

THE BAHAMAS UNION OF TEACHERS

HANDBOOK

FOR

MEMBERS

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VISION

To provide top quality representation to all members of the PROFESSIONS of PROFESSIONS and all workers in the Education Sector in The Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

MISSION

To increase the level of membership satisfaction with living standards, the quality of the work life, and with the quality of service and benefits provided by their union; to promote continuous improvements in the delivery of quality education; and to reposition the BUT to propel its development, and to maximize operational efficiency.

Strategic Goals

2002-2005

1. To improve the status of teachers in conformity with the **ILO/UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers** by negotiating the establishment of the first Comprehensive Collective Bargaining Agreement for public school teachers, guidance counsellors and administrators, and promoting the implementation of the Teaching Service Commission and its entrenchment in the constitution of The Bahamas.
2. To expand the BUT=s membership base by organizing the entire education sector in The Bahamas.
3. To promote continuous improvements in the delivery of quality education by establishing a dynamic Professional Development Division including Special Subject Councils, and establishing an effective Research and Development department.
4. To maintain cutting-edge status in education, teaching and trade unionism through a dynamic membership education and leadership training programme, and by harnessing improvements in Information and Communications Technology.
5. To redevelop the BUT=s properties in Grand Bahama and New Providence to increase revenue, provide for expansion and to add value to the image of the Profession of Professions and the BUT.
6. To empower members and the BUT through an investment programme which allows members to participate in both the allocation of capital and the distribution of profits.
7. To expand the menu of membership services and benefits to meet growing demand.
8. To establish and maintain the most effective communications system possible to consistently meet the information needs of our various publics and to encourage critical feedback from them.

- 9.** To provide opportunities for members to fraternize, and to bond and develop as professionals.
- 10.** To maximize operational efficiency at all levels.
- 11.** To develop and sponsor outreach programmes targeting the youth.

THE **CONSTITUTION**

RULES AND REGULATIONS

OF

THE BAHAMAS UNION OF TEACHERS

Rule1.0 Name

1.1 The name of the Union shall be "**The Bahamas Union of Teachers**" (hereinafter referred to as the Union) The registered office of the Union will be located in a two-storey building in Stapledon Gardens, the address of which is 104, Bethel Avenue, Stapledon Gardens, Nassau; P.O. Box N-3482, Telephone Numbers: 323-4491, 323-7085 or 356-2687, and 323-7086 (fax).

Rule 2.0 Objectives

2.1 The objects of the Union shall be as follows:

2.1.1 To secure the organization of all persons qualified for membership in the Union and generally to foster unity among the teachers of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

2.1.2 To promote better educational standards in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas and to encourage higher professional standards among teachers.

2.1.3 To encourage good relations among all teachers, between teachers and the Ministry of Education, or other governmental authorities, or governing bodies, and to act as a liaison where necessary, or desirable, between teachers and their governing bodies.

2.1.4 To obtain a just and fair scale of salaries for teachers and to obtain other conditions of service favourable to members, and generally, to protect the interests of members, individually and collectively.

2.1.5 To provide or secure for members, any or all of the following benefits and such other as the Executive Committee or the Annual General Meeting (AGM) may decide:

- (a) Relief in sickness, accident, disablement, distress and unemployment.
- (b) Protection and relief in the case of victimization.

2.1.6 To promote legislation which is in the interest of its members

2.1.7 To provide grants and endowments, including scholarships, to members or their children, and to colleges or other institutions having among their objects, the education of teachers.

2.1.8 To transact insurance business, including insurance under any National Health Insurance and the Unemployed Insurance Acts, if and when enacted by legislation.

2.1.9 To promote the material, social and educational welfare of the members in any lawful manner, which the Annual General Meeting or the Executive Committee may, from time to time, deem expedient.

2.1.10 In order to achieve the above objects, the Union shall have the power, in addition to any other powers given them by law, or by these rules, to impose such restraints upon the service of Members as it may deem expedient.

2.1.11 In particular the Union shall have the power to provide funds by subscriptions, levies, or otherwise, as the Union or the Executive Committee may direct, for maintaining all or some of the benefits from time to time authorized in the opinion of the Union or the Executive Committee, that may be deemed necessary to further the interests of the Union. No levy shall be imposed until a vote of Members concerned has been taken by secret ballot.

2.2 The Union shall have the power:

2.2.1 To hold, purchase, lease, mortgage or otherwise deal with land.

2.2.2 To erect and furnish such buildings as may be considered necessary or desirable.

2.2.3 To raise funds by borrowing money on any real or personal property of the Union, or by levies on its members or any class thereof.

Rule 3.0 Membership

3.1 Membership shall be open to all practising teachers in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

3.1.1 The Annual General Meeting shall set the membership dues rate. The Membership dues rate shall be published in the Governance Manual.

- 3.1.2** Any member who has held membership in the Union for a total of 40 years, shall be exempted from paying dues. He/she shall be entitled to all benevolent benefits of the Union.
- 3.1.3** The Union shall operate a Group Insurance Plan on behalf of its members and employees. The payment of premiums shall be the responsibility of the members and employees concerned. The Union shall contract the services of a reputable Insurance company with competitive premium rates as the carrier for the Group Insurance Plan.
- 3.1.4** No member shall be entitled to benevolent benefits until that member shall have been enrolled as a _____ member for a period of not less than three (3) months, and is financial.
- 3.1.5** Any member having an interest in the funds of the Union may inspect the books of the Union, and _____ the names of the Members at any place where the same are kept.

Rule 4.0 Constitution and Government

- 4.1** The Supreme authority of the Union shall be vested in the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of members, and subject to that authority, the Union shall be governed by the Executive Committee.
- 4.2** The rules of procedure and debate governing meetings of the Union will be those of the Roberts Rules of Order.

Rule 5.0 Annual General Meeting

- 5.1** The Annual General Meeting shall be held during the Summer Vacation of each year and Twenty-eight (28) clear days notice must be given.
- 5.2** A Special or Emergency General Meeting may be held at such times as the Executive Committee or the President may decide. They shall have the same power as the Annual General Meeting.
- 5.3** On the written application of not less than 15% of the financial members of the Union, the President, or any other officer acting in such capacity, can summon a Special General Meeting. The application for such a meeting must state the object(s) for requesting such a meeting, and no other business shall be discussed at such a meeting.
- 5.4** At least one District Membership Meeting shall be held in Nassau and Freeport each school term. A notice specifying the date and place of the meeting shall be given at least seven (7) clear days prior thereto.

5.5 The quorum at all meetings of the Union, except for Executive Meetings and Special General Meetings called under Article 5 (c) shall be 50, numerically or a representation thereof.

Rule 6.0 Business of The Annual General Meeting

- 6.1** The business of the Annual General Meeting shall be to receive reports from the Executive Committee, to review the past year's work of the Union, plan future tasks, and to consider all matters upon the Annual General Meeting=s Agenda.
- 6.2** The Annual General Meeting shall have the power to approve proposed amendments to the constitution for inclusion on the ballot for a referendum.
- 6.3** The Executive Committee shall ensure that a national poll is conducted to allow the membership to ratify each approved amendment. The vote to ratify the amendments must be taken no later than one hundred and twenty (120) days after the Annual General Meeting. Only amendments which receive a two thirds majority vote shall become a part of the constitution (**This rule is subject to the provisions of the Industrial Relations Act 1970 and its amendments 1979**).

Rule 7.0 Agenda of the Annual General Meeting

- 7.1 Resolutions for discussion at the Annual General Meeting, motions for amendment, of the rules, etc. shall be sent to the Secretary General not later than twenty-eight (28) clear days before the opening of the Annual General Meeting.
- 7.2 The Secretary General shall prepare an Agenda of the Annual General Meeting including resolutions, motions for amendment of the rules, etc. and any other business before the opening of the Meeting.
- 7.3 The Executive Committee shall decide on the date of the Annual General Meeting.

Rule 8.0 Executive Committee

The government of the Union in the periods between Annual General Meetings and the conduct of its business shall be vested in the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee shall be comprised of:

8.2.1 the President, Vice President, Secretary General, Treasurer, Two Trustees, and Five Executive Members who shall be elected in a national poll.

8.2.2 the Area Vice President, Grand Bahama District; the Area Vice President, New Providence District, Area Vice President, Northern Bahamas District (Abaco, Andros, Berry Islands, Bimini, Eleuthera, Harbour Island and Spanish Wells); and the Area Vice President, Southern Bahamas District (Acklins, Crooked Island, Long Cay, Cat Island, Exuma, Inagua, Long Island, Mayaguana, Ragged Island, San Salvador and Rum Cay) who shall be elected in district polls.

- a. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once monthly. Seven (7) members shall form a quorum. Five (5) clear days notice must be given by the Secretary by post or press announcement or any other satisfactory means.
- b. In the event of the death, resignation or dismissal of a member of the Executive Committee, the vacancy shall be filled by secret ballot vote at the normal time of Union elections, except in the case where the death, resignation or dismissal occurs six (6) months prior to regularly scheduled elections. If the death, resignation or dismissal of an executive in any period six (6) months or less prior to a regularly scheduled election, the vacancy may be filled temporary by secret ballot vote by the Executive Committee. In every other case, a special election may be held.
- c. The Executive Committee shall do its best to attain the objects of the Union and shall take any necessary steps to protect its funds against extravagance or misappropriation.
- d. The Executive Committee shall give instructions to the Secretary General and other officers for the conduct of the Union. It may appoint such organizer(s) and such clerical staff as it may consider necessary. It may suspend or dismiss any member of the clerical staff for neglect of duty, dishonesty, incompetence, refusal to carry out the decisions of the Executive Committee, or for any other reason which it deems good and sufficient in the interests of the Union. It should give instructions to the trustees regarding the investment of the funds of the Union.
- e. The Executive Committee may fine any member who is proved, to the satisfaction of the Executive Committee to have been guilty of conduct contrary to the Code of Ethics of The Bahamas Union of Teachers, a sum not exceeding \$100.00 or may expel such member from the Union. Any member so fined, or expelled, shall have the right to appeal to an Appeals Committee, and finally to the Annual General Meeting whose decisions shall be final. Such a member shall have the right of having someone defend him/her.
- f. The decisions of the Executive shall be binding on all members of the Union until such decisions are changed at an Ordinary Meeting or Annual or Special General Meeting.
- g. Between meetings of the Annual General Meeting, the Executive Committee shall interpret the rules, where necessary, and determine any point on which the rules are silent.

8.10.1 The Executive Committee shall direct how the surplus funds (if any) of the Union shall be invested.

8.10.2 Such funds shall be invested in the joint names of the Trustees for and on behalf of the Union for the time being in such Public stock, Government Securities, or other trustee investments as the Executive Committee may deem fit. Surplus funds shall be all funds in excess of those approved in the budget.

1.11 The Trustees acting upon the decision of the Executive Committee shall have the power to raise or borrow money on any of the properties or securities of the Union by way of mortgage or otherwise in such manner as they shall think fit, and after every such transaction, the body should be duly informed.

1.12 Any member of the Executive Committee who is absent for three consecutive meetings, without a satisfactory excuse, shall automatically cease to be a member of the Executive Committee.

8.13 In addition to any express powers in these Rules provided, the Executive Committee shall have the power generally to carry on the business of the Union and may delegate such of their powers to the Secretary General as they may deem necessary; and do such things and authorize such acts, including the payment of monies on behalf of the Union as they in the general interest of the Union may deem expedient. They shall have power at any time to negotiate on any matters concerning the interest of the teaching profession generally, and to conclude agreements with persons and associations not members of the Union. They shall have the power to sanction the payments of monies, authorize payments, make levies generally, or for particular purposes or districts and generally within the Rules and other standing decisions of the Annual General Meeting and the Appeals Committee, to decide the policy of the Union.

8.13.1 The Executive Committee alone shall have the power to sanction payment of benefits with respect to any strike (other than a strike involving the whole of the Members of the Union) and in respect of any lock-out. They shall have power to expend monies on any of the purposes authorized by these Rules, or on any other purpose, which, in their opinion, is expedient in the interests of the Union and its Members, including the right to expend monies on legal assistance of the Members or Officers, whether in bringing or defending actions or persecutions arising out of or in the course of their employment, other legal actions as in their opinion may be necessary to protect the interests of the Union. They may likewise institute or defer or authorize the Trustees to institute or defend legal proceedings against persons who are Members of the Union, only where such proceedings arise out of or during the course of their employment. They may send delegates or deputations to represent the Union for any purpose they think fit.

