

Constitution and By-Laws

Saint Paul Federation of Educators

Revised and Ratified September 23, 2019
General Membership Meeting
(Amended 5.19.2025)

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Article 1

NAME

The name of this organization shall be the St. Paul Federation of Educators, Local 28 (the Federation), affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association, Education Minnesota and the AFL-CIO.

Article 2

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Federation is to bring all individuals in all bargaining units represented by the St. Paul Federation of Educators into relationships of mutual assistance and cooperation; to strongly advocate for all matters reflecting the diversity of these individuals regarding contractual and professional issues; to raise the standards of the education profession by securing the conditions essential to the best professional practices, and to promote such democratization of the schools as will better enable them to equip students to take their places in the economic, social, and political life of the community and the nation.

Article 3

MEMBERSHIP

Persons employed in positions defined as being within the licensed staff bargaining unit, the educational assistants' bargaining unit, and the school and community service professionals' bargaining unit of the St. Paul Independent School District #625 shall be eligible for regular membership. A person must be a member to hold any office of the Saint Paul Federation of Educators.

Article 4

OFFICERS

Section 1. The five (5) officers shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Education Support Professionals Director, elected by the membership.

Section 2. To be an officer, a person must be a member for at least three (3) consecutive years at the time of the election.

Section 3. Members of all bargaining units may run for any of the officer positions with the exception of the Education Support Professionals Director, which is only available to Education Assistants and School and Community Support Professionals.

Section 4. The Vice President and Secretary shall be elected in the odd-numbered years; the President, Treasurer, and Education Support Professionals Director shall be elected in the even-numbered years. The term of office shall be for two (2) years or until a successor has been elected.

To transition to new years for President and Vice President elections, the President elected in 2025 will have one (1) year term and the Vice President elected in 2024 will have a three (3) year term. Future terms will be two (2) years as normal. This change will ensure there is a consistent President serving through an entire contract negotiation session.

Article 5
EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. The officers, eighteen (18) elected board and three (3) appointed board members shall constitute the Executive Board.

Section 2. A person must have completed one (1) year of membership to serve on the Executive Board.

Section 3. Nine (9) Executive Board members shall be elected each year for a term of two (2) years or until a successor has been elected. Board appointees serve until the last day of the duty year as defined by the Licensed Staff Collective Bargaining Agreement or until the election for that position has been certified by the Executive Board.

Article 6
BUILDING STEWARDS

Section 1. In each workplace as defined by the Executive Board, there will be a Building Steward.

Section 2. Any member who is employed at the workplace may be the Building Steward for that workplace.

Section 3. Each year during the month of May, the members employed at a workplace shall elect a steward. In places where there are more than twenty (20) members, an additional steward may be elected for every 20 additional members or fraction thereof.

Article 7
COMMITTEES

Section 1. All committee members must be members of the Saint Paul Federation of Educators.

Section 2. Executive Board Committees: These committees shall be composed of members of the Executive Board and /or the officers. Members of the Executive Board will volunteer for the Executive Board committees on which they wish to serve. In the event there are not enough members on an Executive Board committee, the President shall appoint members to the committee. Each committee shall select its own chair. The activities of these committees shall be subject to the direction and review of the Executive Board.

Section 3. Membership Committees: Members of these committees shall be appointed by the President from the general membership with the approval of the Executive Board at the October Executive Board meeting. The Chair of each committee shall be elected by the members of that committee, with approval of the Executive Board. The activities of these committees shall be subject to the direction and review of the Executive Board.

Section 4. Committee Reports: A current list of committee membership and minutes shall be submitted to the Executive Board by the chair of each committee dictated by the published yearly calendar of the Executive Board.

Article 8 **RECALL**

Section 1. Any officer, Executive Board member, delegate, committee member or building steward shall be subject to recall for any infringement of the provisions of this Constitution, for conduct unbecoming to the office, for incompetence, or for misappropriation of funds.

Section 2. Whenever ten (10) percent of the eligible membership sign a recall petition setting forth specific charges, the Executive Board shall order a recall election, with published notice thereof.

Section 3. The accused officer, member, or building steward shall be presented with the charge in writing not less than ten (10) days before the recall meeting, which may be a special meeting or a subsequent membership meeting. S/he shall be given an opportunity to answer the charges at the meeting.

