

# State Vocational Federation of Teachers

Local 4200A, AFT, AFT-CT, AFL-CIO, CPEF

## Constitution and By-Laws

Revised: May 15, 2008

# **Constitution of the State Vocational Federation of Teachers Local 4200A**

## **ARTICLE I - NAME**

This organization shall be known as the State Vocational Federation of Teachers, Local 4200A of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO.

## **ARTICLE II - OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this organization shall be:

1. To organize and unite all instructors (teachers) and school personnel in the Connecticut Technical High School System into a relationship of mutual assistance and cooperation.
2. To secure to them the rights to which they are entitled and guaranteed by due process.
3. To raise the standards of the teaching profession by securing the conditions essential to producing the best professional service.
4. To promote such a democratization of the schools as will enable them better to equip their pupils to take their places in the industrial, social, and political life of the community, state and nation.
5. To promote the welfare of the children and adults of this state by providing progressively better educational opportunity for all without discrimination or regard for race, national origin, sex, creed, social or economic status, or political beliefs or affiliations.
6. To actively support the principle of solidarity with other Unions in the protections and upgrading of jobs and working conditions.

## **ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section One**

All full-time and part-time employees in the Connecticut technical high schools are eligible for membership.

### **Section Two**

Excluded from membership in this organization are employees of the Connecticut State Board of Education whose positions grant or impose administrative authority.

### **Section Three**

No discrimination shall ever be shown toward individual members or applicants for membership because of race, national origin, creed, sex, social or economic status or political activities or beliefs.

### **Section Four**

A member may be expelled for an act (or acts) detrimental to the Federation upon presentation of written charges signed by at least 2 members and approved by at least 3/4 of the Executive Council. A member shall have the right to appear in his/her own behalf at any Executive Council meeting considering such charges against that person and shall be notified in advance of said meeting. Either an accuser or the accused shall have the right to appeal a decision of the Executive Council to the membership at the following membership meeting. A majority vote of the members present at this meeting will suffice to overrule the Executive Council decision in such a matter.

### **Section Five**

A member in good standing who is granted a leave of absence without pay (greater than three months), shall be placed on the inactive list and shall pay no dues for the duration of said leave. Such members shall be restored to active membership without penalty upon termination of their leave. The inactive list shall not be included in the monthly report to the AFT.

### **Section Six**

A member who retires from state service while in good standing is eligible to join the SVFT Retirees' Chapter.

## **ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS**

### **Section One**

The following officers shall be elected from the membership to a three-year term.

1. President
2. Vice-President
3. Treasurer
4. Secretary
5. Executive Union Representative

## **ARTICLE V – ELECTIONS**

### **Section One**

Elections for all officers shall be conducted in each school on the date of the May Executive Council meeting. All officers will be elected by secret ballot by a majority vote of membership. In the event that no candidate for an officer's position receives a majority of the vote, a run-off election between the top two vote-getters will be held. The run-off election(s) must be conducted on or before the date of the June Executive Council meeting.

### **Section Two**

During an election year, nominations for officers may be made at the November Membership Meeting. Nominations received by the Nominations Committee will be published in the December newsletter.

### **Section Three**

Written notice of pending nominations for any office must be given to the Chairperson of the Nominations and Elections Committee at least thirty days prior to the date of that election.

### **Section Three (a)**

The President and Vice President shall appear on the ballot as individual candidates.

### **Section Four**

A list of candidates for office must be given to the membership at least fifteen days prior to an election.

### **Section Five**

No write in votes will be allowed.

### **Section Six**

The President and Vice President and Executive Union Representative each shall be a member in good standing for one year prior to elections and shall be tenured.

### **Section Seven**

The union representatives in each school will collect the votes in a container that will be sealed upon completion of the voting. In the event a union representative is running for office, he/she shall not be eligible to collect or handle the ballots. He/she shall be replaced by an elections committee appointee.

### **Section Eight**

The sealed container shall be delivered to the Nominations and Elections Committee at the Executive Council meeting on the evening of the election.

### **Section Nine**

Results of an election shall be announced to the membership within one week after the election of officers. The results shall be published in the organization's newsletter and placed on bulletin boards in all technical high schools. The ballots must be kept by the Secretary for one year.

### **Section Ten**

Vacancies of six months or less duration can be filled by a majority vote of the Executive Council. Vacancies of more than six months duration shall be filled as outlined in (Article V).

### **Section Eleven**

The Secretary shall send a certified list of all elected officers and/or delegates to all SVFT affiliates and associated labor bodies.