8.13.2 The Executive Committee shall have the power to suspend, or expel, any Member, whether temporarily or permanently for such reasons and on such terms as they may deem expedient, and their decisions save as herein provided shall be final and conclusive for all purposes, provided that every such Member shall have the right within four (4) weeks of the date of the receipt notification of the decision of the Executive Committee to give notice of appeal and to appeal to the Appeals Committee.

Rule 9.0 Elections

- 1.1 All members of the Executive Committee shall be elected triennially and shall serve for a period of three (3) years. The national poll and the four (4) district polls shall be conducted at the same time.
- 1.2 Nominations for officers of the Union shall be made in the month of March of the year in which elections are held. All nominations shall be made on the official Union nomination forms and must be signed by the member being nominated and counter-signed by five (5) financial members of the Union. Nomination forms must be delivered or sent to the Secretary General and where forms are posted, must bear a post mark dated on or before 12 midnight March 31st to be valid. All candidates shall be notified of the receipt of their nominations.
- 1.3 The Candidates Committee shall be appointed by the Annual General Meeting held during the year before elections. All members shall serve for a period of three (3) years. The Candidates Committee shall submit a report to the Annual General Meeting. In the event of a bye-election, the Candidates Committee shall reconvene to approve the list of candidates who are eligible to contest the bye-elections. (The Candidates Committee for the 2002 Elections shall be appointed by the Special General Meeting on January 26th 2002. It shall be disbanded at the 55th AGM).
- 9.4 The members of the Candidates Committee shall be elected by secret ballot vote at the Annual General Meeting. The Candidates Committee shall comprise of four (4) members, one from each of the four (4) districts. The members of the Candidates Committee shall elect a Chairman from among them. No member of the Candidates Committee shall be eligible to contest an election or bye-election. Only rank and file members shall be eligible for membership on the Candidates Committee. The procedure for the nomination of members to the Candidates Committee shall be as outlined in article 11.71 of the Governance Manual.
- 9.5 Any member of the Union may nominate for any position on the Executive Committee. The Candidates Committee shall approve the list of candidates in accordance with the criteria outlined in Rule 9.6. The Chairman of the Candidates Committee shall present a copy of **The Approved List of Candidates** to the Secretary General by April 15th in an election year. The Secretary General shall publish the list.
- 9.6 The criteria for determining the eligibility of a candidate to contest an election are as follows:
- **Executive Member:** the candidate must be a member in good standing for at least three (3) years.
 - **Trustee:** the candidate must be a member in good standing for at least three (3) years.
 - **Area Vice President:** the candidate must be a member in good standing for at least three (3) years and have at least two (2) years experience as a Shop Steward or equivalent.
 - **Treasurer:** the candidate must be a member in good standing for at least three (3) years, have at least two (2) years experience as a Shop Steward or equivalent and he/she must demonstrate to the Candidates Committee a strong interest in the effective management of the Union=s finances. Training and/or experience in financial management is preferred.
 - **Secretary General:** the candidate must be a member in good standing for at least three (3) years, have at least two (2) years experience as a Shop Steward or equivalent and

training and/or experience in administration or management. Additionally he/she must demonstrate to the Candidates Committee that he/she has the ability to direct the operations of the Union effectively.

– **Vice President:** the candidate must be a member in good standing for at least three (3) years and have at least two (2) years experience as a Shop Steward or equivalent. He/she must demonstrate to the Candidates Committee a strong interest in directing the Professional Development activities of the Union.

– **President:** the candidate must be a member in good standing for at least three (3) years, have at least two (2) years experience as a Shop Steward or equivalent, and have leadership training and/or experience. He/she must demonstrate to the Candidates Committee that he/she has a vision for promoting the continuing development of the Union.

9.7 All candidates must submit the following **nomination papers** to the Secretary General at the time of nominations:

– A completed **nomination form**,

– **A resume** which includes information on all items in the set of criteria for the position

– **A Candidate=s Statement of Intent Form.**

– The Secretary General shall supply the Chairman of the **Candidates Committee** with relevant information including copies of **nomination forms**, **Candidate=s resumes**, **Candidate=s Statements of Intent Forms**, and **job descriptions** for all positions. The **Candidates Committee** shall use such information to assist it with its work.

9.8 The **Candidates Committee** shall have the prerogative to interview ALL candidates for any position.

9.9 In the event that the Candidates Committee cannot endorse any candidate for a position, it shall recommend to the Secretary General the names of at least three (3) members who are eligible for the position. The Secretary General shall distribute **Late Nomination Forms** to the members concerned. Late nominations must be received by the Secretary General by April 30th. The Secretary General shall amend the Approved List of Candidates to accommodate late nominations. He/she must publish **The Amended List of Candidates**.

9.10 The Candidates Committee shall endorse the names of all candidates who meet the minimum criteria for the position as outlined in 9.6 above. Only the names of the candidates endorsed by the Candidates Committee shall appear on the ballot for that position. The names of any candidate whose appeal was upheld by the **Elections Commission** shall also appear on the ballot.

9.11 Any candidate whose name was not endorsed by the Candidates Committee may appeal to the Elections Commission by April 30th. The Elections Commission shall make a determination by May 15th. The decision of the Elections Commission shall be final.

9.12 The Secretary General shall further amend **The Approved List of Candidates** (when necessary) to facilitate a ruling by the Ethics Committee on an appeal from a Candidate. The Secretary General shall publish **The Final List of Candidates**.

9.13 The Executive Committee shall facilitate the work of the **Candidate=s Committee**.

9.14 Elections shall be held during the second or third week of June, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. and voting stations shall be established on each island in appropriate numbers. Voting stations shall be supplied with a list of financial members voting at that station, and ballots bearing the names of all duly nominated candidates.

9.15 Only financial members of the Union will be allowed to vote, and members will be required to provide proof of membership in the Union.

9.16 Newly elected officers will assume the duties of office on the evening of the last day of the Annual General Meeting.

9.17 If 50% of the members sign a petition asking for the recall of any member of the Executive, the member named shall resign, and an election will be called to fill the vacancy created by the resignation. A petition of recall shall state the grounds on which the recall is being requested.

9.17.1 An Executive Officer who nominates for another position on the Executive Committee in a bye-election shall resign his/her position effective the day nominations close.

9.17.2 A District Steward, Branch Officer, Shop Steward or Assistant Shop Steward who nominates for a position on the Executive Committee in an election or bye-election shall resign his/her position effective the day nominations close.

9.18 The Elections Commission shall be appointed by the Annual General Meeting immediately preceding an election year. It shall comprise of three members who shall be elected by secret ballot. The Elections Commission shall elect a Chairman, and all members shall serve for a period of three (3) years (The Elections Commission for the 2001-2005 period shall be appointed by the Special General Meeting on October 19th, 2002).

9.18.1 The Elections Commission shall:

- Determine appeals from candidates which are received by April 30th in an election year.
- Make its determination by May 15th and inform the Candidate and the Secretary General of its decision immediately.
- Address complaints about the election process which are referred to it in writing by union members. It shall respond to each complaint in writing, and copy the Secretary General.
- Advise members protesting election results to refer their complaints to the Director of Labour.
- Refer ethical issues to the Ethics Committee.

9.18.2 The Executive Committee shall facilitate the work of the Elections Commission.

9.18.3 Membership on the Elections Commission shall not be open to Executive Officers, Members of the Candidates Committee, Members of the Ethics Committee, Shop Stewards, District Stewards, Assistant Shop Stewards or Family Island Branch Officers.

9.18.4 A member may appeal a decision of the Elections Commission to the Appeals Committee.

9.18.5 The procedure for the nomination of members to the Elections Commission shall be as outlined in article 11.71 of the Governance Manual.

Rule 10.0 Appeals Committee

- 1.1 The Appeals Committee shall consist of three Members of the Union, elected at a Meeting of the Union.
- 1.2 Notice of Appeal against Executive decisions under Section 8(g) by the party aggrieved shall be handed to the Committee at the conclusion of the hearing of the charge against him/her, and the appeal shall be heard and determined within twenty-one (21) days of such Notice of Appeal.
- 1.3 The party aggrieved shall lodge with the Secretary General within five days (5) the grounds of the Appeal.
- 1.4 A Member may appeal to the Annual General Meeting from a decision of the Appeals Committee.
- 1.5 No Member of the Appeals Committee shall be a member of the Executive Committee.

Rule 11.0 Standing Committees

- 11.1** Standing Committees, which shall consist of persons selected from among the members of the Union shall be appointed when deemed necessary. Such committees shall act in an advisory capacity to the Executive, but a member of the Executive committee shall not be precluded from membership on such committees. The President shall be an ex-officer member of all committees.

Rule 12.0 Duties and Responsibilities of Executive Officers

- 12.1** The President shall be elected by secret ballot vote and shall serve for a period of three years. He/she shall be eligible for re-election. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Union and the Executive Committee. The President shall be responsible for the proper conduct of business at all such meetings. He/she shall have a casting vote. He/she shall sign the minutes of each meeting at the time they are approved. In conjunction with the Vice President, Secretary General and Treasurer, he/she shall superintend the general

administration of the affairs of the Union and shall endeavour to secure the observation of these rules by all concerned.

- 12.2** The Vice President shall be elected triennially by secret ballot vote and shall assist the President in the performance of his/her duties and in the absence of the President shall perform the duties of the office. He/she shall be eligible for re-election. In the absence of the President & Vice President a chairman shall be elected by the members to preside.
- 12.3** The Area Vice President - Grand Bahama District shall be elected triennially by secret ballot vote by the members of the Grand Bahama District. He/She shall have responsibility for the effective functioning of the Grand Bahama District, and will be answerable to the Executive Committee, and shall have the right to vote at all Executive Meetings.
- 12.4** The Area Vice President - New Providence District shall be elected triennially by secret ballot vote by the members of the New Providence District. He/She shall have responsibility for the effective functioning of the New Providence District and will be answerable to the Executive Committee, and shall have the right to vote at all Executive Meetings.
- 12.5** The Area Vice President - Northern Bahamas District shall be elected triennially by secret ballot vote by the members of the Northern Bahamas District. He/She shall be responsible for the effective functioning of the Northern Bahamas District, and will be answerable to the Executive Committee, and shall have the right to vote at all Executive Meetings.
- 12.6** The Area Vice President - Southern Bahamas District shall be elected triennially by secret ballot vote by the members of the Southern Bahamas District. He/She shall have responsibility for the effective functioning of the Southern Bahamas District, and will be answerable to the Executive Committee, and shall have the right to vote at all Executive Meetings.
- 12.7** The Secretary General shall be elected triennially by secret ballot vote and shall be subject to suspension or dismissal at a Special or Annual General Meeting. He shall be eligible for re-election.
- 12.7.1** He shall conduct the business of the Union in accordance with the rules and shall carry out the instructions of the Annual General Meeting and of the Executive Committee and shall record the Minutes, and shall have the right to speak and vote. He shall prepare the Annual Report for the Annual General Meeting.
- 12.7.2** He shall send to the Director of Labour who is the Registrar of Trade Unions a copy of all alterations of rules and new rules and changes of officers during the year and a copy of the rules as they exist at that date, and a list of Members in good standing.
- 12.7.3** He shall ensure that all monies paid to the Union shall be received and handed over to the Treasurer to be deposited in the Union's Bank Account.

12.8 The Treasurer shall be elected by secret ballot vote. He/she shall be eligible for re-election. The Treasurer OR the Secretary General, AND the President OR the Vice President shall sign cheques on behalf of the Union. He/she shall work closely with the Secretary General to ensure that the Union=s funds are effectively managed, an efficient accounting system is maintained, the payment of benefits are proper and legal requirements are complied with.

12.8.1 The Treasurer shall cause to be kept, true accounts of the Union, and shall cause to be made such payments as the Executive Committee may direct, and shall cause to be lodged, all monies received by the Union into a Bank to be named by the Union. He/she shall produce such books, vouchers and documents as may be required by the Executive Committee. He/she shall cause to be prepared and presented to the Secretary General for submission to the Executive at their monthly meetings and at the end of each financial year proper accounts of income and expenditures of the Union during the period of review, and shall give such assistance to the Auditors of the Union as they shall require. He/she shall cause to be made proper disbursements of benefits and shall be legally responsible for all monies passing through his/her hands.