Section 4. Pending action upon charges, the officer or member charged will be suspended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Executive Board.

Section 5. Upon call for a vote, two-thirds (2/3) of those voting will be necessary for removal of the person. The voting shall be conducted by ballot of the membership, as formulated in Article 6, Section C of the By-Laws.

Article 9
CRISIS FUND

The Federation shall maintain a Crisis Fund of at least \$50,000. Funds may be expended for emergency purposes which may include defense, strike, or other crisis identified by the Executive Board.

Article 10
ELECTIONS

Section 1. Applicable state and federal laws shall govern all elections.

Section 2. There will be an open nomination process proposed by the Election Committee and adopted by the Executive Board, for each election.

Section 3. Every member will have a fair and equal opportunity to participate in the election without unreasonable impediments.

Section 4. Voting will be by secret ballot. To be elected, the candidate for office must receive a plurality of the votes cast for that office.

Section 5. The Executive Board will certify the election results at the first Executive Board meeting after the election.

Section 6. Newly elected officers and Executive Board members shall assume office on the first weekday after the end of the duty year as defined by the Licensed Staff Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Article 11
AMENDMENTS

Section 1. This Constitution may be altered or amended at a regular meeting of the membership by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present, provided the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing and read at the meeting preceding the meeting at which voting is to take place. The proposed amendment(s) shall be published in a special bulletin and distributed to all members as soon as possible prior to the next membership meeting.

By-Laws of the Saint Paul Federation of Educators

Article 1

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership in this organization is accorded to applicants following receipt of their application. Membership shall be continuous until a letter of resignation is received by the Federation office or until action by the Executive Board. The membership year shall correspond with the fiscal year, September 1 to August 31.

Section 2. No discrimination shall be shown toward individual members or applicants for membership because of age, race, disability, gender identification, sexual orientation, immigration status, social, political or economic status or national origin.

Section 3. No member may be expelled except by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board, meeting in executive session, and acting upon written charges which are signed by the person making the charges. A copy of such charges shall be presented to the member accused. The Executive Board shall be required, on request of the member so expelled, to report to the membership meeting. It shall require a majority vote at such meeting to overrule the action of the Executive Board. Members against whom charges are made shall have the right to appear in person before the Executive Board and/or at the membership meeting when charges are presented.

Article 2

OFFICERS

Section 1. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the organization, preside at the Executive Board and Membership meetings, prepare an agenda for Membership and Executive Board meetings, call special meetings of the Executive Board, appoint any special committee which has been authorized by the Executive Board or membership, countersign disbursements over the Treasurer's signature, direct day to day implementation of union policy and programs, direct and coordinate activities of officers and staff, act as ex-officio member of all standing committees with the exception of the Financial Review Committee, shall have authority to fill vacancies and appointments pursuant to the Constitution and By-Laws and shall serve on all contract negotiation teams.

Section 2. The Vice President shall assist the President and assume the duties of the President in the event of an absence, resignation, death, or disability of the President. In the event the Vice President assumes the presidency in the aforementioned manner, the Vice President shall serve until the next scheduled election for President.

Section 3. The Secretary shall be responsible for a record of the minutes of all meetings, the credentials of all delegates and alternates to conventions and assemblies, verification of the results and validity of all elections, and a current list of the members of all committees.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall receive and have custody of all monies, pay all bills approved by the Executive Board, be responsible for a record of all receipts and disbursements, and submit a monthly financial statement, which will be audited according to law.

Section 5. The Education Support Professionals Director shall represent the interests of non-licensed staff as an officer. The person shall be the Local contact for Education Minnesota, the American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association, and AFL-CIO issues for non-licensed staff.

Article 3 **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

Section 1. The Executive Board:

- a) Shall direct the affairs of the Federation between meetings of the membership. All actions of the Executive Board are reported to the membership of the Federation.
- b) May require any officer or committee to make a report and assign additional duties to any officer or committee.
- c) Shall determine and publish by September 15, the yearly calendar of meetings.
- d) Shall approve all expenditures of monies.
- e) Shall hire office personnel.
- f) Shall select five (5) people from the non-officer members of the Executive Board to serve as a Financial Audit Committee.
- g) Shall select four (4) non-officer board members in addition to the President to serve as an Employee Review Committee.
- h) Shall maintain final authority to approve all appointments made by the President.
- i) Shall certify all elections governed by the Saint Paul Federation of Educators.

