



FACTS ABOUT OUR CAMPAIGN



Q: WHAT IS A CHARTERED LOCAL AND HOW DOES IT DIFFER FROM OUR CURRENT STRUCTURE?

A: All Brownsville Educators Stand Together (BEST AFT) members are part of what is called the Texas AFT Associate Member Program (AMP). This is a special member program of the 1.7-million-member American Federation of Teachers (AFT), AFL-CIO. The purpose of AMP is to help introduce school employees to the benefits and opportunities AFT can provide. In short AMP's purpose is to teach employees to utilize their power to advocate for the issues important to them on a local, state, and national level. BEST AFT is currently at the Organizing Committee stage where a large portion of dues money is retained locally to establish a treasury; leadership and committees are appointed, and members are trained on how to operate their own local union. A chartered local is the third and final phase in our development where a local constitution is ratified, local leaders are elected by the members, and the elected executive board oversees the day-to-day operations of our union. Chartered locals will also be affiliated with the 13.5 million-member AFL-CIO and have representation at the local Central Labor Council (i.e., the Rio Grande Valley CLC). AFT members of a chartered local will have full voting rights at the state and national conventions as well.



Q: WHAT NEW BENEFITS DO MEMBERS RECEIVE FROM A CHARTERED LOCAL?

A: BEST AFT members already receive many benefits including access to a local union office, local representatives, and attorneys. Full-time and part-time Texas AFT staff have been assigned to assist with our local programming needs. In addition, dues dollars are spent on local advocacy efforts which have yielded many positive changes for BISD employees. Once chartered, members will have access to new benefits. These benefits include receiving a \$25,000 Accidental Death & Dismemberment Insurance policy, having stronger engagement in local elections, affiliating with the AFL-CIO and Central Labor Council (population for community support on issues), electing local union officers, increasing local professional development programs, gaining access to organizing and employee welfare grants, establishing a local higher education scholarship fund, and seeking a local elected consultation policy to win on issue such as employee pay, benefits, and working conditions.



Q: WILL BEST AFT MEMBERS SEE A DUES INCREASE UPON CHARTERING?

A: Since our Organizing Committee leadership chose to move to “full dues” in the school year of 2022-2023, there will be no dues increase associated with our move to charter hood in May 2024.



Q: WHEN WILL MEMBERS HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO VOTE ON THE CHARTER PROPOSAL?

A: Members will have the ability to vote on the charter proposal at our BEST AFT Spring Social in May 2024 (location/date/time TBD). A secret ballot election will be held to vote to charter, ratify a proposed constitution, and to elect local officers.

