The Constitution and By-Laws

 of the

 Red River United Local 4995

American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, Louisiana Federation of Teachers

Ratified: October 2011

Amended: February 2025

**PREAMBLE**

In order to unite the teachers and support personnel of the public education systems of Northwest Louisiana, we the members of this organization, do ordain and establish this Constitution.

This organization shall strive to promote and defend the needs, desires, and legitimate rights of this educational community. It shall endeavor to achieve the ultimate in service, benefits, and communication to its members. It shall support legislation and elected officials favorable to education and labor.

**ARTICLE I: NAME AND AFFILIATION**

Sec. 1 This organization shall be known as the Red River United, Local 4995, LFT-AFT/AFL-CIO, hereinafter referred to as “RRU.”

Sec. 2 Local 4995 shall be composed of all affiliated Federations who meet RRU membership requirements and At-Large members, who wish to affiliate with Local 4995.

Sec. 3 This organization shall maintain affiliation with the American Federation of Teachers, the Louisiana Federation of Teachers, and the AFL-CIO.

**ARTICLE II – PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

Sec. 1 To bring the members of the organization into relations of mutual assistance and cooperation.

Sec. 2 To obtain for them all the rights to which they are entitled, even to the extent of securing legislative action.

Sec. 3 To raise the standard of the education profession, and to secure public recognition of education as a profession.

Sec. 4 To cultivate social intercourse, educational interest, and professional solidarity among members.

Sec. 5 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.

Sec. 6 RRU shall:

A. Assist in carrying out the duties of the Standing Committees.

B. Provide an office for the use of the Local and affiliated Federations.

C. Provide legal assistance as follows to each Federation and its members upon approval of the Board of Directors.

D. All services of the Local shall also be available to At-Large members upon approval of the Board of Directors.

E. The Board of Directors shall have the power to carry on all the business affairs of the RRU including, without limitation, the power to do on its behalf any or all of the following:

1) to sue and be sued, complain and defend on behalf of and for the use of the RRU;

2) to employ attorneys and counselors to advise the Board of Directors, Local Executive Boards and members, and employees on all matters pertaining to its business and affairs;

3) to employ accountants, agents and other persons having skills and knowledge needed in the conduct of the business;

4) to adopt an official seal, which may be altered at pleasure, and to use the same by causing it or a facsimile thereof to be impressed or affixed or in any manner reproduced;

Sec. 7 The RRU shall:

A. Conduct representation/negotiations.

B. Handle policy violations.

C. Establish Federation By-Laws, if any, in full accordance with the Constitutions of the American Federation of Teachers, the Louisiana Federation of Teachers, and the Red River United, Local 4995.

D. Conduct any, and all, other business relating to the RRU that is not specifically delegated to the affiliated Federation.

**ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP**

1. This organization shall consist of primarily but not exclusively of employees of any school system affiliated with the RRU. Retirees as well as all regular part-time school employees may be members.
2. Employees of this organization shall be eligible for staff membership. Persons with staff membership are prohibited from seeking election to any position within the organization or any of its affiliates. However, staff members who return to the school system as a full time employee for a period of at least one year will be eligible to seek election to position within the RRU.
3. No person shall be denied membership in RRU on the basis of race, creed, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, political ideology, economic status, or national origin.
4. Membership shall consist of different units which will maintain their own autonomy. These units will include teachers/support personnel from various school systems who vote to affiliate with the RRU. To the extent that each unit negotiates separate contracts, the members of each unit will vote on their group’s contract. Members of all the units of the RRU will have identical rights and responsibilities within the RRU except as specifically provided herein.
5. A member unit may be expelled from the organization upon the bringing of written and signed charges by two (2) or more members of the RRU general membership, who shall present such charges and documentation to the RRU Board of Directors. A majority vote of the Board of Directors shall cause an expulsion hearing to be held at which the accused member unit shall have the right to examine and question the charges and be represented by a person of unit choice. At the conclusion of the hearing, a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the RRU general members present shall be required for expulsion.
6. A member unit who has been expelled may appeal the decision to the Board of Directors by requesting a vote of the general membership at the next quarterly meeting. The Board of Directors shall grant at least one (1) such request to an expelled unit per expulsion. A simple majority of members voting shall be sufficient to overrule the decision of the expulsion.

