:

SECTION 1.

To bring teachers into relations of mutual assistance and cooperation.

SECTION 2.

To obtain for teachers the rights to which they are entitled.

SECTION 3.

To improve standards for teachers and other educational workers by promoting better preparation, encouraging relevant in-service training, and securing the working conditions essential to the best performance of professional service.

SECTION 4.

To encourage the maintenance of modern well-equipped schools, and the promotion of such educational programs and conditions in American schools as will enable students to equip themselves better to take their places in the economic, social, and political life of the community.

SECTION 5.

To promote the welfare of the youth of the community by providing the best possible education opportunity for all.

SECTION 6.

To eliminate discrimination in education in all its forms.

SECTION 7.

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 passage and retention of just laws which will improve the educational climate for students, teachers, and other workers in education and to encourage them to exercise their proper rights and responsibilities under these laws.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1.

Certified employees of the public school district of Bristol including classroom teachers, permanent substitutes, supporting teachers, librarians, and counselors, are eligible for membership.

SECTION 2.

- a. Membership shall be closed to anyone who is employed in a position requiring an administrator's or a supervisor's certificate or the equivalent thereof.
- b. Persons eligible for membership are legally described in Connecticut General Statutes, Section 10-153b, Subsection (a)C1, (2). In the event that a proposed or existing member's status is in question, the Executive Council shall, by a majority vote, make the final determination.

SECTION 3.

No discrimination shall ever be shown toward individual members or applicants for membership because of gender, race, age, national origin, religion, political activities or belief, or social/economic status.

SECTION 4.

A member may be expelled from membership from the Federation for acts detrimental to the Federation. Such acts may include, but shall not be limited to the following:

- a. Failure to pay dues in the amount, time and manner designated by the Executive Council or otherwise attempting to damage the Federation financially.
- b. Overtly or covertly aiding or abetting the attempts of any board (or members of), council, association, or any other identifiable entity to decertify or in any way remove the Federation from the status of bargaining agent.

The terms of the ~~expulsion~~ shall be determined by a majority vote of Executive Council. The member shall have the right to appeal the expulsion by appearing before the Executive Council. The expulsion shall be withdrawn if two-thirds of the Executive Council so votes.

ARTICLE IV OFFICERS, STEWARDS, DELEGATES ELECTION

SECTION 1. The following at-large officers shall be elected in May of even-numbered years by this Federation:

1. President
2. Three (3) Vice-Presidents

3. Secretary
4. Treasurer

The following grade level officers shall be elected in September of even-numbered years, concurrent with building steward elections:

1. High School Vice-President
2. Middle School (6-8) Vice-President
3. Elementary School (Pre-K – 5) Vice-President

SECTION 2

At-Large Officers shall take office on September 1, concurrent with the BFT fiscal year. Grade level officers shall take office immediately upon election

SECTION 3.

Vacancies in any office shall be filled by vote of the Executive Council upon nomination of the Executive Committee.

SECTION 4

Allocation For Salaries And Stipends Will Be Determined By The Executive Council During The Budget-Making Process.

SECTION 5

Officers of this organization shall be subject to removal from office for malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance in office by a two-thirds vote of members present at a general meeting, provided that notice of the proposed action shall have been submitted in writing to all members at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

SECTION 6. BUILDING STEWARDS

- a. Building stewards shall be elected in a building election during the third week of September in even-numbered years.
- b. The number of stewards in each building shall be the following:

Each High School - four (4) stewards

Each 6-8 Middle School - three (3) stewards

Each K-5 School - two (2) stewards

City -wide teachers based in any other designated BOE Annex – One (1) Steward.

- c. Each steward shall have one vote on the Executive Council.

SECTION 7.

Membership in good standing is required to be a steward.

SECTION 8.

Steward vacancies shall be filled by majority vote of the Executive Council upon nomination by the Executive Committee.

SECTION 9.

Stewards may be disciplined for the same reasons as officers except that removal shall be at the building level.

