

# **Proposed Amendments to the Bylaws of the Broward Teachers Union**

*Presented to the Steward Council  
at the October 20, 2022 meeting.*

**Amendments are proposed to:**

*Article II - Officers*

*Article III - Duties of Officers*

*Article VI - Committees*

*Article VIII - Conventions and Delegates*

**Proposed changes are noted in RED**

## ARTICLE II OFFICERS

**Section 1. Officers.** The officers of BTU shall be the executive officers and executive board members specified in the BTU Constitution.

**Section 2. Eligibility.** Officer candidates shall have been a member in good standing of a BTU bargaining unit for five consecutive years at time of nomination and shall remain a member in good standing throughout their term of office.

### Section 3. Nominations

- A. A candidate seeking election as an executive officer shall be nominated by a signed petition of fifty (50) members in good standing of a BTU bargaining unit and served on the executive board for a minimum of one full term.
- B. A candidate seeking election as an executive board member shall be nominated by a signed petition of twenty-five (25) members in good standing of a BTU bargaining unit and served as a school/site BTU Steward for at least three years (one full term).
- C. A candidate seeking election as a TSP/CSP/ESP vice president shall be nominated by signed petition from fifty (50) members in good standing of the respective unit and served for one full term on the executive board.
- D. A candidate seeking any of the above positions must have signed-in and attended a minimum of six (6) executive board meetings and six (6) member events/meetings in the calendar year leading up to the nomination.
- E. Nominations shall be open in the month of January for a period of fifteen (15) days.

### Section 4. Elections

- A. The election of officers shall be held every four years. The election cycle shall begin in January of the year in which elections are held and shall end with the resolution of election appeals.
- B. Elections shall be conducted by mail ballot, or by an equally reliable and accepted method, as determined by the Executive Board, to all eligible voting members of the BTU bargaining unit.
- C. Only members in good standing, active or retired, shall be eligible to vote for Executive Officers (President, 1st Vice President, Secretary and/or Treasurer).
- D. Only active members in good standing shall be eligible to vote for At-Large Executive Board members.
- E. New members whose dues were received thirty (30) or more days prior to the nomination period shall be eligible to vote.
- F. Only members of each respective bargaining unit shall be eligible to vote in the election of TSP/CSP/ESP vice presidents and designated EP/TSP/CSP/ESP executive board members.
- G. Only the following four (4) executive officers – president, first vice president, secretary, and treasurer – shall be permitted to slate on the ballot. For all other candidates, slating shall be prohibited; they shall be listed individually on the election ballot.
- H. Delegate Elections shall be conducted in conformity with US Labor Standards and the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act, 1959 (LMRDA).

### Section 5. Vote Required for Election

- A. The executive officers and the TSP/CSP/ESP vice presidents shall be elected by a majority vote. If no candidate receives a majority vote, a run-off election between the top two candidates shall be held.
- B. The at-large board members and the designated EP/TSP/CSP/ESP board members shall be elected by plurality vote. In the event of a tie for the last remaining position, a run-off election shall be held.

**Section 6. Term of Office.** The term of office shall begin on the first day of July of the year of election and shall be for four years or until successors are elected.

**Section 7. Office-Holding Limitations.** No member shall hold more than one executive board office at a time.

**Section 8. Vacancy in Office.**

- A. If the office of the president becomes vacant, it shall automatically be filled by the first vice president.
- B. If the office of first vice president, secretary, treasurer, a TSP/CSP/ESP vice president, or any executive board member becomes vacant, it shall be filled by appointment of the president with approval of the executive board by a majority vote.
- C. A vacancy occurring with less than four (4) months remaining in the term of office, with exception to the office of president, shall remain vacant.
- D. A vacancy on the executive board shall exist in the case of death or retirement. In the case of resignation or the inability to serve in a position, a vacancy shall be declared to exist by official action of the executive board.

**Section 9. Removal from Office**

An executive board member may be removed from office by procedures provided in these bylaws based on the grounds of neglect of duty, misconduct in office, or activities seriously detrimental to the Broward Teachers Union. An executive board member may also be removed from office for excessive absenteeism, unless the absences occurred while conducting official union business or on a medical leave. Excessive absenteeism shall be defined as missing more than three (3) consecutive, or four (4) total, regularly scheduled board meetings between August and May of a calendar year.

**Section 10. Recall of an Elected Officer**

- A. Any elected office may be declared open by a recall petition signed by one-third (1/3) of the membership.
- B. A special election shall commence within sixty (60) days of verification of the recall petition to fill the office for the remainder of the current term.
- C. A recall petition and election shall not be allowed in the last year of the term of office. The recall procedures shall not prohibit the office holder from seeking re-election. The recall election shall be conducted according to rules established by the Elections Committee, approved by the executive board, and in conformity with US Labor Standards and the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act, 1959 (LMRDA).

