

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS



CURRENT AS OF FEBRUARY 2024

CONSTITUTION OF THE OHIO FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

Current as of February 2024

ARTICLE I **NAME, OFFICE AND AFFILIATION**

- Section 1. This organization shall be known as the Ohio Federation of Teachers.
- Section 2. Its principal office shall be located at such place as the Executive Council may determine.
- Section 3. It shall maintain affiliation with the American Federation of Teachers and the Ohio AFL-CIO.
- Section 4. A current copy of the constitution of each local shall be on file in the principal office of the Ohio Federation of Teachers.

ARTICLE II **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this organization shall be:

- Section 1. To bring Ohio locals of the American Federation of Teachers into a relationship of mutual assistance and cooperation and to assist in the organization of new locals.
- Section 2. To secure the conditions essential to improving the standards of teaching and other professional and para-professional services; to strengthen state collective bargaining and civil service laws and to promote para-professional continuing education and secure working conditions conducive to the best performance and delivery of public service.
- Section 3. To promote such a democratization of schools and allied institutions as will enable teachers, school personnel and other professional services to equip their students and clients to take their places in the economic, social and political life of the community.
- Section 4. To obtain for teachers, school employees, students, other professionals and clients, regardless of race, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or social, political or economic status, all the rights to which they are entitled.

ARTICLE III **MEMBERSHIP**

- Section 1. This organization shall consist of locals of the American Federation of Teachers in Ohio in good standing and complying with the constitution and bylaws of the Ohio Federation of Teachers.

Section 2. Upon being chartered by the AFT, the local must affiliate with the OFT and pay monthly per capita. A grace period of two (2) months shall be in effect, (See AFT Constitution, Article XI, Section 10 (2), and AFT Constitution Article XI, Section 2.).

Section 3. All locals of the AFT in Ohio shall maintain affiliation with the Ohio AFL-CIO within six (6) months following the date of their charter.

Section 4. All locals of the AFT shall affiliate with their local AFL-CIO organization and maintain this affiliation during the period of their charter. Such affiliation shall be made within six (6) months of the date of their charter.

Section 5. Student locals. All student locals in the State of Ohio shall have affiliation with the Ohio Federation of Teachers and shall participate in OFT activity but shall not participate in voting.

Structure shall be established to provide non-voting representation at Executive Council Meetings and at State Convention.

Structure shall be established to provide a fee to cover AFT affiliation but no dues shall be paid to OFT.

Section 6. Qualifying locals whose memberships are paying fair share fees or service fees or agency fees to another organization shall pay per capitass at one-fourth (1/4) the regular rate.

Locals to qualify for such reductions shall maintain charters and attend, as registered delegations, at least three (3) official state meetings per year from among Executive Council Meetings, Presidential Conferences and Retreats, and the State Convention.

Locals, desiring to qualify for such reductions, and pledging to meet the requirements, shall be immediately granted the reductions.

Locals granted the reductions and not meeting the requirements shall be returned to full per capita payment. Such locals may appeal the return to full per capitass to the President who shall have the right to grant or not grant subsequent reductions. Such locals may appeal the decision of the President to the Executive Council. The decision of the Executive Council shall be final.

Locals granted per capita reductions at one-fourth (1/4) the regular rate, via this section, shall vote one-fourth (1/4) of their regular voting strength at Executive Council and State Convention. No votes shall be fractional and all fractions shall round to the next highest whole number.

Section 7. Locals shall pass through to individual members all OFT dues increases beginning no later than September following the month in which the increase was approved.