### **Section Twelve**

Each technical high school shall elect two union representatives according to present practices, (by secret ballot at a meeting attended by a minimum of five members of this organization at that school, one from the shop instructional area and one from the academic area. If there is no one available from the shop area or the academic area, the Union Representatives may come from the same area). These

Union Representatives shall be elected as the school's delegates to the Executive Council. Each satellite school will elect one union representative. Bristol TEC will elect two union representatives. Bullard Havens THS will elect three union representatives.

### **Section Thirteen**

The Union Representatives shall be elected by the end of the second full week in May for a term of two years.

### **Section Fourteen**

Any vacancies in the office of Union Representative at a given school shall be filled by an election at that school (as per Article V, Section Twelve) to fill the unexpired term. If the school fails to fulfill (Article V, Section Twelve), the President with the approval of the Executive Council may appoint a replacement to fill the unexpired term.

### **Section Fifteen**

The SVFT delegates will be elected in the odd-numbered years. Delegates will serve for a term of two years. From January 1<sup>st</sup> – June 1<sup>st</sup> in an election year, nominations for the position of SVFT delegate will be accepted by contacting the SVFT office. Notice of the nomination period and the requirements to run for office of delegate will be prominently posted in the SVFT newsletter immediately preceding January 1<sup>st</sup>. Any member in good standing for one year prior to the election will be eligible to run for the position of delegate.

The SVFT delegates election will be by secret ballot, at a union meeting in the schools. The elections will take place the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday in June. Voting procedures will follow those used in the election of SVFT officers (Article V, Section One). Results of the election of delegates will be announced via electronic mail the day after the election and published in the September newsletter.

## **ARTICLE VI - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

### **Section One**

The Executive Committee shall be the elected officers.

### **Section Two**

The Executive Committee shall meet at the call of the President and/or any two of its members whenever deemed necessary.

### **Section Three**

A quorum shall consist of a majority of its members.

### **Section Four**

The Executive Committee shall consult with the President on methods and actions (between membership meetings) for carrying out the organization's policies as established by the membership and the Executive Council. It may also discuss and recommend policy to the membership and, in emergency, determine a policy where none exists. Continuance of such approved policy shall be subject to the approval of the membership at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

## **ARTICLE VII - EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

### **Section One**

The Executive Council of this organization shall consist of the following:

1. All elected officers.
2. All Union Representatives from each school.

### **Section Two**

The Executive Council shall administer the policy of this organization as set by the membership. It shall have the power to act for the good of the organization consistent with the goals and policies of this organization and, in emergencies, to determine a policy where none exists. Continuance of such approved policy shall be subject to the approval of the membership at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

### **Section Three**

A quorum for the Executive Council shall consist of the President or that person's Executive Committee designee and one other Executive Committee officer and one-third of the Executive Council.

### **Section Four**

The time and place of the Executive Council meetings shall be set by the Executive Council and announced at the previous membership meeting. Executive Council meetings will be held monthly and the time and place of the meetings will be made known to the membership via the September SVFT newsletter.

### **Section Five**

The Executive Council shall have the power to employ, set salaries as budgeted, supervise, and discharge all hired personnel such as an executive secretary, clerical help, and other persons on either a full or part-time basis as may be determined by the needs and finances of the organization. The Executive Council shall have the power to select a negotiation team subject to the approval of the membership.

### **Section Six**

The Executive Council shall report its activities at each membership meeting.

## **ARTICLE VIII – COMMITTEES**

### **Section One**

There shall be active, standing committees approved by the Executive Council.

### **Section Two**

The Nominations and Elections Committee shall be a special committee and be appointed by the Executive Council.

### **Section Three**

Any additional special committees may be appointed as the President and/or membership deems necessary.

### **Section Four**

The chairperson of each of the committees shall serve at the discretion of the President with the consent of a majority of the Executive Council.

### **Section Five**

Members of each committee shall be appointed by the respective committee chairperson with the approval of the Executive Council.

### **Section Six**

Three committee members including EX-OFFICIO members shall make a quorum for committee meetings.

## **Section Seven**

No committee meeting shall be recognized as official unless the President, or his designee, has been notified at least seven days before the meeting.

## **Section Eight**

The Executive Committee selects committee members, pending approval of the Executive Council. New Committee members must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Has served or is currently serving as a building representative
- Has served or is currently serving on other committees
- Provides necessary expertise
- Balances representation on the committee between trade and academics
- Is available to attend all meetings

## **ARTICLE IX – AFFILIATIONS**

### **Section One**

This organization shall maintain its affiliations with the following organizations: AFL-CIO, AFT, AFT-CT, CPEF and any other labor organizations as deemed appropriate.

