



## BMORE Voting Accessibility Petition

For years, obstacles to voting in BTU elections have hampered the voice of educators in Baltimore City. To increase participation and make our union more democratic, one of BMORE's first initiatives has been a campaign to make it easier for BTU members to vote for its leadership. Throughout last year and the first month of the 2017-2018 school year, we have collected signatures from BTU members with the goal of changing the union constitution to allow us to vote via a mail-in ballot in addition to in-person voting, rather than trekking to inconvenient and time-consuming destinations that limit participation.

Making our elections more accessible is a vital first step to addressing the needs of BTU members who feel we do not have enough say in union activities. Increasing the vote will lead to a more representative, responsive, and engaged union.

**Current Constitutional Language from Article VI, Section 14.n:** *The Chapters' Executive Boards, sitting jointly, shall have the authority to establish all rules and regulations for the conduct of the election to supplement the provisions of this Constitution, including the authority to use mail referendum balloting or absentee balloting, without membership approval provided, however, that if the election is to (be) held without a mail ballot, there shall either be one (1) central-location for the balloting or the balloting shall be conducted at each of the Regional Offices of the Baltimore City Public School System. In the event that the school system will not allow the use of said offices, the Chapters' Executive Boards, sitting jointly, will designate a central location in each region.*

**Proposed Replacement Constitutional Language:** *The Chapters' Executive Board members shall be elected by secret ballot with the members in good standing of the Union voting by mail-in balloting or, if members choose, secure online voting. The options of mail-in and secure online voting shall be available for contract ratification votes in addition to Executive Board elections. Voting shall be conducted by a reputable and impartial third party organization and shall follow the timelines and other relevant election provisions stated in Article VI, Section 14 of the Constitution.*

### Why Change How We Vote?

- The current process for voting makes it hard for teachers and paraprofessionals to vote. Forcing teachers to vote in only a few locations across the city, all on one day, excludes union members. We deserve a better chance to be included.
- In BTU elections, only about 10% of teachers and PSRPs actually vote. We need to include more voices.
- Many other unions use mail-in and online voting.
- More participation means a stronger union!

### What Happens Next?

- After we submit our approximately 850 signatures, a special meeting will be scheduled.
- All BTU members in good standing will be invited to attend that meeting and vote Yes or No on the amendment.
- If 2/3 of the teachers and 2/3 of the PSRPs at that meeting vote Yes, the new voting procedure will be put in place for the May 2019 election.