

***CONSTITUTION OF THE SPRINGFIELD
FEDERATION OF PARAPROFESSIONALS LOCAL
4098, AFT MASSACHUSETTS, AFL-CIO***

Amended as of 1/25/2023

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ARTICLE I - NAME

This organization shall be known as the Springfield Federation of Paraprofessionals, Local 4098, AFT Massachusetts, AFL-CIO

ARTICLE II - OBJECTIVES

- 1) To maintain and improve the conditions of the membership with respect to salaries, pensions, conditions of employment in general, and the right of freedom of expression in and out of the classroom.
- 2) To advance the economic and professional interests of paraprofessionals.
- 3) To provide the best education for the children we serve.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1

This organization shall consist of Para-educators, Certified Nursing Assistants, Licensed Practical Nurses, Health Assistants, Assistant Teachers, Occupational Therapy Assistants, Physical Therapy Assistants and Tutors; and all other paraprofessionals eligible for membership that are employed by the Springfield, Massachusetts School Department excluding all administrative personnel.

SECTION 2

No discrimination shall ever be shown toward members or applicants for membership because of race, color, religious faith, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, political activities or beliefs.

SECTION 3

Any member who fails to pay his dues shall be notified by letter by the Treasurer. After sixty days, his name shall be removed from the records of the national office. The member may be reinstated upon the payment of back dues.

SECTION 4

A member may be expelled for acts detrimental to the Federation upon the presentation of written charges signed by at least one-fourth of the total membership of the Federation and approved by at least three-fourths of the Executive Board. The entire membership shall be notified by letter of the impending action at least seven

days prior to the action. The 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 a simple majority of the members present and voting.

SECTION 5

Educational employees in public or private institutions outside the jurisdiction of this local may be admitted to membership until such time as a local is chartered in their jurisdiction.

ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS

SECTION 1

The officers of this organization shall be the President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, each to serve for two (2) years or until their successors are elected.

SECTION 2

Vacancies in any office which occur between elections will be filled by the Executive Board.

SECTION 3

All officers must be members of the local, in good standing.

SECTION 4

All officers shall be elected by secret ballot, in order of preference, at either a membership meeting, individual school sites or electronically, dependent on circumstances or situations that present challenges relative to practicing social distancing. Notice of election shall be made at the previous membership meeting and distributed to each member in good standing at least fifteen (15) days prior to the elections. The candidate receiving a majority of the votes cast shall be declared elected. In the event a majority is not attained, a run-off election will be held between the two (2) top candidates. If any office is unopposed, the members may instruct the Election Chairperson, by a motion from the floor and an affirmative vote, to cast one (1) roll call ballot for that office.

ARTICLE V- DUTIES OF OFFICER

SECTION 1

- 1) The President shall preside at all meetings of the Federation and of the Executive Board, and shall present a report of all local activities at each meeting. She/he shall sign all necessary papers and documents, and represent the local when and where necessary. She/he shall make a report to the membership at least once each year summarizing the accomplishments of the

Federation and outlining plans for the next year.

- 2) File an activity log annually with the Executive Board, for the current school year, at the last Executive Board Meeting.

SECTION 2

- 1) The 1st Vice President shall perform all duties of the President in the absence of that officer.
- 2) File an activity log annually with the President, for the current school year, at the last Executive Board Meeting.

SECTION 3

- 1) The 2nd Vice President shall take the duties of the 1st Vice President in the absence of that officer.
- 2) She/he shall preside over the Building Representative Committee Meetings and report to the membership.
- 3) File an activity log annually with the President, for the current school year, at the last Executive Board Meeting.

SECTION 4

- 1) The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all Membership and Executive Board Meetings, read the minutes of the previous meeting, and file a copy of all minutes at the office of the Federation.
- 2) She/he shall issue all notices, shall have charge of all outside correspondence that has to do with the business of the Local, and in general shall carry out the instruction of the President.
- 3) File an activity log annually with the President, for the current school year, at the last Executive Board Meeting.

SECTION 5

The duties of the Treasurer shall be:

- 1) To receive, record, and deposit in the name of the Federation all monies from dues and other sources.
- 2) To keep the membership roll and issue receipts.
- 3) To forward all per capita dues and the current membership lists to the National Office of the American Federation of Teachers and to other affiliated organizations to keep the Local in good standing at all times.
- 4) To make a financial report at each meeting and to have current records available at all times.
- 5) To pay all the bills authorized by the adopted budget, retaining vouchers or invoices for same. Expenses not authorized in the budget must be presented to

- the Executive Board for authorization.
- 6) File an activity log with the President, for the current school year, annually at the last Executive Board Meeting.