**ARTICLE IV: DUES AND FEES**

Sec. 1 The dues of RRU shall be established annually on the following factors:

a. The per capita of affiliates of RRU.

b. RRU retention as established by the RRU Board of Directors.

Sec. 2 Federation dues shall be directed to the RRU. Dues for all Federations of RRU shall be collected and maintained in one treasury. Said funds shall be disbursed by the Treasurer in a manner which shall best serve the needs of all members of the RRU.

Sec. 3 The fiscal year of this organization shall begin July 1 and end June 30 of each year.

**ARTICLE V: BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Sec. 1 The Board of Directors shall consist of elected Executive Officers and Senior Vice Presidents.

Sec. 2 The Board of Directors shall be the policy making body of the RRU.

Sec. 3. The Board of Directors shall determine the pay for the Executive Officers.

Sec. 4 All officers of the Board of Directors shall be delegates to the conventions of American Federation of Teachers, the Louisiana Federation of Teachers, and the AFL-CIO.

**ARTICLE VI: EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

Sec. 1 The Red River United Executive Officers shall consist of the following of the President, Regional Executive Officer, and Secretary-Treasurer.

Sec. 2 Executive Officers shall not serve on the Executive Board of any of the Local Federations affiliated with Red River United.

Sec. 3 Only members in good standing of any organization affiliated with Red River United for one year prior to the date of the elections shall be eligible to serve as President, Regional Executive Officer, and Secretary-Treasurer of the Red River United.

Sec. 4 The Executive Officers shall be elected by the RRU general membership to a three (3) year term by the first Tuesday of May, taking office by July 1st of the calendar year.

Sec. 5 Vacancies caused by death, resignation, or recall shall be filled by the President with the approval of the Board of Directors for the remainder of the term.

Sec. 6 Recall of an Officer shall be conducted upon presenting to the Board of Directors a petition to recall stating reason(s) and signed by Presidents of affiliated councils equaling at least 35% of the total RRU membership.

**ARTICLE VII: DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

The President shall:

1. be the chief executive officer of the RRU.
2. be the presiding officer at all meetings of the membership and the Board of Directors.
3. be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Elections Committee and the Nominating Committee.
4. appoint, with the approval of the Board of Directors, the chairs and members of all standing and special committees except the Elections Committee and the Nominating Committee.
5. be responsible for the ongoing administration of the organization.
6. supervise all employees of the organization.
7. 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.
8. represent the organization before bodies of the employer, executive and legislative officials.
9. represent the organization before bodies of the public, community organizations, and the news media.
10. be, by office, a delegate to the Central Labor Council.
11. be, by office, a delegate to the convention of the American Federation of Teachers and meetings or conventions of its affiliated subordinate bodies.
12. make an annual report to the membership of the organization.
13. be able to delegate the responsibilities of the office except where otherwise specified by the constitution.

The Regional Executive Officer shall:

1. serve as the President’s designee as appointed.
2. serve as President in the event that the President is unable to complete the full term of office.
3. be one of the responsible financial officers of the organization and be authorized to co-sign financial instrument and make regular and usual disbursement of funds.
4. collaborate with other educational organizations to influence educational policy at local, state, and national levels.
5. foster relationships with community organizations, parents, and stakeholders to promote the union's goals and enhance public support for education.
6. stay informed about local, state, and federal legislation affecting education and advocate on behalf of members regarding these issues.
7. regularly report back on progress, issues, and the status of negotiations or initiatives.
8. participate in long-term planning for the union’s goals, including setting priorities and strategies for advocacy and member engagement.
9. perform other duties as delegated by the President or assigned by the Board of Directors.