ARTICLE IV **OFFICERS AND DUTIES**

- Section 1. The officers of the Ohio Federation of Teachers shall be a president, a first vice-president, a second vice-president, a treasurer, and a recording secretary.
- Section 2. The qualifications to be a candidate for an elected office are as follows:
- a. OFT membership in good standing for at least one year.
 - b. Membership in good standing as an active member of an OFT affiliate other than a retirees chapter for at least one year.
- Section 3. The president, first vice-president, second vice-president, treasurer, and recording secretary will be elected for two-year terms by and at the biennial convention of the organization.
- Section 4. The duties of the officers shall be those usual to their respective offices, except that the duties of the president shall include being OFT delegate to the AFT Convention, Ohio AFL-CIO Convention, and all other conventions and meetings which would ordinarily under the National Labor Relations Act bear presidential representation.
- Section 5. The elected officers of the Ohio Federation of Teachers shall act in their elected positions on the Executive Council and at the Convention and shall have the same rights as elected delegates, and shall be considered as delegates from their local. Such officer-delegates shall be in addition to the number of delegates allowed for each local as specified in Article V, Executive Council and Duties, Section 1., and in Article VII, Biennial Convention, Section 2.
- Section 6. The Ohio Federation of Teachers shall purchase for the office of the presidency, paid leaves of absence, including retirement and fringe benefit costs, from the president's employing school district. The president shall have the right to make and order such purchases or any part of such purchases. The office of the presidency shall be a full or part-time position as decided by the holder of the office.
- Section 7. The Ohio Federation of Teachers Executive Council shall establish salaries for all elected officers.
- Section 8. If the President cannot complete a term of office, the First Vice President shall serve as interim President until such time as the Executive Council meets to elect a successor. The Executive Council shall meet for that purpose within thirty (30) days of the date that the vacancy occurs. The successor shall serve until the next OFT Convention, at which time an election for President shall be conducted.
- If an officer, other than the President, cannot complete a term of office, the President shall appoint a successor who shall complete the unexpired term, subject to the approval of the Executive Council.
- Section 9. The President of the Ohio Federation of Teachers may appoint a Parliamentarian to serve as advisor to the President or to the President's designated chair in the conduct of business and to serve as Keeper-of-the-Constitution and By-laws. The appointment shall be subject to the approval of the Executive Council. The Parliamentarian shall attend those meetings assigned by the President. If assigned to the OFT Executive Committee and/or Executive Council and/or Convention, by the President, the

Parliamentarian, if a delegate, shall have a voice, but no vote. Any such delegate vote shall be reassigned by the Parliamentarian's local. The length of the appointment shall be at the pleasure of the President.

Section 10. The President of the Ohio Federation of Teachers may appoint a Retiree's Liaison to serve as the Federation's representative for retirees. The appointment shall be subject to the approval of the Executive Council. The Liaison shall attend those meetings assigned by the President. If assigned to the OFT Executive Committee and/or Executive Council and/or Convention to report and to respond to questions, the Liaison, if a delegate, shall have a voice, but no vote. Any such delegate vote shall be reassigned by the Liaison's local. The length of the appointment shall be at the pleasure of the President.

Section 11. The President of the Ohio Federation of Teachers may appoint an executive secretary for a two-year term following each biennial convention, subject to confirmation by the Executive Council. The Executive Secretary shall be responsible for OFT meetings, conference and convention arrangement, shall represent the OFT at meetings at the direction of the President, and shall be in all activities responsible to the President.

Section 12. It shall be the duty of the President and Treasurer to submit to all locals the annual audit.

ARTICLE V

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND DUTIES

Section 1. The Executive Council shall consist of the elected officers of the Ohio Federation of Teachers, and additional representatives apportioned among the various affiliated locals on the following basis:

1-50 members	1 representative
51-100 members	2 representatives
101-500 members	3 representatives
501-1000 members	4 representatives
1001-1500 members	5 representatives
1501-2000 members	6 representatives
2001-2500 members	7 representatives
2501-3000 members	8 representatives
3001-3500 members	9 representatives
3501-4000 members	10 representatives
4001-4500 members	11 representatives
4501-5000 members	12 representatives
5001-5500 members	13 representatives
5501-6000 members	14 representatives
6001-6500 members	15 representatives
6501-7000 members	16 representatives
7001-7500 members	17 representatives

Representation shall be determined within 30 days of the biennial convention. Each local's representation shall be determined based on its 12 month average of per capita

payments received by OFT.

The names of representatives and alternates shall be submitted to the President or designee when determined by each local and they shall serve through the biennial meeting of the Executive Council that directly follows the biennial convention. Only those so determined may cast a vote.

