

**American Federation of Teachers Local 1904  
Committee On Political Education (COPE) Constitution  
August 1, 2016**

**Article 1 – NAME**

This Committee shall be known as the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Local 1904 Committee On Political Education (COPE).

**Article II - PURPOSE**

The purpose of the AFT Local 1904 COPE shall be:

- To promote public and government support for higher education;
- To encourage the participation of the Local 1904 members in governmental and political activities;
- To improve union members' understanding of policies and legislation that affect higher education; state and local government, and worker rights; and
- To engage in activities suitable for achieving these ends.

**Article III - MEMBERSHIP**

Only those AFT Local 1904 members who donate to the AFT Local 1904 COPE Fund via dues check-off (*i.e.*, COPE contributors) shall be eligible for membership on the COPE. The committee shall consist of a minimum of seven (7) members but not to exceed 15, including the AFT Local 1904 President, Vice President for External Affairs, Treasurer, and at least four (4) additional at-large members who are COPE contributors.

In the case where a given AFT Local 1904 officer listed above is not a COPE contributor that officer is not eligible to participate on the committee or vote on COPE issues or expenditures.

**Article IV - OFFICERS**

The officers of the COPE shall be (unless precluded as described above):

- The chairperson, who shall be the AFT Local 1904 Vice President for External Affairs; and
- The treasurer, who shall be the AFT Local 1904 Treasurer.

**Article V – AUTHORITY OF COMMITTEE**

The COPE shall have the authority to carry out activities related and limited to the achievement of its purpose; and

- Shall make recommendations to the AFT Local 1904 membership with regards to political endorsements on local and state elections, with the exception of governor, only;

- Shall inform the AFT Local 1904 membership about NJ AFL-CIO, Council of New Jersey State College Locals, AFT NJ, and AFT National's endorsements of candidates for the following offices :
  - Governor of New Jersey;
  - President of the United States;
  - U.S. Senate seats; and
  - U.S. Congressional seats;
- Shall decide, on its own authority, the distribution of COPE funds for political activities subject to applicable laws and regulations;
- Shall recruit AFT Local 1904 unit members to become COPE contributors; and
- Shall recruit AFT Local 1904 COPE contributors to participate on labor walks, phone banking, and other Get Out The Vote (GOTV) activities.

#### **Article VI – PROCEDURES FOR RECRUITMENT OF COPE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

AFT Local 1904 officers will issue an invitation to AFT Local 1904 members who donate to the AFT Local 1904 COPE Fund via dues check-off to become members of the Local's COPE Committee. The invitation to join the committee shall be extended every two years within three (3) months after the election of AFT Local 1904 officers.

Should the number of volunteers exceed 15 (fifteen) COPE contributors, the officers of AFT Local 1904 will hold an election for membership on the COPE Committee. Only AFT Local 1904 members who donate to the AFT Local 1904 COPE Fund via dues check-off shall be eligible to vote in this election. Those who receive the most votes shall then serve on the COPE Committee. Ex-Officio members of the COPE (President, VPEA and Treasurer) are listed on the ballot as Ex Officio and are not part of the vote.

#### **Article VII - PROCEDURES FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**

Only those AFT Local 1904 members who donate to the AFT Local 1904 COPE Fund via dues check-off are eligible to vote on amendments to the COPE constitution. Amendments to this constitution shall be made by majority vote

- A proposed constitutional amendment may be presented in writing to the chairperson of the COPE by an eligible COPE voter, as described above in this article;
- The proposed amendment must have the signature of a minimum of 10 eligible COPE voters. Lists of COPE contributors will be provided to any COPE contributor who requests one for the purpose of proposing a constitutional amendment;
- The COPE shall administer a vote on the proposed amendment among the eligible COPE voters within 90 calendar days of the submission of the proposed amendment.