SECTION 10. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

- a. The At -Large Officers of the Federation shall be elected in May of even-numbered years. The actual date of the election will be set by the Executive Council no later than its January meeting and members will receive notification of the election date at least fifteen (15) days prior to February 1.
- b. The election of officers of the Federation shall be by secret ballot
- c. Membership in good standing for at least one (1) year immediately preceding the date of the election is required to hold office.
- d. A non-incumbent officer member seeking to be elected to any at-large Federation office shall so inform the President in writing by March 1 in the form of a petition containing the signatures of at least ten (10) percent of the total Federation membership. A receipt for each petition shall be provided to the prospective candidate by the Federation. Incumbent officers seeking reelection shall so notify the president and election chairperson in writing by March 1 that they wish to have their names placed on the ballot.
- e. Petition forms for each office shall be made available to members at the Union office beginning February 1.
- f. Upon verification of petition signatures by the Elections Committee and not sooner than April 1, nominees shall receive, upon written request, a complete list of all BFT members and shall have access to an election flyer. Upon verification of an At-Large Officer incumbent's intent to seek reelection by the elections committee, and not sooner than April 1, at-large incumbents shall receive, upon written request, a complete list of all BFT members and shall have access to an election flyer.
 1. If all of the above is done and there is no contest for a particular office, the secretary shall be instructed by the elections committee chairperson to cast one ballot for that office and the nominee shall be declared elected.
- g. Membership in good standing as of May 1 in an election year shall be required to vote in the election of BFT At-Large Officers. Membership in good standing as of September 1 in an election year shall be required to vote in the election of Grade Level Officers.

- h. The nominees receiving at least a majority of the votes cast shall be declared elected.
- i. If a majority is not obtained, a run-off election of the two candidates receiving the most votes shall be held within five (5) days.
- j. Nominees for BFT Grade Level Officerships must be assigned full time at the grade level they are expected to represent. Persons placing a member's name in nomination for Grade Level Officerships must be assigned full time to the grade level for which they are making the nomination. Member's wishing to seek grade level officership may place his/her own name in nomination.
 - 1. If, during his/her term of office, a Grade Level Officer is no longer assigned to the grade level for which he/she was elected to represent, such grade level officership shall be declared vacant and filled according to Article IV, Section 3 of this constitution.
- k. Members seeking Grade Level Officerships need not petition for nomination. Grade level nominees shall have access to a complete list of BFT members on September 1, and shall have access to an election flyer
- l. If this constitution is ratified by the membership during the 2000 – 2001 school year a special election for Grade Level Officers will be held in September, 2001. Grade Level Officers elected in the special election will hold office until September of 2002.

SECTION 13. ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

The Elections Committee shall:

- a. Receive the nomination petitions and verify the signatures on such.
- b. Issue no sooner than April 1, the list of BFT members to At-Large Officership nominees who have requested such list in writing, and no later than September 1 the list of BFT members to Grade Level Officership nominees who have requested such list in writing.
- c. Prepare the ballots for each election.
- d. Provide a school membership list to the person conducting the election in each school building, unless there is a mail ballot.
- e. Distribute the ballots to the person conducting the election in each school building and provide a sheet that each member will sign to indicate that the ballot has been received.

- f. Provide a secure container for ballots, which must be supervised until the election is over.
- g. Count the total number of ballots returned to make sure that they are equal to or less than the number of ballots distributed.
- h. Count all the ballots at one place.
- i. Make provisions for absentee ballots for those who know they will be absent on election day, unless there is a mail ballot.
- j. Make three (3) signed official written reports of the vote for:
 - (1) The President
 - (2) The Secretary
 - (3) The Union Teacher Editor

SECTION 14. ELECTION OF DELEGATES

In the event that an officer is unable to act as a delegate to the conventions of affiliates, or if the number of delegates allotted is more than the number of officers, the election of BFT delegates to conventions shall be as follows:

- a. The Elections Committee shall conduct elections for convention delegates. No member of this committee shall be a candidate for delegate.
- b. At least sixty (60) days before the election, members shall be notified, through posting and individual communication in mail boxes, of the procedure for nomination, the date and place nominations are due, the time and place of the election, and the number of delegates and alternates to be elected.
- c. Membership in good standing for at least one year immediately preceding the election is required to be a candidate for the delegate election.
- d. The election shall be done by secret ballot in individual schools.
- e. The ballots shall be counted in one place under the supervision of the Elections Committee. The candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected. In the event of a tie for the last delegate position to be elected, a run-off election shall be held. In the event that there are fewer candidates nominated than positions available, those members nominated shall be considered elected.
- f. The election results signed by the Elections Committee shall be posted at the union office and a copy shall be posted in each school.