When a representative withdraws for a single meeting or for the term of office, the vote may be cast by an alternate, providing that the alternate has been assigned the vote and the length of the assignment, single meeting or term of office, by the local's ranking delegate or the local's ranking delegate designee and the assignment has been reported to the President or designee. No other transfer or substitution of voting rights shall be allowed. Alternates who have not taken a representative seat may not move business or vote, but may serve the Chair as distributors, counters, and timekeepers.

Section 2. Each member of the Executive Council shall be entitled to one (1) vote.

Section 3. It shall be the duty of the Executive Council to determine and execute the policy of the organization between meetings and biennial conventions except where subject to instructions of the convention.

ARTICLE VI

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND DUTIES

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers, and not less than six (6) nor more than ten (10) members of the Executive Council who shall be appointed by the president and approved by the Executive Council by majority vote. All appointed members shall serve two-year terms.

Section 2. Nominations of appointees to the Executive Committee shall be made by the president with preference given to presidents of locals who are members of the Executive Council. In the event that an appointee is not approved by a majority of the Executive Council, the matter shall be remanded to the president for another appointment, and the process shall continue until an appointment is approved.

Section 3. The Executive Committee shall be chaired by the president and shall meet at the call of the president.

Section 4. The Executive Committee shall advise the president in the enforcement of the mandates emanating from the Executive Council and the biennial convention. The Executive Committee shall advise the president on all legislative matters and proposed legislation occurring between meetings of the Executive Council and/or biennial convention.

Section 5. Except when serving as the Defense Committee, or as the OFT COPE Steering Committee, the Executive Committee shall serve the president in all matters in the status of advice and consent and shall not have committee voting rights. Nothing contained herein shall prevent the president from polling the committee to gain

information.

Section 6. The appointed members of the Executive Committee shall be reimbursed full mileage and expenses.

Section 7. The Executive Committee and the O.F.T. elected officers shall, at the discretion of the president, convene as the Defense Committee and shall, in that capacity, approve grants from the Dorothy Matheny Memorial Defense Fund. Grants in excess of fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500.00) shall require approval of the Executive Council.

ARTICLE VII **BIENNIAL CONVENTION**

Section 1. The biennial convention of the Ohio Federation of Teachers shall meet in even numbered years at such time and place as the Executive Council may determine.

Section 2. Delegates to the biennial convention shall be apportioned among the various affiliated locals on the following basis:

1-15 members	1 delegate
16-25 members	2 delegates
26-35 members	3 delegates
36-45 members	4 delegates
46-62 members	5 delegates
63-87 members	6 delegates
88-112 members	7 delegates
113-137 members	8 delegates
138-162 members	9 delegates
163-187 members	10 delegates
188-212 members	11 delegates
213-237 members	12 delegates
238-262 members	13 delegates
263-287 members	14 delegates
288-325 members	15 delegates
326-375 members	16 delegates
376-425 members	17 delegates
426-475 members	18 delegates
476-525 members	19 delegates
526-575 members	20 delegates
576-650 members	21 delegates

For each additional one hundred (100) members over six hundred (600) or major fraction thereof, add one (1) delegate.

Section 3. For the purpose of this article, membership shall be determined 90 days prior to the month of convention based on a twelve (12) month average of the per capita tax received by OFT provided:

a. That no locals in arrears for three (3) months at the time of the convention shall be

entitled to representation.

- b. That in the case of locals affiliated less than twelve (12) months, the average shall be computed on the basis of the number of months of per capita tax received by OFT prior to the month of convention. New locals must be affiliated at least one (1) full month in order to qualify for credentialed delegates at convention.

Section 4. Each local must register with the President or designee all credentialed delegates and alternates fifteen (15) days prior to the biennial convention, after which no delegates or alternates will be certified to be seated at the convention. To be seated at convention delegates and alternates must be credentialed, must appear physically at the convention and must pay, or cause payment of, all necessary convention registration fees. The president shall effect a daily report to the convention of the number of seated delegates and alternates. When a delegate withdraws from the convention, that seat may be taken by an alternate, for the remainder of the convention, providing that the alternate has been assigned to the seat by the local's ranking delegate or the local's ranking delegate designee and the assignment has been reported to the President or designee. No other transfer or substitution of voting rights shall be allowed. Alternates who have not taken a delegate seat may not move business or vote at committee or general meetings, but may serve the Chair at all such meetings as distributors, counters, and timekeepers.

