CONSTITUTION
OF
THE
BILLERICA
FEDERATION OF
TEACHERS

Local 1677 of the American Federation of Teachers, AFT MA, AFL-CIO

Revised and adopted by the membership March 11, 2019
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Constitution of the Billerica Federation of Teachers

ARTICLE 1  NAME

Section 1.1  The name of this organization will be the Billerica Federation of Teachers, Local 1677

ARTICLE 2  PURPOSE

Section 2.1  To bring all teachers, nurses, and paraprofessionals into relations of mutual assistance and cooperation, regardless of age, color, race, creed, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or religion.

Section 2.2  To obtain for our members the rights to which they are entitled.

Section 2.3  To raise the standards of the teaching profession by securing the conditions essential to achieve the best professional service.

Section 2.4  To promote such a democratization of the school system as will enable our community to equip pupils to take their place in the industrial, social, and civic life of their country.

Section 2.5  To promote the general welfare of those children who come within the sphere of activity of this organization by providing them with progressively better education.

ARTICLE 3  MEMBERSHIP

Section 3.1  All personnel in Unit A of MCR-595 may be members of the Federation, including all classroom teachers now employed and/or unassigned teachers who are employed on a regular basis by the Billerica Public Schools, including those persons who duties are primarily those of a teacher, regardless of classification, including but not limited to school nurses, school psychologists, librarians, social workers, and other special teachers, but excluding principals,
assistant or vice principals, directors, assistant directors, coordinators, administrative assistants and supervisors, the superintendent, and the assistant superintendent(s).

Section 3.2 Paraprofessionals of Unit B of MCR-2630 whose duties are those of paraprofessionals, regardless of title classification, may be members of the Federation.

Section 3.3 Any other employees of the Billerica Schools for whom Local 1677 maintains collective bargaining rights under Chapter 150E of the Massachusetts General Laws may be members of the Federation.

Section 3.4 Retired personnel of the Billerica Public Schools who maintained active membership in the Federation for at least one (1) calendar year before their retirement may be members of the Federation.

Section 3.5 All members must have dues deducted from payroll or pay the entire year’s dues in two payments, on or before October 1 and February 1 of that school year.

Section 3.6 No discrimination shall ever be shown toward individual members or applicants for membership because of age, color, race, creed, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or religion.

Section 3.7 A member may be expelled for acts detrimental to the Federation upon presentation of written charges signed by at least one-fourth (1/4) of the total membership and approved by at least three-fourths (3/4) of the Executive Board (E-Board). A member shall have the right to appeal the decision to the membership at the following membership meeting and shall be reinstated with full rights by two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting.

Section 3.8 Any member who wishes to withdraw from the Federation must submit a written intent of withdrawal to the Federation that follows all statutory requirements.

Section 3.9 Any member who fails to pay dues in the manners described in
Section 3.5 of this Constitution shall lose their status as a member
in good standing.

Section 3.10 Members who are not in good standing shall lose their rights to hold
any position in the union and will not be able to participate in any
union activity including but not limited to elections, ratification
votes, and meetings. Any member who loses these rights may have
them restored after one (1) full calendar year of maintaining dues or
by paying back dues in their entirety.

ARTICLE 4 OFFICERS

Section 4.1 The following Officers shall be elected biennially according to the
rules set forth in Article 11 of this Constitution:

I. President
II. Executive Vice President
III. Executive Vice President of Paraprofessionals
IV. Secretary-Treasurer
V. Building Vice Presidents

Section 4.2 Officers shall be installed in June at a General Membership Meeting
or a social function held, in part, for that purpose.

Section 4.3 All vacancies in elected Office, other than President, must be filled
by members appointed by the Executive Board, subject to the
approval of the membership at the following General Membership
meeting.

Section 4.5 Any appointed officers must meet the requirements described in
Sections 11.6 and 11.7 for their respective positions.

ARTICLE 5 BUILDING LEADERSHIP

Section 5.1 The interests of the Federation will be carried out on a day-to-day
basis at the building level by Building Vice Presidents and
Stewards.
Section 5.2 Each building in the district will be apportioned one (1) Vice President. Any Vice President that is under the teacher contract will receive contractual release time from student supervisory duties, as long as this time remains a benefit under the collective bargaining agreement.

Section 5.3 The Executive Vice President, Executive Vice President of Paraprofessionals, and Secretary-Treasurer may run for and concurrently serve as a Building Vice President.

