

THE CONSTITUTION  
for the  
PETALUMA FEDERATION OF TEACHERS  
LOCAL #1881  
affiliated with  
THE CALIFORNIA FEDERATION OF TEACHERS  
and  
THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS, AFL-CIO  
555 New Jersey NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Revised April 1989  
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Ratified 6/10/05  
Revised 11/16/15

**Article I**

**NAME**

This organization shall be known as the Petaluma Federation of Teachers, Local 1881, CFT/AFT/AFL-CIO.

**Article II**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this organization shall be:

- \* Section 1 To advance the economic, social, and political well-being of the membership.
- \* Section 2 To uphold the standards of the teaching profession by securing the conditions essential to the best professional service.
- \* Section 3 To encourage mutual understanding, participation, and cooperation among the membership.
- \* Section 4 To promote and continue the spirit of Shared Decision Making in the schools, to better equip students to take their places in the economic, social, and political life of the community.
- \* Section 5 To promote the welfare of the children of the nation by providing progressively better educational opportunities for all.
- \* Section 6 To eliminate discrimination in education in all of its forms.

**Article III**

## **MEMBERSHIP**

- \* Section 1 All certificated employees of the Petaluma City Schools excluding Adult Education teachers, home teachers, summer school teachers, day-to-day substitutes, long-term substitutes, management employees, supervisory employees, confidential employees, consultant employees, and emergency employees.
- \* Section 2 Other educational employees including school clerks, truant officers, adult education personnel, instructional assistants, and other paraprofessionals, are eligible for affiliated chapter membership.
- \* Section 3 Personnel designated as management shall not obtain membership. Members who are assigned permanent or part-time management duties are automatically removed from membership effective on the first date of the assignment.
- \* Section 4 Teachers in public or private institutions outside the jurisdiction of this local may be admitted as at-large members until such time as a local is chartered in their jurisdiction.
- \* Section 5 No discrimination shall ever be shown toward individual members or applicants for membership because of race, religious faith, gender, sexual orientation, age, political activities or beliefs.
- \*Section 6 A member in good standing is defined as a member who is current in payment of dues to the organization.

## **Article IV**

### **OFFICERS AND THEIR ELECTION**

- \* Section 1 The following officers shall be elected biennially by this Federation:
  - (a) President
  - (b) Secondary Vice President, high school
  - (c) Secondary Vice President, junior high school
  - (d) Elementary Vice President
  - (e) Secretary
  - (f) Treasurer
  
- \* Section 2 (a) Membership in good standing for at least one year is required to hold office.

(b) The President, Junior High Vice President, and Secretary shall be elected in the spring of even numbered years for a two (2) year term.

(c) The High School Vice President, the Elementary Vice President, and the Treasurer shall be elected in the spring of odd numbered years for a two (2) year term.

\* Section 3 Nominations for officers shall be made in March to the Executive Council. Other nominations shall be secured by the Election Committee who will notify the membership that the nominations period is open.

\* Section 4 The Election Committee shall be established by January of each year at a regularly scheduled Executive Council meeting. The committee members shall consist of at least three (3) members (including at least one secondary and one elementary representative) plus the chair.

(a) The committee members will appoint their own chair.

(b) The Election Committee shall establish the date and hold the election of officers in the month of April.

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

(d) The Election Committee shall prepare and send ballots to one designated school site representative at each school site. The designated school site representative shall conduct the election at the school site. The ballots shall be returned to the Election Committee, at a time and place to be designated by the Committee, on the consecutive days that the election is held.

(e) The candidate receiving a majority of the votes cast for any office shall be declared elected.

(f) The Election Committee chairperson shall report the result of the election to the Executive Council.

(g) In the absence of a majority, the Election Committee shall conduct a run-off election between the two candidates who have received the most votes for the office in question.

(h) 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 Election Committee within five (5) days of the count. The Election Committee shall issue its written opinion regarding the objections no later than 10 (ten) days after receipt of such objections.

