

THE Leader

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School Administrators
AFSA, AFL-CIO

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A NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

School Leaders United

New Campaign Engages Members in Political Activism



AFSA stood in solidarity with the people of Wisconsin fighting to keep their bargaining rights.

AFSA this month is launching a major new initiative to organize and activate members in stepped-up political and communications programs to combat the assaults by reactionary politicians against educators and other public employees.

“This is about asserting our authority as trade unionists and school leaders and saying, ‘enough is enough!’”

— Diann Woodard, AFSA President

The new AFSA Action Network will be the centerpiece for activity, with participating members receiving Action Alerts and materials designed to help make AFSA members’ voices heard. To sign up for the program, members can contact Nick Spina at 202-986-4209 or nspina@afsaadmin.org.

Additionally, political training by experienced professionals will be conducted at AFSA regional conferences and through webinars. The training will focus on endorsing

supportive candidates and becoming more active with the AFL-CIO’s Central Labor Council in members’ areas.

The training will also teach members how to rally support for key issues and candidates, and will offer advice on how to engage in voter registration drives and improve turnout among supportive voters.

To increase AFSA’s visibility and strengthen the campaign’s arguments, two research initiatives have been launched that underscore the importance of school leaders. One initiative focuses on the importance and scope of school leaders’ roles in developing quality education policies and programs while the other focuses on the essential need for school

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AFL-CIO To Reposition Labor Movement

Using Wisconsin as a springboard, the AFL-CIO announced it would be repositioning itself to redefine how the public views unions. Additionally, a national day of action occurred April 4.

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Conference Sparks Discussions Among Education Leaders

A first-of-its-kind conference on labor-management collaboration was held in Denver in February by the U.S. Department of Education. The focus was on the relationships between superintendents, school boards and teachers, and how student achievement could be boosted through successful collaboration. AFSA President Diann Woodard attended the meeting.

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AFSA GEB Discusses New Logo, April Leadership Conference



The GEB met in January and voted unanimously to approve a new logo for AFSA that is featured in this edition of the newsletter (see top of page). Additionally, plans were outlined for the AFSA Midwestern and Southern Regional Leadership Conference on April 15 and 16 in New Orleans.

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Raising Our Voices in Solidarity to Defend Our Rights



AFSA President Diann Woodard

There comes a time in each of our professional lives when our mettle as leaders and our commitment to quality education for children is tested severely. For educators in Wisconsin, Ohio, Florida and numerous other states, that moment is upon them.

The political attack on their collective bargaining rights being conducted by Republican governors behind a smokescreen of budget cutting is a blatant power play to transform our commitment to public service into shameful servitude.

For some of our members, this autocratic assault on our bargaining rights is nothing new. In my hometown of Detroit, principals and assistant principals were stripped of their bargaining rights a decade ago under the guise of budgetary necessity.

Nor did the assault on their service end with those disgraceful violations of our rights. The Michigan legislature recently passed a "financial Marshall Plan" that gives a state emergency financial manager near total control over every aspect of the state government, including the power to override decisions of elected officials.

This unrelenting pursuit of autocracy is at the heart of the campaign to undermine our rights, much as it is central to the push for the corporate model of school reform.

Financed by corporate interests, politicians—in this case Republican lawmakers—are accreting to themselves and their campaign benefactors powers that trump the traditional checks and balances crucial for meaningful democracy.

As we consider how best to mount a united front in resisting this transparently coordinated assault on our rights, the lesson the Detroit experience teaches is clear. Appeasing our adversaries by effectively "going along to get along," as some school districts in Michigan and elsewhere have done, only encourages our adversaries.

Our roles as school leaders complicate our ability to engage in resistance akin to that on display in Madison, Wis., and some administrators, especially those in smaller districts, undoubtedly feel isolated and relatively powerless.

We are anything but powerless, as the positive developments resulting from the protests in Wisconsin are showing. Two months ago, who would have imagined nearly two-thirds of America's voters would express their support for protecting our collective bargaining rights as they did in a recent national survey?

