

**TACOMA FEDERATION OF  
EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS**

**Constitution and Bylaws**

**ARTICLE I  
NAME**

This organization shall be known as the  
TACOMA FEDERATION OF EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS,  
LOCAL #461 – AFT WA/AFT/AFL-CIO

**ARTICLE II  
AFFILIATIONS**

1. This Federation shall maintain affiliations and be represented to the following organizations: The American Federation of Teachers (AFT), The American Federation of Teachers Washington (AFT WA), The Pierce County Central Labor Council (PCCLC), and the Washington State Labor Council (WSLC) affiliated with the AFL-CIO.
2. Members in good standing shall participate in all entitlements offered by the above affiliations.

**ARTICLE III  
PURPOSE**

The purpose of this organization shall be:

1. To unite and/or organize educational workers employed by the Tacoma Public Schools.
2. To seek benefits and improve working conditions for its members.
3. To improve the quality of working conditions for its members.
4. To work as a social force with other AFL-CIO unions to improve the quality of life for our community.
5. To work for the passage and retention of just laws and to encourage others to exercise their rights and responsibilities under these laws.
6. To fight all forms of prejudice and gain equity in education and other fields.

**ARTICLE IV**  
**MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY**

1. Any Paraeducator, Substitute Paraeducator, Bus Monitor, Substitute Bus Monitor, ASL Interpreter, Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant, Speech Language Pathology Assistant, Physical Therapy Assistant or Health Room Assistant/LPN employed by the Tacoma School District is eligible to be a member of the Federation.
2. Retired Members who wish to maintain membership in the Federation may do so by contacting the Membership Director in writing. Retired members do not vote and do not pay dues.
3. No person shall be denied membership based on sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained service animal, or their political affiliation.
4. Laid off employees, employees on district approved leave and members who have a lapse in dues because of a change in job status may maintain membership at dues determined by the Executive Board. Members must notify the Executive Board in writing when such an event occurs to ensure that they remain dues-paying members in good standing.
5. Each person eligible for and desiring membership shall apply by completing and signing the membership application/dues deduction authorization form.

**ARTICLE V**  
**RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**FEDERATION MEMBERS HAVE:**

1. The right to participate collaboratively in all aspects of the Federation.
2. The right to exercise the freedom of speech shall be held inviolate.
3. The right to be secure from coercion and intimidation in the exercise of their rights.
4. The right to demand fair and democratic elections at all levels of this labor organization.
5. The right to peaceably assemble and to petition the Federation for redress of complaints.
6. The right to run for any office of this Federation, as per these Bylaws.
7. The right to demand reasonable accounting and reasonable access to all records of this Federation.
8. The right to participate in the decision-making processes of this Federation, and

- the right to vote on issues where appropriate.
9. The right to attend all open meetings of this Federation.
  10. The right to union representation.

### **FEDERATION MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Members in good standing of this Federation are expected to do the following:

1. Respect the rights of other members.
2. Participate collaboratively in the operation of this Federation by voting and attending meetings.
3. Protect fellow members, observe strikes and pickets of fellow members, and assist other members in the legitimate exercise of Federation picketing whenever such action does not conflict with one's conscience.
4. Subscribe to, uphold, and preserve the integrity of these Bylaws.
5. Seek the betterment of this Federation's membership.
6. Pursue valid grievances.
7. Familiarize themselves with their local collective bargaining agreement.

### **ARTICLE VI OFFICERS**

1. Officers shall be known collectively as the Executive Board.
2. To be eligible to run for office, a member must be a current Federation member in good standing with twelve (12) consecutive months of membership prior to being nominated and a current employee of Tacoma Public Schools.
3. Officers of this organization shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Director, Membership Director, four (4) Union Representative Coordinators (A, B, C, and D), Parliamentarian, and additional officers as approved by the Executive Board.
4. The term of office shall be two (2) years. Each officer shall be limited to three (3) consecutive terms.
5. Officers shall take office within 7 days of the last day of the school year in which the election was held.
6. Officers shall have the option to be reimbursed for their monthly dues.
7. Officers shall ensure that the Communication Director is advised of all alterations to email passwords immediately following any changes.
8. The Executive Board shall have full power and authority to act for the Federation, subject only to ratification of its act by the body and common-sense policy.
9. No individual board member may act independently as an agent for the Federation without express authorization of the board as a whole, or without express authorization of the general membership.
10. The Executive Board shall ensure that an internal audit committee reviews all financial records every year. The Executive Board shall ensure that an external financial review is done every five years beginning with the 2020-21 fiscal year.