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

- \* Section 5 Officers shall be installed in May at the Executive Council meeting or a banquet held for this purpose.
- \* Section 6 With the exception of the President, or in case of recall, the Executive Council will have the power to fill vacancies until the next general election of officers.
- \* Section 7 A petition signed by 45% (forty-five percent) of the PFT membership, or 45% (forty-five percent) of his/her constituency in the case of a site representative, and alleging constitutional violations, fiduciary breaches, or acts clearly detrimental to the union, shall be sufficient to require the Executive Council to vote on whether to conduct a recall election of the officer identified in the petition.
  - (a) If a majority of the Executive Council approves a recall election, the Election Committee shall supervise the recall election.
  - (b) Each person named in a recall petition shall have the right to a rebuttal statement, which shall be distributed to his/her constituency at least seven days before the recall election.
  - (c) Recall elections shall be by secret ballot
  - (d) The officer subject to recall shall not vote on the question of a recall election at the Executive Council Meeting.

**Article V**  
**COMMITTEES**

- \* Section 1 The following standing committees shall be active:
  - (a) District Budget Committee
  - (b) Trust Agreement Committee
  - (c) Negotiations Committee/Employer Employee Relations Committee
  - (d) Committee on Political Education
  - (e) Membership Committee
  - (f) Grievance Committee
- \* Section 2 The following special committees shall be active as needed:
  - (a) Budget and Finance Committee
  - (b) Audit Committee
  - (c) Election Committee
  - (d) Insurance Committee

- (e) Social Committee
- (f) Publicity Committee

\* Section 3 The Executive Council shall approve the chairperson and membership of all standing and special committees of the organization, except the COPE Committee chairperson, and receive regular reports from such committees.

## **Article VI**

### **THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

\* Section 1 The Executive Council of this Federation shall consist of the following:

- (a) All elected officers
- (b) Chairpersons of the Standing Committees (non-voting)
- (c) School Site Representatives who shall be elected according to the following formula:

School site representatives shall be elected by school site faculty according to the number of PFT members divided by 20 (twenty) and rounded up to the nearest whole number.

One representative for district office based certificated personnel (nurses, speech therapists, psychologists, and the district ombudsman) and another representative for district based certificated elementary music/arts teachers, shall be represented.

- \* Section 2 The Executive Council shall administer the policy of this Federation. It shall have the power to act for the good of the Federation in emergency situations.
- \* Section 3 The chairperson of the Executive Council shall be the President of the Federation.
- \* Section 4 The time and place of the executive council meetings shall be set by the President of the Federation. The Executive Council, with the President, shall determine the agenda for all meetings.
- \* Section 5 Special meetings of the Federation shall be called for a specific reason. The Executive Council shall meet monthly, or at the call of the President or at the call of two (2) or more of its members.
- \* Section 6 The Executive Council shall have the power to employ all personnel, including an executive secretary, clerical help, or other persons on full or part-time basis as may be determined by the needs and finances of the Federation.

- \* Section 7 The Executive Council shall have the power to make contract and incur liabilities which may be appropriate to enable it to accomplish any or all of its purposes: to borrow money for Federation purposes at such rates of interest and terms and conditions as they may determine; to issue notes, bonds, and other obligations, and to secure any of its obligations by mortgage, pledge, or deed of trust of all or any of its property and income.
- \* Section 8 The Executive Council shall report its activities to the membership and call general membership meetings.
- \* Section 9 A quorum of the Executive Council shall consist of site representatives from 50% of the sites plus one (1) and at least two (2) elected officers. There are 13 sites, and two (2) representatives of district office based certificated personnel.
- \* Section 10 Three missed regularly scheduled Executive Council meetings within a year, counted from the date of assumption of office, shall be grounds for an Executive Council member's suspension and/or replacement.
- \* Section 11 Executive Council, at the start of each year, will review program/members of each standing committee and determine the need for special committees.

