



CONSTITUTION
AND
BY-LAWS

PREAMBLE

We, the teachers in the Providence Public Schools, having organized ourselves as a labor union to utilize fully our combined strength in the cause of public education and to provide adequate, fearless representation of our viewpoint and interests, do adopt and subscribe to this constitution, its by-laws, and rules of order.

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I – NAME

This Union shall be called THE PROVIDENCE TEACHERS UNION, LOCAL 958, American Federation of Teachers.

ARTICLE II – OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Union shall be to promote the cause of sound and democratic education by:

- a. Convincing the citizens of our state and city that adequate education of their children must be the first charge against public revenues.
- b. Maintaining and improving the conditions of its teachers with respect to salaries, tenure, pensions, conditions of employment, and the right to freedom of expression in and out of the classroom.
- c. Promoting active, equitable participation in the development, implementation and evaluation of district-wide school policy and curricula.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Any certified teacher in the Providence Public Schools shall be eligible to apply for membership. He or she shall attain “good standing” after payment of dues, subscription to this Constitution, and election to membership as prescribed in the By-Laws.

- a. Any certified member of the Providence Public School District may choose to disaffiliate from the Providence Teachers Union upon signing the Disaffiliation card at the PTU office.
- b. Disaffiliation is effective the following pay period. No dues shall be returned prior to signature date.
- c. If a disaffiliated member wishes to rejoin the membership, they must sign a new membership card.
- d. Disaffiliation and reaffiliation may only take place once per school year during the month of September. Anyone hired after September 30th will have thirty (30) days from their date of hire to disaffiliate if they choose.
- e. Fee for services. Any non-union member that requires representation on all contractual matters will pay an agreed upon fee for service.

Section 2. Requirements for election to and retention of membership not prescribed in this Constitution shall be in accordance with Article 3 of the Constitution of the American Federation of Teachers.

Section 3. Retirees Chapter of the Providence Teachers Union, (hereinafter referred to as the “PTU Retirees Chapter”):

- a. The President of the PTU Retirees Chapter shall be a member of the Executive Board. His/her duties shall be concerned with issues of retirees and members of the Providence Teachers Union contemplating retirement. In the event the President of the PTU Retirees Chapter is unable to carry out his/her duties for any reason, the person designated by the Constitution of the PTU Retirees Chapter shall serve in his/her place.
- b. Members of the PTU Retirees Chapter may participate in Providence Teachers Union activities but will not have the privilege of voting at membership meetings.
- c. The Providence Teachers Union shall pay to the PTU Retirees Chapter and to the Rhode Island Federation of Retired Teachers the first year's dues for each of its members who retire from the Providence School Department. Thereafter, the PTU Retirees Chapter shall forward to the Providence Teachers Union, in a reasonable and timely fashion, five dollars (\$5.00) of the annual dues it receives from each of its members except for the first year of a teacher's retirement from Providence School Department.
- d. The President of the Providence Teachers Union and the President of the PTU Retirees Chapter shall send a timely and appropriate letter to teacher retirees upon their retirement from the Providence School Department together with an application card inviting them to join the PTU Retirees Chapter.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of the Union shall be a President, seven Vice-Presidents (one Vice-President-at-Large, three Elementary Vice-Presidents, one each from Middle Schools, Senior High, and Special Groups), a Secretary and a Treasurer.

Section 2. The officers shall be elected at the Biennial Election and shall serve until the first Wednesday in June following the next Biennial Election with the exception of the Treasurer who shall serve from September 1 to August 31. All officers shall serve until their successors qualify.

Section 3. When the Presidency or the position of the Treasurer is vacated prior to the Biennial Election, the Vice-President-at-Large shall serve until the vacancy is filled by the membership.

Section 4. When an elective office other than the Presidency or the position of Treasurer is vacated prior to the Biennial Election, the membership shall elect a member to serve until the first Wednesday in June following the Biennial Election

ARTICLE V – EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. The Executive Board shall comprise the following voting members:

- a. The officers of the local and the chairpersons of the standing committees.
- b. A past President.
- c. The President of the PTU Retirees Chapter.

Section 2. A member who is an administrator of the Providence School Department or a paid full-time employee of the Union shall not be qualified to be a member of the Executive Board.