- Section 5.
- a. Each credentialed delegate shall be entitled to one (1) vote in the biennial convention except on roll calls in which cases the delegates of each affiliated local union shall be entitled to cast as many votes as there are members of such affiliate as determined by the records of the executive secretary based upon per capita paid. The votes of a local shall be distributed as evenly as possible among its delegates at the time of voting but votes shall not be fractional.
 - b. When a roll call vote is asked for, a vote of twenty-five percent (25%) of the delegates present on the floor must be the deciding factor as to the agreement on having a roll call vote.

Section 6. Decisions of the convention and committees thereof shall be by a majority of the votes cast.

Section 7. If a duly appointed committee shall fail to report on convention business, on a majority vote of the convention, the convention may be constituted a committee of the whole to transact such business.

Section 8. A quorum to conduct business at the convention shall consist of a majority of the seated delegates.

ARTICLE VIII **AMENDMENTS**

Section 1. Amendments to this constitution shall be submitted to the biennial convention by the Executive Council, by petition, signed by at least one hundred (100) members, or endorsed by at least one (1) affiliated local.

Section 2. Such proposed amendments must be submitted to the President or designee at least sixty (60) days before the date set for the biennial convention. The President or designee shall communicate such proposals to all of the affiliated locals at least forty (40) days before such convention.

Section 3. Amendments to this constitution so proposed may be adopted at the convention by a majority of the votes cast.

ARTICLE IX RESOLUTIONS

Section 1. Resolutions to the biennial convention may be introduced by the Executive Council or affiliated locals. Such resolutions must be submitted to the President or designee at least sixty (60) days before the date set for the biennial convention and must bear the signatures of at least two (2) officers of the introducing authority. Such resolutions shall be promulgated to all affiliated locals at least forty (40) days before the date set for the biennial convention and shall be assigned to committees by the president, and must be submitted to the convention by the committee chairperson.

Section 2. Resolutions to the biennial convention may be introduced to committees by the chairperson of the committee. Such resolutions shall be submitted to the convention if the committee recommends favorably and may, at the discretion of the committee, be submitted to the convention if the committee recommends unfavorably.

Section 3. Resolutions to the biennial convention may be introduced by any delegate on the convention floor as a special order of business under the rules of order.

Section 4. Committees meeting at times other than the biennial convention may submit resolutions to the Executive Committee for consideration. Such resolutions must be submitted to the President at least forty (40) days before an Executive Council meeting.

Section 5. Resolutions at times other than the biennial convention may be introduced by any Executive Council representative at the Executive Council meeting as a special order of business under the rules of order.

ARTICLE X RETIREEES

Section 1. There shall be three (3) regional retiree locals, designated R locals, chartered as follows:
Northeast -- Local 279 R (Retired)
Southwest -- Local 1520 R (Retired)
Northwest -- Local 250 R (Retired)

Section 2. Each chartered retiree local shall have delegates to the biennial convention apportioned on the following basis:

- a. Locals with fewer than 500 members shall be entitled to two delegates.
- b. Locals with 500 members but fewer than 1000 members shall be entitled to three delegates.
- c. Locals with 1000 members or more shall be entitled to four delegates.
- d. Retiree locals may send alternate delegates who shall take delegate seats as assigned by the Ranking Delegate.
- e. Each of the three retiree, R delegates, shall be entitled to all rights and privileges of delegates at the biennial convention except that retiree delegates shall not be entitled to nominate any candidate for office or cast a vote in the election of officers, or cast more than one (1) vote on a roll call.
- f. Retiree delegates and alternates shall meet all credential and registration requirements of Article VII.

Section 3.

- a. Each Chartered Retiree local shall have one vote on Executive Council for the first 650 members and a total of two votes for more than 650 members.
- b. OFT-R shall have one voting member on each of the OFT Committees.