The financial review or audit must contain a certification of submission to AFT, the membership and AFT Washington.

### **OFFICER VACANCIES**

1. In the event an office is vacated, the office will be filled by electing a new officer to complete the term. The Executive Board may appoint an interim officer from the membership, if the vacancy occurs with less than six (6) months in the term, to fill the vacancy and complete the term.
2. An interim officer from the membership may also be appointed by the Executive Board to fill a vacancy while steps are being taken to elect a new officer by special election. This special election should take place within three months of the vacancy and be governed under the same rules as stated in Article X Elections.
3. At the conclusion of a special election the newly elected officer will be sworn into office as soon as possible.
4. In the event the President becomes incapacitated or vacates their office, the Vice President will complete the term of the President, and the office of Vice President shall be considered vacant.
5. Upon separation from employment with Tacoma Public Schools, officers will immediately relinquish their office.

### **OFFICER EXIT PROTOCOLS**

1. When an Executive Board member leaves office for any reason, they shall immediately return keys, and all Federation owned equipment and materials.
2. At the conclusion of the term, the exiting officer shall assist as needed as an advisor to the newly elected officer for a period of three (3) months or as agreed to with the newly elected officer.
3. At the conclusion of the term for presidential office the immediate past president shall assist as an advisor to the newly elected President for a period of at least three (3) months or as agreed to with the newly elected President. They shall, whenever possible, remain available for consultation and to answer questions for the first year of the current President's term.
4. As advisor, the immediate past president is to yield the running of all meetings to the current President and shall maintain an advisory role in all matters pertaining to the order of the Federation.
5. Exiting officers shall ensure that a detailed list of instructions on how to perform the duties of the office are provided to the newly elected officer.
6. To ensure a smooth transition occurs with no service interruption for the Federation, exiting officers shall update new officers on any information needed to fulfill the duties of office including pending obligations, account passwords/access, and access to any working documents before their term in office is concluded and the new officer is sworn in.

## **DISMISSALS AND RECALL OF OFFICERS**

1. Any officer may be dismissed from office by the Executive Board if deemed unable to fulfill the duties of their job description as determined by the Executive Board. The Executive Board will review each situation to determine if there is a cause for dismissal.
2. Any officer may be dismissed from office if they are absent from three (3) consecutive Executive Board and/or General Membership meetings.
3. Recall of officers shall be by petition of at least 10 percent (10%) of the membership in writing, including electronic communication, setting forth the charges, and submitting the charges to the Executive Board.
4. The Executive Board shall call a special meeting of the General Membership within two (2) weeks to hear and consider the charges.
5. At least 25 percent (25%) of the members must be present at the special meeting in order to call a vote on the recall petition.
6. The results shall be determined by a majority vote.

## **ARTICLE VII DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

### **PRESIDENT**

1. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Executive Board and Federation and represent the Federation when and where necessary.
2. The President or their designee shall be a delegate to all affiliation conventions.
3. The President or their designee with approval of the Executive Board, shall be chairperson of all negotiating and bargaining committees.
4. The President or their designee shall be an ex-officio member of all standing committees except the Elections Committee.
5. The President shall approve the chairpersons of all committees with the approval of the Executive Board and shall have the power to remove committee chairpersons subject to approval of the Executive Board.
6. The President shall make an annual report to the general membership at the September meeting of the general membership on the state of the Federation.
7. The President shall be the principal agent of the Federation and they or their designee shall conduct the day- to- day business of the Federation.
8. The President shall report the business of the Executive Board to the general membership.
9. The President shall vote only to break a tie.
10. The President shall serve as a co-signatory with the Vice President, Treasurer, or Secretary on all financial holdings and accounts controlled by the Federation.

### **VICE PRESIDENT**

1. The Vice President shall perform all the duties of the President in the absence of the President.
2. The Vice President shall assist the President in the everyday operations of the Federation.
3. The Vice President shall oversee Elected Officers to ensure that they are fulfilling the duties of their elected position as assigned by these Bylaws.
4. The Vice President shall maintain a current list of all officers and committee members.
5. The Vice President shall maintain a current list of all rules, regulations, and policies of the Federation.
6. The Vice President shall ensure that all committees are functioning and trained.
7. The Vice President shall serve as a co-signatory with the President, Treasurer or Secretary on all financial holdings and accounts controlled by the Federation.