12.9 Any officer whose duties call for full-time or part-time services on behalf of the Union, may be paid a salary. Such salary is to be determined by the Executive Committee.

12.10 Any officer whose duties involve financial responsibility shall provide such security as the Executive Committee may require.

Rule 13.0 Audit, and Inspection of Books

13.1 The Accounts of the Union shall be audited annually and it shall be the duty of the Executive Committee to cause such audit to be made.

13.2 Every member having an interest in the funds of the Union may inspect the books, receipts, loan statements, fixed deposits, share accounts, credit card statements and the names of the members of the Union with an appointment by the Secretary General.

Rule 14.0 Trustees

1.1 The **TWO** Trustees under Rule 8(b) shall be elected triennially by secret ballot. The Executive Committee shall appoint one Trustee as Chairman of the **Internal Audit Committee**. The Internal Audit Committee shall comprise of the Trustees.

1.2 They shall have vested in them all the real and personal estate whatever belonging to the Union, and they shall deal with it in such a way as the Executive Committee may direct.

1.3 A Trustee may be removed from Office by the Annual General Meeting on the grounds of owing to ill-health, unsoundness of mind, removal from the country or for any other reason he/she is unable or unsuitable to perform the duties of his/her office.

1.4 In the event of the death, resignation or removal of a Trustee, the Office shall be filled temporarily by the Executive Committee.

Rule 15.0 Educational Work

15.1 The Union may undertake the education of its members through meetings, classes and monthly bulletins reporting the monthly activities of the Union. Furthermore, it may publish literature and take such other actions as will promote their industrial, cultural and social knowledge.

Rule 16.0 Arrears

16.1 Members who are more than three (3) months in arrears of contributions shall not be entitled to any Union benefits.

Rule 17.0 Dissolution

17.1 The Union shall not be dissolved, except with the consent of five-sixths of the membership of the Union present, and voting by means of a ballot.

17.2 Such dissolution can only be decided by a Special General Meeting summoned for this special purpose and fifteen clear days notice shall be given to all members.

17.3 In the event of the Union being dissolved as provided above, all debts and liabilities legally incurred on behalf of the Union shall be fully discharged, and the remaining funds divided amongst the members in proportion to their total contributions to the Fund over their Membership period. Upon the completion of such division the Union shall be dissolved.

Rule 18.0 Family Island Branches

1.1 The Union shall establish branches in all Family Islands except Grand Bahama. The single island districts - Grand Bahama and New Providence shall have District Councils. The District Council shall comprise of the Area Vice President, District Stewards, Shop Stewards and Assistant Shop Stewards.

- 1.2 The Family Island Branch Executive shall comprise of all Shop Stewards and Assistant Shop Stewards in the Branch. The Branch Executive shall elect a Chairperson, and a Secretary/Treasurer.
- 1.3 Elections for Family Island Branch Officers shall be held biannually, on the third Friday of September, at the Branches= Annual General Meetings. Voting shall be by secret ballot.
- 1.4 The Grand Bahama District, the New Providence District and the Branches in the Northern Bahamas and the Southern Bahamas Districts shall be entitled to use up to \$2.00 per member per month to defray the cost of district or branch operations.

18.5 The Family Island Branch shall attempt to raise funds locally, all of which can be used to the advantage of the local members.

18.5.1 The Family Island Branch should attempt to hold monthly general membership meetings.

18.5.2 The quorum for all Family Island Branch Meetings shall be 15% where the number of financial members in the Branch exceed 50 and 25% where the number of financial members in the Branch is less than 50.

18.6 Each Family Island Branch should prepare an annual report of its activities, for consideration at the Annual General Meeting.

Rule 19.0 Governance

19.1 Policies and procedures designed to enhance good governance shall be established by the Annual General Meeting and shall be contained in the Governance Manual. The Governance Manual is intended to complement the Constitution, therefore, none of its policies and procedures may contravene the constitution. Any policy or procedure found to be in contravention of the constitution shall be deemed null and void and of no effect.

GOVERNANCE MANUAL

RESOLUTION

Whereas there is no written set of guidelines for Executives, Branch officers, Shop Stewards and Assistant Shop Stewards to follow while performing their duties, and

Whereas the absence of established policies and procedures to standardize the performance of union leaders, impacts negatively on productivity and efficiency, and

Whereas all progressive organizations require the said written guidelines to maximize goal accomplishment, enhance development, and indeed to survive,

Be it resolved that this Special General Meeting approves this GOVERNANCE MANUAL as the set of guidelines which will govern the conduct of Executives, Branch Officers, District Stewards, Shop Stewards and Assistant Shop Stewards in the execution of their duties.

Be it further resolved that the approved GOVERNANCE MANUAL be implemented immediately.

Approved by an overwhelming majority vote at a SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING held at the South Ocean Beach Resort, November 11-12, 1994.

Kingsley L. Black
President

Errol McPhee
Secretary General

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INTRODUCTION

Successful organizations all have at least one thing in common: a set of clearly defined guidelines to assist organizational members - managers and employees, achieve their stated goals and objectives efficiently. The policies and procedures set out below are intended to establish standards for the President, Executives, Branch Chairpersons, Branch Officers, District Stewards, Shop Stewards and Assistant Shop Stewards to follow while performing their various duties. Union employees have been guided by the B.U.T. Secretariat Policies and Procedures Manual for years while the leadership of the union has been observing undocumented traditions for decades. This document seeks to fill that void.

The Bahamas Union of Teachers is destined to ascend to greater heights. Therefore it is critically essential that the President, Executives, Branch Officers and Shop Stewards ensure that their performances are in accordance with these guidelines.

Kingsley L. Black
President

1.0 THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- 1.1 The Annual General Meeting (A.G.M.) shall be held in accordance with Rule 5 of the Constitution.
- 1.2 Departmental reports shall be included on the agenda. Each Executive Director (Executive responsible for a department) shall present a report on departmental activities for the period under review (July to June).
- 1.3 Family Island Branch Chairpersons and New Providence Shop Stewards shall present reports on their Branch/School to the A.G.M.
- 1.4 All reports presented to the A.G.M. must be in writing. Delegates are entitled to copies of each report.
- 1.5 Delegates to the A.G.M. shall be as follows:
- (a) All Executive Officers
 - (b) All Branch Chairpersons and Senior Shop Stewards
 - (c) All Shop Stewards
 - (d) All Assistant Shop Stewards
 - (e) Membership Group:
 - (i) Grand Bahama and New Providence Districts:
 - _ Schools with 50 members or less - 2 official delegates
 - _ Schools with more than 50 members - 3 official delegates
 - (iii) Northern Bahamas and Southern Bahamas Districts:
 - _ Branches with 50 members or less - 2 official delegates
 - _ Branches with more than 50 members - 3 official delegates
- 1.6 Each Family Island shall be entitled to at least one official delegate.
- 1.7 Grand Bahama and New Providence delegates must be democratically selected by members working at the particular school under the supervision of the Shop Steward.
- 1.8 Delegates from a Family Island district must be democratically selected by the members of the Branch under the supervision of the Branch Chairperson.
- 1.9 Any member may attend the A.G.M. as an observer. Observers are entitled to participate in debating any issue before the A.G.M. but they are not allowed to vote since official delegates vote on their behalf.
- 1.10 An official delegate may present an item to the A.G.M. for consideration to be included on the agenda at least 24 hours before it is due to be discussed. Proposed amendments to the constitution shall not be considered.
- 1.11 The union shall be responsible for financing the attendance of official delegates to the A.G.M. whenever inter-island travel is involved. The cost of return fare accommodations

and per diem shall be borne by the union. Per diem shall be paid at the rate of \$15.00 per day. Delegates must attend at least 90% of the sessions to be eligible for reimbursement.

1.12 The A.G.M. shall approve all expenditures exceeding two hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000.00).

1.13 The Executive Committee shall facilitate the implementation of A.G.M. directives as far as resources permit. It shall provide sound reasons to explain why an A.G.M. directive was not carried out.

1.14 The venue for the next A.G.M. shall be approved by majority vote at the A.G.M.

2.0 DISTRIBUTION OF UNION ACTIVITIES

2.1 The major activities of the union shall be organized by departments as follows:

- (a) FINANCE & ACCOUNTING
- (b) ADMINISTRATION
- (c) DISTRICTS
- (d) PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
- (e) INTERNAL AUDIT
- (f) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- (g) MEMBERSHIP SERVICES
- (h) LABOUR/INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

2.2 The President shall have the prerogative to distribute these portfolios to Executive officers.

2.3 Notwithstanding this policy, the Treasurer shall be responsible for Finance & Accounting, the Secretary General - Administration, the Area Vice President - Grand Bahama shall be responsible for the Grand Bahama District including The Grand Bahama Office, the Area Vice President - New Providence shall be responsible for the New Providence District, the Area Vice President - Northern Bahamas shall be responsible for the Northern Bahamas District and the Area Vice President - Southern Bahamas shall be responsible for the Southern Bahamas District, and Trustees - Internal Audit.

2.4 The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer in the operation of the Accounting/Finance department. The Assistant Secretary General shall assist the Secretary General carry out the functions of the Administration Department. Both the Treasurer and the Secretary General shall be responsible for sharing the work of their department with their assistants. (Redundant: the positions no longer exist B November 2004).

2.5 The President may appoint Executive Members to assist officers with large departments.

2.6 The Administration Department shall be responsible for:

- (a) Directing the activities of the National Secretariat,
- (b) Directing the Human Resource Management function.

- (c) Establishing and maintaining effective two-way communications between the union and the membership and relevant national and international organizations,
- (d) Maintenance of all union buildings and properties.
- (e) Directing the Public Relation's activities of the Union.
- (f) Organizing the Annual General Meeting.

2.7 The District shall be responsible for:

- (a) Ensuring that the special interests of members in of the district are served by the union.
- (b) Handling grievances/disputes in the district.
- (c) Liaising with Branch Chairpersons/Shop Stewards in the district.
- (d) Maintaining good communication between the National Secretariat and the district.
- (e) Referring matters which cannot be settled locally to the President or the Executive Committee.
- (f) Promoting union programmes.

2.8 The Finance & Accounting department shall:

- (a) direct the operations of the accounts department.
- (b) prepare and monitor the annual budget.
- (c) develop and implement effective policies and procedures for controlling financial activities and promoting efficiency.

2.9 The Grand Bahama office shall:

- (a) assist the Area Vice President for Grand Bahama in the execution of his/her duties,
- (b) assist any other Executive residing in Grand Bahama, carry out their duties.
- (c) assist the Finance & Accounting department by providing source documents for all financial transactions in a timely fashion.
- (d) facilitate the delivery of quality service to members residing in the Grand Bahama District.

2.10 The Internal Audit department shall:

- (a) ensure that union assets are protected

(b) monitor the activities of Branch Offices and the National Secretariat, to ensure that they conform to the provisions of the Constitution, the Governance manual, the Policies and Procedures manual and Annual General Meeting directives.

2.11 The Professional Development/Industrial Relations Department shall:

- (a) direct Professional Development activities including conferences, workshops and seminars
- (b) provide education and training for Executives, Branch officers, Shop Stewards and members.
- (c) handle grievances and disputes
- (d) coordinate collective bargaining activities.
- (e) seek to improve working conditions and economic benefits for the membership.
- (f) be responsible for membership e.g. recruiting new members.

2.12 The Membership Services Department shall be responsible for:

- (a) membership benefits
- (b) the Group Medical Plan
- (c) the Pension Plan,
- (d) the Teacher of the Year Awards Programme
- (e) Christmas party, and
- (f) sports, travel and social

3.0 PLANNING

3.1 The fiscal year of the union shall be January 1st to December 31st.

3.2 The Executive Committee shall hold a major planning session each year between April and May to develop and update the union's strategic plan. Departmental plans and plans for Branch operations shall be developed from the union's strategic plan.

3.3 The strategic plan shall be approved by the A.G.M.

3.4 The priorities for the next fiscal year shall be selected from the strategic plan.

3.5 Each Executive Director shall be responsible to the Executive Committee for developing and implementing plans for achieving the goals of his/her department.