The size of our membership will not determine whether we succeed or fail. The size of our spirit in rising up to challenge autocratic domination will.

Members are urged to take action

At the recent meeting of the AFL-CIO's Executive Council, the general presidents of international unions from the private and public sector alike voted unanimously to mount a national day of action to protest the assault on our bargaining rights.

As soon as plans for the day of action are concluded, we will share them with you and recommend actions our members can take to show our solidarity and challenge union-busting policies being foisted on us for purely political reasons.

In the meantime, we strongly encourage you to attend meetings of your central labor councils to familiarize other union leaders with our issues and to learn what actions are being taken in your area to build mounting opposition to the attack on our rights.

We Are One—join in solidarity

There also are actions we can legitimately take to express our solidarity with fellow educators who are under attack. In Pennsylvania, for instance, the newly elected Republican governor is advancing a budget with sweeping cuts to education funding that inevitably will lead to layoffs.

In addition, his budget legislation, if passed, will empower administrators to lay off teachers without regard to seniority. Actions such as these confront us with both a challenge and an opportunity. If we engage in violating teachers' seniority rights, we not only will become fifth columnists in the assault on our own rights, but we effectively will be co-dependents to the addiction of Republicans and their corporate allies to undermining universal public education.

Instead, we have every right to express our solidarity with teachers and all public employees by refusing to engage in violating their seniority rights. Indeed, uniting to resist the movement by autocratic politicians to undermine public employees' rights does more than express our solidarity—it offers us the opportunity to pledge allegiance to the very principles of democracy we teach our students to value.

There's no question we're confronted with a Hobson's choice. But unless we raise our voices in protest and join in solidarity with all public employees now, we'll lose more than our bargaining rights. We'll willfully be surrendering the dignity and respect every worker deserves. ■

In Solidarity,

Diann Woodard

AFL-CIO Sees Wisconsin as Springboard for Repositioning

Executive Council Meeting Energizes Movement

The AFL-CIO is poised for action in response to a series of coordinated Republican attacks against public employees that threatens the very existence of unions' collective bargaining rights.

"Everyone is very energized," said Diann Woodard, AFSA international president. "The AFL-CIO is seeing what's happening in Wisconsin and wants to use it as a springboard to reposition the labor movement."

Woodard attended the AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting in Washington, D.C., on March 1-3. AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka framed the meeting by stating the union movement must stay focused on its top priorities, which are growth, organizing, repositioning, effective political programs and state-level battles.

President Trumka acknowledged the energy the Wisconsin incident has provided the union movement. He said the AFL-CIO has been tracking more than 500 pieces of anti-labor legislation being proposed throughout the states.

Woodard said the protests in Wisconsin are reminiscent of the glory days of unions. She said the number of young people and amount of diversity the protests have produced is inspiring.

"Seeing all of these groups under one banner is exciting," Woodard said. "This is about our collective ability to have a voice and represent all groups of people."

According to Woodard, the AFL-CIO made it clear it is prepared to do everything necessary to stand up for union rights in Wisconsin and across the country. President Trumka took a show of hands to confirm the Executive Council's willingness to do whatever it takes to win in Wisconsin and received unanimous support.

"They are trying to take away the system of checks and balances," Woodard said. "We can't just have one person in charge."

There was discussion of using the current momentum to begin repositioning the AFL-CIO and make it more relevant in the long term. The idea is to activate and keep younger workers engaged as well as continuing to speak to more experienced workers.

The repositioning may take a look at the AFL-CIO logo, the message and the use of social media. The idea is to redefine how the public views unions. The AFL-

CIO will attempt to rebuild its identity and develop a core message, raise its profile, reconnect with its members through training and education, amplify national outreach and engage key audiences and new communities. There also was discussion about reaching out to communities and seizing opportunities to keep engaged the many different groups that have come out in support of Wisconsin workers. To further the involvement of all unions, each national union was asked to ensure all of its locals join, affiliate and participate with the state federations and central labor councils in their communities.

"The AFL-CIO is seeing what's happening in Wisconsin and wants to use it as a springboard to reposition the labor movement."