## ARTICLE III DUTIES OF OFFICERS

**Section 1. Duties of All Officers.** It shall be the duty of all BTU officers to:

- A. Support the policies and programs adopted by the executive board.
- B. Promote, support and defend BTU positions.
- C. Represent BTU at national, state, and local affiliate meetings and conventions as elected or assigned.

**Section 2. Duties of the President.** The president shall be the chief executive officer of BTU and all of its holding companies. The president shall administer all the affairs of BTU and execute policies of BTU as determined by the executive board. The president shall employ, supervise, direct, and discipline/terminate staff as well as retain counsel, accountants, and other professional personnel necessary to maintain the operation of the BTU.

The president shall:

- A. Actively advocate on behalf of members;
- B. Serve as the official spokesperson for BTU;
- C. ~~Be an automatic delegate to the AFT Convention, NEA Convention (as a state delegate), FEA Convention, FEA Governance Board, Florida AFL-CIO Convention, as well as delegate to the Broward County AFL-CIO and to any and all organizations with which the Broward Teachers Union shall be affiliated;~~
- D. Represent BTU on committees for state and national affiliates;
- E. Act as the chairperson of the executive board and preside at executive board meetings and steward council meetings;
- F. Report current BTU activities and important events at all regularly scheduled executive board and steward council meetings;
- G. Call special meetings of the executive board and steward council when required, or requested, with at least a forty-eight (48) hour notice;
- H. Appoint committee chairpersons (with the approval of the executive board) and appoint committee members;
- I. Serve as a non-voting, ex-officio member of all BTU committees, except the Elections Committee and the Committee on Professional Ethics;
- J. Appoint the lead negotiator and members of the negotiations team prior to the beginning of the school year, and direct the negotiations team;
- K. Suggest policies, plans, and activities for the BTU and be held responsible for the progress and work of the BTU;
- L. Prepare and promote BTU positions when appropriate:
  1. Meet with school board officials to advocate for members;
  2. Speak at school board meetings of the SBBC and city commission meetings for PPCS;
  3. Serve on, or appoint a BTU representative to participate on, SBBC executive committees;
  4. Represent BTU as a board member/education advocate with local business partners;
- M. Meet with community leaders and local, state, and federal politicians to advocate for members and promote BTU positions;
- N. Present BTU's program priorities for the coming year (including those related to the BTU's annual budget) to the steward council no later than the August meeting;
- O. Present a written "State of the Union" report (for the current school year) evaluating the progress of the BTU in regards to established programs and policies by the May executive board meeting;

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- P. Delegate and direct the fulfillment of duties by all officers and professional staff of the BTU and maintain compliance with BTU/FEA/NEA/AFT governance documents;
- Q. Report to the executive board any changes in staffing within forth-eight (48) hours of an action being taken;
- R. Maintain contact with membership through school visitations, or other appropriate means, and communicate membership concerns to the executive board;
- S. Evaluate professional staff annually and report results to the executive board;
- T. Retain the service of a Professional Registered Parliamentarian, certified by the National Association of Parliamentarians, as approved by a majority vote of the executive board.
- U. Be a signer for financially binding documents;
- V. In case of emergency, as defined in the BTU Constitution, the president shall be empowered to act on matters not expressly forbidden by the constitution or the bylaws subject to sustaining or overruling vote of executive board at its next meeting;
- W. Fulfill other such responsibilities as directed by the executive board and/or the steward council; and conduct other duties as necessary to fulfill the obligation of office.

**Section 3. Duties of the First Vice President.** The first vice president shall assist the president with duties and responsibilities, promote membership, and be a consultant to committees as assigned by the president.

The first Vice President shall:

- A. Actively advocate on behalf of members;
- B. Serve as a spokesperson for BTU as needed;
- C. ~~Be an automatic local delegate to the AFT Convention, NEA Convention, FEA Convention, FEA Governance Board, Florida AFL-CIO Convention, as well as delegate to the Broward County AFL-CIO;~~
- D. Represent BTU on committees for state and national affiliates;
- E. Develop and manage membership campaigns and additional organizing activities;
- F. Maintain/contact membership through school visitations, or other appropriate means, and communicate membership concerns to the executive board;
- G. Prepare and present membership reports for executive board and steward council meetings;
- H. Oversee grant writing and submissions as needed;
- I. Manage/oversee the committee recruitment process;
- J. Make recommendations to the president for committee member placement and assignments for staff liaisons;
- K. Serve as committee chair of the Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules Committee;
- L. Oversee all professional development activities;
- M. Facilitate the organization of member socials/events;
- N. Prepare and promote BTU positions when appropriate
  - 1. Meet with school board officials to advocate for members;
  - 2. Speak at meetings of the SBBC and city commission meetings for PPCS as needed;
  - 3. Meet with community leaders and local, state, and federal politicians to advocate for members and promote BTU positions;
- O. Be a cosigner of any financially binding documents in the absence of the president or treasurer;
- P. Participate in the annual evaluation of professional and administrative staff;

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- Q. Attend regularly scheduled executive board meetings, steward council meetings, steward trainings, and at least one (1) area meeting each fiscal year;
- R. Preside in the absence of the president;
- S. Perform other such duties as may be assigned.