3.6 During the planning exercise, the Executive Director shall consult with the President, his/her assistant and the relevant standing committees. The Executive Directors for Family Island Affairs shall also consult with the Branch Chairpersons in their districts.

3.7 Each Departmental/Branch plan shall include:

§ rationale, a list of goals and objectives, strategies,

§ budget and provisions for evaluation

- 3.8 (a) Departmental plans may be presented to the Executive Committee in two stages:
- (i) rationale, goals and objectives, and (presented by September 30th)
 - (ii) strategies, budget and provisions for evaluation (presented by October 31st)
- (b) Branch plans must be presented for approval by October 31st.
- 3.9 Each Executive Officer and Branch Chairperson shall be provided with a set of approved plans by January 31st.
- 3.10 A calendar of events must be published in the first issue of the Teachers' Voice for the year.
- 3.11 The President shall be responsible for developing a chart illustrating the major activities of each department. Copies of this chart must be displayed in the Conference Room and the reception area of the National Secretariat, and in Branch Offices. Also Shop Stewards shall receive copies.
- 3.12 The President shall monitor the implementation of departmental plans. He/she shall advise Executive Directors on the effectiveness of their efforts.
- 3.13 Each Executive Director shall submit a monthly progress report to the Executive Committee at its monthly meeting. The Executive Committee shall evaluate the report and direct the Executive Director accordingly.
- 3.14 Plans for Branch operations must be developed by the Branch Executive in consultation with the Area Vice President. Branch plans must complement the union's strategic plan. The Executive Committee must approve Branch plans.
- 3.15 Programmes (e.g. Teacher of the year Awards, Annual Professional Development Conference) and projects complete with budgets must be presented to the Executive Committee for approval at least 30 days before implementation is due to begin.

4.0 LINE OF AUTHORITY

- 4.1 In the Family Island Branch, the Shop Steward shall report to the Branch Chairperson. The Chairperson shall report to the Area Vice President for the district. The Area Vice President shall report to the President.
- 4.2 In New Providence and Grand Bahama, the Shop Steward shall report to the Area Vice President, who shall report to the President.
- 4.3 An Executive Officer assisting in a department (e.g. Assistant Secretary General, Assistant Treasurer) shall report to the Executive Director responsible for the department on departmental matters. He/she shall report directly to the President on other matters. **(Redundant see article 2.4 B November 2004)**
- 4.4 Each Executive Director shall report directly to the President.
- 4.5 The President shall report to the Executive Committee.

4.6 The Executive Committee shall report to the Annual General Meeting.

4.7 Emergencies and serious matters must be reported directly to the President immediately.

4.8 (a) In the absence of the President the Vice President shall act as President. In the absence of the President and Vice President Rule 12 (b) (1) of the Constitution takes effect.

(b) At no time shall the Union be left without at least an Acting President.

5.0 THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

5.1 The Executive Committee shall meet at least once per month to:

(a) ensure that directives from the A.G.M. are implemented;

(b) receive and discuss progress reports from Executive Directors;

(c) assess the effectiveness of union programmes and activities and to make adjustments to enhance efficiency;

(d) make decisions on matters which require its attention especially urgent or emergency matters;

(e) approve expenditures between two thousand, five hundred dollars (\$2,500.00) and two hundred & fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000.00);

(f) plan the work of the union;

(g) discuss matters of concern to the union and the Teaching Profession;

5.2 It is the duty of each Executive officer to:

(a) uphold the constitution of the Bahamas Union of Teachers;

(b) treat all matters discussed at Executive Meetings as strictly confidential;

(c) obey directives from the Executive Committee;

(d) assist the President in the effective management of the union;

(e) carry out assigned responsibilities effectively and in a cost effective manner;

(f) promote a positive image of the B.U.T. and the Teaching Profession;

(g) Respect the BUT's code of ethics and be guided by it;

(h) Protect and defend the rights of union members;

- (i) Treat each member with respect;
 - (j) Know the constitution of the BUT;
 - (k) Learn all he/she can about regulations and legislation which affects teachers and the union;
 - (l) Learn all he/she can about local, regional and international organizations with which the B.U.T. is affiliated;
 - (m) Consult with the President or Acting President whenever the need arises especially on extraordinary and controversial matters;
 - (n) Protect the assets of the BUT;
 - (o) Consult with experts (auditors, bankers, lawyers, insurance consultants, investment managers etc.) on matters which require such attention;
 - (p) Operate as a member of the Executive Team and seek to facilitate the achievement of the goals and objectives of the Executive Committee and the mission of the union;
 - (q) Obey the Constitution and the Governance manual;
 - (r) Implement approved decisions, programmes, projects and plans.
- 5.3 (a) The Area Vice President B New Providence and the Area Vice President B Grand Bahama shall liaise with Shop Stewards in their respective districts to ensure that membership needs are being effectively addressed;
- (b) The Area Vice President B Northern Bahamas and Area Vice President B Southern Bahamas shall visit the islands in their districts at least once per year.
- 5.4 (a) The President shall be accountable to the membership for the effective management of the entire union i.e. the National Secretariat, Branches, Branch offices, union properties and programmes.
- (b) He/she shall supervise the planning function of the Executive and Branches, and shall monitor the implementation of union programmes and activities
- (c) He/she shall advise Executive Directors and Branch Chairpersons on matters affecting their areas of responsibility.
- (d) He/she shall be the chief spokes-person and official representative for the union.
- (e) The monetary limit on the President's authority shall be Two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500.00).
- (f) He/she shall delegate his/her responsibilities to the Vice President in his/her absence.

- (g) He/she shall ascertain the needs of the membership and seek to facilitate the satisfaction of the same.
- (h) He/she shall promote professionalism in teaching by encouraging teachers to take advantage of opportunities to grow and develop professionally, and by insisting that the teaching environment be conducive to learning and professional development.

5.5 (a) the monetary limit on the Treasurer=s authority shall be one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500.00).

(b) He/she shall be accountable for the efficient management of the union's funds.

(c) He/she shall delegate his/her responsibilities to the Secretary General in his/her absence.

5.6 (a) the monetary limit on the Secretary General=s authority shall be one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00).

(b) He/she shall receive and distribute all incoming correspondence to the National Secretariat.

(c) He/she shall sign all correspondence leaving the National Secretariat which does not bear the signature of the President.

(d) He/she shall establish and maintain effective communications between the National Secretariat and the membership, and both national and international organizations with which the union is affiliated.

(e) He/she shall be the Chief Public Relations Officer for the union.

(f) He/she shall delegate his/her responsibilities to the Assistant Secretary General in his absence.
(Redundant see article 2.4 B November 2004)

5.7 The President, Vice President, Secretary General and Treasurer shall consult continually on the operations of the union.

5.8 (a) The President shall set the date for Executive Meetings.

(b) He/she shall ensure that at least seven (7) clear days notice is served for regular meetings.

(c) He/she shall have the prerogative to use his discretion in respect of serving notice for extraordinary Executive, General or Shop Steward meetings.

5.9 (a) Executive officers shall be paid monthly stipends as follows:

(i) Vice President	\$ 350.00
(ii) Secretary General	\$ 350.00
(iii) Treasurer	\$ 350.00
(iv) Area Vice President B New Providence District	\$ 225.00
(v) Area Vice President B Grand Bahama District	\$ 225.00
(vi) Area Vice President B Northern Bahamas District	\$ 225.00

(vii) Area Vice President B Southern Bahamas District	\$ 225.00
(viii) Trustee	\$ 200.00
(ix) Executive Member	\$ 150.00

(b) Executive officers who fail to carry out their duties shall forfeit all or part of their stipend, and may face further disciplinary action.

5.10 Executive stipends become due on the 15th of each month.

5.11 (a) The position of President shall be a full time job.

(b) The President shall be paid a salary equal to that of a Grade A Secondary School Principal plus one dollar (\$1.00) more.

(c) The terms and conditions of the President's employment contract shall be standardized, and approved by the Executive Committee.

5.12 The Executive Committee shall approve the President's salary and Executive stipends.

5.13 The Executive Committee shall approve the hiring of full time Executive Officers including salaries.

5.14 The Executive Committee shall approve a standardized contract for each full time Executive Officer position.

5.15 The Executive Committee shall approve the hiring of employees for the National Secretariat and Branch offices.

5.16 (a) The Secretary General shall be responsible for the Human Resources Management function of the Union.

(b) Vacancies in the National Secretariat and Branch offices shall be registered with the Department of Labour and advertised in the media by the Secretary General.

(c) He/she shall chair the interview committee and recommend a short list of potential employees to the Executive Committee.

(d) He/she shall enforce the BUT Employment Policy and shall recommend the need for recruitment and terminations to the Executive Committee.

5.17 (a) In the event of a crisis (e.g. a strike) the Executive Committee shall become a crisis management team.

(b) The resources of the union shall be mobilized to give top priority to the successful resolution of the crisis.

(c) Each Executive officer shall be continuously on call for the duration of the crisis.

(d) When an executive decision is not feasible, Executive Officers must take instructions directly from the President.

5.18 An Executive Officer residing on a Family Island shall be entitled to:

- (a) attend Executive Meetings, the Teacher of the Year Awards Ball, the Professional Development Conference and joint meetings between the Executive Committee and the Ministry of Education or other Government departments at the expense of the Union.
- (b) return airfare
- (c) ground transportation as prescribed by the Executive Committee
- (d) per them at fifty dollars (\$50.00) per day inclusive of the day of arrival
- (e) (i) Hotel accommodations for the duration of the official visit
 - (ii) Up to four (4) officers shall share the same ground transportation
 - (iii) Two female officers shall share hotel accommodations
 - (iv) Two (2) male officers shall share hotel accommodations

5.19 No Executive Officer may hold the position of Branch Officer, District Steward, Shop Steward nor Assistant Shop Steward while serving on the Executive Committee.

5.20 a) When the President or any other Executive Officer travels to a Family Island the Area Vice President for the district should accompany him/her.

- b) The Area Vice Presidents for the Northern and Southern Bahamas are entitled to visit each island in their district at least once per year.

6.0 ELECTIONS

6.1 All officers of the Executive Committee shall be elected triennially and shall serve for a period of three (3) years.

6.2 AWhen national/district union elections, a bye-election or a referendum are due, the Secretary General shall:

- (a) Notify the membership of:
 - (i) The date of the election, by-election, referendum.
 - (ii) The deadline for nominations
 - (iii) The location of polling stations.
- (b) Notify the Director of Labour of the date of the election, by-election, referendum, and make arrangements with the Labour Department to facilitate taking the poll.
- (c) Make nomination forms available to the membership at least two (2) months in advance.
- (d) Receive nomination forms, verify that they are proper, and inform each candidate about the status of his/her nomination in writing at last three (3) weeks after the deadline for nominations.
- (e) Provide the membership with the list of candidates as soon as possible after the deadline for nominations, and at least by May 1st.
- (f) Prepare the membership register which should be subdivided by district, island and school.

- (g) Prepare an adequate number of ballots for each position/amendment.
- (h) Supply each polling station with copies of the membership register and an adequate number of ballots.
- (i) Supply each candidate with a copy the membership register.
- (j) Comply with the Labour Department and the Police on the safety, protection and distribution of ballots.
- (k) Request police protection to enhance the orderly conduct of polls if it is deemed necessary.
- (l) Receive unofficial/official results.
- (m) Publish official results in the media within 7 days of receiving them.

6.3(a) The deadline for nominations in national/district union elections shall be March 31st.

- b) The deadline for nominations in a bye-election shall be no later than thirty (30) days before the date of the bye-election.

6.4 (a) The Labour Department shall oversee all national/district union elections, by-elections and referendum.

- (b) Protests shall be referred to the Labour Department.

6.5 (a) The Executive Committee shall set the date for by-elections.

(b) A by-election must be held no later than six (6) months after the Executive position becomes vacant.

- (c) The Secretary General shall ensure that the membership receives at least three (3) months notice of a by-election.

6.6 When national/district union elections, a by-election or referendum are called the Branch Chairman shall:

(a) Notify the district Education Officer, Principal, Shop Stewards and members of the date time and venue for the poll.

(b) Liaise with the Labour Officer/Family Island Commissioner to facilitate orderly voting on election/referendum day.

