

**CONSTITUTION OF THE
NEW BEDFORD FEDERATION OF
PARAPROFESSIONALS
LOCAL 2378, AFL – CIO**

Revised as of April 12, 2005

ARTICLE I – NAME AND LOCATION

**This organization shall be known as the New Bedford Federation of
Paraprofessionals, Local 2378, American Federation of Teachers, AFL –CIO.**

ARTICLE II – OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this organization shall be:

- Section 1. To promote the economic and social welfare of the Paraprofessionals of New Bedford and assist in the educational advancement of the children of the New Bedford Public Schools.**
- Section 2. To obtain for Paraprofessionals the rights to which they are entitled.**
- Section 3. To raise the standards of the Paraprofessionals by promoting availability of educational resources.**
- Section 4. To initiate and support legislation which will benefit the pupils and Paraprofessionals of the State of Massachusetts.**

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1.** All employees of the New Bedford Public Schools System may be members of this organization.
- Section 2.** Supervisory personnel with the rank of principal or above shall not obtain membership. Members, who are promoted to positions with the rank of principal or above, automatically are removed from membership on the effective date of the promotion.
- Section 3.** A member in good standing may sever his/her membership with the Local, without prejudice, by presenting a letter of withdrawal or resignation to the President or Treasurer.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

- Section 1.** The following officers of this Local shall be elected every two (2) years by this local.
- 1. President**
 - 2. Vice President**
 - 3. Recording Secretary**
 - 4. Corresponding Secretary**
 - 5. Treasurer**

Each officer shall be bonded.

- Section 2.** In order to hold the offices of Vice President, Corresponding Secretary, or Recording Secretary, you must be a member in good standing for a minimum of one (1) year, except in the first three (3) years after the chartering of this local.

Requirements for the office of President:

- 1. Held the office of Vice President, Treasurer, Corresponding Secretary, or Recording Secretary for a minimum of one (1) year, except during the first three (3) years after the chartering of this local.**

Or

- 2. Served as a member of the Executive Board for a minimum of two (2) years.**

Requirements for the office of Treasurer:

- 1. Held the office of President, Vice President, Corresponding Secretary, or Recording Secretary for a minimum of one (1) year, except during the first three (3) years after the chartering of this local.**

Or

- 2. Served as a member of the Executive Board for a minimum of two (2) years.**

Section 3. At the March meeting the President shall appoint a Nominating Committee of three (3) members, none of whom shall be an officer.

A slate of nominees for each office shall be presented at the April meeting.

Notice of election and a slate of nominated officers shall be prepared and distributed to each member in good standing within fifteen (15) days following the nomination meeting.

Section 4. All officers shall be elected by secret ballot at the May meeting (see Article VII, Section 2). Other nominations may be made from the floor. The candidate receiving a majority of the votes cast shall be elected. In the event a majority is not attained, a run-off election will be held between the two (2) top candidates.

Section 5. Vacancies in any office which occur between annual elections shall be filled by the Executive Board.

Section 6. Any officer who is not present without good cause for more than two meetings in any fiscal year shall be paid their stipend on a pro-rata basis.

ARTICLE V – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. The president shall preside at all meetings of this local and of the Executive Board, appoint all committees not otherwise provided for, and represent this Local in its relations with other units of the American Federation of Labor and with other organizations. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees. The President shall also be a member of the Negotiation Team and shall attend all negotiation meetings during the contract year.

Section 2. The Vice President shall perform all duties of the President in the absence of that officer and shall organize all committees appointed by the President, such as, but not limited to Grievance, Retirement, Scholarship and Nominating. Responsibilities shall include attendance at monthly meetings. The Vice President shall also be a member of the Negotiation Team and shall attend all negotiation meetings during the contract year.

Section 3. The Recording Secretary shall keep a record of all business transacted at meetings of the Local and of the Executive Board, and shall be the official custodian of the Constitution and By-Laws. Responsibilities shall include attendance at monthly meetings. The Recording Secretary shall also be a member of the Negotiation Team and shall attend all negotiation meetings during the contract year.

Section 4. The Corresponding Secretary shall issue all notices and newsletters. He/she shall answer correspondence at the direction of the President and shall report outside correspondence to the President and Executive Board. In November of each Academic School Year the Corresponding Secretary shall request from each Building Representative the number of Paraprofessionals and Lunch Aides in his/her respective building. Responsibilities shall include attendance at monthly meetings. The Corresponding Secretary shall also be a member of the Negotiation Team and shall attend all negotiation meetings during the contract year.

Section 5. The Treasurer shall collect all dues, have charge of all funds belonging to the Local, file vouchers for all disbursements of money, and submit a financial report to the membership at each regular meeting. The Treasurer shall also submit an annual Financial Statement and Balance Sheet. The Treasurer shall be responsible for filing an audit by an independent outside accounting firm required due to the agency fee clause in the federation contract. The following language was adopted at the 2004 American Federation of Teachers Convention:

“Effective January 1, 2005, AFT affiliates with fewer than 1,000 members, excluding retirees, are required to submit to the AFT annually, and within six months of the close of the affiliate’s fiscal year, an audit of its financial statements by an independent CPA in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards or a financial review of the affiliate’s financial statements conducted by an internal audit committee in accordance with AFT guidelines for audit committees. Appended to the audit or financial review must be a signed certification by the affiliate’s principal officer that the current audit or financial review has been presented at a specified regular or special meeting of the affiliate’s governing body and published and made available to members.”