ARTICLE VI - EXECUTIVE BOARD

SECTION 1

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

SECTION 2

The Executive Board shall consist of the following:

- 1) All elected officers
- 2) Chairmen of the committees
- 3) Chief delegate to the local labor council

SECTION 3

The Executive Board shall administer the policy of the Federation set by the membership at regular membership meetings. The Executive Board shall have the power to act for the good of the Federation in emergency situations where policy cannot be set by the membership.

SECTION 4

The time and place of the Executive Board meetings shall be set by the Executive Board and shall be announced at the previous membership meetings.

SECTION 5

The Executive Board shall have the power to employ all personnel including officers, clerical help and other persons as may be determined by the needs and finances of the Federation.

SECTION 6

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

SECTION 7

Twenty-five percent (25%) of the membership of the Executive Board shall constitute

a quorum.

ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS

SECTION 1

There shall be at least three (3) general meetings each school year open to all members in good standing. The membership shall be notified of the time and place at least five (5) school days prior to each meeting.

SECTION 2

The annual report of the officers and committees shall be made at the last general meeting of the year.

SECTION 3

A special meeting shall be called by the President upon written request of ten (10) members. Notification shall be given to the membership at least five (5) days prior to the date of the special meeting.

SECTION 4

Ten (10) members of the Local, in good standing, shall constitute a quorum at any regular or special meetings.

ARTICLE VIII - COMMITTEES

SECTION 1

The following standing committees shall be active in this Local:

- 1) Membership, 2) Negotiations, 3) Grievance, 4) Legislative, 5) Public Relations, 6) Human Rights, 7) Political Action, 8) Finance.

SECTION 2

The following special committees shall be appointed by the President: 1) Nominations and Election, 2) Social, 3) Audit, and any other necessary committees as the need arises.

SECTION 3

Chairpersons of all standing committees and all special committees shall be appointed by the President.

SECTION 4

The President shall be a member ex-officio of every committee except the Nominations and Election Committee.

SECTION 5

All committee members must be members in good standing.

ARTICLE IX - DUTIES OF COMMITTEES

SECTION 1

The Membership Committee shall plan and execute a program to insure growth to the Local. It shall present a written report to the membership.

SECTION 2

The Negotiations Committee will be responsible for requesting, collecting, and presenting proposals at the bargaining table.

SECTION 3

The Grievance Committee shall act on all grievances submitted in writing and will file a written report to the Executive Board who will vote to allocate the funds necessary for arbitration.

SECTION 4

The Legislative Committee shall consider all recommendations of the American Federation of Teachers, AFT Massachusetts, and the Local, pertaining to all levels of government. It shall study proposed legislation which may affect the Federation and the schools.

SECTION 5

The Public Relations Committee shall maintain a working relationship with the communications media.

SECTION 6

The Human Rights Committee shall plan activities to combat all forms of discrimination.

SECTION 7

The Political Action Committee shall make recommendations to the membership relative to any action to be taken regarding political matters.

SECTION 8

The Finance Committee shall prepare a budget for adoption by the Executive Board and shall also make recommendations on the finances of the Federation whenever necessary.

SECTION 9

The Nominations and Election Committee shall be responsible for the preparation of the ballots and the conduct of elections.

SECTION 10

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

SECTION 11

The financial accounts of the Treasurer shall be audited once a year by an independent CPA or an internal review committee according to the generally accepted accounting principles at the end of the Fiscal year, and submit a report to the President and the membership.

ARTICLE X - BUILDING REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES

1. To represent all Paraprofessionals at each location
2. To maintain a personal email account and current phone number to conduct union business. This email address and current phone number should be on file in the union office.
3. To keep Paraprofessionals informed and listen to the concerns of the members and communicate these concerns with the principal and President.
4. The building representative will meet with all new Unit D members at their school to welcome them to the school, obtain their contact information and to encourage them to

- become members of the union and complete a dues authorization form.
5. To distribute all Paraprofessional mailings and information sent to the Building Representative from the Local to all the members of the building. Maintain an up-to-date Local 4098 Bulletin Board in the building.
 6. The Building Representative is the agent of the Federation in her/his building, and is responsible for the implementation of the Collective Bargaining Agreement in that building.
 7. The Building Representative is responsible for overseeing Step One of the grievance procedure as outlined in the Collective Bargaining Agreement.
 8. To attend all Local 4098 Meetings/Trainings. If you are unable to attend a meeting, you must notify the 1st Vice President prior to the meeting via email.
 9. Attend disciplinary meetings at the building level to represent the affected member, take comprehensive notes and maintain records.
 10. File an activity log with the Treasurer, for the current school year, annually at the last Membership Meeting.
 11. Building Representatives must fulfill all of the above duties in order to receive the annual building representative stipend.