(c) Inspect the ballot box, when asked to do so by the person in charge of conducting the poll to ensure that it is empty before the poll opens.

(d) Provide refreshments for the persons conducting the poll at the union=s expense and in accordance with Executive Committee guidelines.

(e) Be present when the ballots are being counted after the poll closes.

(f) Communicate unofficial results to the Secretary General as soon as they are known.

6.7 When national/district union election, by-elections or referendum are called the shop Steward shall:

(a) Communicate essential information on the election/referendum to members at his/her school in a timely fashion.

(b) Ensure that the Principal is aware of the date and time of the election/referendum.

(c) Consult with the principal to establish a roster which allows all members at the school to vote during school hours.

6.8 When national/district union elections or bye-elections are called, candidates:

(a) Shall not handle ballots.

(b) May not campaign or distribute campaign literature within 100 yards of the place where the poll is being conducted.

(c) May appoint representatives to scrutinize the proceedings to ensure that their interest is protected **(Only one representative per candidate shall be allowed inside a polling station at any point during the voting).**

(d) Shall not enter the polling station during the hours of voting except to cast his/her ballot.

6.9 (a) In the event the Executive Committee loses a no confidence vote at the A.G.M., the A.G.M. shall set a date for new elections. The date for the election shall not be less than 60 days and not later than 90 days after the close of the A.G.M.

(b) The A.G.M. shall appoint an Election Committee to organize the elections.

(c) Each Executive officer shall submit his/her resignation to the Election Committee.

(d) The resignation of each Executive officer shall become effective on the day of the elections.

(e) The Secretary General shall assist the election committee in carrying out its function.

(f) The Election Committee shall announce the official results as soon as they are received from the Labour Department and the new Executive Committee shall take office on the same day.

(g) The Chairman of the Election Committee shall swear in the new Executive Officers.

(h) No member of the Election Committee including the Chairman may be a candidate in the elections.

(i) Each officer of the Executive Committee which lost the no confidence vote shall be entitled to nominate as a candidate in these elections.

(j) The Election Committee shall disband on the day the new Executive Committee takes office.

6.10 (a) In the event an Executive Officer loses a no confidence vote at the A.G.M. the Executive Committee shall invoke articles 6.6, 6.7 and 6.8.

(b) The officer shall tender his resignation to the Executive Committee immediately. Such resignation shall take immediate effect.

6.11 (a) The Secretary General shall provide the Ministry of Education and Principals with the list of Executive officers by July 30th in an election year.

(b) Within thirty days after a by-election, the Secretary General shall provide the Ministry of Education and the Principals concerned with the name(s) of the new Executive Officer(s).

7.0 DISTRICTS

7.1 The membership of the Union shall be divided into four (4) districts:

(a) The Grand Bahama District.

(b) The New Providence District.

(c) The Northern Bahamas District comprising of Abaco, Andros, Berry Islands, Bimini, Eleuthera, Harbour Island and Spanish Wells, and

(d) The Southern Bahamas District comprising of Acklins, Crooked Island, Long Cay, Cat Island, Exuma, Inagua, Long Island, Mayaguana, Ragged Island, San Salvador and Rum Cay.

7.2 (a) Each district shall have a District Council comprising of the Area Vice President, All Branch Chairpersons, All District Stewards, All Senior Shop Stewards, All Shop Stewards and All Assistant Shop Stewards.

(b) The District Council shall assist the Area Vice President in the execution of his/her duties.

(c) The District Council shall meet at least once per month where this is feasible.

(d) The Area Vice President shall preside at District Council meetings.

(e) The Grand Bahama District Council and the New Providence District Council shall each elect a District Treasurer and a District Secretary,

(f) The Area Vice President shall appoint District Stewards on the advice of the District Council.

7.3 (a) The District Steward shall function in a similar capacity as the Branch Chairperson.

- Rule (b) District Stewards shall be eligible for re-appointment by the Area Vice President. See 7.2(f).
- (c) The list of the District Stewards must be submitted to the Secretary General within thirty days of their appointment and the Secretary General shall submit this list to the Ministry of Education and the Principals concerned within thirty (30) days of receiving the list from the District.

7.4 The District Steward shall:

- (a) identify the needs of the his/her District.
- (b) liaise the Area Vice President for the District to develop strategies to satisfy those needs.
- (c) assist in the planning of District activities.
- (d) maintain effective communication with his/her District.
- (e) assist with the settling of grievances and disputes within his/her District.
- (f) provide District members with proper representation.
- (g) consult and get approval from the President/Area Vice President/Executive Committee to:
- (i) make statements to the press
- (ii) engage in industrial action.
- (h) pursue objectives which contribute to the achievement of the Union's strategic plan and by extension its mission.
- (i) consult with the Area Vice President responsible for the District on matters of concern to the District.
- (j) consult with the Area Vice President/President on serious and emergency matters.
- (k) referring matters outside its scope of authority to the Area Vice President for the District or to the President.

- 7.5 (a) The Area Vice-President shall be responsible for the effective functioning of the district.
- (b) He/she shall give reports on District activities at Executive Committee meetings and at the Annual General Meeting.

8.0 FAMILY ISLAND BRANCHES

8.1 (a) Branches shall be established in all Family Islands (see rule 18(a) of the Constitution). However, where there are fewer than fifteen (15) members in a district, the members may opt to elect a Senior Shop Steward to represent them.

(b) The Senior Shop Steward shall function in the same capacity as the Branch Chairperson.

(c) Senior Shop Stewards shall be eligible for re-election triennially on the third Friday of September at a general membership meeting.

8.2 The Family Island Branch Executive shall comprise of ALL Shop Stewards and Assistant shop Stewards in the Branch. The Branch Executive shall elect a Chairperson and a Secretary/Treasurer.

8.3 Elections for Family Island Branch Officers shall be held biennially, on the Third Friday of September at the Branch's Annual General Meeting. Voting shall be by secret ballot (see rule 18 c of the Constitution).

8.4 Financing of branch operations shall be as prescribed in rules 18 (d) and (e) of the Constitution.

8.5 The Branch Executive shall be responsible for:

- (a) identifying the needs of the local membership
- (b) liaising with the Area Vice President for the district to develop strategies to satisfy those needs.
- (c) planning branch activities.
- (d) submitting annual plans to the Executive Committee for approval.
- (e) maintain effective communication with the Branch membership.
- (f) maintaining effective communication with the National Secretariat and disseminating information to Branch members in a timely fashion.
- (g) keeping proper records of income and expenditure
- (h) submitting an annual report to the A.G.M.
- (i) settling local grievances and disputes.
- (j) providing Branch members with proper representation.
- (k) getting approval from the President/Executive Committee to:
 - (i) make statements to the press
 - (ii) engage in industrial action.
- (l) pursuing objectives which contribute to the achievement of the union's strategic plan and by extension its mission.
- (m) consulting with the Area Vice President on matters of concern to the Branch.
- (n) consulting with the President on serious and emergency matters.
- (o) referring matters outside its scope of authority to the Area Vice President or to the President.
- (p) democratically electing delegates to attend the A.G.M.
- (q) assist with organizing national union elections

(r) organizing branch elections

8.6 (a) The Branch Chairperson shall be held accountable for the effective operation of the Branch.

(b) He/she shall be the chief spokesperson for the Branch and the union's official representative on the island.

(c) He/she shall coordinate visits by the Area Vice President and National Officers and extend appropriate courtesies.

(d) He/she shall promote a positive image of the union and the teaching profession.

8.7 In the event a position becomes vacant on the Branch Executive the vacancy shall be filled within sixty (60) days. The by-election shall be conducted at a general membership meeting. Voting shall be by secret ballot.

8.8 The Branch may request that National Executive Officers conduct Branch Elections.

8.9 (a) The list of Branch Officers must be submitted to the Secretary General within thirty days of a Branch Election.

(b) The Secretary General shall submit a list of Branch officers to the Ministry of Education and the Principal concerned within thirty (30) days of receiving the list from the Branch.

8.10 (a) On any Family Island where the union membership exceeds two hundred and fifty, the branch(es) may petition the Executive Committee to establish a Branch office.

(b) If the branch(es) are dissatisfied with the decision of the Executive Committee, it may appeal to the Annual General Meeting.

(c) The Executive Committee shall be responsible for funding the operation of the Branch Office.

8.11 (a) The Branch Chairperson shall be responsible to the Secretary General and the Executive Committee for the efficient operation of the Branch Office.

(b) He/she shall ensure that proper records are kept of financial transactions of the Branch Office.

(c) He/she shall consult with the Secretary General on the recruitment selection and termination of Branch office employees.

(d) He/she shall advise the Executive Committee on the suitability of office space and shall facilitate procurement of the same.

8.12 The purpose of the Branch Office shall be to facilitate the efficient delivery of quality service to the Branch membership.

- 8.13 The Branch Executive shall meet at least once per month to discuss matters of importance to the Branch and the union.
- 8.14 There shall be a Branch General Membership meeting at least twice per term.
- 8.15 The Branch Chairperson shall preside at all Branch meetings (See rule 18(f) of the Constitution re: quorum).
- 8.16 The Branch Chairperson shall liaise with the Shop Stewards in the Branch to ensure that the needs of the members are being effectively addressed.
- 8.17 It shall be the duty of each Branch Chairperson to:
- (a) Establish effective communications with Shop Stewards and members in the Branch.
 - (b) Establish a professional relationship with his/her Principal and other school Administrators in the Branch.
 - (c) Know the constitution of the union, the Governance manual, and the B.U.T. Shop Steward Handbook.
 - (d) Know the regulations and legislation which affect the union and teachers.
 - (e) Defend the rights of members in the Branch.
 - (f) Assist the Shop Stewards in settling grievances and disputes in the Branch.
 - (g) Refer matters which he/she cannot resolve to the Area Vice President or to the President.
 - (h) Consult with the Area Vice President or the President whenever the need arises.
 - (i) With the assistance of the Branch Executive, plan and coordinate union activities in the Branch.
 - (j) Assist with the training of Shop Stewards.
 - (k) Provide feedback to the Branch Executive, the Area Vice President and/or the President on the effectiveness of union programmes.
 - (l) Adhere to the code of ethics.
 - (m) Counsel members when necessary.
 - (n) Be a professional teacher and uphold the Constitution of the B.U.T.
 - (o) Attend Branch Executive and General meetings.
 - (p) Take advantage of training opportunities provided by the union.

8.18 Each Branch Chairperson shall be a delegate to the A.G.M.

9.0 SHOP STEWARDS

9.1 (a) Each school with less than fifty (50) union members shall have one Shop Steward, and may have an Assistant Shop Steward.

(b) Each school with more than fifty members shall have a Shop Steward and an Assistant Shop Steward.

(c) A school with less than five (5) members shall not be entitled to a Shop Steward. The Branch Chairman, District Steward or Area Vice President shall be responsible for serving the needs of the members in such a school. A School Representative may be selected by the members at the school or appointed by the Branch Chairperson, District Steward or Area Vice President. The School Representative shall have first preference to be a delegate to the Annual General Meeting.

9.2 (a) The Executive Committee, acting on the advice of the membership of the school shall appoint the Shop Steward and Assistant Shop Steward. Such appointments shall be for a period of two years.

(b) The Shop Steward and the Assistant Shop Steward shall be democratically selected at a school membership meeting by the end of the third week in September.

(c) The Executive Committee reserves the right to reject the selected member(s) provided that it can show just cause as it pertains to the duties and responsibilities of Shop Stewards outlined in the Governance Manual, and as it relates to the union=s code of ethics.

(d) If rejected the selected member(s) has the right to appeal. Such appeal shall be addressed by the Appeals Committee under Rule 10 of the Constitution.

(e) The Executive Committee reserves the right to appoint a Shop Steward and/or an Assistant Shop Steward in a school where no selection has been made within the stipulated period.

(f) If the Shop Steward or Assistant Shop Steward fails to perform his/her duties, the Executive Committee reserves the right to rescind the appointment (s). In such cases the selection / appointment process shall be repeated.

9.3 The duties of a Shop Steward are to:

(a) Establish effective communications with the members at his/her school.

(b) Establish a professional relationship with the school's administration.

(c) Know the constitution of the union, the Governance manual and the B.U.T. Shop Stewards Handbook.

