

CHICAGO ACTS CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I NAME

This organization shall be known as the Chicago Alliance of Charter Teachers and Staff, Local 4343, IFT, AFT, AFL-CIO.

ARTICLE II OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this organization shall be:

Section 1. To secure full trade union rights, including the rights to exclusive recognition and collective bargaining, for all employees who are eligible for membership.

Section 2. To advance the economic, social, and political well-being of the membership.

Section 3. To promote the improvement of standards in the employment situation of the membership.

Section 4. To encourage mutual understanding and cooperation among the membership.

Section 5. To promote the interests of citizens who are served by the membership.

Section 6. To promote the effectiveness and quality of the institutions in which our members work.

Section 7. To promote democracy, equality, and trade unionism in the society at large.

Section 8. To secure adequate financing to provide quality education in all public schools, colleges, universities, and public service in Illinois.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. All employees in recognized IFT bargaining units of charter schools represented by C-ACTS in the State of Illinois who are not supervisors, managers or principals are eligible for membership in this organization.

Comment [CC1]: Clarification

Section 2. No person shall be denied membership, nor shall this organization ever discriminate against individual members or applicants for membership on the basis of race, creed, sex, sexual orientation, disability, social, political, or economic status, or national origin.

Section 3. A member in good standing is defined as a member who is current in payment of dues to the organization. A member who is more than 30 days delinquent in dues payment shall be considered to be a member in bad standing, and shall be promptly notified of such status. A member shall be removed from membership in this organization, with notice, following three months of dues nonpayment, unless a plan to pay back dues is made and approved by both the Executive Board and the member.

Section 4. Discipline of members.

a. A member may be disciplined by the organization for actions contrary to this Constitution or to the interests of the union or its membership. Such action may only be initiated by the bringing of written and signed charges to the Executive Board by two or more members of the local; these charges must include a specific and detailed accounting, including any documentation, of the allegations against the member.

b. Upon the receipt of such charges, the Executive Board shall cause a preliminary investigation to be conducted in order to determine whether the charges against the member have merit. In addition, at this time, the Executive Board shall give a copy of the charges to the accused member.

c. Following the preliminary investigation, the Executive Board shall vote on the question of whether a disciplinary hearing should be held. If a majority of the Executive Board votes to hold a hearing, the member shall be given at least ten (10) days written notice of the hearing.

d. At a disciplinary hearing, the accused member shall have the right to be represented by a person of his or her choice, and shall have the right to question the charges and present evidence and witnesses to support their defense. At the conclusion of the hearing, a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board shall be required for discipline. If a member of the Executive Board has brought the charges against the member, that Board member shall recuse him/herself from the vote.

e. A disciplined member may appeal the decision of the Executive Board to the membership by requesting a vote at the next regular meeting. Two-thirds (2/3) of the members voting shall be sufficient to overrule the decision of the Executive Board to discipline.

**ARTICLE IV
ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Section 1. Elections shall be conducted in accordance with the AFT Constitution and the standards set out by the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959 (LMRDA).

Section 2. Officers shall be elected in ~~November-October~~ of every odd year. Terms of office shall be two years. The organization will elect the following officers:

Comment [CC2]: Need to align local and council elections. See Article VII, Section 3 for more information.

- a. President
- b. Executive Vice President
- c. Secretary
- d. Treasurer

Section 3. To be eligible for office a person must be a member in good standing of the organization for a period of six months prior to the date of the election. This section shall not apply to the first election held by the organization immediately following ratification of this Constitution

Section 4. The Elections Committee shall conduct all general and special elections and referenda of the organization.

a. The Elections Committee shall consist of three members in good standing appointed by the President with the approval of the Executive Board. The Elections Committee shall elect its chair.

b. Any member of the Elections Committee nominated for or seeking office must vacate their position and be replaced by a member nominated by the president and approved by the Executive Board.

Section 5. ~~Sixty (60)~~ Thirty (30) days prior to the date of the election, the Elections Committee shall notify all members of the opening of nominations for officers, the offices to be filled and of the date of the election by first class U.S. Mail (delivery to school site mail box will also comply with this requirement) to the members' last known home address. This section shall not apply to the first election held by the organization immediately following ratification of this Constitution

Comment [CC3]: Shorten up election season. Small charters can communicate and run effective elections in a shorter time frame.

Comment [CC4]: Based upon legal opinion of IFT consultants.