**Section 4. Duties of the Secretary.** The secretary shall be the custodian of records, including the seal and charter of BTU as well as minutes of the executive board and steward council meetings.

The secretary shall:

- A. Be responsible for the recording and distribution of minutes, notice of meetings, and agendas for all meetings to members of the executive board and the steward council and to the membership when appropriate;
- B. Keep an accurate roster of the membership and attendance of executive board and steward council meetings;
- C. Collect/combine minutes from all standing committees and compile a report to be presented at all regularly scheduled steward council meetings;
- D. Serve as consultant and/or member of standing committees, special committees, and/or task forces as appointed by the president;
- E. Attend regularly scheduled executive board meetings, steward council meetings, steward trainings, and at least one (1) area meeting each fiscal year;
- F. ~~Be an automatic local delegate to the FEA Delegate Assembly;~~
- G. Perform other such duties as may be assigned.

**Section 5. Duties of the Treasurer.** The treasurer shall provide general supervision of all financial affairs.

The treasurer shall:

- A. Present the financial report at each regular meeting of the executive board and steward council;
- B. Be a signer for financially binding documents;
- C. Serve as committee chair of the Internal Budget Committee;
- D. Confer in the preparation of and present BTU's proposed annual budget to the executive board;
- E. Ensure that the required annual audit of the BTU financial records is conducted in accordance with AFT constitution and coordinate the auditing firm presentation of the audit for approval to the executive board;
- F. Serve as consultant and/or member of standing committees, special committees, and/or task forces as appointed by the president;
- G. Attend regularly scheduled executive board, steward council meetings, steward trainings, and at least one (1) area meeting each fiscal year;
- ~~H. Be an automatic local delegate to the FEA Delegate Assembly;~~
- ~~H.~~ Perform other such duties as may be assigned.

**Section 6. Duties of the Vice Presidents of TSP/CSP/ESP.**

The vice presidents of TSP/CSP/ESP shall actively advocate on behalf of the members, consult with and assist the president with duties and responsibilities, and promote membership.

- A. Serve as an official spokesperson for their respective the unit;
- B. Maintain contact with their respective membership through worksite visitations, or other appropriate

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means, and communicate membership concerns to the president, first vice president, and executive board;

- C. Advise the president, first vice president, and executive board of current issues, district initiatives, and legislative actions that affect their unit members;
- D. ~~Be an automatic local delegate to the AFT, NEA, and FEA Conventions. The ESP vice president shall also be an automatic delegate to the FEA Governance Board;~~
- E. Serve as consultants and/or members of standing committees, special committees, and/or task forces as appointed by the president;
- F. Make recommendations to the president for committees in order to ensure adequate representation of members from their respective units.
- G. Attend regularly scheduled executive board, steward council meetings, steward trainings, and at least one (1) area meeting each fiscal year;
- H. Perform other such duties as may be assigned.

### **Section 7. Duties of At-Large and Designated EP/TSP/CSP/ESP Executive Board Members.**

These board members shall actively support and promote the policies and programs of BTU.

These executive board members shall:

- A. Actively recruit to encourage membership growth and retention, leadership expansion, and solidarity amongst members of all bargaining units;
- B. Communicate member concerns to the president, first vice president, and executive board;
- C. Attend regularly scheduled executive board, steward council meetings, steward trainings and at least one (1) area meeting each fiscal year;
- D. Serve as consultants and/or members of standing committees, special committees, and/or task forces as appointed by the president;
- E. Advise and assist the president and/or the first vice president and perform other such duties as may be assigned.

## ARTICLE VI COMMITTEES

**Section 1. Standing Committees.** The standing committees of BTU shall be as follows: civil & human rights, committee on professional ethics, constitution, bylaws, & standing rules, COPE-TIGER, elections, internal budget, scholarship, and sick leave bank.