(d) Learn about regulations and legislation which affect the union and teachers.

(e) Defend and protect the rights of each member at his/her school, providing that the member is not in violation of the Union's constitution.

(f) Settle grievances and disputes involving members at the school.

(g) Refer matters which he/she cannot resolve to the Branch Chairperson, Area Vice President or to the President.

(h) Consult with the Branch Chairperson, the Area Vice President or the President whenever the need arises.

(i) Coordinate union activities at the school.

(j) Assist in the training of the Assistant Shop Steward.

(k) Provide feedback to the Branch Chairperson or the Area Vice President or the President on the effectiveness of union programmes.

(l) Obey the union's code of ethics.

(m) Counsel members when necessary.

(n) Be a professional teacher and uphold the Constitution of the B.U.T.

(o) Hold membership meetings (at least once per term).

(p) Be the chief spokesperson for the union in the school.

(q) Coordinate visits by Executive/Branch officers.

(r) Be a delegate to the A.G.M.

(s) Attend Shop Steward meetings and General Membership Meetings.

(t) Report to members at the school on the A.G.M. in September.

9.4 The Assistant Shop Steward shall assist the Shop Steward carry out the functions of the position. He/she shall act as Shop Steward in the absence of the Shop Steward.

9.5 Both the Shop Steward and the Assistant Shop Steward shall take advantage of opportunities for training provided by the union.

9.6 (a) In the event the position of Shop Steward becomes vacant, the Assistant Shop Steward shall act as Shop Steward until the vacancy is filled.

(b) The Area Vice-President shall ensure that the vacancy is filled within thirty (30) days.

9.7 No Executive Officer or Branch officer shall be eligible to be appointed Shop Steward or Assistant Shop Steward.

10.0 MEMBERSHIP

10.1(a) Membership shall be open to all practising teachers in the Commonwealth of the Bahamas (see Rule 3(a) of the Constitution).

(b) Members who leave the profession may opt to retain their membership.

(c) The Executive Committee shall confer the status of Honorary Member on any member who has held membership in the union for a total of forty (40) years. Honorary members shall be exempted from paying dues. They shall be entitled to all benevolent benefits of the union (see rule 3 (b) (ii) in the Constitution).

(d) Teachers who opt not to join the union shall pay agency shop fees which shall be equal to 90% of the dues. Agency Shop contributors shall not be entitled to any membership benefits. They may join the Union by paying the extra 10% in dues.

(e) (i) Teacher education students are eligible for **ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP** in the Bahamas Union of Teachers.

(ii) Associate members shall pay the Union's membership joining fee only. They shall not be required to pay dues until they are eligible for full membership.

(iii) Associate members shall become eligible for full membership after successful completion of the pre-service training programme and subsequent posting to a school or educational institution in the Bahamas.

(iv) The president of the **Education Awareness Society** shall be the official union representative for teacher education students. He/she shall have similar rights and privileges as a Shop Steward.

(v) The rights and privileges of full membership shall be extended to associate members as far as it is practical to do so.

10.2 The Executive Committee shall give due recognition to members on their tenth, twentieth, thirtieth and fortieth anniversary in the teaching profession.

10.3 (a) The National Secretariat and each Family Island Branch Shall keep an up-to-date register of members complete with school, mailing address, job title, specialty and home phone number.

(b) The Secretary General shall be responsible for compiling the membership register.

10.4 (a) There shall be a membership joining fee of TWENTY DOLLARS (\$20.00).

(b) Each member shall pay dues monthly at the rate of 2.5% of the starting salary of a trained teacher.

10.5 It shall be the duty of each member to:

(a) Know and uphold the Constitution of the Union.

(b) Obey the BUT's Code of Ethics.

(c) Know and exercise his/her rights as a union member, as a teacher.

(d) Be a professional teacher.

(e) Establish a professional relationship with school administrators.

(f) Take advantage of opportunities to grow and develop professionally.

(g) Report grievances/disputes emanating from his/her job to the Shop Steward and/or the Assistant Shop Steward.

(h) Consult with the Shop Steward whenever the need arises.

(i) Learn about regulations and legislation which affect the union and teachers.

(j) Attend union meetings.

(k) Support the programmes and activities of the Union.

(l) Pay dues.

10.6 Each member has the right to:

(a) Vote in Union elections.

(b) Offer as a candidate in Union elections for any position.

(c) Demand accountability from Shop Stewards, Branch officers and Executive Officers.

(d) Vote on amendments to the Constitution of the Union.

(e) Be considered in the selection of delegates to the A.G.M.

(f) Attend the A.G.M. as an observer.

(g) Peruse the records of the Union.

(h) Offer suggestions to the Union leadership for improving the operation of the Union.

- (i) Participate in Union activities.
- (j) Training that is appropriate for members.
- (k) Serve on union Committees.
- (l) Appeal Shop Steward, Branch and Executive decisions.
- (m) Petition the Annual General Meeting.
- (n) Propose amendments to the Constitution of the B.U.T.
- (o) Put resolutions at union meetings or the A.G.M.
- (p) Speak at Union Meetings.
- (q) Receive membership benefits.
- (r) Be considered as a nominee for the Teacher of The Year Award.
- (s) Proper representation by the Union.

11.0 COMMITTEES

11.1 The President shall appoint the following Standing Committees within sixty days of assuming office:

- (a) Negotiating Team
- (b) Collective Bargaining Committee
- (c) Professional Development Committee
- (d) Retirees Chapter
- (e) Membership Benefits Committee
- (f) Finance and Fund Raising Committee
- (g) Annual General Meeting Committee
- (h) Editorial Committee
- (i) Social Committee
- (j) Awards/Recognition Committee

11.2 The Internal Audit Committee shall comprise of the three Trustees.

11.3 The Chairperson for each Standing Committee shall be an Executive officer.

11.4 Executive Directors shall consult with the appropriate committees to get assistance with planning and implementing the work of their departments.

11.5 The Chairperson of each Committee except for the Negotiating Team, the Finance, A.G.M. and Internal Audit Committees shall have the prerogative to invite, committee members to serve on a voluntary basis.

11.6 (a) The Ethics Committee comprising of three members including the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson, and all members shall be elected at the A.G.M. by secret ballot.

(i) Each member shall serve for a period of three years.

(ii) He/she shall be eligible for re-election

(iii) After three consecutive terms, the Chairman shall become ineligible for re-election for a period of three years.

(b) (i) All three members of the Ethics Committee must be members of the B.U.T.

(ii) No Executive Officer, Branch Chairperson, Branch Officer, Shop Steward or Assistant Shop Steward shall be a member of the Ethics Committee.

11.7 The function of the Ethics Committee shall be as follows:

(a) To promote the observance of, and compliance with the Union's Code of Ethics and the Education International Declaration on Professional Ethics.

(b) To receive and address complaints from members about ethical misconduct. Such complaints must be in writing, and must identify the specific part of the Code of Ethics or the EI Declaration on Professional Ethics alleged to have been breached.

(c) To notify the accused member in writing that a complaint was made against him/her within fourteen days of receiving the complaint, and at the same time supply the accused member with a copy of the complaint.

(d) To conduct an investigation into the complaint to determine whether or not a legitimate case exists. Such investigation must be completed within 14 days of notice being given to the accused member.

(e) To inform the parties concerned about its preliminary decision within seven (7) days after completing its investigation. i.e whether or not the case is a legitimate one. If the case is legitimate, give notice of the date, time and place when the Ethics Committee will hear the case.

(f) To issue summons to witnesses within seven days of giving notice of the hearing.

(g) To hear the case within 14 days of issuing the summons. Such hearing shall be private. However, each member giving evidence in a hearing shall be entitled to have one representative present. Such representative shall be a union member.

(h) To rule that the case against the member has been proven or that it has not been proven, and to make recommendations in accordance with articles 19.5 and 19.6 of the Governance Manual.

(i) To communicate its ruling and recommendations to the parties concerned and copy the Secretary General.

(j) To issue a verbal or written warning in conformity with article 19.5 (a) and (b).

(k) To issue a letter of reprimand or direct that a letter of apology be written in accordance with article 19.6 (a) and (b).

(l) To allow the Executive Committee to implement any other disciplinary action recommended under article 19.6.

(m) To report any member who fails to comply with a summons to the Executive Committee through the Secretary General. The Executive Committee shall mediate to procure compliance with a second or third summons. The Executive Committee shall apply severe disciplinary action under Article 19.6 (d) B (g) after a member fails to comply with a third and final summons.

(n) To file each complaint with the Secretary General after the matter has been completed.

- (o) Any member of the Ethics Committee who nominates for a position on a Branch Executive or the Executive Committee in a bye-election or a union general election shall resign effective the day of nomination.
- (p) The Chairperson shall have the prerogative to delegate his/her responsibilities to the Vice Chairperson in his/her absence or in the event he/she is unable to dispose of a matter before the Ethics Committee in a timely fashion due to mitigating circumstances which shall be explained in writing to the Vice Chairperson and copied to the Executive Committee.
- (q) The Vice Chairperson shall assume the position of Chairperson in the event the Chairperson becomes incapacitated, resigns or dies.
- (r) The Ethics Committee shall have the prerogative to consult with members who are party to a conflict with a view to mediating and resolving the conflict. Such action can be initiated by any member or the Secretary General on behalf of the Executive Committee making a report to the Ethics Committee, or by the Ethics Committee itself.

11.71 (a) Nomination forms for membership on the Ethics Committee, Candidates Committee and the Elections Commission shall be submitted to the Secretary General no later than 90 days before the AGM. Such nomination forms must be accompanied by at least three character references, two of which must be from members of the Union. The Secretary General shall notify the membership of the list of nominees within seven days of the close of nominations.

(b) The Candidates Committee shall approve the list of eligible nominees for membership on the Ethics Committee and the Elections Commission no later than 60 days before the AGM convenes. The Executive Committee shall approve the list of eligible nominees for membership on the Candidates Committee no later than 60 days before the AGM convenes.

(c) Membership on the Ethics Committee, the Candidates Committee and the Elections Commission shall be open to any person who is respected by their peers as a professional teacher and a good role model who possesses a strong commitment to moral and ethical principles.

(d) Any nominee whose nomination is refused by the Candidates Committee or the Executive Committee may appeal to the Appeals Committee under Rule 10 of the Constitution. The Appeals Committee shall make a determination no later than 40 days before the AGM convenes. If an appeal is upheld, the nominee concerned shall be eligible for election at the AGM.

(e) The Secretary General shall publish the list of nominees for vacancies on the Ethics Committee, the Candidates Committee, and the Elections Commission no later than 30 days before the AGM convenes.

(f) Any member shall have the right to challenge the nomination of a member to the Ethics Committee within 75 days before the AGM convenes. Such challenge must be substantiated by evidence, and shall be determined within seven (7) days.

11.8 Family Island Branches may establish committees to facilitate the work of the Branch.

11.9 The President may appoint ad hoc committees as the need arises. Ad hoc committees shall disband after their work is completed.

11.10 (a) Decisions made by a Committee must be ratified by the Branch Executive, District Council or the Executive Committee.

(b) Committee decisions which are not approved by the appropriate authority shall be declared void and of no effect.

12.0 MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

12.1 The Union shall provide the following benefits to the membership:

(a) A Group Medical Plan. Premiums shall be paid by the member. The terms and conditions of the plan shall be negotiated by the Union. The Union shall charge the plan an administration fee.

(b) Improved salaries and better working conditions through negotiations.

(c) Representation in individual and group disputes emanating from the job.

(d) Discounts on purchases from participating business houses.

(e) Visits by Union officials, flowers/fruit baskets, get well cards in the event of a major illness especially if the member is hospitalized.

(f) A Retirees Medical Assistance Fund to assist with defraying the cost of medical services for retired Union members.

(g) An Educational Loan Fund to assist members with paying tuition for degree programmes. The Union shall use the fund as collateral to guarantee bank loans to members for educational purposes.

(h) A Contributory Pension Fund.

(i) Assistance in the event of a disaster e.g. fire, hurricane.

(j) Professional Development, Conferences, Seminars and Workshops.

(k) Opportunities to attend national and international education Conferences.

(l) Financial assistance to A.G.M. delegates who travel overseas to attend the A.G.M.