— Diann Woodard, AFSA President

Woodard said she has ideas on how AFSA can organize in response to Wisconsin, and said AFSA is moving to position itself at the forefront of today's labor and education issues.

"We need to be heard. We need to be represented. We see our rights deteriorating every day and this cannot and should not keep happening," she said. "It is important that we are participating and making ourselves known."

Other items discussed included the 2012 Martin Luther King Jr. celebration, which will be held in Detroit. The 2013 celebration will be held in Philadelphia.

The AFL-CIO wrapped up the conference by reminding Executive Council members the National Labor College offers an online degree program

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Advancing Student Achievement Through Labor-Management Collaboration

Conference Sparks Discussions Among Education Leaders

A first-of-its-kind conference on labor-management collaboration held in Denver in February has been considered by its conveners a historic effort to transform the relationship among superintendents, school boards and teachers into a partnership to boost student achievement.

AFSA President Diann Woodard attended the conference and said there were 150 districts from across the country represented. The conference was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, the American Association of School Administrators, the AFT, the Council of Great City Schools, the National Education Association and the National School Board Association.

“If true collaboration is to be achieved in schools, then no one should be excluded. Principals lead schools and their voices need to be added.”

—Diann Woodard, AFSA President

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said that to participate in the conference, a school district’s school board president, superintendent, teachers union and a teacher all had to attend. He said student success must be at the heart of any agreement and that he hoped to create a new narrative of school reform in which labor and management could work together collaboratively.

“Accountability must be shared,” said Duncan. “What we do must make a difference in the lives of children.”

He stressed these collaborations will raise expectations and will become a

tool of innovation, creating new ways to improve academic outcomes for students and the work of educators. Duncan also talked about a few of the guiding principles and the opportunity they present for implementing a student-centered relationship.

“In a time when budget cuts are looming, working together toward a common goal makes sense,” said Woodard.

Charlie Rose, general counsel to the U.S. Department of Education, led a conversation on how to create the environment for labor-management collaboration. The conversation concluded that for collaboration to thrive, trust must be a key element and leadership must exhibit stability. Rose emphasized the importance of communication and that both sides should not want collaboration for the sake of collaboration, but rather collaboration that leads to results.

Woodard said the conference included breakout sessions that spurred individual discussion. In one of the sessions, 12 selected school districts discussed the collaboration formed in their districts. Each participant discussed how the necessary reforms outlined by federal education officials, such as pay-for-performance, teacher evaluation and school design, had been implemented.

In another session, districts worked as teams and were given time to meet, reflect on issues and challenges and develop a district action plan. Teams then were asked to share what they had learned throughout the two-day conference.

A final session focused on how to support labor-management collaboration. Woodard said during that session the irony was brought out that principals had not been invited to the conference but were nonetheless viewed as essential to the success of the schools and the push for collaboration.



“Accountability must be shared. What we do must make a difference in the lives of children.”

—Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education

“If true collaboration is to be achieved in schools, then no one should be excluded,” said Woodard. “Principals lead schools and their voices need to be added.”

Finally, a discussion titled “Leading a Movement to Advance Student Achievement through Labor-Management Collaboration” was hosted by the conference’s key sponsors. Duncan made it clear the administration was invested in improving all aspects of education, and the other sponsors agreed that taking ownership and responsibility of the current situation lays the foundation for moving forward. ■

[\(AFL-CIO Sees Wisconsin... continued from page 3\)](#)

for all workers. Additionally, all unions are asked to support every campaign across the country that stands up for union workers’ rights and encourage local affiliates to call legislators who would shut down the government. ■

AFSA GEB Discusses Scholarship Deadline, PAC Balance

Next GEB Meeting in April

The AFSA General Executive Board met

Jan. 14–15 and deliberated on several pertinent matters. All committees were present, which included the Scholarship, PAC, Legislative, Policy, Program, Organizing and Finance.

The Scholarship Committee voted to extend the deadline for the AFSA 2010–2011 Scholarship Program from Feb. 25 to March 31, 2011. This extra time allowed more children of AFSA members to take advantage of this opportunity.