Section 2. The Executive Board shall meet at least once a month except during July and August. The June meeting will take place after the newly elected officers and Executive Board members take office. Eleven (11) members of the Board shall constitute a quorum. All members of the Board shall be notified of the time, place and agenda of all meetings of the Board.

Upon written request of eleven (11) members of the Board, the President shall call a special meeting of the Board and notify all members of the Board within two (2) days of the time, place and agenda of such special meetings.

Executive Board meetings shall be open to all members except when it is meeting in executive session.

Section 3. Presidential appointments to the Executive Board shall strive to reflect the diversity of the membership and student population and shall be subject to the approval of the Executive Board.

The Executive Board may, by vote of the majority of its members present, declare vacant the position of any member of the Executive Board who has had unexcused absences from three (3) consecutive meetings of the Board.

Any vacancy occurring on the Executive Board may be filled by an appointment of the President, who will strive to reflect the diversity of the membership and student population, with the approval of the Executive Board. The appointment shall expire at the end of the term.

Article 4

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Section 1. There shall be a regular membership meeting each month except during the months of December, June, July and August. Additional meetings may be called by the Executive Board or upon written request of at least fifty (50) members. Notice of all meetings will be published.

Section 2. Fifty (50) members shall constitute a quorum for a membership meeting.

Section 3. Member Motions: During “new business” at membership meetings, members may bring forward motions. The motions will be read, and the text of the motion will be shared. The motion will be debated and voted on at the next regularly scheduled membership meeting.

In between, weekly SPFE emails will include a section about the new motion with the following information: topic of the motion with a link to the full text of the motion.

The topic of the motion will be in appropriate language for SPPS email. Motions will be checked by SPFE leaders to see if they contradict parts of the existing constitution, bylaws, policies, or procedures.

Article 5 **DELEGATES**

Section 1. Delegates to the conventions of Education Minnesota, American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association, and St. Paul Trades and Labor Assembly shall be elected. The date for such elections shall be set with the Executive Board in accordance with Article 10 of the Constitution.

Section 2. Any member of this organization may serve as a delegate to a convention or assembly. Delegates shall serve for one (1) year or until the convention is adjourned.

Section 3. Delegates to the Minnesota AFL-CIO Convention shall be the same as those elected to the St. Paul Trades and Labor Assembly.

Article 6 **COMMITTEES**

Section 1. Executive Board Committees: The standing committees of the Executive Board shall be the Budget Committee, Screening Committee, Defense Committee, Financial Audit Committee, and the Employee Review Committee. Committee decisions shall be made through a lens of racial equity and strive to include multiple voices and perspectives.

- A. Budget Committee: The Budget Committee shall be composed of the officers. This committee shall prepare the budget for submission to the Executive Board and the membership. This committee shall monitor the status of the budget and submit recommendations for supplements to the budget to the Executive Board.
- B. Screening Committee: This committee shall be composed of five (5) members of the Executive Board. This committee shall screen candidates who seek Federation endorsement for non-political, school

related committees and boards and make recommendations for endorsement to the full board. This committee will also screen candidates for the bargaining teams and make a recommendation to the board.

- C. Defense Committee: This committee shall be composed of five (5) members of the Executive Board. It shall review and monitor grievances and legal actions.
- D. Financial Audit Committee: This committee shall be composed of five members of the Executive Board who are not officers. This committee shall review expenditures and make recommendations to the full board for changes in financial policy.
- E. Employee Review Committee: This committee shall be composed of four (4) non-officer members of the Executive Board and the President. This committee shall interview applicants for employment by the Federation and make recommendations for employment to the full Board. This committee shall also monitor the performance, work hours, vacation and sick leave of the employees of the Federation. This committee shall also negotiate the employee's contracts and make recommendations to the Executive Board regarding ratification of said contracts.

Section 2. Membership Committees: The Membership Committees are: Publicity Committee, Building Stewards Committee, Elections Committee, Social Committee, Human Rights Committee, Bargaining Team, Committee on Political Education (COPE), and Professional Advocacy Committee. The President, subject to the approval of the Executive Board, shall appoint members of these committees. At least one member of each committee must be an Executive Board member. Committee decision shall be made through a lens of racial equity and strive to include multiple voices and perspectives.