(m) Due recognition on the tenth, twentieth, thirtieth and fortieth anniversaries in the teaching profession.

(n) Legal assistance in litigations emanating from employment.

(i) The Executive Committee, on the advice of the union's lawyer shall determine whether a matter is legitimate or should be pursued.

(ii) The Executive Committee shall determine what portion of the legal costs shall be borne by the union, on a case-by-case basis.

- (iii) Due process must be followed before any matter is allowed to be taken to court.
- (iv) The services of the union=s lawyer shall be made available to the member.
- (v) If a member chooses to use the service of his/her own lawyer, he/she shall be liable for the total costs incurred.
- (vi) Matters involving two or more members shall be referred to the Ethics Committee.
- (o) Identification cards.
- (p) Financial assistance from the strike fund in the event of a strike.

12.2 (a) The Executive Committee shall establish rules and regulations for administering these benefits subject to approval by the A.G.M.

- (b) Such rules and regulations shall be available to the membership

13.0 FINANCE

13.1 (a) The Treasurer shall develop a set of standardized accounting and financial policies and procedures to effectively manage and control Union Funds.

(b) Such standardized policies and procedures must be approved by the Executive Committee.

(c) The Accounting and Financial policies and procedures shall address the following:

- (i) Income
- (ii) Disbursements
- (iii) Purchases
- (iv) Bank deposits
- (v) Posting of entries
- (vi) Financial statements
- (vii) Budgeting
- (viii) Travel expense reports
- (ix) Bank reconciliations
- (x) Personal/general accounts
- (xi) Petty cash
- (xii) Trial balances
- (xiii) Financial reports for special events, programmes and projects.
- (xiv) Credit and collections
- (xv) Loans
- (xvi) Audited financial statements

13.2 The Executive Committee shall authorize the Treasurer to establish a bank account for the general operation of the Union, and bank accounts for special funds.

13.3 The signatories to the Union's bank accounts, and negotiable financial instruments shall be:

(a) The Treasurer or Secretary General

AND

(b) The President OR the Vice President

(c) The Treasurer and the President shall be the principal signatories.

13.4 (a) Branches may establish bank accounts where feasible.

(b) Signatories to Branch bank accounts shall be the Branch Treasurer, any one of three Branch Executive Members, and the Branch Chairperson.

(c) Signatories to the Grand Bahama District bank account and the New Providence District bank account shall be the Area Vice President and the District Treasurer or the District Secretary.

13.5 (a) Investments valued at two hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000.00) or less must be approved by the Executive Committee.

(b) Investments valued at over two hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000.00) must be approved by the Annual General Meeting.

13.6 Whenever the Executive Committee authorizes a member, Shop Steward, Branch Officer or Executive Officer to travel on behalf of the union to conduct official business the person(s) travelling shall be entitled to:

(a) Round trip airfare.

(b) Accommodations for the duration of the trip.

(c) A fifty dollars (\$50.00) per day per diem inclusive of the day of travel.

(d) An allowance for ground transportation to be determined by the Executive Committee.

(e) Up to four (4) persons shall share the same ground transportation.

13.7 The person or head of the delegation travelling on such missions shall:

(a) Return all funds not spent on the trip to the National Secretariat within seven (7) days of his/her return.

(b) Submit a Travel/Expense Report to the Treasurer within fourteen (14) days of his/her return.

(c) Produce receipts for all expenditures, except per diem.

(d) Be reimbursed for any documented over-expenditure.

(e) Return all reimbursements received from the sponsoring organization to the National Secretariat immediately upon his/her return.

(f) Submit a written report on the trip to the Secretary General within thirty (30) days of his/her return.

(g) Present a copy of the report to the A.G.M.

13.8 All disbursements in excess of twenty dollars (\$20.00) must be paid by cheque.

13.9 (a) The petty cash fund is to be used for small office expenses only.

(b) Disbursements from petty cash must not exceed fifty dollars (\$50.00) per transaction.

13.10 Income must be receipted.

13.11 An authentic receipt must be produced for every payment made on behalf of the union.

13.12 (a) The closure of a Union's bank account must be approved by the Executive Committee.

(b) The closure of a Branch account must be approved by the Branch Executive with an explanation by the Treasurer at the next A.G.M.

13.13 All rents and lease payments received from Union properties must be deposited in the Union's Bank account.

13.14 (a) All union loans of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000.00) or less must be approved by the Executive Committee.

(b) All Branch loans must be authorized by the Executive Committee.

13.15 (a) All contracts to do work on behalf of the Union must be approved by the Executive Committee.

(b) Any contract valued at over one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) requires at least three (3) bids.

(c) The Executive Committee reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

(d) All bids must be addressed to the Secretary General.

(e) No member of the Executive Committee or their immediate family may bid.

13.16 (a) Honoraria shall be paid to, Assistant Shop Stewards, Shop Stewards, District Stewards, and Branch Chairpersons as follows:

(i) Assistant Shop Steward - \$350.00

- (ii) Shop Steward - \$500.00
- (iii) Branch Chairperson - \$600.00
- (iv) District Steward - \$750.00

(b) Such honoraria shall become due on the 15th of December each year.

(c) (i) Shop Stewards, Branch officers and Branch Chairpersons who fail to carry out their duties shall forfeit all or part of their allowance, and may face further disciplinary action.

(ii) Shop Steward and Branch officers honouraria shall be paid based on 90% attendance at meetings.

(d) Acting Shop Stewards shall receive the Shop Steward allowance for the period of acting.

13.17 (a) Each invoice for goods and services purchased on behalf of the Union requires a corresponding Purchase order with the appropriate authorization.

(b) Invoices for which there are no proper purchase orders shall become the responsibility of the person making the purchase.

13.18 Treasurer shall ensure that all rents and other payments due to the Union are collected and deposited in a timely fashion.

13.19 (a) The Treasurer shall ensure that agreements with creditors for payment are honoured.

(b) He/she shall make payments on or before the date they become due to avoid late payment charges.

13.20 (a) The Executive Committee shall authorize the Treasurer to establish accounts with creditors.

(b) Creditors must be informed of the Union's purchasing policy in writing before an account can be activated.

13.21 (a) The Executive Committee shall authorize the Treasurer to take out adequate insurance coverage on all Union properties and automobiles.

(b) The Treasurer shall ensure that insurance premiums are paid before they become due.

14.0 PROGRAMMES

14.1 (a) The Teacher of the Year Awards Programme shall be an annual event sponsored by the Union to honour members who demonstrate excellence in teaching.

(b) Nominees for the Award shall be selected by Union Members supervised by the Shop Steward or other Union Official at the participating school.

(c) The Mable Walker Award shall be presented to the winning nominee in the Primary Division.

(d) The A Leonard Archer Award shall be presented to the winning nominee in the Secondary Division.

(e) The Mursay Poitier Award shall be presented to the winning nominee in the All Age Division.

(f) The Carlton Francis Award shall be presented to the winning nominee in the Special Education Division.

(g) The Executive Committee shall ratify a set of unambiguous criteria for selecting and judging nominees proposed by the Teacher of the Year Committee.

(h) The Teacher of the Year Committee shall coordinate the activities of this programme.

(i) The Awards shall be presented at the Annual Teacher of the Year Awards Ball in May.

(j) The Teacher of the Year Committee shall submit a list of prospective judges to the Executive Committee for approval.

14.2 (a) The Annual Professional Development Conference shall be held in October.

(b) The purpose of the Conference shall be to provide members with opportunities to grow and develop professionally by participating in plenary sessions, workshops and discussions.

14.3 A Homework Hotline shall be established to provide assistance to students in the core subjects - English Language, Mathematics and Science.

14.4 A Members' Scholarship Fund shall be established to assist members with acquiring their Bachelors and masters degrees locally. The Executive Committee shall administer the fund.

15.0 MANAGEMENT OF UNION PROPERTIES

15.1 (a) The Executive Committee shall reserve the right to hire a real estate management firm to manage Union properties.

(b) A management contract shall be negotiated.

15.2 (a) Union properties not managed by a management firm shall be managed by the Property Management Committee made up of the five Executive Members.

(b) Tenants and lessees shall sign a contract approved by the Executive Committee.

16.0 UNION VEHICLES

16.1 (a) The Union shall provide a car for the President's use.

(b) An account shall be established at a service station for gasoline and other petroleum products.

(c) An account shall be established with an automobile repair and maintenance firm for repairs and maintenance.

(d) The President shall be the only signatory to these accounts.

(e) (i) In the event the President leaves the Island, the Vice President or an officer in charge shall have use of the car.

(ii) Charges for gasoline and repairs shall be requisitioned by purchase order.

16.2 (a) The Executive Committee shall approve a set of instructions for the use of Union vehicles.

(b) The authorized driver(s) shall be accountable to the Secretary General and Trustees for the proper use of such vehicle.

17.0 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

17.1 The Executive Committee shall authorize the President to provide:

- a) Specialized training for Executive Officers to facilitate the effective operation of their departments.
- b) Training in Trade Union Leadership for all Executive officers, Branch Chairpersons, Branch Officers, District Stewards, Shop Stewards and Assistant Shop Stewards to assist them in performing their various functions.
- c) Trade Union education for members.

17.2 The President shall consult with the National Congress of Trade Unions, the Caribbean Union of Teachers, Education International and other organizations in his/her effort to facilitate training and development.

17.3 When a member (including Executives, Branch officers and Shop Stewards) has to travel for training/ educational purposes he/she be entitled to:

- a) Return airfare
- b) Hotel accommodations
- c) A \$30.00 per day per them inclusive of the day of travel, and
- d) (d) An allowance for ground transportation which shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

17.4 All Shop Stewards and Assistant Shop Steward shall receive at least one training session per year.

18.0 AFFILIATION

18.1 The Bahamas of Teachers shall be a member of:

- a) The National Congress of Trade Unions (NCTU).
- b) The Caribbean Union of Teachers (CUT).
- c) Education International (EI)
- d) Any national or international organization with compatible goals.

19.0 DISCIPLINE/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

19.1 Any Executive officer, Branch Chairperson, Branch Officer, Shop Steward, Assistant Shop Steward or member who breaches these policies and procedures shall be liable for disciplinary action.

19.2 The Executive Committee shall administer discipline in accordance with the Constitution.

19.3 (a) Any member who has a grievance against an Executive officer, Branch Chairperson, Branch Officer, Shop Steward, Assistant Shop Steward or another member may file a complaint with the Secretary General.

(b) A proper investigation shall be conducted to ascertain the facts.

(c) A special committee shall be appointed to conduct the investigation. This committee shall report to the Executive Committee within a stipulated time period.

(d) The Executive Committee shall determine if there is sufficient grounds to initiate disciplinary action.

(e) The accused party shall be informed in writing within seven (7) days of the results of the investigation and the decision of the Executive Committee.

19.4 *(Repealed by the Special General Meeting, November 2002)*

19.5 The procedure for disciplinary action shall be as follows:

- (a) first offence - a verbal warning
- (b) second offence - a written warning
- (c) third offence - disciplinary action

19.6 Disciplinary action shall take the form of one or more of the following depending on the severity of the breach:

- a) Reprimand
- b) Written apology to the aggrieved party
- c) Withdrawal/reduction in allowances, stipend or salary
- d) Serve a period of probation not to exceed six (6) months.
- e) Suspension from office for a period not to exceed three (3) months
- f) Suspension of membership for a period not to exceed two (2) years
- g) Expulsion.

19.7 A member, Shop Steward, Branch officer, Branch Chairperson, Executive on probation shall become liable for stiffer penalties if he/she commits a breach of discipline while serving probation.

19.8 Any member, Shop Steward, Branch Officer, Branch Chairperson or Executive who refuses to obey a summons issued by the Chairman of the Ethics Committee, President or Executive Committee shall become liable for disciplinary action.

19.9 (a) The Chairman of the Ethics Committee or the Executive Committee may recommend counselling where appropriate.

(b) The Executive Committee shall make every effort to facilitate informal or professional counselling.

19.10 Decisions of the Ethics Committee, and the Executive Committee may be appealed to the Appeals Committee (see rule 10 of the Constitution).

20.0 AMENDMENTS

20.1 The A.G.M. shall have the authority to approve amendments to the GOVERNANCE Manual.

20.2 Proposed amendments to the GOVERNANCE Manual must be submitted to the Secretary General not later than fourteen (14) days before the first business session of the A.G.M.

