

2024 BTU SPECIAL Election Procedures/Candidates' Guide

Who is being elected?

This process is for the nomination and election of Boston Teachers Union (BTU) Local 66 Vice-President, due to a vacancy mid-term. The election will be conducted in accordance with the BTU Local 66 Bylaws and the AFT constitution.

How do I get on the ballot?

To run for office in the BTU election, candidates must collect a certain number of valid nomination signatures from BTU and/or RTC members in good standing. For Vice-President, you must collect 100 nomination signatures.

Due to a 2022 bylaw change, you can now obtain your nomination signatures in two ways: by collecting signatures on a paper form and submitting them to the Election Committee at a membership meeting; or by electronic nomination. The BTU's tech team has created a system where members can nominate candidates by securely signing in to the [BTU member portal](#).

As a candidate, how can I reach out to my friends and colleagues to get nominations?

Candidates may use the paper nomination forms to collect signatures face-to-face. They can also contact their colleagues by email, phone, or any other means to ask for a digital nomination "signature" via the member portal. For example, they may choose to send a [link to the member portal](#) and the [step-by-step directions for nominations](#) via text or email.

When are nominations due?

All nominations, whether paper or digital, must be submitted by September 11th (the first membership meeting), by 6pm or by the end of the membership meeting, whichever is later.

Where can I get the paper nomination forms?

At the BTU administrative office after August 1st, 8-5 Monday through Friday.

How do I submit paper nomination forms?

Paper nominations MUST be submitted in person at the Election Committee table at the membership meeting on September 11th. They will only be accepted up to 6 PM or the end of the meeting, whichever is later. All of a candidate's paper nominations must be submitted at the same time. If the candidate is unable to attend the meeting, they may designate another member to submit their papers for them.

How does a member give their electronic "signature" to nominate a candidate?

Members should go to members.btu.org ([the member portal](#)), where they will sign in using their BPS employee number, email, or BTU-provided Retirement Number and their password.

For those who are not familiar with the member portal, there is a "forgot password" link and a registration link to help them get access.

After signing in, members will click NOMINATE. They will fill in the first and last name of the candidate they wish to nominate for a given position. After the system locates the name of the candidate, the nominator selects the office from a drop-down menu, then clicks "submit" to confirm.

See [step-by-step directions for the member portal here](#).

What if two people have the same name?

If the system locates multiple members with the same name, the nominator will be shown school and/or departmental affiliation so they can choose the right person.

Will I be able to see a record of who I have nominated for each office?

Yes. That information will appear each time you log in. It is on the NOMINATE tab.

Will candidates know who has nominated them, and how many nominations they have?

Yes. Once submitted, the nomination "attaches" to the candidate. The candidate will then be able to log in to the portal to view all the nominations they have received. Click MY NOMINATIONS to see this information.

Does the system preserve confidentiality?

Yes. Each nomination will only be able to be viewed by two people: the nominator, and the nominated candidate. Eventually it may be viewed by the Election Committee during the validation process.

Is it possible to submit a combination of paper and electronic nominations?

Yes. If you submit both, the Election Committee will verify both sets of nominations. Signatures from any paper nomination forms submitted to the committee before the deadline will be entered into the system and will appear as part of the total nominations for a candidate. When paper ballot signatures are merged with electronic signatures, any duplicates will be invalidated. Please know that electronic papers are automatically validated and there is a delay for paper.

How many candidates can I nominate for Vice President?

You can only nominate one person for Vice President.

When will the nominations be validated by the Election Committee?

Election Committee will validate signatures as soon as possible. Electronic signatures are validated immediately due to the member portal procedure. Paper signatures, if necessary, will be validated on September 12th.

Who updates the membership lists?

The membership list is maintained by BTU and RTC staff. If you have any questions or concerns about your membership status, please contact the BTU office or the RTC.

How will I be notified if I am on the ballot?

Upon completion of the validation process everyone who received nominations (or submitted paper nomination forms, or both) will be notified by email as to whether their name has been validated to appear on the ballot.

When validation is completed, a list of validated candidates will be sent to the membership by E-Bulletin and will be available on the website.

Will I have a chance to review the ballot before it is printed?

Draft ballots will be circulated to candidates to allow for timely comments/corrections before publication of ballots. Final ballots will be published in the e-bulletin and the BTU website for all members to view.

How can I find out more, or get my questions answered?

Contact electioncommittee@btu.org with any questions about the election. Contact mfrank@btu.org with any questions about your membership status. Contact members@btu.org with any questions or concerns about the member portal and the electronic nomination process. For questions that need a quick response, contact ombudsperson Marjie Crosby and/or Danielle Fraine at marjiecrosby@gmail.com and daniellefraine@gmail.com.

