



*A Union of Professionals*

## **2020 Presidential Endorsement Process**

WHEREAS, the American Federation of Teachers is a union of professionals that is committed to bettering the lives of the people we serve and the people we represent—through a voice at work and in our democracy, and by championing economic opportunity and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services; and

WHEREAS, the AFT and our members have a long and proud history of engaging in the political process as a means to improve people’s lives; and

WHEREAS, the AFT, through our national, state and local affiliates, provide a vehicle for working people and our communities to build collective power and to accomplish what is impossible for individuals to achieve alone for a better life and a voice at work and in our democracy; and

WHEREAS, the AFT is committed to advancing the ideals of our democracy, including making it easier—not harder—to register and vote, and to ending the disenfranchisement of millions of voters through voter suppression and gerrymandering schemes; and

WHEREAS, while every election is important to advancing our goals, the 2020 presidential election may be the most important in generations; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 presidential election process provides an opportunity to elect a new U.S. president who shares our values and aspirations for our country; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 presidential election primary process has already begun, with candidates announcing their campaigns and policies, debates and forums being scheduled, and the slating of delegates for presidential candidates effectively beginning in the summer of 2019 in several large states; and

WHEREAS, the AFT and our members provide an important voice in the political dialogue of our country, a voice that is needed to shape the debate in the presidential primary process regardless of whether the AFT has officially endorsed a candidate; and

WHEREAS, the AFT is committed to its members having a genuine and effective voice in this process and using the vehicle of our union as a means for that voice, a voice that states clearly: “We care, we fight, we show up and we vote!”:

**RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers will begin a process of engaging in the 2020 elections; and**

**RESOLVED, that the process will include:**

- **Listening to and engaging our members on the issues and policies that matter to them, including but not limited to issues raised in the AFT’s 2018 convention resolution titled “AFT Goals for Political Endorsements.”**
- **Ensuring the endorsement process for the 2020 presidential election is transparent and involves meaningful member input and feedback, including informing and educating the members on each step of the endorsement process;**
- **Ensuring direct engagement by the candidates with AFT members, as it is vital for the candidates to understand the issues facing our members and their communities. This will include more than candidate questionnaires; it can include, for example, candidates meeting directly with AFT members in candidate forums, Facebook Live conversations, discussions with members at the workplace or other appropriate activities; and**
- **Utilizing new tools and technology to engage and educate the membership, a process which may include AFT national town halls using social media, online forums, digital platforms such as Hustle and Twitter, scientific polling or other appropriate tools, with the aim of achieving the greatest level of member participation the AFT has ever had in a presidential process; and**

**RESOLVED, that with a large field of candidates for U.S. president, many of whom have a record of supporting our issues and with whom the AFT and our affiliates have long-term and strong relationships warranting “favorite daughter/son” support or other preference, the AFT encourages affiliates and members to actively engage the candidate campaigns during the presidential primary process, even before the AFT formally considers the endorsement of candidates; and**

**RESOLVED, that because the 2020 presidential process will have many defining moments, well before most voters are ever really engaged, the AFT will take steps to educate and communicate with the members about the primary and caucus process, including running for national convention delegate or standing committee member (platform, credentials and rules), in support of a presidential candidate; and**

**RESOLVED, that in the endorsement process, the AFT executive council may consider, after meaningful input of our membership, which candidate is best for our members, our communities and our country; such an assessment will include consideration of the candidates’ positions on issues, the timing and state of the race, and the candidates’ pathway to victory; and**

**RESOLVED, that because we are indeed stronger together, if and when the AFT executive council and/or AFT convention delegates vote to endorse a candidate for president, the AFT and our affiliates will work together in every possible way to elect the AFT’s nationally endorsed candidate.**