## **Article VII**

### **AFFILIATIONS**

- \* Section 1 This Federation shall maintain affiliation with, and whenever possible send delegates to, the following organizations:
  - (a) The American Federation of Teachers – all delegates and alternates to the national convention of the AFT shall be elected by a majority vote of the membership in the spring. The Election Committee shall conduct the election: the President and Secretary shall forward the credentials of all elected delegates and alternates to the National Office as soon as possible, but not later than ten days before the convening of the National Convention. The delegates shall confer with the Treasurer to make sure the AFT per capita through June has been sent to the National Office at least 15 (fifteen) days before the convening of the National Convention.
  - (b) The California Federation of Teachers - delegates shall be elected in the same manner as prescribed in Article VII, Section 1.a, at least two months before the State Convention.
  - (c) The North Bay Labor Council - delegates shall be appointed by the President with the consent of the Executive Council.
- \* Section 2 All delegates shall make written or oral reports to the Executive Council about meetings attended at the next, regularly scheduled Executive Council meeting.
- \* Section 3 Every reasonable effort shall be made by this federation to pay the legitimate expenses of the delegates to meetings and conventions of affiliated organizations.

- \* Section 4 The Federation, to the best of its ability, shall be active in the affairs of affiliated organizations.
- \* Section 5 Delegates to affiliated organizations must be members in good standing of the Federation for at least one year.

## **Article VIII**

### **DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND SITE REPRESENTATIVES**

- \* Section 1 The President shall preside at all meetings of the Federation and of the Executive Council. She/he shall be an ex-officio member of all committees (except the Audit Committee), shall sign all necessary paper and documents, and represent the local when and where necessary. She/he shall make a report to the membership at least once a year summarizing the accomplishments of the Federation and outlining plans for the next year.
- \* Section 2 The Secondary Vice Presidents or the Elementary Vice President shall perform all duties of the President in the absence of that officer.
  - (a) Senior Vice President
    - (i.) Executive Council shall determine by majority vote who of the three (3) Vice Presidents will be designated as “senior.”
    - (ii.) The Senior Vice President shall serve as the primary assistant to the President.
    - (iii.) The Senior Vice President shall be first to assume duties of President when necessary.
    - (iv.) In case the President is no longer able to perform his/her duties, the Senior Vice President will assume the position and finish the remaining term of the President.
    - (v.) The Senior Vice President shall be a co-signer on all accounts.
  - (b) All Vice Presidents
    - (i.) Shall serve as assistants to the President.
    - (ii.) Shall perform all other duties as delegated by the President or Executive Council.
- \* Section 3 The Secretary shall issue all notices, shall answer correspondence at the direction of the President and shall report outside correspondence to the President and the Executive Council. She/he shall be the custodian of the seal and charter of the Federation. The secretary shall record, publish, and distribute the minutes of the Executive Council and of the general membership meetings.

\* Section 4 The duties of the Treasurer shall be:

(a) To receive, record, and deposit in the name of the Federation, all monies from dues and all other sources.

(b) To keep the membership roll, issue receipts, and serve delinquent notices.

(c) To forward all per capita dues and current membership lists to the National Office of the American Federation of Teachers and to other affiliated organizations to keep this federation in good standing at all times. Special care shall be taken to see that the per capita tax through June 30 is sent to the National Office no later than 15 (fifteen) days prior to the opening date of the National Convention to make sure delegates from this federation may be seated.

(d) To be chairperson of the Budget and Finance Committee. She/he shall present a written report to all members once a year.

(e) To keep adequate records available at all times for the Executive Council and the Audit Committee.

(f) To pay all bills authorized by the adopted budget, retaining voucher or invoice for same. Expenses not authorized must be presented to the Executive Council for authorization.

\* Section 5 The duties of the Site Representative shall be to represent the members' interests to management and the union leadership, help resolve their day-to-day problems on the job, and involve the members in activities of the Federation.