The Secretary-Treasurer shall:

1. serve as the President’s designee as appointed.
2. record and keep accurate minutes of meetings of the membership, and the Executive Board.
3. assist the President in handling the correspondence of the organization.
4. receive and certify the reports of the Elections Committee.
5. receive, record and deposit all dues monies and other income in the name of the organization.
6. maintain accurate membership records.
7. issue membership cards and notices of delinquency.
8. be one of the responsible financial officers of the organization and be authorized to co-sign financial instrument and make regular and usual disbursement of funds.
9. maintain all financial records of the organization.
10. arrange for an independent audit of the finances of the organization annually and make available to the Board of Directors and Membership.
11. transmit per capita payments on a regular basis to the Secretary- Treasurer of the American Federation of Teachers and similar officer of affiliates, other bodies with which the organization is affiliated.
12. chair the Budget Committee
13. perform duties of the office as required by the Labor- Management Reporting and Disclosure Act.
14. perform other duties as delegated by the President or assigned by the Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE VIII: SENIOR VICE PRESIDENTS**
Each Local Federation President affiliated with Red River United shall hold the title of Senior Vice President by virtue of their position as Local President.

**ARTICLE IX: DUTIES OF SENIOR VICE PRESIDENTS**

Senior Vice Presidents shall:

1. serve as the policy making body of the RRU.
2. serve as the representatives for their Local Federations.
3. establish pay for the Executive Officers.
4. perform other duties as delegated by the President or assigned by the Board of Directors.
5. serve as delegates to the conventions of American Federation of Teachers, the Louisiana Federation of Teachers, and the AFL-CIO.

**ARTICLE X: MEETINGS**

Section 1: The Executive Board shall meet at least four times during the school year. Special meetings of the Executive Board may be called by the President or by a majority of the Board of Directors petitioning the President.

Section 2. A quorum for doing business of the Board of Directors shall consist of the President and his/her designee and fifty percent (50%) of the membership of the Board of Directors.

Section 3. Meeting of the membership may be called by:

A. The President

B. Petition of 10% of the membership of RRU

**ARTICLE XI: COMMITTEES**

Sec. 1 The following shall be considered as Standing Committees: Communications, Constitution/Policy, Defense, ER&D, Labor, Legislative, Membership, and Steering.

 Sec. 2 Any other committees shall be considered Special Committees.

Sec. 3 All committees shall be appointed by the President with approval of the Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE XII: ELECTIONS**

Sec. 1 Elections shall be held not later than the first Tuesday in May, and officers shall assume office not later than July 1.

Sec. 2 The Board of Directors shall appoint an Elections Committee, which shall have the power and authority to nominate candidates for all offices and to draft proposed Rules governing the conduct of elections, and the authority to propose amendments to the Rules.

Sec. 3 No member of the Elections Committee shall be a candidate for any elected position.

Sec. 4 All Election Rules and amendments shall be subject to approval by the Board of Directors. Elections shall be conducted according to procedures established by the Elections Committee approved by the Board of Directors.

Sec. 5 The election of all Executive Officers shall be by secret ballot.

Sec. 6 Election results shall be tabulated and published within three (3) days of the election. The elected officers shall assume their duties not later than July 1st of that calendar year.

**ARTICLE: XIII: AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION or BY-LAWS**

1. An amendment to the RRU Constitution may be proposed at any regular or special Board of Directors Meeting either by a member unit in good standing or by a member of the Executive Board.
2. A proposed amendment must pass a vote by a simple majority of those Board of Directors Members present.
3. The RRU Constitution may be amended in a referendum of the members by a two-thirds majority of votes cast or in a general membership meeting by a simple majority. Notice of the proposed amendment(s) shall be given to all members at least one month in advance of the vote.
4. The Board of Directors shall set the date and establish the procedures for the referendum/meeting on the proposed amendment.

**ARTICLE XIV: RULES OF ORDER**

Robert’s Rules of Order revised shall govern the conduct of all meetings of all bodies of the RRU except as otherwise provided in the Constitution or By-Laws.