### **SECRETARY**

1. The Secretary shall record the minutes of the Executive Board and the General Membership meetings.
2. The Secretary shall provide minutes to the President within one week after the meeting and file a copy in the appropriate binder and/or electronic file.
3. The Secretary shall issue all notices and complete all correspondence at the direction of the President and Executive Board.
4. The Secretary shall make the minutes of all meetings available to the membership upon request.
5. The Secretary shall prepare agendas of all meetings of the Local at the direction of the President.
6. The Secretary shall be responsible for preparing all ballots.
7. The Secretary shall serve as a co-signatory with the President, Vice President, or Treasurer on all financial holdings and accounts controlled by the Federation.

### **TREASURER**

1. The Treasurer shall receive, record, and deposit all monies of the Federation within seven (7) days.
2. The Treasurer shall issue quarterly financial reports to the general membership.
3. The Treasurer shall forward all per-capita dues and current membership to all affiliated organizations and keep the Federation in good standing at all times.
4. The Treasurer shall keep accurate records available at all times.
5. The Treasurer shall prepare an annual budget and present it for approval by the General Membership, at the October meeting.

6. The Treasurer shall pay all bills authorized by the budget and retain records of such expenditures.
7. Expenses not authorized in the budget must be presented to the Executive Board for authorization.
8. The Treasurer shall prepare or authorize the preparation of all tax reports and other financial reports.
9. All duties of the Treasurer shall be performed in a timely manner to ensure that accounts remain in good standing and that all deadlines are met.
10. The Treasurer shall chair the Finance and Budget Committee.
11. The Treasurer shall serve as a co-signatory with the President, Vice President, or Secretary on all financial holdings and accounts controlled by the Federation.

### **COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR**

1. The Communication Director shall be responsible for writing and publishing communications to the membership as approved by the President, Vice President, or Secretary in a timely manner.
2. The Communication Director shall be responsible for administering communication to the membership through various Executive Board approved social media platforms.
3. The Communication Director shall assist in the maintenance and updating of the Federation website and serve as webmaster.
4. The Communication Director shall solicit information for publication.
5. The Communication Director shall distribute communications to the membership.
6. The Communication Director shall keep a record of all publications sent to the general membership.
7. The Communication Director shall be the chair of the Communications Committee.
8. The Communication Director shall be the keeper of all Federation email accounts and information including: the creation of passwords, making corrections for updated passwords, and shall ensure that passwords are changed after the exit of any officer for each associated Federation email address.

### **MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR**

1. The Membership Director shall oversee and be responsible for all aspects of Membership within the Federation.
2. The Membership Director shall ensure that new members are put into the membership database monthly, and that membership applications are filed in the appropriate binders at the Federation office.
3. The Membership Director shall report the current membership data monthly to the Treasurer.

4. The Membership Director shall provide each Union Representative Coordinator with updated lists of all ESPs in the district organized by work site, indicating which ESPs are members of the Federation, and a current list of all newly hired ESPs and their work site monthly.
5. The Membership Director shall ensure that all new hire orientation meetings are attended by themselves and/or an available Union Representative Coordinator.
6. The Membership Director shall ensure that newly hired ESPs are presented with information pertaining to the Federation, its affiliates, the benefits of Federation membership, and a membership application with instructions for its return within 45 days of receipt of new hire information from the District.
7. The Membership Director shall ensure that membership packets are distributed to new members of the Federation monthly.
8. The Membership Director shall collaborate with Union Representative Coordinators to help secure and maintain union representation at every work site.
9. The Membership Director shall organize and help facilitate meetings to adequately train Union Representatives alongside the Union Representative Coordinators.
10. The Membership Director shall give a monthly membership report to the Executive Board and to the general assembly of Federation members including the number of total members of the Federation and any new members added since the previous monthly report.
11. The Membership Director shall be the chair of the Membership Committee.
12. The Membership Director shall be in charge of the sign-in at general membership meetings and provide the list to the Secretary.