Section 3. It shall be the duty of the Executive Board to:

- a. Carry out the directives of the membership.
- b. Administer the affairs of the local subject to the will of the membership.
- c. Recommend policies and plans to the membership.
- d. Communicate and promote the programs, activities, and efforts of the local to their respective groups.
- e. Interpret and enforce this Constitution and By-Laws.
- f. Serve on committees and attend meetings outside of regularly scheduled meetings at the request of the president.

Section 4. The Executive Board shall have the power to commit the Union on matters of high policy or action only when an emergency precludes such commitment by the membership.

Section 5. The Executive Board shall take office on the first Wednesday in June following the Biennial Election and shall serve until the first Wednesday in June following the next Biennial Election.

Section 6. The Executive Board shall hold monthly meetings during the school year. A special meeting may be called by the President. Upon petition of nine Executive Board members, the President shall call a special meeting. The object of the special meeting shall be stated in the call.

Section 7. A member of the Executive Board who missed a total of four (4) regular Executive Board or regular membership meetings for reasons other than sickness or personal emergency, shall be removed from the Executive Board and notice of such vacancy shall be made known to the Nominating Committee in the case of the elected officers, and to the Executive Board in the case of the appointed Standing Committee Chairperson, by the Recording Secretary. The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for keeping records of all absences of the Executive Board members.

Section 8. Each appointed and elected member of the Executive Board, exclusive of the President, shall be paid a stipend no later than July 31st of each school year for services rendered in the school year then ending, in an amount not to exceed twice the annual dues then in effect. Members of the Executive Board shall be expected to attend a schedule of meetings as set forth by the President.

Compensation for Executive Board members shall be determined in accordance with the following formula:

$$\frac{X}{N} 2d$$

where “x” represents the number of meetings attended, “n” represents the total number of meetings scheduled, and “d” represents the annual dues.

ARTICLE VI – STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1. The Standing Committees shall be:

- Membership and COPE – The Membership committee shall work on the recruitment of teachers to the PTU, eligibility, rights, and privileges of members. As part of the COPE (Committee on Political Action) work the committee will work on active research into legislative measures, maintain current voting lists, evaluate the performance of candidates for public office as it affects teachers and public employees, makes endorsement recommendations to the Executive Board and the Membership for all elections. The President shall be an ex-officio member of the Committee. The President and Committee members shall be responsible for campaigning for passage of legislation that benefits for teachers and public employees and for elections of candidates to public office who support causes of teachers, public schools, students and public employees.
- Organizing and Community Engagement – A committee that will guide the scheduling, planning and oversight of community events and union-based campaigns. Participants will actively engage the community in participation of Union focused initiatives. The committee will elevate member engagement at the school and district level for all actions, campaigns, and events.
- Welfare -The Welfare Committee shall be concerned with general matters of bereavement, extended illnesses, and appropriate remembrances
- Racial Justice – The educators of the PTU Racial Justice Committee work to develop an anti-racist climate in and around the Providence Public Schools for our students, families, and colleagues. We commit to recognizing and addressing instances of injustice and systemic racism. We are committed to centering race and the acknowledgment of intersecting identities, holding ourselves accountable internally as a union, while collaborating with students, families , administrators, school staff, and the community at-large, educating ourselves and fellow PTU members, interrupting systems and policies that recreate and perpetuate racial injustice while proposing co-creating just alternatives.
- MLL/Dual Language – The educators of the MLL/Dual Language Committee will engage in the work of reviewing curricula, identifying areas of support and concern for all MLL/Dual Language educators, students and families. Meet with district leaders and families to problem-solve around issues that impact educators, students and families in MLL/Dual Language, provide regular communications and updates to educators and families.

Section 2. The Chairpersons of the Standing Committees shall be nominated by the Executive Board and confirmed by the membership and shall serve until their successors are confirmed. The members of each Standing Committee shall be nominated by its chairperson and confirmed by the Executive Board.

Section 3. The size of the Standing Committees shall be determined by the Executive Board

ARTICLE VII – SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Section 1. The Nominating Committee shall be a Special Standing Committee. Its members shall be elected by the Membership at the January meeting preceding the Biennial Election. This committee shall elect its own chairperson. It shall have seven members. A member of the Executive Board may not serve on the Nominating Committee.

Section 2. The Nominating Committee shall present to the membership the name of a candidate to fill a vacated elective position at the regular meeting next following the resignation or other notification that the position is open. Should the Nominating Committee for any reason fail in its duty in this respect, nominations will be made from the floor at said meeting.