The SVFT shall affiliate with its parent organizations, those designated by the parent organization and other deemed appropriate by the membership.

### **Section Two**

All delegates shall make written reports to the Executive Council on all meetings attended. These reports shall be made part of the minutes of the membership meeting.

### **Section Three**

Every reasonable effort shall be made by this organization to pay the approved expenses of delegates to meetings and conventions of affiliated organizations.

### **Section Four**

Delegates who retire during their term as an elected delegate, will be allowed to complete that term.

### **Section Five**

## **Local Labor Councils**

Representatives to the local labor councils will be sought on a volunteer basis with final approval being given by the Executive Council.

## **Section Six**

This organization, to the best of its ability, shall be active in the affairs of affiliated organizations.

## **ARTICLE X – MEETINGS**

### **Section One**

The specific time and place of membership meetings shall be fixed by the Executive Committee on recommendation of the President. Each member must receive written notice of the date, place, time and purpose at least fifteen days before the meeting.

\* Note: Notice may be prominently placed on the front page of the newsletter.

### **Section Two**

There shall be two membership meetings during the regular school year, one in November and one in May.

### **Section Three**

A quorum at any membership meeting shall consist of twenty members with fifty percent of the technical high schools represented, and a majority of the officers.

#### **Section Three (a)**

A quorum for the membership meeting to approve dues shall be five percent of the membership with fifty percent of the technical high schools represented.

### **Section Four**

The Executive Council shall meet at least once each month throughout the school year (as per Art. VII, Sec. Three & Four).

## **Section Five**

A mass meeting shall be held to approve all non-arbitrated contract agreements between the State Board of Education and the SVFT, only if the school year is over, otherwise voting will take place in the individual schools by secret ballot.

- a) In the event of a mass meeting, the location of the meeting shall be central to all bargaining unit members.
- b) The voting shall take place by secret ballot at a specified time after the presentation of the contract or issues.
- c) Approval of a contract shall be by a majority of the bargaining unit members at the mass meeting, or by a majority of the total votes cast at the individual schools.
- d) Results of the voting will be presented to the members of the meeting before adjournment, or within twenty-four hours of the vote taken in the individual schools.

## **Section Six**

Special membership meetings shall be called by the President or at the request of three officers, twenty-five percent of the Executive Council or fifteen percent of the members from thirty percent of the schools. Fifteen days notice is required if the business involves elections, constitutional amendments or dues changes. Appropriate quorums as outlined above will apply based on the purpose of the special meeting.

## **ARTICLE XI - FINANCE**

### **Section One**

Local membership dues shall be changed by following the procedure for amending the By-Laws as outlined in Article II of said By-Laws.

### **Section Two**

The fiscal year shall be September 1 - August 31.

### **Section Three**

The budget and dues shall be approved prior to the election of officers.

## **ARTICLE XII - RECALL PROCEDURES**

### **Section One**

A recall petition signed by thirty percent of this organization's membership may be presented to the Executive Council at any time during the year. Such petition shall list the name(s) of the elected official(s) to be recalled and shall state the reasons. The Executive Council will hear the arguments for and against the recall election. If two-thirds of the Executive Council approves, an election as outlined in (Article V) shall be held. The name(s) of the person(s) to be recalled and the nominees for the position(s) shall be on the ballot.

### **Section Two**

A recall petition signed by thirty percent of the membership of a technical high school shall authorize a recall election of the union representative(s) of that school. The procedure in Section One of this Article shall be followed to recall a union representative. The recall election shall be held in accordance with (Article V, Section Fourteen).

### **Section Three**

A union representative may be recalled by the Executive Committee for cause. Reasons for the recall would be brought to the Executive Council. The Executive Council would hear the arguments for and against the recall. If two-thirds of the Executive Council finds against the union representative, the union representative will be recalled and a new election held according to Article V, Section Twelve of this Constitution.

(Cause would be failure to perform the duties of a union representative, ethical reasons, etc.)

## **ARTICLE XIII - AVAILABILITY OF CONSTITUTION**

### **Section One**

Three copies of the Constitution and By-Laws of all future amendments shall be submitted to all SVFT affiliates.

### **Section Two**

Every member shall receive a copy of this Constitution and all future amendments. Thereafter copies shall be available for any member of this organization upon request to the Secretary.

## **ARTICLE XIV - AMENDMENTS.**

This constitution may be amended as follows:

### **Section One**

The proposed amendment shall be submitted by any member in good standing, to the Executive Committee or may be proposed from the floor at any regular Membership Meeting. The proposed amendment shall be submitted to the Constitution and By-Laws Committee. The Committee after review of the proposed amendment, and at least five days prior to the next Executive Council Meeting, shall bring it back to the Executive Council with a recommendation for acceptance or rejection.

