

WTU Member Petition to Amend the WTU Bylaws to Increase Union Accountability through Checks and Balances & Member Power

PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME ON FILE WITH DCPS/WTU CLEARLY:

I, _____,
(Name of Petitioner: Person gathering signatures) (School) (Home Address) (Phone Number)

submit this petition for amending the WTU Constitution and Bylaws in the following ways:

Article	Current Language	Proposed Amendment	If Adopted, Will Read	Rationale
Article V Section D 1	The Executive Board shall have the sole authority to hire and terminate employees upon the recommendation of the president. Professional employees shall be hired by contract with provision for orderly dismissal and with the right of hearing and counsel. Other employees may be hired by Union contract and procedures shall be established in all contracts for orderly dismissal with the right of hearing and counsel, unless otherwise provided for in a Union contract. The provisions of this section shall not apply to elected officers of the Union.	Delete full text in D1 and replace with: 1. The Executive Board shall meet for the purpose of initiating, overseeing or revising the program of the organization and to conduct other business of the organization that is within its authority. 2.The Executive Board shall employ all professional, technical, clerical and support staff of the organization. 3. The Executive Board shall establish the salary, benefits and expense guidelines of any general officer who is employed by the organization. 4. The Executive Board shall be empowered to make contracts and incur liabilities including the purchase of services, equipment and real property, to borrow money, to secure such obligations by mortgage or other instrument, and to otherwise engage in financial transactions to the extent permitted by applicable law or statute. The Executive Board shall have the power to sue, complain and defend on behalf of the membership.	1. The Executive Board shall meet for the purpose of initiating, overseeing or revising the program of the organization and to conduct other business of the organization that is within its authority. 2.The Executive Board shall employ all professional, technical, clerical and support staff of the organization. 3. The Executive Board shall establish the salary, benefits and expense guidelines of any general officer who is employed by the organization. 4. The Executive Board shall be empowered to make contracts and incur liabilities including the purchase of services, equipment and real property, to borrow money, to secure such obligations by mortgage or other instrument, and to otherwise engage in financial transactions to the extent permitted by applicable law or statute. The Executive Board shall have the power to sue, complain and defend on behalf of the membership. <i>Note: Article V Section D2-5 language will not be changed and will just be remunerated to D5-8</i>	This language is verbatim what is provided by the AFT Model Constitution which is recommended to all locals. It is meant to clarify the role of the WTU Executive Board as compared to the WTU Rep Assembly and allow it greater authority to check and balance the power of the WTU President. This provides greater democracy over union office functions and carrying out Representative Assembly policy.
Article VI Section 1	Subject to the final authority of the membership, the general governing body of the WTU shall be the Representative Assembly. This assembly shall consist of members of the WTU elected by the members. Elections for the Assembly shall be as follows:	Insert after “membership.”: “and any exceptions specifically set forth in this Constitution and By-Laws,” Insert after “Representative Assembly.” The decisions of the Representative Assembly on Union matters shall be supreme and final. The Representative Assembly may consider and act upon any matter which it regards as pertinent to the purposes and activities of this Union.	Subject to the final authority of the membership, and any exceptions specifically set forth in this Constitution and By-Laws, the general governing body of the WTU shall be the Representative Assembly. The decisions of the Representative Assembly on Union matters shall be supreme and final. The Representative Assembly may consider and act upon any matter which it regards as pertinent to the purposes and activities of this Union. This assembly shall consist of members of the WTU elected by the members. Elections for the Assembly shall be as follows:	This language is meant to clarify and strengthen the powers of the WTU Representative Assembly in alignment with how more democratic and member driven unions like the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) run. This was adapted from the current language in CTU’s “House of Delegates”.