- g. All steps of the procedure in b. above shall conform to state and federal statutes which pertain to such elections and shall conform to the CSFT, AFT, and AFL-CIO constitutions.

ARTICLE V DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND BUILDING STEWARDS

SECTION 1.

The President shall preside at all meetings of the Federation and of the Executive council. He/she shall be ex-officio member of all committees except the Audit Committee, shall sign all necessary papers and documents and represent the local when and where necessary. The President shall carry out all directives of the Executive Council.

SECTION 2.

The Vice-Presidents shall perform the duties of the President in the absence of that officer. The Vice-Presidents shall assist the President in the duties assigned by the President as well as those duties, which are naturally incumbent to the office of Vice-President.

SECTION 3.

The Secretary shall issue all notices, shall answer all correspondence at the direction of the President and the Executive Council, and shall report outside correspondence to the President and the Executive Council. He/she shall be the custodian of the seal and charter of the Federation. The Secretary shall record the minutes of Executive Council, Executive Committee, and of any general membership meetings. The Secretary shall carry out other duties as assigned by the President and/or Executive council.

SECTION 4.

The duties of the Treasurer shall be:

- a. To receive, record, and deposit in the name of the Federation all monies from dues and all other sources.
- b. To keep the membership roll, issue receipts and delinquent notices.
- c. To forward all per capita dues and current membership lists to the AFT, the CFEPE, and other affiliated organizations as required to keep this Federation in good standing at all times as required and allowed by affiliated organizations.
- d. To be chairperson of the Budget Committee.
- e. To keep adequate records available at all times for the Executive Council and the Audit Committee.

- f. To pay all bills authorized by the adopted budget, retaining voucher or invoice for same. Expenses not authorized in the budget must be presented to the Executive Council for authorization.

SECTION 5.

Officers shall automatically be delegates to conventions of all affiliates. In the event that an officer is unable to act as a delegate at such a convention, or if the number of delegates allotted is more than the number of officers, then an election of delegates for conventions shall be held in accordance with the provisions of Article IV, Section 13.

SECTION 6.

Building Stewards shall conduct building meetings.

SECTION 7.

They shall transmit to the Executive Council the record of any votes of the members in their respective buildings. They shall carry out the directives of the Executive Council. They shall be the official union representatives in the initial stages of any grievance unless other arrangements are made.

SECTION 8.

AT the end of their term of office all officers, stewards, committee chairpersons and all appointees to contractual committees shall turn into the President all of their records for transmittal to their successors.

ARTICLES VI COMMITTEES

SECTION 1.

The following committees shall be active in this Federation:

1. Membership Committee
2. Publicity and Publications Committee
3. Defense Committee
4. Education Committee
5. Social Committee
6. Political and Legislative Education and Action committee
7. Collective Bargaining committee
8. Benefits and Insurance Committee

SECTION 2.

The following ad hoc committees shall be established as needed:

1. Budget Committee
2. Audit Committee
3. Nominating Committee
4. Elections Committee

SECTION 3.

The number of persons on committees, the members, and chairpersons of the standing committees and all special committees shall be appointed by the President with the advice of the Executive Committee and the consent of the Executive Council.

SECTION 4.

The length of the term of membership on committees in Section 1 and 2 shall be for two years and shall run concurrently with the terms of office of the elected at-large officers. In June of each even numbered year, the President-Elect shall make appointments to such committees in accordance with Section 3.

SECTION 5.