(a) As a worksite leader the Site Representative shall be a visible representative of the Federation, hold worksite meetings, encourage members to serve on committees, welcome new staff, discuss important issues, and represent members at the Executive Council.

(b) As a communicator, the Site Representative shall distribute newsletters and flyers, maintain a bulletin board, conduct surveys as needed, inform members of policy issues and decisions, and activate a non-district email list and communication system.

(c) As a problem solver, the Site Representative shall assist in the grievance process, identify worksite problems, and involve members in professional issues.

(d) As a union builder, the Site Representative shall recruit members and help organize social events.



## Article IX

### DUTIES OF STANDING COMMITTEES

- \* Section 1 The District Budget Committee Representatives shall attend meetings of the District Budget Committee and shall represent the Federation on this committee. These representatives shall report to the Executive Council all pertinent information.
- \* Section 2 The Trust Agreement Committee shall study and make recommendations for improvements of curricula, teaching techniques, class size, texts, equipment, and other professional matters. The Committee shall conduct Trust Agreement negotiations with the District at the discretion of the Executive Council.
- \* Section 3 The Negotiation Committee shall prepare and substantiate salary and other contract proposals. It shall present these proposals for approval to the Executive Council, and then it shall negotiate these proposals with the District Administration.

#### (a) Negotiation Committee Membership:

(i.) The Negotiation Committee will be composed of a minimum of seven (7) members in addition to the Chief Negotiator, and the President. The members of the team shall be nominated by the Chief Negotiator and approved by the Executive Council. The Committee is encouraged to maintain a representational balance of its membership.

(ii.) If any member of the team resigns, the Executive Council shall appoint a replacement for the balance of the school year. Written notice of this appointment shall be forwarded to the governing board of the district.

(iii.) The Executive Council, by a two-thirds vote, may remove a member of the Negotiation Committee then appoint a replacement.

#### (b) Negotiations Committee Duties

(i.) Members of the committee will attend at least one regularly scheduled Executive Council meeting per school year.

(ii.) Members will represent and bargain for the entire membership.

(iii.) The Negotiation Committee may request approval of the Executive Council for the services of consultants, resource persons, secretaries, and/or staff to assist in the consideration, presentation, and/or negotiation of any specific agenda item. Upon the request of the Negotiation Committee, the unit may employ additional expert counsel.

(iv.) The Negotiation Committee shall report its activities to the Executive Board and to the general membership with such frequency as needed.

(v.) Agreements reached between the Negotiation Committee and the School Board or its representative shall be considered tentative and not binding upon the Federation until such agreements have been ratified by the membership, unless such ratification shall be specifically waived or otherwise delegated by that membership.

(vi.) Tentative Agreements shall be ratified by a majority vote of the general membership.

(vii.) The yearly survey created by the Chief Negotiator and Executive Council shall be distributed and tabulated by Site Representatives.

(viii.) The survey results will be approved by Executive Council before being shared with District Administration.

\* Section 4 Committee on Political Education shall support and further the goals and policies of the Federation. Members of the Federation may make contributions to the Committee directly through payroll deduction. In addition, the Executive Council may set aside a portion of member dues for the Committee. This amount may be changed from time to time. The Committee may accept contributions from persons who are not members of the Federation subject to approval of the Board.

(a) The control and direction of the committee shall be vested with a Board of the Directors which shall consist, ex officio, of the members of the Executive Council and other members expressing interest. Each even numbered year in the spring, the Chair of the Board will be appointed by the President. At the next board meeting, a treasurer and secretary will be established for the next term (of one year).

(b) The Board shall have control over the funds and affairs of the COPE and shall establish and carry out all policies and activities. The Board may delegate all or some of the responsibilities to the Executive Council or a separate committee comprised of members appointed by the board.

(c) Other endeavors of the COPE shall be, but not limited to: to support candidates and positions on ballot measures endorsed by the Federation and other affiliations; to further the common good and general welfare by promoting improvements in public education; to promote the welfare of our active and retired members and teachers in general; to encourage the improvement of benefits, compensation, working conditions and retirement status of our active and retired members and teachers in general.