Section 3. The Elections Committee shall be a Special Standing Committee. The Elections Committee shall consist of five (5) members who shall be elected by the Membership at the January meeting preceding the Biennial Election. This committee shall elect its own chairperson. A member of the Executive Board and/or a candidate for office may not serve on the Elections Committee.

Section 4. No person may serve concurrently on the Nominating Committee and the Elections Committee.

Section 5. Other special committees may be activated by the President with the consent of the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VIII – BUILDING REPRESENTATIVES

Section 1. The membership of each school shall elect Building Representatives at least two weeks prior to the Biennial Election. The number of Building Representatives shall be determined by the Executive Board. If a school faculty should for any reason fail to elect a building representative, the President shall be authorized to appoint a building representative subject to confirmation by the Executive Board.

Section 2. Each duly elected and serving Building Representative shall be paid a stipend no later than July 31st of each school year for services rendered in the school year then ending, in an amount not to exceed the annual dues then in effect. He or she shall be required to attend a schedule of meetings as set forth by the President.

Compensation for Building Representatives shall be determined in accordance with the following formula:

$$\frac{X}{N} d$$

where “x” represents the number of meetings attended, “n” represents the total number of meetings scheduled, and “d” represents the annual dues.

The Area Vice-Presidents shall be responsible for keeping attendance records of Building Representatives.

ARTICLE IX – MEETINGS

Section 1. A general meeting of the membership shall be held in October, December, January, February, March, April and May. The Secretary shall publish the time and place of the meetings as directed by the Executive Board.

Section 2. The general meeting in May in even numbered years effective May 1984, shall be called the Biennial Election.

Section 3. A special meeting of the membership may be called by the Executive Board. The President shall call a meeting on the petition of fifty members in good standing. The object of the meeting shall be stated in the petition and in the call.

ARTICLE X – AFFILIATIONS

The Providence Teachers Union shall be affiliated with appropriate professional and labor organizations as recommended by the Executive Board and approved by the membership, regardless of the changes in the names of the affiliated organizations.

ARTICLE XI – REFERENDUM

The President shall submit any matter to a referendum vote of all the membership, if eleven members of the Executive Board or twenty percent of the members in good standing in the local so request. The referendum shall be initiated within two weeks after the request is received.

ARTICLE XII – RECALL

Any officer or member of the Executive Board may be recalled. A petition signed by at least ten percent (10%) of the membership in good standing, or by ten voting members of the Executive Board, stating the reasons for recall, shall be sufficient for initiating recall proceedings. The petition shall be submitted to the membership at a regular meeting and shall be placed on the order of business for the next regular meeting. The Secretary shall notify the membership at least one week prior to the next meeting. A two-thirds vote of the members present at the meeting shall be necessary for recall.

ARTICLE XIII – AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed by any member who shall submit same in writing to the Secretary for transmission to the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall consider the proposed amendment, and its recommendations to approve or reject, together with the proposed amendment, shall be announced in writing to all the membership at least one week in advance of the next regular meeting through one or more of the following modes of communication (Membership Update, website, email, phone, etc.) The proposed amendment shall become part of the Constitution upon adoption by a two-thirds vote of the members present at said regular meeting unless the motion to adopt specifies a time for its going into effect.

ARTICLE XIV – AGENCY FEE

Non-union members from whose payroll monies are withheld in an amount equal to Union dues pursuant to the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Providence School Board and the Providence Teachers Union shall have the right to object to the expenditure of their portion of such payments for activities or causes of a political nature only incidentally related to collective bargaining. Non-union members may not object to the expenditure of their portions of such payments used for collective bargaining including but not limited to negotiations, organizing, servicing, educational research and union administration.

Objections shall be made between January 1 and January 31, by registered/certified mail.

ARTICLE XV-Conflict of Interest Policy

The Providence Teachers Union and all officers, Directors and Committee Members shall scrupulously avoid any conflict between their own respective personal, professional, or business interests and the

interests of the Union, in any and all actions taken by them on behalf of the Union in their respective capacities.