### **Section Two**

After review of the proposed amendment by the Executive Council, the proposed amendment shall be listed in full in the call to the next membership meeting, with recommendations from the Executive Council, either for adoption or rejection.

### **Section Three**

A majority vote, of the membership at that meeting shall be sufficient to adopt the amendment.

## **BY-LAWS**

### **ARTICLE I - DUES**

#### **Section One**

The dues of this organization for full-time employees shall be (0.9%) of the average annual salary divided by twenty-six, plus pass throughs for affiliated bodies and insurances since after 1986.

#### **Section Two**

- A. All teachers working 30 hours per week or more will pay full dues, as mandated by the AFT By-Laws.
- B. All teachers working fewer than 30 hours per week will pay ¼ of full dues, as mandated by the AFT By-Laws.

### **ARTICLE II - AMENDMENT BY-LAWS**

These By-Laws may be amended as follows:

#### **Section One**

The proposed amendment shall be submitted by any member in good standing, to the Executive Committee or may be proposed from the floor at any regular Membership Meeting. The proposed amendment shall be submitted to the

Constitution and By-Laws Committee. The Committee after review of the proposed amendment, and at least five days prior to the next Executive Council Meeting, shall bring it back to the Executive council with a recommendation for acceptance or rejection.

### **Section Two**

After review of the proposed amendment by the Executive Council, the proposed amendment shall be listed in full in the call to the next regularly scheduled membership meeting, with recommendations from the Executive Council, either for adoption or rejection.

### **Section Three**

A majority vote, of the membership at that meeting shall be sufficient to adopt the amendment.

## **ARTICLE III - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY AND RULES OF ORDER**

### **Section One**

The latest edition of Robert's Rule of Order, Revised, shall govern this organization in the conduct of its meetings and in all matters not covered by the Constitution, By-Laws, or Special Rules.

### **Section Two**

Special rules and/or orders of business shall require a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a membership meeting.

## **ARTICLE IV - DUTIES OF COMMITTEE**

### **Section One**

#### **STANDING COMMITTEES SHALL BE:**

- |                             |                      |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| (A) BUDGET                  | (F) LABOR-MANAGEMENT |
| (B) COMMUNICATIONS          | (G) POLITICAL ACTION |
| (C) CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS  | (H) SICK LEAVE BANK  |
| (D) GRIEVANCE & ARBITRATION | (I) SOCIAL & WELFARE |
| (E) HEALTH & SAFETY         |                      |

### **Section Two**

All committee members shall be in good standing.

**Section (A)**

The Budget Committee –

Shall prepare a budget for adoption by the membership and make it available to the membership five days prior to the membership at the May meeting. The Treasurer shall be the chairperson. It shall periodically consult with the Treasurer to insure that expenditures are within budgeted limits and that mandated Agency Fee requirements are being fulfilled. It may suggest such changes as are necessary for approval by the Executive Committee and/or membership.

**Section (B)**

The Communications Committee -

Shall have the following responsibilities: (1) Publish monthly September-June the SVFT Newsletter *Vocational Instructor*. (2) Develop, maintain and update monthly September-June the SVFT web site. (3) Make use of other media to publicize SVFT news and information as deemed necessary by the leadership.

**Section (C)**

The Constitution & By-Laws Committee -

Shall be a committee whose members shall be selected at the discretion of the President. It shall research changes and additions presented to them by the membership and recommend acceptance or rejection to the Executive Council.

**Section (D)**

The Grievance & Arbitration Committee -

Shall act on all grievances in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement.

**Section (E)**

Health & Safety Committee –

Shall function as defined in the collective bargaining agreement.

**Section (F)**

The Labor-Management Committee -

Shall function as defined in the collective bargaining agreement.

**Section (G)**

The Political Action Committee -

Shall consider recommendations of the SVFT affiliates and the membership of the local pertaining to all levels of government. It shall study proposed legislation which may affect the federation and schools. It may initiate recommendations. It may present the record of government officials. It shall coordinate and act on all areas of this section in conformity with the policy of this organization as established by the membership.

### **Section (H)**

The Sick Leave Bank Committee -  
Shall function as defined in the collective bargaining agreement.

### **Section (I)**

The Social & Welfare Committee -  
Shall arrange such programs and functions and perform such duties as the local may direct.

### **Section Three**

#### SPECIAL COMMITTEES SHALL BE:

- (A) CRISIS
- (C) ANY OTHER AS DEEMED
- (B) NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS NECESSARY BY THE ORGANIZATION

### **Section (A)**

The Crisis Committee - Shall organize and coordinate activities of the technical high schools in any crisis situation. A crisis shall be determined by the President with the approval of the Executive Council.

