

Bedford Teachers' Association Bedford, New York

Campaign Rules and Elections Procedures

*Recommended by Elections Committee 4-30-2014
Approved by BTA Executive Board 5-2-2014*

Campaign Rules

General

- Privileges extended to one candidate must be extended to all.
- The union may not use any funds received from dues, assessments, or similar levies to promote any person's candidacy.
- The union and its officers may not use union resources to support a favored candidate for office over any other candidates.
- The union and its officers are prohibited from discriminating among candidates with respect to procedures and use of facilities.
- No employer may contribute cash or anything of value to the campaign of any candidate.

Distribution of Literature

The union must treat all candidates fairly. All candidates will be able to post campaign literature on the union's website from the time of solicitation of nominations until the elections are completed. The union may not censor the contents of campaign literature it is requested to post.

- The webmaster of the union's website will post one campaign statement and one photo on behalf of each candidate.
- A weekly reminder will be sent out to the membership to check the BTA Elections web page.
- All other distribution of literature shall be done at each candidate's expense.
- The union and its officers shall not provide an email listserve to candidates nor shall they distribute campaign literature or announcements by means of privileged school district distribution lists for any candidate.

Inspection of Membership Lists

Privileges extended to one candidate regarding membership lists must be extended to all candidates. Each candidate has the right, once within 30 days before the election, to inspect a list containing the names and addresses of all members of the union, and the right to copy that list. The union is required to refrain from discriminating in favor of, or against, any candidate with respect to the use of lists of union members. If one candidate is allowed to make a copy, then all candidates must be allowed to copy the lists if they so desire. The sole purpose of copying a list would be to mail campaign literature to the homes of union members.

Candidate Forums

All candidates must be treated the same in regard to the opportunity to be heard. The union may sponsor a forum (or forums) so its members can meet all candidates. The forum (or forums) must allow for all candidates to be treated in an even-handed manner with regard to notice. All candidates shall agree to established procedure in advance of a forum (or forums).

Monthly union meetings are not to be used as a forum for the candidates.

Conduct

Candidates should commit themselves not only to compliance with campaign rules and election procedures, but also to campaign standards of professionalism, decency and fairness. Candidates should assume responsibility for the work of their campaign staff and supporters; all campaign material should be expressly approved by the candidate, or carry a disclaimer indicating that it was not so approved.

Election procedures

Basic Procedures

- Local union elections must be held by secret ballot.
- All members in good standing have the right to vote, subject to reasonable rules, uniformly imposed.
- Election results must be published.
- All ballots, including used, unused, and challenged, return envelopes, tally sheets, and related election documents, must be kept for 1 year.
- Each candidate has the right to have observers at each polling place and at the vote count.
- A member may not be penalized, disciplined, or improperly interfered with in the exercise of his right to support the candidate of his choice.

Counting and Keeping the Ballots

1. Ballots shall be distributed to each building by the Elections Chair to the Elections Committee Member of that building.
2. The Elections Committee Member for the building shall be responsible for conducting the election in his or her building.
3. The ballots shall be delivered in an envelope with the names of each building member on the envelope.
4. On the day of the election, each building member shall be permitted to vote by secret ballot.
5. The completed ballot shall be returned by each voting member to the envelope. He or she shall initial on the envelope by his or her name indicating that the ballot was returned.
6. Once all ballots have been returned to the Elections Committee Member in the building, he or she shall tally them. Each candidate may be permitted to have observers at each polling place and at the counting of the ballots.
7. Upon completion of the tally at the building level, the Elections Committee Member shall return the envelopes to the Elections Chair. After the return of all envelopes to the Elections Chair, he or she shall tally the ballots from all of the buildings to determine the final tally. Each candidate may be permitted to have observers at the counting of the final tally of the ballots.
8. Election results shall be reported to the membership no later than one day after the final tally of the ballots.
9. Election results shall be published on the BTA website as well as in the minutes of the next BTA Rep Assembly.