Section 5.4 The Executive Board shall, in consultation with Building Vice Presidents, appoint Stewards for each building. Beginning in the 2020-2021 school year and continuing forward, schools shall be apportioned stipended Stewardships according to the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category 1</th>
<th>Schools with 100 to 150 staff members</th>
<th>Four (4) Stewards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category 2</td>
<td>Schools with 50 to 99 staff members</td>
<td>Three (3) Stewards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category 3</td>
<td>Schools with less than 50 staff members</td>
<td>Two (2) Stewards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 5.5 In each building, one (1) of the apportioned stewards must be a paraprofessional.

Section 5.6 The following worksites will be considered schools:

I. Billerica Memorial High School
II. The Ditson Elementary School
III. The Dutile Elementary School
IV. The Hajjar Elementary School
V. The Kennedy Elementary School
VI. The Locke Middle School
VII. The Marshall Middle School
VIII. The Parker Elementary School
IX. Pre-K (Project Support and BEAM)
Section 5.7  So that all representatives of the union will be accorded the proper legal rights which they are due, the President shall forward the names and buildings of all officers, stewards, and staff to the relevant central and building administrators.

ARTICLE 6  DUTIES OF OFFICERS, STEWARDS, AND STAFF

Section 6.1  The President shall:

I. Be the Chief Executive Officer of the Federation
II. Preside at all meetings of the Federation and the Executive Board
III. Be an ex-officio member of all committees (except the Audit Committee)
IV. Sign all necessary documents
V. Be responsible for all communication to the union membership
VI. Represent the local when and where necessary
VII. Report to the membership once a year summarizing the accomplishments of the Federation and outlining plans for next year
VIII. Chair the Membership Committee and oversee a yearly audit of membership information
IX. Regularly attend school committee meetings and all federation-level meetings

Section 6.2  The Executive Vice-President shall:

I. Perform all duties of the President in the absence of that Officer and complete the term of the President if they are unable to do so.
II. Act as an assistant to the President
III. Chair the Grievance Committee
IV. Ensure the sanctity and timeliness of grievance processing
V. Track building update reports from Building Vice Presidents
VI. Attend all federation-level meetings and one (1) school committee meeting a year

Section 6.3  The Executive Vice President of Paraprofessionals shall:

I. Act as a resource to Vice Presidents and stewards
II. Sit on the Grievance and Membership Committees
III. Assist the Secretary-Treasurer in maintaining accurate membership lists of the paraprofessional unit
IV. Communicate with Vice Presidents regarding new paraprofessional hires and non-members and ensure that newly hired paraprofessionals are given a union orientation
V. Assist the Executive Vice President in processing paraprofessional grievances (Level 2 and above)
VI. Attend all federation-level meetings and one (1) school committee meeting a year

Section 6.4 The Secretary-Treasurer shall:

I. Receive, record, and deposit in the name of the Federation all monies from dues and from all other sources
II. Ultimately be responsible for the membership rolls and issue delinquent notices
III. Forward all per capita dues and current membership lists to the National Office of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and to other affiliated organizations
IV. Keep accurate records available at all times for the Executive Board and the Audit Committee
V. Pay all bills authorized by the budget, retaining voucher or invoice for the same. Bills not authorized in the budget must be presented to the Executive Board for authorization.
VI. Keep and prepare all records relating to payroll and all Federal and State reports
VII. Be chairperson of the Budget committee.
VIII. Submit a financial statement for the local including a statement of assets and liabilities and a statement of income and expenses to the AFT Secretary-Treasurer within five (5) months of the end of the fiscal year for the local organization. This audited budget shall be presented to the membership at the January meeting.
IX. Be the custodian of the seal and charter of the Federation
X. Record the minutes of the Executive Board and General Membership meetings
XI. Attend all federation-level meetings

Section 6.5 Building Vice Presidents shall:

I. Be active members of the Membership Committee and one (1) other committee
II. Serve on a special committee if needed  
III. Coordinate with Stewards to maintain strong networks of communication within their buildings  
IV. Be responsible for enrolling new hires in their buildings  
V. Complete and send a quarterly building report to the Executive Vice President  
VI. Hold 10-Minute Building Meetings  
VII. Develop and build a relationship with school building administration  
VIII. Address workplace issues and file Level 1 grievances  
IX. Attend all federation-level meetings and one (1) school committee meeting a year  

**Section 6.6**  
Stewards shall:  

I. Be an active member of one (1) standing committee and be available to sit on one (1) special committee if requested by the Executive Board  
II. Assist the Vice President with one-on-one talks, new hire enrollment, and 10-Minute Building Meetings  
III. Address workplace issues  
IV. Attend all general meetings, building-level meetings, as well as one (1) school committee meeting a year  