#### **UNION REPRESENTATIVE COORDINATORS**

1. The Union Representative Coordinators shall act as a liaison to the Executive Board and the Union Representatives from each work site assigned to them.
2. The Union Representative Coordinators shall make every effort to secure and maintain Union Representation at each work site.
3. The Union Representative Coordinators shall send out a memo in September to all ESPs requesting that they select a Union Representative from their work site and report the name back to them.
4. The Union Representative Coordinators shall report to the Executive Board on the status of representation for all work sites.
5. The Union Representative Coordinators (in collaboration with the Membership Director) shall hold a minimum of one (1) Union Representative meeting each school year for the purpose of information and/or training.
6. The Union Representative Coordinators shall communicate with all Union Representatives that they are assigned to monthly.

7. The Union Representative Coordinators shall make and provide an information packet to all Union Representatives.
8. The Union Representative Coordinators shall ensure that all Union Representatives are informed of their roles and responsibilities.
9. Union Representative Coordinators shall collaborate with the Membership Director to ensure that all newly hired ESPs are presented with information pertaining to the Federation, its affiliates, the benefits of Federation membership and a membership application.
10. The Union Representative Coordinators shall be members of the Membership Committee.

### **PARLIAMENTARIAN**

1. The Parliamentarian shall assist in keeping order at all General Membership and Executive Board meetings.
2. *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall be the authority for all matters not covered by the Constitution and Bylaws.
3. The Parliamentarian shall be familiar with *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* and the Constitution and Bylaws of the Federation and shall assure that all General Membership and Executive Board meetings adhere to them.
4. The Parliamentarian shall ensure that a copy of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* be present and available at all in person meetings to be viewed upon request.
5. The Parliamentarian shall follow and understand these five basic rules:
  - Order — one business item at a time.
  - Equal opportunity — chance to participate.
  - Justice — Fairness, everyone understands.
  - Right of Minority — to be heard.
  - Right of Majority — to decide.

## **ARTICLE VIII UNION REPRESENTATIVES**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

1. Union Representatives **MUST** be a member of the Federation in good standing, and any member of the Federation in good standing can serve as a Union Representative.
2. Each work site shall choose/assign one (1) or two (2) members of the Federation within their work site to serve as union representation for their work site and report the name(s) of the chosen Representative(s) to their respective Union Representative Coordinators by October 1<sup>st</sup> of each school year.
3. Union Representatives shall serve as a liaison between the Executive Board and the members of the Federation within their work site.

4. Union Representatives shall attend all monthly General Membership meetings held by the Federation and report information back to all ESPs at their work site.
5. Union Representatives shall bring forth any concerns that ESPs may be experiencing at their work site for discussion at Federation meetings.
6. Union Representatives shall create an initial list of all ESPs within their work site including personal contact information and union membership status at the beginning of each school year. The initial list shall be sent to the Union Representative Coordinator assigned to them.
7. Union Representatives shall encourage Federation Membership and share the benefits of Federation membership with ESPs within their work sites.
8. Union Representatives shall refer all disputes and/or disciplinary actions involving any ESPs within their work site, to their Union Representative Coordinator for support and advice on how to best proceed.
9. Union Representatives shall attend at least one online Union Representative training course provided by AFT WA as well as periodic meetings/trainings provided by the officers of our local Federation.

## **ARTICLE IX COMMITTEES**

1. Committees shall be established and meet as needed to fulfill the obligations as prescribed in these Bylaws for the successful operation of the Federation.
2. The following committees shall be established and meet at least once every school year: Negotiations, Finance/Budget, Audit, Nominations/Elections, Membership, and Communications.
3. The following committee shall be established and meet at least every five (5) years beginning with the 2020-2021 fiscal year: Constitution and Bylaws.
4. The Executive Board may establish other committees as needed to fulfill the operations and objectives of this organization.
5. A member of the Executive Board will be assigned to each committee with the exception of the Nomination/Elections committee.

## **ARTICLE X ELECTIONS**

1. The election of officers shall take place annually in May. The duration of each office is two (2) years. During odd numbered years, the following officers will be elected: President, Treasurer, Parliamentarian and Union Representative Coordinators (A) and (D). During even numbered years the following officers will be elected: Vice President, Secretary, Communications Director, Membership Director, and Union Representative Coordinators (B) and (C).