Article	Current Language	Proposed Amendment	If Adopted, Will Read	Rationale
Article VI Section 7	The Representative Assembly shall meet for the purpose of establishing the policies of the WTU; receiving and reviewing the reports of the President, Executive Board and Committees; taking appropriate action as specified in the Constitution, reviewing monthly financial reports and the annual audit and initiating and taking other actions as the body deems necessary.	Insert after “Committees”: review and vote to accept or reject tentative or final collective bargaining agreement; Insert after “necessary”: Action by the Representative Assembly to authorize a strike or accept or reject a tentative or final collective bargaining agreement shall be advisory only and in both instances shall be subject to a final, direct vote of the regular members.	The Representative Assembly shall meet for the purpose of establishing the policies of the WTU; receiving and reviewing the reports of the President, Executive Board and Committees; review and vote to accept or reject tentative or final collective bargaining agreement; taking appropriate action as specified in the Constitution, reviewing monthly financial reports and the annual audit and initiating and taking other actions as the body deems necessary. Action by the Representative Assembly to authorize a labor action or accept or reject a tentative or final collective bargaining agreement shall be advisory only and in both instances shall be subject to a final, direct vote of the regular members.	This will empower the Representative Assembly, and thereby all WTU Members, to see and vote on the bargaining agreement throughout the negotiations process and before putting it to the membership for a vote. This will also enshrine the practice (currently not in the WTU Bylaws) that members must vote on the collective bargaining agreement as well as any strike action.

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the signatories to this petition are members in good standing of the Washington Teachers’ Union.

Signature of Petitioner (person gathering signatures): _____

#	Print Name Legibly	School	Signature	#	Print Name Legibly	School	Signature
1				11			
2				12			
3				13			
4				14			
5				15			
6				16			
7				17			
8				18			
9				19			
10				20			

Contact Laura Fuchs at laurajf@gmail.com or 971-219-3935 with any questions, comments or concerns and when you are ready to turn in your petitions

Not necessary to Print: The Purpose & Background Information

- **The Educators Taking Action slate is sponsoring this petition so the WTU can have greater democratic accountability by strengthening the system of checks and balances in alignment with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) sample Constitution Bylaws and fellow unions like the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU).**
- Through multiple union presidents there have been consistent power struggles between the WTU Executive Board and the President around contracts and hiring. This is largely because contracts are not mentioned in the current WTU bylaws. This goes against the standard in other locals and the AFT Model Constitution. This has allowed the WTU President to have largely unchecked power and led to challenges with nepotism, politics, mismanagement and abuse of our staff, causing high turnover. By adding this section of the Bylaws it should create more avenues for checks and balances to manage the spending, hiring and employment in the WTU office while providing greater transparency to membership as a whole.
- While the WTU Representative Assembly already is considered the governing body of the WTU, this has not been how it has worked for a long time. Working with lawyers from the AFT to revise the bylaws, we have seen that the WTU Executive Board and WTU Representative Assembly have too many overlapping functions. This has historically caused the WTU Executive Board to take the place of the WTU Representative Assembly, removing much of their power. The proposed changes to the WTU Representative Assembly seek to strengthen and clarify the role of the WTU Representative Assembly in the union and professionalize that space. This will force the WTU to treat the Representative Assembly as the primary place where all major decisions for the union must be made.
- Our current Constitution and Bylaws also does not have provisions enshrining the ability of the membership to vote on the contract and on strike actions. By adding these sections to the bylaws we ensure that our past practices are explicitly stated and protected.

Petitioner: Person gathering signatures

Process must be followed for each sheet that has signatures on it to be valid.

1. Have delivered and/or print out copies of the petition to gather signatures by hand on **legal sized paper**.
2. Fill out all of the petitioner information at the top of the sheet as legibly as possible. (Full name, School, home address and phone number) - This is required by the WTU.
3. **Sign your name under the certification statement as the petitioner above where you gather the signatures.**
4. **Sign the document yourself as #1.**
5. Do your best to gather signatures from WTU Members only!
 - a. Make sure they write their full name as legibly as possible, because the information will later be checked to ensure they are members.
 - b. If the person is unsure, let them sign, but have them check Peoplesoft (Under Payroll -> Labor Organization Enrollment). If they aren't a member yet, they can sign up on the spot!
6. When you are finished gathering signatures contact Laura Fuchs at laurajf@gmail.com or 971-219-3935 to arrange how the petitions will be collected

The Overall Process: See WTU Bylaws Article XI

https://www.wtulocal6.net/constitution_and_bylaws

- We need **800 Dues Paying WTU Members** to sign the petition in order to introduce a bylaws amendment. **Our hope is to have this finished by April for the June 2025 Membership Meeting.**
- Once the petitions have been successfully submitted, the text of the proposed amendments will be sent to the Membership.
- Membership will then be allowed to vote on the amendments in the June Membership Meeting. The amendment will need to pass by a ⅔ vote of those present and voting at that meeting. It will be important that we have a quorum of well over 150 members ready to support these changes.