**Section 6.7**  
The Director of Organizing shall:  

I. Be a resource for the Vice Presidents and Stewards  
II. Sit on the Membership and COPE and Political Outreach Committee  
III. Assist the Secretary-Treasurer in maintaining accurate membership lists  
IV. Maintain accurate data on membership including membership density and involvement  
V. Communicate with Vice Presidents promptly regarding new hires and non-members so that they may be enrolled in the union  
VI. Sit as a non-voting member of the Executive Board and assist the Executive Board in organizing meetings, socials, and political and labor actions  
VII. Sit on the nominations and elections committee (if eligible)  

**Section 6.8**  
All officers and staff must maintain a union (non-work) email
address that they monitor frequently. All union business should be conducted over non-work email.

**Section 6.9** The stipend amount for officers stewards and staff will be set as a percentage of BA1 in the teacher’s contract and shall be made publicly available to the members.

**Section 6.10** Officers, stewards, and staff may forfeit their stipends in whole or in part for egregious failure to carry out the duties outlined above according to the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duty</th>
<th>Forfeiture Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Missing regularly scheduled meetings or trainings</td>
<td>¼ for each instance over one (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing to submit a quarterly building report (VPs)</td>
<td>¼ for each instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing to hold regularly scheduled 10 Minute Meetings (VPs)</td>
<td>¼ for each instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing to attend one (1) school committee meeting</td>
<td>¼</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section 6.11** In such cases of partial or complete forfeiture of stipends, the Secretary-Treasurer must notify the member of this decision by March 31 with an explanation of why the stipend has been forfeited or reduced. The affected member has the right to appeal the decision of the Secretary-Treasurer to the Executive Board. This appeal must be made in writing within fifteen (15) days’ notice of forfeiture.

**Section 6.12** A staff appointment cannot exceed the term of office of the appointing Officer. Appointed staff may be removed at will by the Executive Board.

**ARTICLE 7 MEETINGS**

**Section 7.1** The time and place of General Membership Meetings shall be fixed by the Executive Board, and this schedule shall be sent to the
membership by the end of the preceding year.

Section 7.2 There shall be at least three (3) General Membership meetings during the school year.

Section 7.3 The General Membership must review and approve the yearly budget of the Federation.

Section 7.4 A quorum shall consist of ten (10) members.

Section 7.5 Special Meetings may be called by the President, or by a petition of a majority of the Executive Board, or by a petition of three percent (3%) of the membership.

Section 7.6 Any vote to ratify a successor agreement between the Federation and the School Committee will be limited to members in good standing of the appropriate unit as defined in Article 3 of this Constitution. Members must receive a written copy of any successor agreement at least 72 hours in advance of the vote. A majority “yes” vote of those members voting will be needed to approve any new agreement.

Section 7.7 If the President is not present, the Executive Vice President will preside at any General Meeting. If neither Officer is present, the membership may elect a chairperson.

Section 7.8 The Executive Board shall make every effort to notify officers and stewards of training dates for the next school year by the end of the current year.

Section 7.9 The Executive Board shall schedule four (4) Executive Board meetings for the next school year by the end of the current school year.

Section 7.10 Special meetings of the Executive Board may be called by the President or by a petition of the majority of the Executive Board.

Section 7.11 General Membership meetings and Executive Board meetings shall
be governed by Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

ARTICLE 8  THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 8.1 The Executive Board of the Federation will consist of the elected Officers outlined in Section 4.1 of this Constitution.

Section 8.2 The Executive Board shall administer the policy of the Federation as set at General Membership meetings. The Executive Board will have the power to act for the good of the Federation in emergency situations when policy cannot be set by the membership.

Section 8.3. The President of the Federation will be the chair of the Executive Board.

Section 8.4 The Executive Board shall have the power to appoint and employ all personnel as may be determined by the needs and finances of the Federation.

Section 8.6 The Executive Board shall report its activities at each regular membership meeting.