Section 4.

- a. A council of retiree locals chartered by the American Federation of Teachers within Ohio shall be established and shall be known as the Ohio Federation of Teachers-Retired. OFT-R shall consider and make recommendations to the OFT.
- b. Each chartered retiree local shall pay annual dues of \$1.00 per member per year to the OFT for membership in OFT-R.
- c. OFT-R shall meet at least twice per year as determined by the OFT president, after consultation with the presidents of the retiree locals.
- d. Each chartered retiree local shall designate representatives to OFT-R as follows:
 - i. Locals with fewer than 500 members shall be entitled to two representatives,
 - ii. Locals with 500 but fewer than 1000 members shall be entitled to three representatives,
 - iii. Locals with 1000 members or more shall be entitled to four representatives.

Retiree locals may also designate an alternate for each delegate. An alternate may attend meetings of OFT-R along with or in place of the designated representative, but shall not be entitled to vote on matters before the OFT-R unless the designated representative is not present. Locals shall submit a list of their representatives and alternates to the President or designee following the OFT Convention and may replace a representative or alternate at any time by notifying the President or designee.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I **MEETINGS**

- Section 1. The Executive Council shall meet no less than two (2) times a year at such location and on such dates as the Executive Council shall designate.
- a. Additional meetings may be held at the call of the president or at the request of the Executive Council or upon petition of five (5) or more locals.
 - b. Notice of regular meetings shall be mailed to each Executive Council member and to each local at least fourteen (14) days before such a meeting convenes.

- Section 2. A quorum of the Executive Council shall be representation by twenty-five percent (25%) of the OFT locals no more than three (3) months in arrears in the payment of full per capita dues as certified by the OFT treasurer.

ARTICLE II **NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS** **PER CAPITA DUES CHANGES**

- Section 1. In the election of officers and amendments to per capita dues, the generally elected delegates of each affiliated local union shall be entitled to cast as many votes as there are members of such affiliate as determined by the records of the treasurer based on per capita paid. The votes shall be cast by ballots which shall be presented to, and returned by, the ranking delegate or designee. The votes of a local shall be distributed as evenly as possible among its generally elected delegates at the time of voting but votes shall not be fractional.

- Section 2. The nomination and election of officers shall take place at the biennial convention.
- a. Nominations shall be made by a nominating committee selected by the president. Nominations from the floor will be accepted.
 - b. In the event of a continuing tie, after a second balloting, an election shall be determined by lot.

- Section 3. Elected officers shall assume office immediately after adjournment of the convention. In order to effect an orderly transition of governance, the president elected during the convention may request an outgoing president, treasurer or executive secretary, to serve up to six (6) weeks as consultant to the incoming counterpart officer, for which the outgoing officer shall receive twelve percent (12%) of the annual salary in effect for that office previous to the convention.

ARTICLE III
DUES

Section 1. Effective September 1, 2024, each local shall pay into the treasury of the Ohio Federation of Teachers per capita dues of \$15.96 per member per month with the following rebates:

a. Locals without bargaining rights shall pay:

First 100 members \$15.96 per member per month
101 members and over \$0.71 rebate per member per month

b. Locals with bargaining rights shall pay:

First 100 members \$15.96 per member per month
101 members and over \$1.40 rebate per member per month

c. Locals with bargaining rights that employ one or more full-time staff personnel and/or have a payroll in excess of \$90,000 per year shall pay:

First 10% of members \$15.96 per member per month
Next 90% of members \$4.19 rebate per member per month

d. Locals whose memberships are paying fair share, agency, service fees to another organization (consistent with Article III, Section 6 of the OFT Constitution), shall pay the current OFT fair share fee as established by most current fair share audit.

e. Locals shall deduct rebate when paying dues.

f. \$0.30 per member per month of this amount shall be deposited into the OFT Solidarity Fund.

Section 2. Any local more than three (3) months in arrears loses standing and vote at any meetings.

A local is automatically in good standing upon payment of all back dues.