In the event that any officer, director or committee member of the Union shall have any direct or indirect interest in, or relationship with, any individual or organization which proposes to enter into any transaction with the Union, including but not limited to transaction involving:

- a. The sale, purchase, lease or rental of any property or other asset;
- b. Employment, or rendition of services, personal or otherwise;
- c. The award of any grant, contract or subcontract;
- d. The investment or deposit of any funds of the Union;

Such person shall give notice of such interest or relationship and shall thereafter refrain from discussing or voting on the particular transaction in which s/he has an interest, or otherwise attempting to exert any influence on the Union, or its components to affect the decision to participate or not participate in such transaction.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE 1 – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. The Membership Committee shall consider all applications for membership. A majority vote of the committee members voting shall determine the recommendation for acceptance or rejection. A majority vote at a regular meeting shall confirm or reject the recommendation.

Section 2. Dues shall be 7/10 of one percent of Step 12 of the Teachers Basic Salary Schedule negotiated between the Providence School Board and the Providence Teachers Union plus the individual member's prorated per-capita Union financial obligations to affiliated organizations. Part-time teachers, including job-sharers, shall pay a prorated amount of said dues to the Union equal to the fractional portion of what they would be earning if they were employed full-time. Each teacher making application for membership shall give written authorization to the Providence School Department and shall have his or her dues deducted from his or her pay on the monthly payroll deduction plan. Teachers not on active payroll shall pay in total on or before October 15.

Section 3.

- a. A member who takes a leave of absence without pay shall not be liable for dues. However, such teachers who wish to retain an active status may do so by paying the annual dues.
- b. A member who takes a leave of absence with partial or full pay shall maintain his or her active status and be liable for dues.

ARTICLE II – OFFICERS

Section 1. The President shall execute the directives of the local and the Executive Board. The President or the President's delegate shall be the only official spokesperson of the Union. He or she shall submit at the October meeting a program of plans for the coming year. He or she shall cause the audit of the books of the Treasurer to be initiated within ten days after the close of business on August 31, in each year by an accountant of a firm licensed under the laws of Rhode Island. Upon request of any member in good standing he or she shall submit a copy of the audit report for examination. He or she shall render an Annual Report on the state of the Local.

Section 2. Whenever the President is unable to perform his or her constitutional duties, the Vice-President-At-Large shall take his or her place.

Section 3. The Vice-Presidents shall be responsible for the efficient functioning of their respective Building Representatives.

Section 4. The Secretary shall announce all meetings, keep a Journal of the Minutes and make all physical preparations for elections, referenda, and for recall when he or she is not the accused.

Section 5. The Treasurer shall be responsible for timely review of all financial documents and co-signatory for all outgoing expenditures per the budget and any non-budgeted items approved per the Executive Board.

Section 6. Sergeants-at-Arms shall be appointed by the President, subject to approval by the Executive Board, and shall act as doorkeepers at the general meetings. They shall insure order and decorum of members. They shall be at the disposal of the Chair at all times during the course of these meetings.

ARTICLE III – EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board shall consist of the officers of the local and the Chairpersons of Standing Committees.

ARTICLE IV – COMMITTEES

Section 1. The Organizing and Community Engagement Committee will guide the scheduling, planning and oversight of community events and union-based campaigns. Participants will actively engage the community in participation of Union focused initiatives. The committee will elevate member engagement at the school and district level for all actions, campaigns, and events.

Section 2. The Membership committee shall work on the recruitment of teachers to the PTU, eligibility, rights, and privileges of members. As part of the COPE (Committee on Political Action) work the committee will work on active research into legislative measures, maintain current voting lists, evaluate the performance of candidates for public office as it affects teachers and public employees, makes endorsement recommendations to the Executive Board and the Membership for all elections. The President shall be an ex-officio member of the Committee. The President and Committee members shall be responsible for campaigning for passage of legislation that benefits for teachers and public employees and for elections of candidates to public office who support causes of teachers, public schools, students and public employees.

Section 3 Racial Justice – The educators of the PTU Racial Justice Committee work to develop an anti-racist climate in and around the Providence Public Schools for our students, families, and colleagues. We commit to recognizing and addressing instances of injustice and systemic racism. We are committed to centering race and the acknowledgment of intersecting identities, holding ourselves accountable internally as a union, while collaborating with students, families, administrators, school staff, and the community at-large, educating ourselves and fellow PTU members, interrupting systems and policies that re-create and perpetuate racial injustice while proposing and co-creating just alternatives.

Section 4. The Welfare Committee shall be concerned with general matters of bereavement, extended illnesses, and appropriate remembrances.

Section 5. The Communication and Community Engagement committee will work with the Executive Board in creating and implementing a communication plan and engage the membership through social media. They will actively engage the community in participation of Union sponsored community events, youth and Union focused initiatives.