2. Nominations for annual elections shall take place at the General Membership meeting in April.
3. Notice that nominations are in order shall be communicated to the membership at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which the nominations will be accepted.
4. Nominees must be present to accept the nomination or have submitted a letter of intent to accept nomination within seven (7) days of nominations.
5. The Nominations/Elections Committee may make ground rules for any projected campaign that shall apply equally to all candidates.
6. No Executive Board member or candidate shall be a member of the Elections Committee.
7. To be eligible to run for an office, members must have been a member in good standing for twelve (12) consecutive months prior to nominations.

### **ELECTION PROCEDURES**

1. The notice of an election must include the date, time, place or format and offices to be filled.
2. Alternative or electronic voting platforms may be used, if deemed necessary by the Executive Board.
3. Voting shall be by secret ballot.
4. The candidate receiving a simple majority of votes cast shall be declared elected.
5. Elected officers shall take office within 7 days of the last day of the school year in which the election was held.
6. Ballots shall be kept in the Federation office for one (1) year.

### **VOTING PROCEDURES**

1. The Ratification of the Federation/District Agreement and the election of officers shall be conducted by secret ballot.
2. Ballots will be kept in the Federation office for one (1) year.
3. All other votes of the Federation, including General Membership Meetings, shall be of members present at the meeting by voice or a showing of hands.
4. All matters requiring a vote will be determined by a simple majority of members voting either by ballot or those present at the meeting.

## **ARTICLE XI MEETINGS**

### **General Membership Meetings:**

1. There shall be a minimum of five (5) General Membership meetings per school year.
2. A quorum shall be twelve (12) members in good standing and four (4) Executive Board members.
3. The Executive Board shall set the time and place of the meetings.

### **Executive Board Meetings:**

1. The Executive Board shall meet at least nine (9) times a calendar year.
2. An Executive Board quorum shall consist of at least four (4) members.

## **ARTICLE XII FINANCE**

1. The dues of the Federation shall be based on a percentage of each individual member's hourly earnings as approved by a vote of our membership. Earnings shall be based on all monies earned for all hours of work except overtime, professional development hours, class coverage, and stipends.
2. Whenever the national body of AFT, the state federation, or the PCCLC raises its per capita dues, member dues and percentages shall increase, if necessary, to cover the increase in per capita.
3. A Legal Defense Fund for grievance and arbitration expenses and other legal defense costs shall be funded at the rate of fifty (50) cents per member per month. The Legal Defense Fund shall not drop below \$12,000 and shall have no maximum amount. The Legal Defense Fund may accrue interest, and that interest shall remain in the Legal Defense Fund.
4. Local Expenses: In addition to the affiliate per-capita payments and the legal defense payments, the Federation will establish dues which will support the regular expenses of the Federation and accomplish goals and objectives approved by the membership.
5. Tacoma Federation of Education Support Professionals shall affiliate with its state federation of AFT and shall maintain good standing by timely payment of state federation per capita dues. This Federation understands that failure to pay per capita dues for a period of three (3) months places a local in bad standing. Also, this Federation understands that, to participate in the AFT convention, past due per capita must be brought current through the two months immediately preceding the convention date.

**ARTICLE XIII**  
**AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

1. Constitutional amendments may be recommended by the Executive Board or any member in good standing by submitting them in writing to the Executive Board.
2. Proposed constitutional amendments shall be put before the General Membership for approval by vote at a General Membership Meeting.
3. Notice must be given to the General Membership Thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which the amendments shall be voted on.
4. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the present, providing there is a quorum, shall be required to adopt an amendment.
5. This Constitution: must be reviewed by the Constitution and Bylaws committee at least once every five (5) years, beginning with the 2020-21 fiscal year.

**ARTICLE XIV**  
**AVAILABILITY OF THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

Copies of this Constitution and Bylaws shall be distributed as follows:

1. One (1) copy of this Constitution and Bylaws and all future amendments shall be available to download for review on our web page.
2. One (1) copy of this Constitution and Bylaws and all future amendments shall be submitted to the American Federation of Teachers Washington (AFT WA).
3. Three (3) copies of this Constitution and Bylaws and all subsequent amendments shall be submitted to the office of the Secretary-Treasurer of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).
4. The Secretary shall provide a hard copy of this document to any member of this Federation upon request.

Revised 11/23/2020.

Voted to Adopt by Membership 11/23/2020

Revised 01/13/2026.

Voted to Adopt by Membership 01/13/2026