The length of the term of membership on contractually mandated committees shall be for two years and shall run concurrently with the terms of office of the elected officers unless the length of the term of membership is specified by guidelines outside the BFT/BOE contract and/or BFT constitution. In June of each even numbered year, the President shall make appointments to such committees in accordance with Section 3.

In the case of committees not covered by the BFT constitution or the BFT/BOE contract, the President, with the advice of the Executive Committee and the approval of the Executive Council, shall make the appointments in accordance with the time schedule specified by outside guidelines.

ARTICLE VII DUTIES OF COMMITTEES

SECTION 1.

The membership committee shall plan and execute a dynamic program to insure growth and vitality of the Federation.

SECTION 2.

The Publicity and Publications Committee shall prepare and publish the bulletin. This committee shall make use of available forms of communication to apprise the membership and general public of the activities and accomplishments of the Federation and its members.

SECTION 3.

The Defense Committee shall act on all grievances and matters of teacher and Federation defense. The Committee shall make itself knowledgeable of the contractual grievance procedures as well as the defense procedures established by the CSFT and AFT. The Committee shall inform teachers and members of the above procedures.

SECTION 4.

The Education Committee shall study and make recommendations for improvements in curriculum, teaching techniques, class size, texts, equipment, and other professional matters. The Committee shall plan a program of professional improvement for presentation to members and other interested parties.

SECTION 5.

The Social Committee shall arrange such programs and entertainments and perform such duties as the local may direct.

SECTION 6.

The Political and Legislative Education and Action Committee shall study proposed Legislation and make recommendations to the Executive Council. It may initiate recommendations. It shall study the records of candidates for public office and make recommendations to the Executive Council for endorsement.

SECTION 7.

The Collective Bargaining Committee shall prepare contract proposals based on recommendations of all the Committees and Executive Council. The Committee shall also poll the membership for their recommendations and priorities. The Committee shall make recommendations to the Executive Council concerning collective bargaining matters. Upon completion of negotiations and not less than twenty-four (24) hours prior to any ratification vote, the committee shall present in writing to all members the textual change of the proposed contract. The Executive Council shall recommend acceptance or rejection of the proposed contract to the membership.

SECTION 8.

The Benefits and Insurance Committee shall be responsible for the evaluation of the various benefits and insurances available to the Federation and Bristol teachers. The committee will make recommendations and disseminate information about programs.

SECTION 9.

The Audit Committee shall annually audit the Treasurer's books and shall prepare a report for presentation at the September Executive Council meeting.

SECTION 10.

The Nominating and Elections Committees shall perform the duties described in Article IV of this constitution.

ARTICLE VIII EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

SECTION 1.

The Executive Committee shall consist of all the officers of the Federation.

SECTION 2.

The Executive Committee shall administer the policy of this Federation as set by the Executive Council and/or the membership. It shall have the power to act for the good of the Federation in emergency situations consistent with local policy and objectives.

SECTION 3.

The chairperson of the Executive Committee shall be the President of the Federation.

SECTION 4.

The Executive Committee shall be scheduled to meet monthly prior to the Executive Council meetings during the school year.

SECTION 5.

The Executive Committee shall issue a monthly report to the Executive Council including recommendations for action by the Executive Council.

SECTION 6.

The Executive Committee shall have the power to employ all personnel including clerical help and other persons on full or part-time basis as may be determined by needs and finances of the Federation.

SECTION 7.

The Executive Committee shall approve an accountant to do a periodic audit.

SECTION 8.

In emergency situations and during months when regular meetings of the Executive Council are not scheduled or held, the Executive Committee may assume the powers, privileges, and duties of the Executive Council.

SECTION 9.

The Executive Council is the primary administrative and policy making body of this Federation. The Executive Council establishes the policies and practices of this Federation when such policies and practices of this Federation are not set by the membership.

SECTION 10.

The Executive Council shall consist of the following:

1. All officers
2. All building stewards
3. The chief delegate to the local labor body.
4. Committee Chairpersons may attend meetings of the Executive Council and make reports but shall have no vote.

SECTION 11.

The Chairperson of the Executive Council shall be the President of the Federation.