### A. Composition, Chairpersons, Term

1. Members in good standing and members of the Retiree Chapter of BTU shall be eligible to serve on a committee and act as committee chairperson.
2. Members of each committee shall be comprised of volunteers with the appointment of the president. Members shall serve for one (1) year from the date the committee commences. Committee members may be reappointed as determined by the president.
3. All chairpersons of standing committees, and any and all special committees, shall be appointed for one (1) year by the president, subject to approval of the executive board. Committee chairpersons may be reappointed as determined by the president.
4. The composition (amount of participants and names of members) of a committee shall be set after the first two meetings. If a committee member has two (2) unexcused absences, or a combination of excused and unexcused absences exceeding four (4) absences in a fiscal year, it shall result in his/her removal from that committee
5. Each committee shall perform duties prescribed for them and assigned to them by the president and/or the executive board. Each committee shall be responsible to the president.
6. The chairperson of each standing committee shall report its progress regularly to the executive board. Chairpersons shall also ensure that minutes/summary notes are taken at each meeting and that copies are submitted to the secretary.
7. The actions and/or recommendations of any committee shall be subject to review by the president and the executive board, with the exception of the Elections Committee and the Committee on Professional Ethics unless approval is required by these bylaws.

**B. Civil & Human Rights Committee.** This committee shall be responsible for actively promoting human rights, civil rights, diversity, and social justice amongst members. The committee shall educate members and encourage activism and leadership in these areas by engaging members in events such as community service activities, charity walks, health fairs, holiday toy drives, food/clothing drives, reading programs, mentoring, etc.

**C. Committee on Professional Ethics.** This committee shall be responsible for resolving all issues related to professional discipline which results from complaints of ethics violations or misconduct by members. All actions of the committee shall be in compliance with and/or conform to LMRDA standards.

The Committee on Professional Ethics shall:

1. Develop policies and procedures which define the code of ethics and misconduct, define the processes by which complaints and charges are filed, detail the penalties for violations, and delineate the procedure for filing appeals. The policies and procedures shall be submitted to the executive board for approval.
2. Investigate all complaints, conduct hearings, render decisions, and establish penalties if warranted.
3. Refer to the executive board any investigated complaints or charges which, in the opinion of the committee, warrant removal from office or expulsion or suspension from membership.
4. Perform such other duties that may be required in the execution of the foregoing duties and responsibilities.



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- D. Constitution, Bylaws, & Standing Rules Committee.** This committee shall review governing documents and makes recommendations for amendments to the executive board and/or steward council whether ordered by the president, the executive board, submitted by others or originated in the committee.
- E. COPE-TIGER Committee.** This committee shall be responsible for increasing BTU visibility and communication with elected officials; shall lobby legislators; shall conduct candidate screenings, shall organize political receptions; and shall participate in member education of political issues.
- F. Elections Committee.** This committee shall conduct all membership voting processes, including but not limited to contract ratifications, internal elections, vote counts, and election appeals.

The Elections Committee shall have the following duties and responsibilities in conjunction with all elections:

1. Develop Election Policy and Procedures and Candidate Rules for submission to the executive board for approval no later than ninety (90) days prior to the beginning of the election cycle; ~~[Proviso: For the 2015-2016 school year, Election Policy and Procedures and Candidate Rules shall be submitted to the executive board for approval no later than 60 days prior to the commencement of the election cycle.]~~
2. Screen all nominations of candidates for any position for conformity to eligibility requirements;
3. Verify that the candidates and the nomination petitioners are members in good standing;
4. Establish the membership voting master list and the cut-off date for inclusion on the list;
5. Supervise the conduct of all steps in the election process: coordinating with the outside vendor selected to distribute and collect the ballots, the counting of the ballots, and the announcement of the results; and
6. Investigate and rule on any and all properly filed and documented election appeals within thirty (30) days of announcement of election results.

- G. Internal Budget Committee.** This committee shall review and contribute to the development of the BTU annual budget and makes recommendations to the executive board.
- H. Scholarship Committee.** This committee shall review student applications and award college scholarships on behalf of the BTU and its members.
- I. Sick Leave Bank Committee.** This committee shall review member applications and award sick bank days according to policy.

**Section 2. Special Committees.** Special or ad-hoc committees may be created as necessary by the president or by the executive board and shall be comprised of volunteers from the general membership, and/or appointments by the president and/or the executive board.

## ARTICLE VIII CONVENTIONS AND DELEGATES

~~With the exception of automatic delegates, A~~a candidate seeking election as a state or national convention delegate shall be nominated by a signed petition of ten (10) members in good standing of a BTU bargaining unit.

Delegates to affiliate state and national conventions shall be elected ~~in all cases where officers are elected at the convention in compliance with the applicable constitution of that organization~~. BTU delegates shall be elected by plurality vote ~~in the same election as BTU officers~~ and shall serve a ~~four~~one-year term, ~~except that delegates to the AFT convention shall serve for two years~~. Alternate delegates shall be the delegate candidate receiving the highest number of votes after the number of authorized delegate positions is filled. The president may appoint delegates or alternates to the affiliate conventions where the election of officers is not involved.