Section 6. The nomination of candidates for office shall be conducted as follows:

a. To be nominated a candidate must submit to the Elections Committee a petition containing the signatures of ten (10) percent of the Local 4343 membership, or twenty-five (25) of Local 4343 members, or seventy-five (75%) percent of the council from which the candidate hails, whichever is less. Said petitions must be submitted no later than ~~thirty (30)~~ twenty (20) days following the notice of the opening of nominations.

Comment [CC5]: To allow for members of small councils to still have an opportunity to run for local office.

Comment [CC6]: Shorten up election season.

b. Members nominated to run for office must affirmatively accept their nomination.

c. The Election Committee shall determine whether the nominations were timely and if the nominees are eligible for office.

Section 7. At least fifteen (15) days prior to the election, the Election Committee shall notify all members of the election date and the candidates for offices.

Section 8. The Elections Committee shall conduct an election for officers at each worksite in ~~November~~ October. The vote shall be by secret ballot. The majority of the ballots cast shall determine the outcome of the election.

Section 9. In the absence of a majority, the Elections Committee shall conduct a run-off election between the two candidates who have received the most votes for the office in question.

Section 10. Challenges and objections to the election must be submitted in writing, with a statement of supporting reasons that includes specific facts as well as any documentation, to the Elections Committee within five (5) days of the count. The Elections Committee shall issue its written opinion regarding the objections no later than ten (10) days after receipt of such objections.

Section 11. The election results will be published and distributed to the membership within thirty (30) days of the count. All elections materials, including the ballots, will be kept in a secure location for one (1) year.

Section 12. Successful candidates shall assume office within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of the election.

Section 13. With the exception of the President, or in case of a recall, the Executive Board will have the power to fill vacancies in its membership until the next general election of officers.

Section 14. A petition signed by forty-five percent (45%) of the membership, and alleging constitutional violations, fiduciary breaches or acts clearly detrimental to the union, shall be sufficient to require the Executive Board to vote on whether to conduct a recall election of the officer identified in the petition. The officer subject to recall and any Executive Board member signing the petition shall not vote on the question of a recall election. If a majority of the Executive Board approves a recall election, the Elections Committee shall supervise the recall election.

**ARTICLE V
DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

Section 1. The President shall:

- a. be the presiding officer at all meetings of the membership and the Executive Board;
- b. be an ex-officio member of all standing committees except the Elections Committee;
- c. appoint, with the approval of the Executive Board, the chairs of all standing and special committees except the Elections Committee;
- d. be the principal executive officer of the organization;
- e. receive, report and respond to correspondence of the organization;
- f. supervise all employees of the organization;
- g. be one of the responsible financial officers of the organization and shall be authorized to co-sign financial instruments and make regular and usual disbursements of funds;
- h. represent the organization before employer bodies, executive and legislative officials;
- i. represent the organization before the public, community organizations, and the news media;
- j. be, by office, a delegate to the Chicago Federation of Labor, and the Illinois AFL-CIO; this duty may also be designated by the President to another member of the local;
- k. be, by office, a delegate to the conventions of the Illinois Federation of Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers and meetings or conventions of their affiliated bodies;
- l. make an annual report to the organization's membership; and
- m. be able to delegate the responsibilities of the office except where otherwise specified by the Constitution.

Comment [CC7]: Scheduling flexibility, President may have other matters of the union that conflict

Section 2. The Executive Vice President shall:

- a. assume the duties of the President in the event of the absence, illness, or death of the President;
- b. oversee the work of and receive regular reports from the organizing committee.
- c. perform other duties as delegated by the President or assigned by the Executive Board; and
- d. co-sign financial instruments in the absence of the President or Treasurer.

Section 3. The Secretary shall:

- a. maintain the non-financial files and records of the organization;
- b. be the custodian of the seal and charter of the organization;
- c. record and keep accurate minutes of meetings of the membership and the Executive Board;
- d. assist the President in handling the correspondence of the organization;
- e. oversee the work of, and receive and certify the reports of, the Elections Committee;
- f. perform other duties as delegated by the President, or assigned by the Executive Board;
- g. perform duties of the office as required by the LMRDA.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall:

- a. receive, record and deposit all dues monies and other income in the name of the organization;
- b. maintain accurate membership records;
- c. issue membership cards, ~~when applicable, and notices of delinquency;~~
- d. be one of the responsible financial officers of the organization and be authorized to co-sign financial instruments and make regular and usual disbursements of funds;
- e. maintain all financial records of the organization;

Comment [CC8]: The local does not currently issue local membership cards, but may in the future, AFT currently does issue membership cards to our local members.