ARTICLE 9  COMMITTEES

Section 9.1 In order to strategically address the issues and responsibilities of the Federation, the following standing committees will be active:

   I. Membership
   II. Member Engagement
   III. Grievance
   IV. Education
   V. COPE and Political Outreach

Section 9.2 The Executive Board will convene the following special committees as necessary:

   I. Budget
II. Audit
III. Nominations and elections
IV. Collective Bargaining
V. Scholarship

Section 9.3 The Chairpersons of the committees will be determined, as follows:

I. The President shall be the chair of the Membership Committee, COPE and Political Outreach Committee, and the Collective Bargaining Committee for Teachers
II. The Executive Vice President shall be the chair of the Grievance Committee
III. The Executive Vice President of Paraprofessionals shall be the chair of the Collective Bargaining Committee for Paraprofessionals
IV. The Secretary-Treasurer shall be the chair of the Budget Committee
V. All other chairs of standing and special committees shall be appointed by the President

Section 9.4 Vice Presidents and stewards shall submit their top three choices for Standing Committees (not including Grievance), ranked in order of preference, within a month of their election/appointment. The President, Executive Vice President, and Executive Vice President of Paraprofessionals shall consult on and make all committee appointments, taking into account the preferences of the vice presidents and stewards.

Section 9.5 Committee openings shall be posted, and volunteers from the rank-and-file shall be sought and recruited to represent the occupational diversity of the membership.

Section 9.6 The enumeration of the above committees does not limit the Executive Board from convening other committees as necessary.

Section 9.7 Committees may confer remotely.

ARTICLE 10 DUTIES OF COMMITTEES

Section 10.1 The Membership Committee shall:
I. Plan and execute a dynamic program to ensure the growth and vitality of the Federation

II. Fully Reconcile membership lists once a year before the May General Membership Meeting

III. Submit a written plan for membership growth to the September General membership Meeting and submit a written report on Progress at the May General Membership Meeting

Section 10.2 The Member Engagement Committee shall:

I. Prepare and distribute a periodic publication or bulletin

II. Make use of sources of publicity such as newspaper, radio, television and social media

III. Plan social opportunities for the members of the Federation

IV. Publicize any non-voting AFL-CIO Conferences to the membership and provide members with a clear application process for these events

V. Review applications for non-voting AFL-CIO Conferences, and recommend applicants to the Executive Board for approval. Any applicant for this position that is also on the committee must recuse themselves from the vote to recommend.

Section 10.3 The Grievance Committee shall consist of the Executive Board and shall vote on all cases before they go to arbitration.

Section 10.4 The Education Committee shall:

I. Study and make recommendations for improvements in curriculum, teaching techniques, class sizes, texts, technology and other professional matters

II. Publicize AFT sponsored professional development conferences to the membership and provide members with a clear application process for these events

III. Review applications for professional development conferences, and recommend applicants to the Executive Board for approval. Any applicant that is also on the
committee must recuse themselves from the vote to recommend.

**Section 10.5**  The Committee for Political Education and Political Outreach shall:

I. Operate according to the separate attached bylaws for COPE
II. Consider recommendations from the the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, the American Federation of Teachers, the American Federation of Teachers, Massachusetts and the local pertaining to all levels of government
III. Plan and execute a dynamic program to partner with community groups that have interests in common with the Federation
IV. Study proposed legislation that may affect the Federation and the schools, and it shall manage the Federation’s COPE fund.

**Section 10.6**  The Budget Committee shall prepare a budget for adoption by the membership at least one (1) month prior to the beginning of the fiscal year.

**Section 10.7**  The Audit Committee shall audit the Treasurer’s books and the yearly Treasurer’s Report. The Committee shall present its yearly report to the membership at the January meeting and meet all relevant affiliate deadlines.

**Section 10.8**  The Nominations and Elections Committee shall be selected at least sixty (60) days prior to the elections. The Committee shall be made up of at least three (3) members that are not pursuing elected offices and shall have the following responsibilities:

I. Track and follow the elections and nominations timelines described in Article 11
II. Create nomination papers and distribute them to the membership
III. Keep track of all nominations and insure that all nominated individuals and their co-signers are in good standing
IV. Prepare ballots
V. Distribute a sample ballot five (5) days before the election
VI. Manage and distribute the ballots before the election
VII. Communicate to the membership the procedures of the
ARTICLE 11  ELECTIONS

Section 11.1  Nominations and Elections are subject to the following regulations uniformly enforced.

Section 11.2  To secure nomination for any elected office or delegate position, a member must fill out nomination papers and have their papers co-signed by another member of the Federation.

Section 11.3  Nominations for Federation officers, delegates, and alternates must be sent to the Chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee. Members are encouraged to scan and send their nomination papers via email.

Section 11.4  Written notice of the nominations window must reach every members at least fifteen (15) days prior to the deadline for nominations.

Section 11.5  The election of all Federation officers, delegates, and alternates shall be conducted prior to the regular May membership meeting. Written notice of the election must be distributed fifteen (15) days prior to the election and a sample ballot must be distributed to each member at least five (5) days prior to the election.