20.3 Any member, Assistant Shop Steward, Shop Steward, Branch Officer, Branch Chairperson or the Executive Committee may submit a proposed amendment to this document.

20.4 Approved amendments shall be communicated to the membership and shall become a part of the GOVERNANCE Manual.

1.5 Each Member Executive Officer, Branch Chairperson, Branch Officer, Shop Steward and Assistant Shop shall be entitled to receive a copy of the GOVERNANCE Manual.

CODE OF ETHICS

Preamble

The teacher recognizes the magnitude of the responsibility inherent in the teaching process. The necessity to earn the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, of students, of parents and of the members of the community provides the incentive to attain and maintain the highest possible degree of ethical conduct.

The code of Ethics of the Bahamas Union of Teachers sets standards of conduct for Teachers in the Bahamian society. The term "teacher" as used in this Code of Ethics includes 'Principal'.

Principles

Principle 1 in Relation to Students

- (i) The teacher speaks to, and acts toward students in a respectful and dignified manner.
- (ii) The teacher does not discriminate against students on the basis of class, nationality, ability, colour, creed, status, religious or political belief.
- (iii) The teacher does not engage in illicit/indiscreet actions involving students.
- (iv) The teacher does not intentionally expose the student to public embarrassment or disparagement.
- (v) The teacher does not act in such manner as might lead his/her students into breaches of law, or unacceptable moral or social codes of behaviour.
- (vi) The teacher does not disclose confidential information about students unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose, or is required by law.
- (vii) The teacher does not intrude into the private life of students unless the intrusion serves a compelling educational purpose.

Principle 2 In Relation to Colleagues

- (i) The teacher does not undermine the position, status or influence of any colleague.
- (ii) The teacher does not accept a position where the Union has determined a dispute surrounding the vacancy of the position.

(iii) The teacher refers to the Union, disputes with colleagues arising from his/her work or professional activities which cannot be privately resolved at the local level.

(iv) The teacher recognizes the authority of school administrators and seeks to influence administrative policies and practices through accepted channels.

(v) The teacher does not act in such manner as might lead his/her colleagues into breaches of law, or unacceptable moral or social codes of behaviour.

(vi) Teacher seeks to operate at all times in a context of mutual respect for the rights of every other teacher.

Principle 3 - In Relation to the Union

(i) The teacher adheres to Union policy and the decisions of its Governing Bodies and seeks to change these only through the Union's constitutional channels.

(ii) The teacher accepts, as a professional obligation, participation in the activities of the Union.

(iii) The teacher honours commitments made on his/her behalf by the Union.

(iv) No group of teachers, or any teacher purporting to speak on behalf of such group, make representations to the Government, its members or officials or any other authority on matters affecting teachers generally, or advocates a change in educational policy without the knowledge and consent of the Union.

(v) The teacher adheres to collective agreements negotiated by his professional organization. In case of any disagreement, he/she registers his protest through the constitutional channels provided within the Union.

(vi) In the event a member has a grievance against the Union, either party seeks to settle such a grievance through the constitutional channels of the Union.

Principle 4 - In Relation to Employees

(i) The teacher honours agreements made in his/her contract or term of employment.

(ii) The teacher notifies Boards, to which he/she has sent applications, as soon as he/she has accepted a position.

(iii) The teacher, intending to terminate his/her employment, gives notice of his/her intentions according to Regulations laid down by his/her employer.

(iv) The teacher does not accept a position with any employer whose relations with the Union are unsatisfactory without consultation with the Union.

Principle 5 - General

(i) The teacher does not engage in activities which adversely affect his/her professional status, or ability to perform adequately, his/her duties as a teacher.

(ii) The teacher does not engage in actions which disrupt the peace, order, discipline, work of the institution in which he/she is employed, or any other institution to which he/she has access, excluding circumstances dangerous to the life and health of the school population, and except for Industrial Action agreed upon by the Union.

A written report on such action described in the above exclusion, will be submitted to the Union's Headquarters within seven (7) days.

Postscript

This code of Ethics applies to all members of the Bahamas Union of Teachers. A complaint of violation of the principles outlined above made to the Union by any person or group, may be regarded as a charge of unprofessional conduct and shall be investigated by the Union through channels outlined in its legal documents.

Any teacher found guilty of a breach of this Code of Ethics, shall be dealt with according to the Constitution and/or Governance Manual.

EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL (EI) POLICY RESOLUTION

DECLARATION ON PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Preamble

1. This declaration represents an individual and collective commitment by teachers and other education personnel. It is complementary to the laws, statutes, rules and programmes that define the practice of the profession. It is also a tool that aims at helping teachers and education personnel respond to questions related to professional conduct and at the same time to the problems arising from relations with different participants in education;
1. Quality public education, a cornerstone of a democratic society, has the task of providing equality of educational opportunity for all children and youth and is fundamental to the well being of society through its contribution to economic, social and cultural development. Teachers and education personnel have a responsibility to foster confidence among the general public in the standards of service that can be expected from all engaged in this important task;
12. The exercise of responsible judgement is at the heart of professional activities, and actions of caring, competent and committed teachers and education personnel to help every student reach his or her potential is a critical factor in the provision of quality education;
13. The expertise and commitment of teachers and education personnel must be combined with good working conditions, a supportive community and enabling policies to allow quality education to take place.
14. The teaching profession may benefit greatly from a discussion about the core values of the profession. Such raising of consciousness about the norms and ethics of the profession may contribute to increasing job satisfaction among teachers and education personnel, to enhancing their status and self-esteem, and to increasing respect for the profession in society;
15. Teachers and education personnel and their unions, by virtue of their membership in Education International (EI), are committed to the promotion of education that helps develop a person=s capacity to live a fulfilled life and to contribute to the well-being of society;
16. Recognizing the extent of the responsibilities inherent in the teaching process and the responsibility to attain and maintain the highest grade of ethical conduct towards the profession, to students, colleagues and parents, Education International member organizations should:
 - a) actively promote the policies and resolutions adopted by the EI Congress and Executive Board including this Declaration of Professional Ethics;
 - b) work to ensure that teachers and other education personnel benefit from terms and conditions of work that allow them to fulfil their responsibilities;

- c) work to ensure the rights guaranteed to all workers in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up which encompasses:
 - the right to freedom of association;
 - the right to bargain collectively;
 - freedom from discrimination at work;
 - equality at work;
 - freedom from forced, or bonded labour;
 - the elimination of child labour;
- a) work to ensure that their members have the rights outlined in the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation Concerning The Status of Teachers and the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel;
- b) Combat all forms of racism, bias or discrimination in education due to gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religion, political opinion, social or economic status, national or ethnic origin;
- c) Cooperate at the national level to promote quality government funded education for all children, to enhance the status and to protect the rights of education personnel;
- d) Use their influence to make it possible for all children worldwide, without discrimination, and particularly child labourers, children from marginalized groups or those having specific difficulties to have access to quality education;

Taking this into consideration, EI adopts and proclaims the present Declaration:

ARTICLE 1. Commitment to the profession: Education personnel shall:

- e) Justify public trust and confidence and enhance the esteem in which the profession held by providing quality education for all students;
- f) Ensure that professional knowledge is regularly updated and improved;
- g) Determine the nature, format and timing of their lifelong learning programs as an essential expression of their professionalism;
- h) Declare all relevant information related to competency and qualifications;
- i) Strive, through active participation in their union, to achieve conditions of work that attract highly qualified persons to the profession;
- j) Support all efforts to promote democracy and human rights in and through education;

ARTICLE 2. Commitment to students: Education personnel shall:

- a) Respect the rights of all children to benefit from the provisions identified in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child particularly as those rights apply to education;
- b) Acknowledge the uniqueness, individuality and specific needs of each student and provide guidance and encouragement to each student to realise his/her full potential;
- c) Give students a feeling of being a part of a community of mutual commitment with room for everyone;
- d) Maintain professional relations with students;
- e) Safeguard and promote the interest and well-being of students and make every effort to protect students from bullying and from physical or psychological abuse;
- f) Take all possible steps to safeguard students from sexual abuse;
- g) Exercise due care, diligence and confidentiality in all matters affecting the welfare of their students;
- h) Assist students to develop a set of values consistent with international human rights standards;
- i) Exercise authority with justice and compassion;
- j) Ensure that the privileged relationship between teacher and student is not exploited in any way, particularly in order to proselytise or for ideological control;

ARTICLE 3. Commitment to colleagues: Education personnel shall:

Promote collegiality among colleagues by respecting their professional standing and opinions; and be prepared to offer advice and assistance particularly to those beginning their career or in training;

Maintain confidentiality of information about colleagues obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law;

Assist colleagues in peer review procedures negotiated and agreed to between education unions and employers;

Safeguard and promote the interests and well-being of colleagues and protect them from bullying and from physical, psychological or sexual abuse;

Ensure that all means and procedures for the implementation of this declaration are the object of thorough discussions in each national organization in order to ensure its best possible application;

ARTICLE 4. Commitment to Management Personnel: Education personnel shall:

- a) Be knowledgeable of their legal and administrative rights and responsibilities, and respect the provisions of collective contracts and the provisions concerning students' rights;

- b) Carry out reasonable instructions from management personnel and have the right to question instructions through a clearly determined procedure;

ARTICLE 5. Commitment to parents: Education personnel shall:

- Recognize the right of parents to information and consultation, through agreed channels, on the welfare and progress of their child;
- Respect lawful parental authority, but give advice from a professional point of view that is in best interest of the child;
- Make every effort to encourage parents to be actively involved in the education of their child and to actively support the learning process by ensuring that children avoid forms of child labour that could affect their education;

ARTICLE 6. Commitment to the teacher: The community shall:

- Make it possible for teachers to feel confident that they themselves are treated fairly while attending to their tasks;
- Recognize that teachers have a right to preserve their privacy, care for themselves and lead a normal life in the community;

Adopted by the Third World Congress of Education International meeting in Jomtien, Thailand, July 25th - 29th, 2001.

Revised by EI=s Fourth World Congress, Porto Alegre, Brazil, July 22 B 26, 2004.

Resource/Reference Listing

The Bahamas Independence Order 1973:

The Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.

The Education Act

General Orders

The Public Service Commission Regulations

The Teaching Service Commission Act 2002

(The Teaching Service Commission Regulations)

The ILO/UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers

The Industrial Relations Act 1979 and Amendments

The Ministry of Education/BUT Recognition Agreement 1965

The Public Service Pensions Act

The National Insurance Act

The Maternity Benefit Act

The Employment Act 2002

The Health & Safety Act 2002

The Career Path Handbook

Ministry of Education Policy Handbooks for Teachers and School Management

Ministry of Education Circulars/Memoranda

Collective Bargaining Agreement

The UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up

The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The ILO Core Conventions:

– C 29: Forced Labour

– C 87: Freedom of Association and the Right to Organise

– C 98: Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining

– C 100: Equal Remuneration

– C 105: Abolition of Forced Labour

– C 111: Discrimination (Employment and Occupation)

– C 138: Minimum Age

– C 169: Indigenous and Tribal Peoples

– C 182: Prohibition and Immediate Action For the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, also ILO Recommendation 190 which bears the same name.

PRESIDENTS OF THE BAHAMAS UNION OF TEACHERS

1947	1st	Sis. Mabel Walker - Founding President
1-1959	2nd	Sis. Mabel Walker (deceased)
1-1964	3rd	Bro. Carlton E. Francis (deceased)
1-1967	4th	Bro. Atemus N. Cox (deceased)
1-1969	5th	Bro. Elcott Johnson
1-1971	6th	Bro. Livingston Darville
1-1972	7th	Bro. Enoch Beckford
1-1973	8th	Bro. Cecil N. Curling
1-1974	9th	Bro. A. Leonard Archer
1-1975	10th	Bro. Enoch Beckford
1-1978	11th	Bro. Cecil N. Curling
1-1981	12th	Bro. Ellison K. Minnis
1-1984	13th	Bro. A. Leonard Archer
	14th	Bro. K. Donald Symonnette
1993-2005	15th	Bro. Kingsley Livingstone Black
2005-2008	16th	Sis. Ida Poitier-Turnquest
2008 - Present	17th	Sis. Belinda M. Wilson