Comment [CC9]: Because of pay check deduction for dues collection, this is not an issue

f. transmit per-capita payments on a regular basis to the Secretary-Treasurer of the American Federation of Teachers and similar officers of all other bodies with which the organization is affiliated;

g. perform other duties as delegated by the President or assigned by the Executive Board;

h. perform duties of the office as required by the LMRDA and the guidelines developed by the AFT.

Section 5. All officers elected by the general membership of the organization shall serve as members of the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VI EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. The Executive Board shall meet ~~monthly~~ five times per year, or at the call of the President, or at the call of two (2) or more of its members, for the purpose of initiating, overseeing or revising the program of the organization and to conduct other business of the organization that is within its authority. A quorum for the Executive Board shall be one-half of its members.

Comment [CC10]: This schedule is one used by many federated locals like ours.

Section 2. The Executive Board shall consist of the elected officers, the chairperson President of each Council, and Council Delegates to be allocated as follows:

Comment [CC11]: Correcting terminology

- a. One Delegate for every 30 Council members per Council or fraction thereof.
- b. Under no circumstances shall any Council be represented on the Executive Board by less than the Council Chair and one Delegate.

Section 3. The Executive Board shall determine the agenda for all Membership Meetings.

Section 4. The Executive Board shall employ all professional, technical, clerical and support staff of the organization.

Section 5. The Executive Board shall establish the salary, benefits and expense guidelines of any general officer who is employed by the organization.

Section 6. The Executive Board shall be empowered to make contracts and incur liabilities including the purchase of services, equipment and real property, to borrow money, to secure such obligations by mortgage or other instrument, and to otherwise engage in financial transactions to the extent permitted by applicable law or statute. The Executive Board shall have the power to sue, complain and defend on behalf of the membership.

Section 7. The Executive Board shall approve the chairperson and membership of all standing and special committees of the organization, except the board shall not approve the chair of the Elections Committee, and receive regular reports from such committees.

Section 8. The Executive Board shall be responsible for adherence to and enforcement of the Constitution of the organization.

Section 9. The Executive Board shall issue regular reports, including an annual report, to the membership.

Comment [CC12]: The council delegate system and website are currently the means by which the reports are regularly issued. The annual report will continue to be produced and either printed or emailed as well as posted on the website.

Section 10. Three unexcused absences from an Executive Board meeting within a year, counted from the date of assumption of office, shall be grounds for an Executive Board member's suspension and/or replacement.

ARTICLE VII COUNCILS

Section 1. Each certified bargaining unit shall constitute a separate Council of the organization. If there are separate bargaining units for certificated/professional and non-certificated/non-professional workers at any worksite, those bargaining units shall constitute one Council of the organization. Under no circumstances shall there be more than one Council at any worksite.

Section 2. Each Council shall adopt its own bylaws, which are subject to review by the Executive Board and that may not be in conflict with this Constitution or any policy adopted by the Executive Board. The bylaws must include provisions to elect a Council ~~Chair~~ **President and Delegates, and Alternate Delegates** to the Executive Board and must comply with the provisions of this Article.

Comment [CC13]: President is correct title. We don't currently have the capacity for alternate delegates.

- a. Each member shall have a reasonable opportunity to be nominated for office.
- b. Notice of the election of Council officers shall be provided to each member 15 days in advance of the election.
- c. Elections shall be by secret ballot.
- d. Results shall be published and all election records shall be kept for one (1) year.
- e. Elections shall be held at each worksite.
- f. Results of elections shall be submitted to the Executive Board at their next meeting.

Section 3. Terms of Office and Vacancies

- a. Elections shall be held in ~~April-October~~ of every odd year. The first election held after the adoption of this constitution may be held at any time. However, another election must be held in April of 2011 and every odd April after that.
- b. Council ~~Chairs, Delegates and Alternate Delegates Officers~~ shall serve for a term of two (2) years.
- c. If a Council ~~Chair~~ **President** vacates the position, the first ranking Delegate shall assume the duties until an election is held.

Comment [CC14]: We want to alleviate the necessity for two elections in a year, in this way members can vote for both council and local officers at the same election. We want to move elections to the start of the school year, instead of at the end, because of the high turnover rate in our schools. We wouldn't want to elect a president in the spring who leaves for a different job over the summer.

Comment [CC15]: More accurate terminology

d. If a Delegate vacancy occurs, Delegates and Alternate Delegates move up in ranking order. If a vacancy remains, the Council ~~Chair-President~~ shall make an appointment.