The PAC Committee reviewed its current account balance and discussed new methods of fundraising to generate additional PAC funds. The committee decided to host a PAC raffle during the next AFSA Regional Leadership Conference. Each GEB member will donate a prize for this exciting event.

The Legislative Committee discussed the November 2010 elections and the potential impact on education and labor. The committee also reviewed actions taken by AFSA regarding the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act and the federal budget for education. Among other actions taken, AFSA President Woodard sent a letter thanking members of Congress for providing \$4.5 billion over 10 years to

help support child nutrition programs in schools, but expressed concern on how the funding is partially offset by reductions to food stamp benefits. President Woodard also sent a letter to members of Congress urging them not to freeze funding for critical education programs through a continuing resolution and instead adopt the House and Senate FY11 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bills that would have provided billions of dollars in increased funding for these programs.

The Legislative Committee also reviewed legislation sponsored by Rep. Susan Davis (D-Calif.) that, among other things, defines principal effectiveness. The bill/issue likely will be introduced in the 112th Congress.

The Policy Committee continued its work on two new manuals for AFSA—The Operations Policies and Procedures Manual and The Staff Policies and Procedures Manual.

The Program Committee reviewed the East Coast Regional Leadership Conference and provided constructive feedback and positive evaluations. Many attendees indicated they wanted interactive workshops at the next conference and so those were included in the Midwestern and Southern Regional Leadership Conference on April



AFSA Vice President Roch Girard and Elaine Papas working at the January GEB meeting.

15–16 in New Orleans. The conference was titled *Leaders in the Mirror: Protecting Administrators through the Implementation of the Reform Movement*. Finally, the committee discussed locations for the October Regional Leadership Conference, the 2012 Constitutional Convention and future board meetings.

The Organizing Committee discussed several methods to increase membership in AFSA, including updating the AFSA Contract Database.

The Finance Committee reviewed the per capita report, the budget and the results of the 2009–2010 audit. AFSA's bookkeeping and financial recordkeeping were found to be in good order.

Finally, the GEB voted unanimously to approve a new logo for AFSA that is featured in this edition of the newsletter.

AFSA members can expect AFSA to continue monitoring all education issues closely and to work to get the message out to the public and policymakers about AFSA's positions on these issues. Additionally, President Woodard will continue her column on The Huffington Post to publicize and educate all audiences on the vital role school administrators play and the issues they and the nation's education system face. ■



AFSA Affiliate Liaison Doris Reed (center) reports to the General Executive Board at the January meeting.

The Need for Professional Development

Principal and Union President Encourages District to Invest in Principals



Cason working with students at Soldan International Studies High School in St. Louis.

Visitors to the principal's office at Soldan International Studies High School seldom find Dr. Thomas Cason there.

The principal of the magnet high school in St. Louis is always at work, but he prefers the halls to his office. He sets his bags down outside his office door when he arrives in the morning, sometimes taking an hour before actually entering his office, stopping instead to inspect the building and to get "snapshots" of what's happening in the halls and classrooms.

Cason thinks principals should be a presence and should know what's going on in their buildings. He has been Soldan's principal for 10 years and previously served as assistant principal at Sumner High School. He first came to work for St. Louis Public Schools in 1985 as an art teacher at an elementary school.

"I loved to draw and paint in high school and I selected fine arts as a major in college," said Cason. "After

a few years in college, I became convinced that I needed teacher certification as a backup if I didn't make it as an artist."

There have been many improvements at Soldan since Cason arrived a decade ago. The school's attendance rate was around 80 percent and the graduation rate was at 74 percent when he took over as principal. Today, the attendance rate is at 93.5 percent and the graduation rate is around 87 percent. State assessment scores have improved dramatically as well. Cason indicates there is a spirit of collaboration and credits his staff—and especially his classroom teachers—for the improvements.

He stops short of saying the school is a success, though. According to Cason, "Success is an end or a goal; it implies that the work is done." He indicates his work will not be completed until all subgroups at the school meet or exceed performance expectations. Collective leadership has been promoted throughout the school.