Where/how can I distribute campaign literature?

Candidates have the option of mailing literature using printed labels and/or electronically through a union approved mailing service. All costs associated with the mailing or distribution of campaign literature are the responsibility of the candidate. Candidates should contact the BTU office to purchase printed labels or to arrange for the mailing list to be sent to the printer electronically.

Will there be a candidate forum this year?

We are not yet certain of opportunities for publicity and communication towards members due to the tight time frame of the special election. We will update candidates and members as we can via the e-bulletin.

Are there any legal limitations on how I can campaign?

The Election Committee expects all candidates to adhere to federal union election law which prohibits the use of any union or employer funds to promote the candidacy of any person. This prohibition applies to cash, facilities, equipment, office supplies, copying, email and mailing lists. This means incumbent union officers campaigning for re-election, and BTU staff, may not campaign on time paid for by the union. Federal law also requires that candidates be treated equally regarding the opportunity to campaign. This means incumbents cannot use BTU sponsored meetings or events to campaign unless all candidates are allowed the same privileges.

The prohibition against cash and the use of union facilities, equipment, office supplies, copying and email applies equally to employer funds, facilities, equipment, office supplies, copying and email furnished by an employer. This means candidates cannot campaign during paid work time or use department facilities, equipment or email to campaign.

Federal law also requires that members be allowed to support the candidates of their choice, without being subject to penalty, discipline or reprisals of any kind.

Can I inspect the BTU membership list?

Each candidate may inspect (not copy) the BTU membership list once within 30 days prior to the election. No candidate is entitled to receive a copy of the list. The membership list will be available for inspection at the BTU office between 8am and 5pm Mon-Fri. Any candidate wishing to inspect the list should contact the Secretary-Treasurer at the BTU office at 617-288-2000 to make an appointment.

Can I observe in-person voting or vote counting?

Candidates or their designees may observe during in person voting and during counting of ballots.

Election Committee Information

Open Meetings

Committee meetings are open to BTU/RTC observers. A period of 15 minutes will be allowed at the beginning of each meeting for questions.

In this cycle, the committee meets in person on the fourth Monday of each month at 5PM at the BTU.

RTC Designee

The RTC will designate a liaison to the election committee to be present at each meeting. RTC members can become a member of the election committee following the same procedure as active members.

Communication with Membership

Election-related information (i.e. by-laws, meeting minutes) will be published on the BTU web portal that is available to members only. Minutes will be approved within 72 hours following the election committee meeting, after electronic review/corrections by election committee members. When possible, documents will be made public on the website (i.e timelines and general resources for candidates.)

Vendor

The election committee selects a vendor to run the election. When necessary, the committee develops an RFP for vendors, specifying the BTU's specific and unique requirements. The committee obtains bids from vendors, holds interviews, checks references, and selects a vendor in a time frame established in the bylaws.

Election Procedures

A secret ballot election is required for all union officer elections; therefore ballots should be completed individually by the member receiving the ballot without interference or request to complete in a group setting.

Members may vote in person or with a mail-in ballot. All members will receive a mailing including mail-in ballot with instructions for return. Ballots will be sent out according to members' status (active or RTC member), and based on the Field Rep. that is assigned to their school, program or job title. Timelines for return of ballots will be determined with the selected vendor.

In-person voting will be held at the BTU hall from 8am to 6pm on October 16th. If there are more than two candidates, then a final election will be held at a later pending date. Members will be asked to present a valid picture ID. After the vendor determines they are eligible to vote, a ballot will be given based on the Field Rep that is assigned to their school, program or job title. All members will be required to use voting booths. Booths and chairs will be available to members who prefer to sit. Only those waiting to vote or representatives of the vendor, election committee, or people staffing trouble tables will be permitted in the polling area. Campaign literature will not be allowed in the room. Personal notes will be allowed at the voting booths.

Counting of Ballots

A procedure will be developed with vendor that allows ballots to be counted in a safe manner and with results tabulated on the day/evening of in person voting (i.e. counting may be done while in person voting is occurring; no results or numbers can be released until total count is completed).

Announcement of results

Results will be announced once counting is completed in person at the union hall. Results will be posted that night in a special E Bulletin, at the BTU office and on the web page for all offices except Delegates. Delegate announcements will be made the following day. All results will be printed in the next edition of the BTU newspaper.

Contact the Election Committee

The election committee can be contacted at electioncommittee@btu.org. For voting concerns or urgent questions, please contact ombudspersons Marjie Crosby and/or Danielle Fraine at marjiecrosby@gmail.com and daniellefraine@gmail.com.