- A. Publicity Committee: This committee shall be composed of a minimum of three (3) members in addition to the President. The committee shall be responsible for publications and for the preparation of articles, newsletters or news releases. The committee shall also maintain the website information with the office manager.
- B. Building Steward Committee: This committee shall be composed of a minimum of five (5) building stewards of the Federation. The committee shall compile and distribute information to building stewards and recommend training for stewards. The committee shall also assist other committees in informing and canvassing members when directed by the President.

- C. Election Committee: This committee shall be composed of the Executive Board Secretary, who shall serve as chair of this committee, and five (5) additional members. The committee shall formulate and present rules for elections to the Executive Board. The committee shall also formulate a report of each election result for certification by the Executive Board.
- D. Social Committee: This committee shall plan and arrange Federation social functions as directed or approved by the Executive Board.
- E. Human Rights Committee: This committee will make recommendations to the Executive Board that 1) eliminate racial barriers, 2) promote accessibility and union participation to the diverse populations of the membership of the Federation and the community. The committee will assist the union in safeguarding the human rights of all members regardless of age, race, disability creed, gender identification, sexual orientation, immigration status, social, political or economic status or national origin, and establish and maintain equitable practices within our union.
- F. Bargaining Team: The SPFE bargaining team will consist of the President and members screened and recommended by the Screening Committee and approved by the Executive Board. The bargaining team shall work with St. Paul Federation of Educators staff to negotiate contracts for ratification by the appropriate membership. The bargaining team shall report on the progress of negotiations to the Executive Board on a regular basis. The bargaining team shall serve until a new team is approved.
- G. Committee on Political Education (COPE): This committee shall be responsible for the administration of the St. Paul Federation of Educators, Local 28 Political Fund. The committee shall screen candidates for political office and make recommendations to the Executive Board for endorsement of candidates for political office. The committee will evaluate and report to the Executive Board on legislation of interest to members. The committee shall also cooperate with similar committees of affiliates and other groups with common interests and concerns. The committee shall report on the finances of the St. Paul Federation of Educators, Local 28 Political Fund and committee activities annually to the Executive Board and quarterly to the President.
- H. Professional Advocacy Committee: This committee shall consider and evaluate educational trends important to the professional concerns of the membership. The committee will bring these educational trends to the attention of the membership and propose positions to be adopted by the Executive Board.

Section 3. Special Task Forces: Special Task Forces may be established by action of the Executive Board or by the membership at a membership meeting. The chair of a task force shall receive a written charge of its responsibility. Each task force shall continue its work until its charge is fulfilled by a report to the body that established the task force. A task force shall not continue in operation for a period exceeding one calendar year from its creation unless it is continued by action of the Executive Board.

Article 7 **FINANCE**

Section 1. Dues are payable through payroll deduction. All members must sign a payroll deduction card.

Section 2. State and national dues will be assessed in accordance with the dues categories and policies of Education Minnesota, AFT and NEA.

Section 3. Members shall pay unified dues, which shall include membership in Local 28, Education Minnesota, the AFT and the NEA, and the St. Paul Trades and Labor Assembly.

Section 4. Dues for regular members of the licensed staffs' bargaining unit shall be based on affiliate costs and .004 of the current annual gross salary. All educational assistants and school and community service professionals shall pay dues based on .0125 of their annual gross salary.

Section 5. No net earnings shall inure to the benefit of any member.

Section 6. The fiscal year shall be from September 1 to August 31.

Article 8 **CONTRACT RATIFICATION AND STRIKE VOTE**

Section 1. The ratification of each bargaining unit's contract between the local and the school district shall be voted on in building sites. The vote shall be conducted by secret ballot and *all members* of the bargaining unit shall have the right to vote. A majority of those voting is necessary to approve the contract.

Section 2. In the event of a strike vote, a neutral location will be designated to ensure the accommodation of the entire membership. The vote shall be conducted by secret ballot and all members of the bargaining unit shall have the right to vote.

Article 9
AMENDMENTS

These by-laws may be altered or amended at a regular meeting of the membership by a majority vote of the members present. The proposed by-law amendment must be published in a special bulletin and distributed to all members as soon as possible at least five (5) business days prior to the membership meeting at which the vote will take place.

Article 10
RULES

Section 1. Robert's Rules of Order (newly revised) shall govern the conduct of all meetings of the organization and its committees, except when otherwise stated in the Constitution and By-Laws.