Cason thinks when everyone contributes to the decisions being made, everyone owns them. Several years ago, for example, it was determined that a revised discipline plan for classrooms was needed because the one then in force was obsolete. As a result, a survey was developed by the school's Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFJROTC) department.

Teachers and students were told to list types of discipline infractions they were most concerned about in the classroom. The items then were rank-ordered according to frequency. Through consensus, some were eliminated to reduce the number. After much discussion, the final plan was presented to the staff at a faculty meeting. The plan was unveiled to students at a student/principal quarterly meeting and has proved to be very successful.

"This is exactly the sort of collaborative approach that should be the essence of education reforms," said AFSA President Diann Woodard. "Programs that engage teachers and students in cooperative development, rather depending solely on data-driven approaches that inevitably label lower-level achievers as 'failures.' "

The school district provides frequent professional development to principals, but none focuses on best practices and strategies, such as the example of the discipline plan. Exceptional active or retired principals can provide these professional development sessions. There has been very little support for this in the past, but that's changing—the superintendent now has directed a member of his cabinet to collaborate with members of The Administrators Association of the St. Louis Public Schools, AFSA Local 44, to design a plan to support principals.

The proposed implementation of this initiative is expected to provide a level
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Local News

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of support that ultimately will provide better leaders. Included in the proposed plan are ways to assess what level of professional development principals are at so additional training can be aligned properly to their needs.

"Our school district has a number of schools undergoing the turnaround intervention," said Cason, the president of Local 44. "Replacing principals and assigning new ones to 'transformational' or 'turnaround' schools is becoming more common as a means to salvage poor performing schools. However, I believe districts should be mindful that new principals are also prone to fail if they do not receive appropriate support."

Recently, the St. Louis superintendent unveiled several new proposals for the district. Included is an emphasis on

early childhood education programs, African-centered curriculum programs, district-sponsored charter schools, gender schools, school closures based on academic performance and allowing eighth-graders to make their own choices regarding what non-magnet school they will attend. These initiatives do not apply to Soldan.

Though new proposals are being introduced, professional development spending has been cut significantly in many school districts, including St. Louis.

"None of the initiatives and programs will work if districts do not provide quality-specific training for principals," said Cason. "This training should include standard professional development as well as small group or one-on-one informal interaction between an experienced instructional

leader and perhaps one that needs support. Discussions should center on strategies and practices that result in positive outcomes."

Members of Local 44 and the superintendent's designee have engaged in this form of interaction as a prelude to designing a quality-specific professional development plan for administrators.

"This form of collaboration is essential to improving the quality of principals and assures that they can continue to play a vital part of the school district's school improvement plans," said Cason. "Missouri does not honor collective bargaining rights for principals and administrators, which makes such collaboration that much more critical." ■

In Tough Times, Education Has Its Rewards

Maryland Principal Finds Happiness in Knowing Students are Succeeding

Carolyn Cole knows what it means to belong to something larger than oneself.

"I have been a member of a union since I was a teacher," she said. "I haven't ever had to call on them for help, but I know they are there if I need them."

Cole, the principal of Roland Park Elementary and Middle School in Baltimore, taught for nearly 20 years before moving into administration. Cole said she has taught every grade level, and has used her experience to help guide her as a principal.

"I went into teaching because I have a passion for trying to focus on student learning and achievement," she said. "I wanted to help develop students and wanted to help develop education standards."

Cole said that besides being a teacher, she has worked as a teacher team leader, a workshop presenter, a curriculum coordinator, an assistant principal and now a principal.

"I made the decision to move further into administration because I liked

the idea that you can develop an entire school together as a whole," she said. "I like raising the bar. I like bringing in staff, creating a team and developing leadership."

Cole said her school recently adopted the Common Core Standards. Although the focus is on testing, Cole thinks with the right data, an accurate picture of a student can be pieced together if the correct questions are asked.

"You have to have something in place to measure success," she said. "I think we are moving toward a system of national standards."

A few years ago, Cole said she had one of the most rewarding experiences of her career.