ARTICLE V – BUILDING REPRESENTATIVES

Building Representatives shall serve as liaison personnel for the President in their respective schools. They shall report directly to their respective Area Vice-Presidents unless otherwise directed by the President. They shall communicate and promote the programs, activities, and efforts of the local to their respective faculties or groups. The President, subject to confirmation by the Executive board, shall be authorized to remove and replace a Building Representative who fails to carry his/her duties as set forth in

the by-laws or as directed by the President. A building Representative so removed shall be afforded the opportunity to appeal his/her removal to the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VI – ELECTIONS

Section 1. The Nominating Committee shall recommend to the membership at the regular meeting in April preceding the Biennial Election a slate of candidates for all elective positions save its own. Other candidates may be nominated from the floor.

Section 2. The Secretary shall publish a list of all the nominees at least two weeks before the Biennial Election, listing the nominees alphabetically under each office.

Section 3. The Secretary shall provide sufficient suitable ballots with the names of the candidates inscribed thereon.

Section 4. The Elections Committee, in conjunction with the Secretary, shall be responsible to oversee all elections. When there is more than one candidate for any office, the Elections Committee shall work with) an appropriately credentialed election service provider via the bid process to conduct and supervise the election held during the Biennial Election. When one candidate only is nominated, he or she shall be declared elected without use of the ballot. It shall be the responsibility of the Elections Committee and Secretary to announce to the membership the official results of the election as certified by the appropriately credentialed bid awardee.

Section 5. In an election of two candidates the majority of votes cast shall be sufficient to elect. In an election with three or more candidates plurality shall govern the winner, with a minimum threshold of 45% of the votes cast. Should the minimum threshold not be met for the office of president, there will be a run-off election of the two candidates that have received the most votes. Said run-off should occur no later than 20 business days after the conclusion of the first election. For elections of offices other than the presidency plurality is sufficient to elect.

Section 6. Special elections shall be conducted generally as described in the preceding sections of this Article.

Section 7. Challenges and objections to the election must be submitted in writing, with a statement of supporting reasons that include specific facts as well as any documentation to the Executive Board as well as the Elections Committee within 10 days of the official count. The Executive Board and Elections committee will review the objection jointly and will submit a written opinion within 10 days of receipt of said objections.

Section 8. The election of delegates to conventions of affiliated organizations shall be held in sufficient time for accreditation and instructions. Procedure shall follow in general the provisions of Section 1 of this Article. A member who is an administrator shall be ineligible for election as a delegate to affiliated organizations or conference meetings.

Section 9. The membership shall designate those delegates who will attend conventions at the expense of the local. In any case, the President shall be ex-officio chairperson of the delegations.

Section 10. Delegates to the National Convention of the American Federation of Teachers shall be elected by secret ballot.

Section 11. The official, certified election results will be published and distributed to the membership within thirty (30) days of the count. All election materials will be kept in a secure location for a period of one year.

ARTICLE VII-QUORUMS

Section 1. A quorum of membership at all meetings shall be 50 members.

Section 2. A quorum of the Executive Board and all committees shall be a majority of the full voting membership thereof.

ARTICLE VIII – FISCAL

Section 1. The fiscal year shall end August 31.

Section 2. Authority to impose assessments for special purposes is vested in two-thirds of the members present at any regular meeting. Due notice of the proposed assessment shall be given all the membership prior to the meeting at which the assessment is to be voted.

Section 3. Obligations to Providence Teachers Union employees, negotiations, and contract enforcement shall have priority in the budget. Legitimate expenses of delegates to conventions shall be a charge against the fund of the local.

Section 4. Nothing in this Constitution or By-Laws shall be construed as forbidding remuneration of members of the Executive Board and Building Representatives where the will of the membership and condition of the treasury permit.

ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these By-Laws may be made in the same manner as for the Constitution except that adoption shall require a majority vote of the members present at a regular meeting.

ARTICLE X – RULES OF ORDER

The rules of Parliamentary practice contained in Robert’s “Rules of Order” shall govern the proceedings of this local, provided that they do not conflict with the intent of the Constitution, the By-Laws, or Rules of Order adopted or to be adopted.

Revised to October 1, 1970
Revised to January 1, 1983
Revised to March 1, 1992
Revised to July 1, 1997
Revised to June 1, 2001
Revised to July 21, 2003
Revised to April 15, 2015
Revised October 13, 2021