### **Section (B)**

The Nominations & Elections Committee - Shall be selected at least sixty days prior to the election of officers. (Care should be taken to insure representation of all groups within the organization). The committee shall adhere to Article V of the Constitution pertaining to election procedures.

### **Section (C)**

Any other as deemed necessary by the organization.

#### **Section Four**

All committee members shall be members in good standing.

#### **Section Five**

All committees shall meet as needed, shall report regularly to the President, the Executive Committee, the Executive Council and the membership.

#### **Section Six**

At the end of their terms in office, committee chairperson shall turn over to the President all files, records and materials.

### **ARTICLE V - DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

#### **Section One**

The President shall be responsible for all of the affairs of the local, including, the relationship between our local and its affiliates. The President shall be an EXOFFICIO member of all committees except the Nominations and Elections Committee and shall be entitled to one of the delegate positions to any convention, and shall be entitled to one of the delegate positions to any convention or to any commission on which the SVFT 4200A has, or is entitled to, representation unless the President declines. The President shall have the power to appoint the chairs of all committees and fill vacancies with the approval of the chairs of all committees and fill vacancies with the approval of the Executive Council. The President or designee shall preside over all General Membership Meetings, preserve order and enforce the Constitution and By-laws. He/she shall decide all questions of order subject to an appeal to the members present. He/she shall not vote except when the vote is by ballot, but shall have the deciding vote when the vote is by other method. The President shall make a report to the membership at least once a year summarizing the accomplishments of the organization and outlining plans for the coming year.

#### **Section Two**

The Vice-President shall assist the President in organizing the internal affairs of

the local. He/she shall be an EX-OFFICIO member of all committees. The Vice-President shall assist the President in the discharge of his official duties when requested and fill his/her place in case of absence.

### **Section Three**

The Secretary shall issue all meeting notices, shall answer correspondence at the direction of the President and shall report outside correspondence to the President and Executive Council. That person shall be the custodian of the seal and charter of the organization. The Secretary shall record the minutes of the Executive Council and of the membership meetings. That person shall make minutes of the above-mentioned meetings and all correspondence available to any member in good standing upon request.

### **Section Four**

The duties of the Treasurer shall be:

- a) To receive, record, and deposit in the name of the organization, all monies from dues and all other sources.
- b) To keep the membership roll, issue receipts for all cash collections and delinquency notices.
- c) To forward all per capita dues and current membership list to the national office of the AFT and to other affiliated organizations to keep this organization in good standing at all times.
- d) To make a financial report at each Executive Council and membership meeting.
- e) To keep adequate records of income and expenditures including Agency Fee information and make them available at all times for the Executive Council.
- f) To pay bills authorized by the budget, retaining a voucher or invoice for same. Bills not authorized in the budget must be presented to the Executive Council for authorization. Bills not authorized in the budget and if in excess of one thousand five hundred dollars must be submitted for approval to the general membership.
- g) To co-sign checks with the President.
- h) To file all reports required by law.
- i) To be bonded for all federal monies at all times.
- j) To be Chairperson of the Budget Committee.

### **Section Five**

The Duties of the Executive Union Representative shall be:

- a) To act as Grievance Coordinator of the local.
- b) To coordinate the union activities and grievances of the State Vocational Federation of Teachers with Union Representatives.
- c) To consult and report on these and other union representatives problems to the Executive Committee and Executive Council.

### **Section Six**

The Duties of the Union Representative shall be:

- a) To act as chairperson of school meetings, act as grievance coordinator, make requests of or relay information to the membership of his/her school by means of meetings, news bulletins, bulletin boards or in other appropriate manners, and coordinate any crisis or job action which may be necessary or has been mandated.
- b) To report and/or consult with the Executive Union Representative on all grievances.

### **Section Seven**

No member can serve as Union Representative and as an officer at the same time.

**STATE VOCATION FEDERATION OF TEACHERS LOCAL 4200A  
AFL-CIO, AFT, AFT-CT, CPEF**

**Constitution & By-Laws Committee**

**Ruth Cion ----- Goodwin THS  
Edward DeSousa ----- Bullard-Havens THS  
Edward Leavy ----- Bullard-Havens THS  
Michael Lorusso ----- Wolcott THS  
Donna Marinan ----- Wilcox THS  
Ben Russell ----- Bristol TEC  
Joe Scarduzio ----- Stratford THS  
Lara Schiavone ----- Wilcox THS**