Section 4. Councils shall meet regularly to discuss and take action upon issues that are of particular relevance to the Council. Councils may, at any time, refer matters of general interest to the Executive Board. Councils shall take all necessary action to negotiate and police their collective bargaining agreement(s), with the assistance of the Executive Board, if necessary. No contractual provision shall be imposed upon any Council. Councils provide a channel of communication between the organization and individual members.

Section 5. Councils are subordinate to the Executive Board. If a Council fails to elect leadership or take any other necessary action when required to do so, the President, with the advice and consent of the Executive Board, shall take whatever action is necessary to best serve the membership.

ARTICLE VIII COMMITTEES

Section 1. The standing committees of the organization shall be:

- a. Elections
- b. Grievance
- c. Legislation/Political Education
- d. Organizing
- e. ~~Political Education~~
- f. Professional Development
- g. Publications
- h. Social
- i. Audit

Comment [CC16]: Combine similar committees

Section 2. The Executive Board, either on its own initiative, or at the direction of the Membership Meeting, may establish special committees.

Section 3. The President, with the approval of the Executive Board, shall appoint all committee chairs and committee members, except shall not appoint the elections committee chair.

Comment [CC18]: Align this section with Article IV section 4, a. and Article V, section 1, c.

Section 4. Each committee shall present its annual program of action to the Executive Board and the Membership Meeting.

Section 5. The Elections Committee shall conduct and supervise all elections of the organization.

Section 6. The Grievance Committee shall work with the officers in the resolution of contractual and non-contractual disputes in the workplace; shall maintain records of grievances and their disposition; and shall be responsible for the processing of grievances and disputes beyond the immediate work location. The grievant may appeal these last decisions to the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall develop and adopt a policy that governs how it shall approach grievances not referred to arbitration, as well as other litigation and/or administrative appeals. The Grievance Committee shall follow this policy. The Grievance Committee shall work cooperatively with the Council ~~Chairs~~ Presidents to handle grievances at particular worksites. Each Council ~~Chair~~ President shall serve as a member of the Grievance Committee.

Section 7. The Legislation and Political Education Committee shall be responsible for monitoring government actions that may affect the membership and develop appropriate responses to such action in cooperation with affiliated organizations. The

Committee on Political Education shall secure voluntary contributions to support the political work of the organization; screen and recommend endorsement of candidates for local, state and federal office to the Executive Board; educate members on the issues of importance to the organization, its membership and clients; and develop programs to promote voter registration and to support the election of candidates who support the interests of the organization, its membership and the people they serve.

Comment [CC19]: Combine 7 and 9

Section 8. The Organizing Committee shall develop programs and activities that shall cause all eligible persons to join and participate in the organization.

~~**Section 9.** The Committee on Political Education shall secure voluntary contributions to support the political work of the organization; screen and recommend endorsement of candidates for local, state and federal office to the Executive Board; educate members on the issues of importance to the organization, its membership and clients; and develop programs to promote voter registration and to support the election of candidates who support the interests of the organization, its membership and the people they serve.~~

Section 409. The Professional Development Committee shall identify the professional and work-related educational and training needs of the membership and develop programs and activities that meet said needs, taking into consideration the resources of the state and national affiliates.

Section 410. The Publications Committee shall design, produce and distribute a regular communication to the membership; a regular bulletin for officers and committee chairs; and other material for the organization as necessary.

Section 4211. The Social Committee shall conduct activities that promote the social well-being of the membership, are attractive to potential members and promote community among organized labor and in the society at large. The Social Committee shall endeavor to promote social events that increase the opportunity for socializing between Councils.

Section 12. The Audit Committee shall, following the close of the fiscal year, review the financial records of the organization every year and produce a report of their findings that will be presented to the executive board and the IFT.

Comment [CC20]: Must do this each year in accordance with IFT-AFT accounting procedures and rules

ARTICLE IX
EXECUTIVE BOAR AND MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Section 1. The legislative power of the organization shall be vested in the Membership Meeting. ~~U~~unless otherwise stipulated in the Constitution, ~~a~~Action items and elections shall require a simple majority of votes when cast in the Membership Meeting.

Section 2. The ~~Membership Meeting executive board~~ shall approve the annual budget; shall receive and approve committee reports, including the required annual financial report or audit; and shall develop and vote on resolutions to guide the policy of the organization.