ARTICLE XI - FINANCES

SECTION 1

The dues of the Federation shall not exceed the sum of:

- a) the per capita dues paid to the AFT Massachusetts
- b) the per capita dues paid to the AFT Washington
- c) the per capita dues paid to the Mass. State Labor Council, (AFL/CIO)
- d) the per capita dues paid to the WMALF (Western Mass Area Labor Federation)
- e) AFT insurance
- f) An amount equal to ten hours pay as reflected by the hourly rate of the lowest paid member of the unit.

For each increase (or decrease) in the membership per 60 members this amount will automatically decrease (or increase) by one hours pay.

SECTION 2

No other expenditures shall be made, nor agreements entered into involving the funds of this Federation, unless by vote of the membership; except that in case of emergency, The President with the approval of the Executive Board may direct the expenditure of such sums as necessary for the good of the membership provided that such sum does not exceed one thousand dollars. In the event that it is necessary to file arbitration that sum may be increased to three thousand dollars.

SECTION 3

Bills presented to the Treasurer for payment must bear the signature of the member incurring the expense and must be countersigned by the President.

SECTION 4

Checks issued by the Federation shall have the signatures of both the Treasurer and the President.

ARTICLE XII - AFFILIATION AND DELEGATES **(Qualifications, Nominations and Elections)**

SECTION 1

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

- a) The American Federation of Teachers- all delegates and alternates to the National Convention of the AFT shall be elected by majority vote at a membership meeting. Notice of election shall be made at the previous membership meeting, distributed to each member at least fifteen (15) days prior to the election. The President and Secretary shall certify the election and forward the credentials of elected delegates and alternates to the AFT as soon as possible but not later than fifteen (15) days before the convening of the National Convention. The delegates shall confer with the treasurer to make sure the AFT per capita through June has been sent to the National Office at least fifteen (15) days before the convening of the National Convention. If any delegate/alternate is unopposed, the members may instruct the Election Chairperson, by a motion from the floor and an affirmative vote, to cast one (1) roll call ballot for that office.

- b) The AFT Massachusetts - all delegates and alternates to the AFT Massachusetts Convention shall be elected by majority vote at a membership meeting. Notice of election shall be made at the previous membership meeting and distributed to each member at least fifteen (15) days prior to the election. The President shall certify the election and forward the credentials of all elected delegates and alternates to AFT Massachusetts as soon as possible but not later than thirty (30) days before the convening of the Convention. The delegates shall confer with the treasurer to make sure the full per capita of the local is paid through the second (2nd) month preceding the Convention date, such payment to be made no later than thirty (30) days prior to the opening date of the Convention. If any delegate/alternate is unopposed, the members may instruct the Election Chairperson, by a motion from the floor and an affirmative vote, to cast one (1) roll call ballot for that office.

c) WMALF (Western Mass Area Labor Federation)- Delegates shall be elected at a regular Membership meeting. If any delegate/alternate is unopposed, the members may instruct the Election Chairperson, by a motion from the floor and an affirmative vote, to cast one (1) roll call ballot for that office.

d) The Massachusetts AFL-CIO- Delegates shall be elected at least one month before the state labor convention at a regular membership meeting. If any delegate/alternate is unopposed, the members may instruct the Election Chairperson, by a motion from the floor and an affirmative vote, to cast one (1) roll call ballot for that office.

SECTION 2

Every reasonable effort shall be made by this Federation to pay the legitimate expenses of delegates to meetings, conferences and conventions of affiliated organizations.

SECTION 3

The Federation to the best of its ability shall be active in the affairs of affiliated organizations.

SECTION 4

Delegates to the Annual Paraprofessional Convention shall be elected at a membership meeting except the President who shall be a delegate by virtue of her/his office.

SECTION 5

Delegates and alternates to conventions of affiliated organizations must be members in good standing for at least one (1) year.

SECTION 6

Election of delegates and alternates will be by secret ballot.

SECTION 7

The President shall be a delegate to all conventions of affiliated organizations by virtue of her/his office.

ARTICLE XITI - RULES

SECTION 1

Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall be considered the authority in all cases not covered by this Constitution.

ARTICLE XIV - AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1

An amendment to the Constitution may be submitted in writing to the Executive Board who will present it at the regular meeting of the Federation. Discussion and action will take place at the next regular membership meeting following presentation.

SECTION 2

A simple majority of all votes cast shall be necessary for the adoption of any amendment.

ARTICLE XV-AVAILABILITY OF CONSTITUTION

SECTION 1

An electronic version of the Constitution and all amendments shall be submitted to the American Federation of Teachers, and AFT Massachusetts.

SECTION 2

Copies shall be made available to other affiliated organizations upon request.

SECTION 3

An electronic version shall be emailed to any member of this Federation upon written request to the President.