SECTION 12.

The Executive Council shall have the power to make contracts, to 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 it may

determine; to issue notes, bonds, and other obligations; to secure any of its obligations by mortgage, pledge, or deed of trust of all or any of its property and income; and to levy an emergency assessment on members not to exceed \$10.00 per annum.

SECTION 13.

The minutes of all Executive Council meetings excepting those portions concerning negotiations, defense, and collective bargaining agent elections and other matters decided in Executive session shall be made available for inspection by the members of the Federation upon written request to the Secretary and may be viewed in his/her presence at the Federation office.

SECTION 14.

The Executive Council shall be scheduled to meet at least once a month during the school year.

ARTICLE IX AFFILIATIONS

SECTION 1.

This Federation shall maintain affiliation with and whenever possible send delegates to the following organizations:

- a. The American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
- b. The CFEPE (Connecticut Federation Of Educational And Professional Employees)
- c. The Greater Bristol Labor Council
- d. The Connecticut State Labor Council
- e. Any other organization which the Executive Council so designates.

SECTION 2.

Delegates to affiliated organizations shall be chosen according to the rules and regulations of the affiliated organizations. If no such rules and regulations are specifically stated by the affiliated organizations, the Executive Council shall determine the manner of selection.

SECTION 3.

The President shall automatically be a delegate to the affiliated organizations.

SECTION 4.

The number of delegates and alternates, allowed expenses, and distribution of expenses shall be determined by the Executive Council.

SECTION 5.

Any delegate may be required to make written or oral reports to the Executive Council on his/her activities as delegate.

SECTION 6.

Delegates to affiliated organizations shall meet the same requirements as officers of the local unless such requirements are waived by vote of the Executive Council.

ARTICLE X MEETINGS

SECTION 1.

The time and place of building meetings shall be fixed by the building stewards. Meetings shall be conducted by the building stewards in their respective buildings. Stewards shall report the results of any votes and motions to the next Executive Council meeting.

SECTION 2.

Stewards shall conduct special building meetings which are called by the Executive Council.

SECTION 3.

A quorum for any Federation meetings shall consist of twenty percent (20%) of the applicable whole number of members.

SECTION 4.

General membership meetings of the local as a whole with all members meeting in one location may be called by a majority vote of the Executive Council, or by a written petition of fifty members in good standing. Notice of such meeting shall be given to the membership at least one day prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE XI FINANCE

SECTION 1.

The Executive Council shall prepare an annual budget and set the amount of regular annual dues for adoption at the June Executive Council meeting. In setting the amount of annual dues, the Budget Committee shall automatically pass through any annual dues increases which may have been established by the AFT and the CFEPE. During the last full school week in June the membership shall be given an opportunity to reject any portion of the budget and/or dues which do not include those amounts which have been "passed through" by the AFT, the CFEPE, the Connecticut State Labor Council, and the Greater Bristol Labor Council. Notice of such meeting shall be given at least one week prior to the meeting.

SECTION 2.

The amount and manner of payments of dues for other than regular members of the Federation shall be determined by the Executive Council.

SECTION 3.

Additional funds may be obtained by various fund raising activities or by emergency dues levy of the Executive Council.

SECTION 4.

The fiscal year shall be September 1 to August 31.

ARTICLE XII RULES OF ORDER

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised shall govern in all cases not covered by this Constitution.

ARTICLE XIII AMENDMENTS

Constitutional amendments may be submitted to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may initiate amendments. After having received a majority vote of the Executive Council the amendment shall be submitted in writing to each member. A majority vote of all members shall be sufficient for adoption.

ARTICLE XIV AVAILABILITY OF CONSTITUTION

SECTION 1.

Three copies of this Constitution and all future amendments shall be submitted to the national office of the AFT.

SECTION 2.

A copy of this constitution shall be presented to each member upon adoption. One copy per year shall be supplied for each member upon written request to the Secretary.

ARTICLE XV APPROVAL OF CONSTITUTION

This Constitution shall become effective upon approval by a majority vote of members in good standing through a secret ballot vote.

Revised 2001