Section 11.6  Any member of the Federation who is in good standing may vote in elections.

Section 11.7  Any member of the Federation who is in good standing may be nominated and stand for election for President, Executive Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, Building Vice President, and AFT,
AFT MA, and AFL-CIO convention delegates.

Section 11.8 Only members in good standing in Unit B may be nominated for and stand for election for Executive Vice President of Paraprofessionals.

Section 11.9 The election of Federation officers, delegates, and alternates must be conducted by secret ballot.

Section 11.10 The full membership will vote for President, Executive Vice President, and Secretary-Treasurer at the May election in even numbered years.

Section 11.11 Members of Unit B will elect the Executive Vice President of Paraprofessionals in even numbered years.

Section 11.12 Each building in the district will elect one (1) Vice President from the active teachers and paraprofessionals in each building in odd numbered years.

Section 11.13 The Nominations and Elections Committee shall conduct elections at time(s) and place(s) convenient to the membership and shall notify the membership of these locations no later than five (5) days before the election.

ARTICLE 12 AFFILIATIONS

Section 12.1 The Federation shall maintain affiliations with and, whenever possible, send delegates and alternates to the conventions of the American Federation of Teachers; the American Federation of Teachers, Massachusetts; and the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations.

Section 12.2 The President of the Federation will be a delegate to the AFT National Convention and the AFT MA Convention by virtue of his/her office.

Section 12.3 Other delegates and alternates will be elected from the membership
to the National Convention of the American Federation of Teachers according to Article 11 of this Constitution. The President and Secretary-Treasurer shall certify the election and forward the credentials of all elected delegates and alternates to the National Office as soon as possible but not later than fifteen (15) days prior to the opening date of the convention. The Federation must send by registered or certified mail to the National Office the above mentioned list of certified representatives.

Section 12.4 The delegates shall confer with the Secretary-Treasurer to ensure per capita dues for June has been sent to the National Office prior to the convening of the National Convention.

Section 12.5 Delegates and alternates shall be elected to the AFT Massachusetts Convention according to Article 11 of this Constitution.

Section 12.6 The AFL-CIO Merrimack Valley Central Labor Council representatives shall be elected by the membership according to Article 11 of this Constitution.

Section 12.7 The top three (3) vote getters for the AFL-CIO Merrimack Valley Central Labor Council shall be delegates to AFL-CIO convention.

Section 12.8 All delegates and alternates shall report to the Executive Board on meetings attended.

Section 12.9 Every reasonable effort shall be made by this Federation to pay the legitimate expenses of delegates and alternates at meetings and conventions of affiliated organizations, including half of the room rate at overnight conventions/conferences.

Section 12.10 To the best of its ability, the Federation shall be active in the affairs of affiliated organizations.

ARTICLE 13 FINANCE

Section 13.1 Regular local dues will be set at all affiliate costs + 3/10 of 1% (.003%) of BA1 salary.
Section 13.2 Members who earn less than a beginning teacher on Bachelor’s base salary, but at least ten thousand dollars ($10,000) a year, will pay dues in the amount representing one-half (1/2) of the regular amount of the AFT, AFTMass and BFT dues plus the full regular amount of MA-AFL dues, GLCLC dues, AFT accident insurance and the AFT liability insurance.

Section 13.3 Half-time Paraprofessionals and quarter-time teachers will pay dues in the amount representing one-quarter (1/4) of the regular amount of local dues, AFT, and AFT MA dues, plus the regular amount of AFL dues, MVCLC dues, AFT accident insurance, and AFT liability insurance.

Section 13.4 Members who earn less than ten thousand dollars ($10,000) a year will pay dues in the amount representing one-fourth (1/4) of the regular amounts of the AFT, AFTMass and BFT dues plus the full regular amount of MA-AFL dues, GLCLC dues, AFT cues, AFT accident insurance and the AFT liability insurance.

ARTICLE 14 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Section 14.1 Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by a majority of the Executive Board, or by a petition of three percent (3%) of the members.

Section 14.2 Amendments require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members voting at the General Membership meeting after the membership meeting where the amendment was initiated.

ARTICLE 15 AVAILABILITY OF THE CONSTITUTION

Section 15.1 Three copies of this Constitution and all future amendments shall be submitted to the National Office of the American Federation of Teachers.

Section 15.2 Copies shall be provided to other affiliated organizations upon request.
Section 15.3 All new members shall be provided with a paper copy of this Constitution. Paper copies shall also be provided to members upon request. An electronic copy shall be available on the union website.