Comment [CC21]: Proposed budget will be available for members to comment on through the delegate system. Committee reports and other information will be available to all members through the delegate system and regular web updates.

Section 2. The Membership Meeting shall meet ~~quarterly~~ twice yearly at a predetermined time and place, or more or less often as approved by the majority vote of assembled members in the regularly constituted Membership Meeting.

Comment [CC22]: We think this is more realistic. Meetings in December (with holiday party) and May (with spring party)

Section 3. Quorum for the Membership Meeting shall be ~~ten~~ five percent (40%) of total membership of the organization.

Comment [CC23]: We need to have a number that we can actually achieve so we can take action at these meetings.

Section 4. Special meetings may be called by the President (or acting President), by a majority of the Executive Board or by petition to the Executive Board of fifteen percent (15%) of the members in good standing. The notice of the special meeting and the agenda shall be circulated to all members at least seven (7) days in advance of the meeting. Items not included on the agenda for the special meeting will not be addressed. All special meetings shall be adequately advertised and conducted according to the provisions of this Constitution.

ARTICLE X
REVENUES

Section 1. The dues of this organization shall be a sum equal to 16% of the total prevailing per capita amounts for the AFT, IFT, and AFL-CIO local and state affiliates, and insurance premiums plus the actual prevailing per capita amounts for the AFT, IFT, and AFL-CIO local and state affiliates, and insurance premiums. Whenever the dues of a required affiliate increases, the dues of the local shall automatically and simultaneously increase by the same amount.

Section 2. Special assessments for specific purposes may be levied by the Executive Board provided that the actions required for a referendum have not been initiated within thirty (30) days of the decision of the Executive Board.

Section 3. The local union will be responsible for collecting agency fee and shall adopt procedures consistent with local, state and federal law and Article VIII, Sections 1 (a) – (d) of the AFT By-Laws.

ARTICLE XI AFFILIATIONS

Section 1. This organization shall maintain affiliation with the following organizations:

- a. The American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO. Whenever possible, the organization will send delegates to the AFT's convention. The delegates will be elected by procedures consistent with Article IV of this Constitution.
- b. The Illinois Federation of Teachers, AFT, AFL-CIO. Whenever possible, the union will send delegates to the IFT's convention. Delegates will be elected by procedures consistent with Article IV of this Constitution.
- c. The Illinois AFL-CIO.
- d. The Chicago Federation of Labor

Section 2. After the initial adoption of this Constitution by the membership, this constitution shall be considered ratified by each new Council that establishes affiliation with this organization.

ARTICLE XII RULES OF ORDER

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall govern this organization and all of its subordinate bodies in all matters not expressly covered by this Constitution.

**ARTICLE XIII
CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION**

Within three (3) years of the initial adoption of this Constitution or when the size of the Executive Board reaches forty (40) members, whichever happens first, the Executive Board may elect to hold a constitutional convention for the purpose of updating this Constitution to better serve the needs of the membership. Should the Executive Board vote to hold a Constitutional Convention, the rules to be followed shall be consistent with those for amending this Constitution, which are set forth in Article XIV.

**ARTICLE XIV
AMENDMENT**

Section 1. Thirty percent (30%) of the membership may present, by petition, a proposed amendment to this Constitution to the Secretary, who shall notify the membership of the proposed amendment no later than thirty (30) days prior to the next Membership Meeting. Alternatively, a majority of the Executive Board may vote to present a proposed amendment to the members at the next Membership Meeting. A copy of the proposed amendment, along with an explanation of said amendment, shall be distributed, which can include on-line availability, to all members a reasonable time prior to the Membership Meeting at which the amendment will be introduced and discussed.

Comment [CC24]: This is the process by which these proposed amendments come to you today.

Section 2. A quorum for any meeting at which constitutional amendments are to be considered and adopted shall consist of twenty five (25) percent of the membership of the organization. Such twenty five (25%) percent can be achieved through voting strength in the delegate system.

Comment [CC25]: Each delegate from each council will have a proportionate amount of votes based on the number of members in the council. For example, a council with 22 members has two delegates, each delegate has a voting strength of 11.

Section 3. The membership shall vote on all amendments to the Constitution.

a. Following the membership meeting or Constitutional Convention at which the proposed amendment was introduced, the Election Committee will hold a (secret ballot) vote on the amendment at the next Membership Meeting or will hold a similar vote through an on-line voting system.

Comment [CC26]: The local has had much success utilizing technology as a way to reach more members in the democratic process.