The Treasurer shall forward all per capita dues and current up-dated 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. Special care shall be taken to see that the per capita tax, through June 30, is sent to the National Office no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the opening date of the National Convention to make sure delegates may be seated.

The Treasurer shall be responsible for issuing membership packets (Payroll Deduction Letter, Registration Card and American Federation of Teachers Membership Card) to all new members of the unit. Responsibilities shall include checking the agendas, addendums, and minutes of school committee meetings for changes in membership and maintaining reports of changes. He/she shall also be responsible for checking weekly dues deduction rosters and keeping records of all paid members on leaves of absence, worker's compensation, resignations, retirements, and terminations. Responsibilities shall include attendance at monthly meetings. The Treasurer shall also be a member of the Negotiation Team and shall attend all negotiation meetings during the contract year.

ARTICLE VI – EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. The Executive Board of this Local shall consist of the following:

- 1. All elected officers**
- 2. Chairperson of standing committees**
- 3. Immediate past President, if in good standing**

Section 2. The Executive Board shall administer the policy of this Local as set by the membership at regular meetings. It shall have the power to act

for the good of the Local in emergency situations where the policy cannot be set by the membership.

Section 3. The time and place of Executive Board meetings shall be set by the Executive Board. Special board meetings may be called by the President or when requested by a Board member, through the President.

Section 4. The Executive Board shall ask for delegates to the conventions of the organizations with which the Local is affiliated. Should delegates exceed the number allotted, an election will be held at least one (1) month before the State Labor Convention at a regular membership meeting.

Section 5. A majority of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE VII – COMMITTEES AND THEIR DUTIES

Section 1. The following standing committees shall be active in this Local:

1. Grievance
2. Membership
3. Publicity
4. COPE and Legislative
5. Nominating
6. Negotiating
7. Any other necessary committees

Section 2. The duties of the committees are as follows:

The Grievance Committee shall act on all grievances submitted in writing to the Grievance Committee. It shall follow the procedure for handling grievances. This committee shall cause the procedure to be publicized as widely as possible.

The Membership Committee shall plan and execute a dynamic program to insure growth and vitality of the Federation. The Local shall present a written report to the Executive Board.

The Publicity Committee shall make every effort to make use of the communications media, such as newspapers, television, radio, etc.

The Legislative Committee shall consider recommendations of the American Federation of Teachers, the State Federations and the Local pertaining to all levels of government.

The Nominating Committee (See Article IV, Section 3)

The Negotiating Committee shall prepare salary and other contract proposals and then shall negotiate the proposals with the employer.

ARTICLE VIII – MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular meetings of this Local shall be held on the second Tuesday of each month, except December, July, and August, at a time and place decided upon by the Executive Board. The Executive Board may for good reason, change the date of the meetings.

Section 2. The regular meeting in June shall be the Annual Meeting.

Section 3. Special meetings may be called by the President with the approval of the officers of this Local.

ARTICLE IX – FINANCE

Section 1. The regular annual dues shall be a sum equal to one-half (½) of Column I, Step I or 50% of Column I, Step I. A dues increase by the American Federation of Teachers shall automatically be passed down to the local level in the event that there is insufficient income to cover the increase.

Section 2. Dues may be paid by a payroll deduction.

Section 3. No expenditures shall be made, nor agreements involving the funds of this Local be entered into unless by vote of the membership; except, that in case of an emergency the President with approval of the Executive Board may direct the expenditures of such a sum as he/she deems necessary in the interest of the membership.

Section 4. Reimbursement for expenses incurred at conventions or conferences shall be made upon presentation of paid receipts.

Section 5. Bills presented to the Treasurer for payment must bear the signature of the member incurring the expense.

ARTICLE X – AFFILIATIONS

Section 1. This Local shall maintain affiliation with, and, whenever possible, send delegates to the following organizations:

1. **The American Federation of Teachers**
2. **The American Federation of Teachers
Massachusetts**
3. **The Massachusetts State Labor Council AFL – CIO**
4. **Greater Southeastern Massachusetts Labor Council,
AFL – CIO**

ARTICLE XI PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

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

ARTICLE XII – AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be changed or amended at any regular meeting of the Local by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote of the members present, provided that the proposed amendment has been read to the members at the regular meeting immediately preceding, or provided that a copy of the proposed amendment has been presented to the membership at least two (2) weeks before the vote on the amendment is taken.

ARTICLE XIII – AVAILABILITY OF CONSTITUTION

Section 1. Three (3) copies of this Constitution and all future amendments shall be submitted to the National Office of the American Federation of Teachers.

Section 2. Three (3) copies shall be made available to other affiliated organizations upon request.

Section 3. Copies shall be available for any members of this local upon request to the Secretary.

Effective April 12, 2005