## **Article X**

### **DUTIES OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

- \* Section 1 The Budget and Finance Committee shall make such budget recommendations as they deem appropriate to further the purposes of this organization, as referenced in Article II, sections one through six (1-6), prior to the beginning of the next fiscal year. The fiscal year shall be November 1 through October 31.
- \* Section 2 The Audit Committee shall audit the Treasurer's books and yearly Treasurer's report. They shall present their yearly report to the membership at the August/September general meeting.
- \* Section 3 The Election Committee shall be in charge of securing nominations for each elective office and delegates, and shall prepare, distribute, collect and count election, ratification, and special ballots. The Committee shall report and publish the results of the election to the membership.
- \* Section 4 The Insurance Committee shall research insurance programs for members and retirees and shall make recommendations to the Executive Council for Negotiations.
- \* Section 5 The Social Committee shall arrange programs and entertainment, as well as perform such duties as the Executive Council may direct.
- \* Section 6 The Publicity Committee shall prepare and distribute a newsletter as needed. The editor of the newsletter shall be a member of the committee. Every effort shall be made by this committee to make use of other sources of publicity (i.e. newspapers, radio, television, and social media).

## **Article XI**

### **MEETINGS**

- \* Section 1 The time and place of scheduled general membership and regular Executive Council meetings shall be fixed by the President, and published by the Secretary, at least one (1) week before the scheduled meeting.
- \* Section 2 There shall be at least one Executive Council meeting per month during the regular school year with the proposed schedule to be established at the May Executive Council Meeting.
- \* Section 3 There shall be a general membership meeting at least once per year, and others may be scheduled as needed.

## **Article XII**

### **FINANCE**

- \* Section 1 Local dues shall be fixed by majority vote of the general membership.
- \* Section 2 Additional finances may be obtained by various fundraising activities.
- \* Section 3 The PFT dues shall be composed of the AFT/CFT affiliate portion, plus local dues, calculated by multiplying Step 1, Column 1 salary (from the current negotiated salary schedule) by .0033. In the event of furlough, the Executive Council will direct the Budget Committee to provide suggestions for fiscally feasible adjustments to the PFT dues.
- \* Section 4 The PFT Adult Education Teachers dues shall be composed of the Union affiliate portion, plus local dues, calculated as stated above, (adjusted by a factor dependent upon the average hours per day of services).
- \* Section 5 The Treasurer shall annually provide the actual breakdown of dues by full, half, quarter, and one-eighth time service.

## **ARTICLE XIII**

### **RULES OF ORDER**

- \* Section 1 Roberts Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern in all cases not covered by this constitution or the By-Laws of the local.
- \* Section 2 A Sergeant at Arms shall be appointed by the Executive Council at the first regularly scheduled Executive Council meeting of the school year. The duties of this position will be:
  - (a) To support Executive Council in the use of Roberts Rules of Order.
  - (b) To manage time keeping on all agenda items.

## **ARTICLE XIV**

### **AMENDMENT OF THIS CONSTITUTION**

- \* Section 1 This constitution may be amended as follows:
  - (a) The proposed amendment(s) shall be submitted to the general membership.
  - (b) A two-thirds vote of all ballots cast shall be sufficient to adopt the amendment.

## **ARTICLE XV**

### **REVISION OF THIS CONSTITUTION**

- \* Section 1 The Constitution shall be reviewed every three (3) years. If the Executive Council recommends a revision, it shall be submitted to the general membership by paper ballot. A simple majority of all ballots cast shall be sufficient to adopt the revision.

## **ARTICLE XVI**

### **AVAILABILITY OF THIS CONSTITUTION**

- \* Section 1 All Site Representatives will be provided two (2) hard copies of this Constitution at the first Executive Council meeting of the school year. Officers will receive a single copy for personal use.
- \* Section 2 The most recent version of the Constitution will be available on the Federation website.