Section 3. Dues for at-large members of the Ohio Federation of Teachers and AFT shall be the amount of per capita dues payable on such members to the AFT and the Ohio AFL-CIO. Benefits shall be determined by the President, and shall be subject to the approval of the Executive Council, and shall be submitted for approval only at times of revision.

Section 4. Locals may establish the following special classes of membership:

a. Employees who are eligible for membership whose salary is less than the beginning teacher's salary or employees whose salary is less than \$22,011, whichever salary is higher: Such locals pay per capita tax for such members at one-half the regular

rate. Effective September 1, 2024, this income threshold shall be increased on a yearly basis by a percentage equal to the public sector Employment Cost Index published by the U.S. Department of Labor.

- b. Employees earning under \$18,205: Such locals pay per capita tax for such members at one-quarter the regular rate. Effective September 1, 2024, this income threshold shall be increased on a yearly basis by a percentage equal to the public sector Employment Cost Index published by the U.S. Department of Labor.
- c. Laid-off employees or employees on unpaid leave: Such locals shall pay per capita tax for such members at the rate of \$1 per month.
- d. Employees earning under \$11,054: Such locals pay per capita tax for such members at one-eighth the regular rate. Effective September 1, 2024, this income threshold shall be increased on a yearly basis by a percentage equal to the public sector Employment Cost Index published by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Such members shall be entitled to receive full benefits of membership. Such members shall NOT be counted for any other per capita dues rebates mentioned in Article III Dues, Section 1 (e.g. will not count towards rebates of \$1.40 or \$4.19).

ARTICLE IV **COMMITTEES**

Section 1. This Federation shall have the following committees dedicated to the welfare of children, teachers and the organization, with chairpersons appointed by the president.

Budget
Career Technical Education
Communication
Community Advocates
Constitutional Amendments
Educational Issues
Higher Education
Human Rights
Legislative and School Finance
Paraprofessionals, School Related Personnel, and School Healthcare Providers
Retirement

The members of each committee shall be appointed by the O.F.T. president and shall include the president and first vice-president of O.F.T. Other than the officers, no single local shall have more than two (2) appointed members and one (1) alternate on any one (1) committee.

Section 2. Meetings of committees shall, between conventions, be called at the discretion of the president and the chairpersons.

Stipends for the chairpersons of the committees may, after recommendation of the

president and approval of the Executive Council, be established on a continuing basis, subject to periodic review.

Section 3. When committees meet at Convention additional committee members who are delegates shall be appointed by the O.F.T. president for the duration of the Convention providing that consideration has been given to the expressed choice of these delegates as indicated on committee preference forms established and promulgated for that purpose. In appointing to committees at Convention, the O.F.T. president shall not be bound by the preference forms or committee service.

ARTICLE V **OFFICIAL MILEAGE RATE**

Section 1. The official mileage rate for delegates to Executive Council, convention, committee meetings, and other meetings assigned by the president shall be the I.R.S. mileage rate.

Section 2. The full mileage rate shall be paid to officers, Executive Committee members, chairpersons of committees and to members assigned to special tasks by the president in attending Executive Committee, Executive Council, convention and any other meetings assigned within their responsibilities.

Section 3. For delegates to convention and Executive Council, O.F.T. shall pay the full mileage rate, allocating one (1) car for each local having four (4) or fewer delegates, two (2) cars for locals sending five (5) to eight (8) delegates, three (3) cars for locals sending nine (9) to twelve (12) delegates, and four (4) cars for locals sending thirteen (13) to fifteen (15) delegates, and five (5) cars for locals sending sixteen (16) or more delegates.

ARTICLE VI **DOROTHY MATHENY MEMORIAL DEFENSE FUND** **BYLAWS**

Effective January 1, 1987, each local shall pay a per capita assessment of fourteen (\$.14) cents per member per month from existing per capita. The treasurer shall deposit this per capita assessment into the Dorothy Matheny Defense Fund on a quarterly basis.

ARTICLE VII **AMENDMENTS**

Section 1. These bylaws may be amended by the same procedure by which the constitution may be amended.

ARTICLE VIII **PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

Section 1. Roberts Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern this Federation in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with procedures established in the OFT Constitution or Bylaws or approved at the biennial convention.