"A student of mine was selected to be a Presidential Scholar, and the student selected me as the 'teacher that had changed her life,' " she said. "It was the first year of Bill Clinton's presidency, and I was just so touched. It was a very wonderful experience."

Cole said one of the best parts about being in education is seeing your students succeed.

"There was a time when I had to go into surgery, and I was sitting there on the table and the surgical nurse came in and pulled down her mask and yelled, 'Ms. Cole!' and I was so shocked and so proud at the same time," she said.

As for the future of education, Cole said everyone, not just one person or organization, will need to play a part.

"We need smart, confident teachers who are ready to take a step forward, raise the bar and be dedicated," she said. "And we need principals to be the guides, to be the driving force that asks those teachers to step up. Everyone needs to be part of the process."

Besides counting on fellow principals and teachers, Cole said she knows she can depend on her union.

"They always have your best interest at heart," she said. "All of us want someone who will be there to support us. I know I have security." ■

CFSA Response to Governor Dannel Malloy's Recommended Budget

Budget Will Negatively Affect State's Technical Schools

Below is an excerpt from a letter to Connecticut State Sen. Andrea L. Stillman, State Rep. Andrew M. Fleischmann and the co-chairs and members of the Connecticut Education Committee. The letter is from Roch J. Girard, the president of the Connecticut Federation of School Administrators (CFSA).

The bill in question is H.B. 6385, "An Act Implementing The Budget Recommendations of The Governor Concerning Education," and proposes that local boards of education take on the jurisdiction and control of the vocational-technical schools currently run by the state.

This is a massive bill with tremendous implications for Connecticut's technical high schools. Though the process will take four years to implement, CFSA is very concerned about Local Education Agencies (LEAs) taking over the function of our technical schools.

These schools are unique in the educational landscape, serve a specific mission and purpose and produce graduates with high quality skills in their respective trades, many of which are

licensed. Their curriculum is different from career technical education curricula in our regular public high schools. The trade skills taught in tech schools are trade specific, with 1500 to 2000 hours of training for specialized career tracks and eventual employment in students' trades of choice.

These technical schools provide a network of technical education uniquely positioned to directly impact the workforce statewide. Breaking up this concept and placing these schools under the direction of local LEAs will take away their unique status and diminish the special workforce development mission.

Instead of a common purpose in trade selection and training, these students will lose that unique identity that employers look for and will graduate with less stature in the trades. CFSA is concerned that over time, the trade career choices will be limited, minimized by the lack of funding, and a coordinated curriculum approach to advance trade workforce needs.

The current technical schools have been and are already underfunded.

CFSA does not believe that adding these schools to local school systems will enhance funding for these schools. And, in the absence of any real guarantee of steady funding, why would Connecticut want to turn the schools' critical operations over to those who do not operate them and do not have the knowledge of how to keep them going with less than adequate funding? Connecticut has a system now that continues to do more for its students with less and less.

CFSA is not in favor of this legislation. We believe it is poor public policy affecting a unique classification of students and staff. There has been a long-standing belief in the uniqueness and viability of our tech schools. We fear that this is an attempt to dump the tech schools on the local level and eventually have the state out of the tech school business, lessening their bottom line and transferring the funding (as available) to the local LEAs. Instead of celebrating their 100 years of dedicated service to their communities and businesses, Connecticut now wants to dismantle them! ■



AFSA President Diann Woodard and Chris Michalak, Legislative and Political Director of UFCW Local 876, were among the thousands who participated in the Labor rally in Lansing, Mich., on March 16.

An estimated 5,000 people gathered at the Michigan state capitol to oppose the anti-worker law signed by Gov. Rick Snyder and other proposals supported by the Republican-controlled Legislature.





An Accomplished Life

Daisy Yarbrough Shares Her Experiences on Being an Educator and Trade Unionist

AFSA sat down with Daisy Yarbrough, an executive board member of the City Association of Supervisors and Administrators (CASA), AFSA Local 20, Newark, N.J. Below are her thoughts on teaching, education, trade unionism and her plans for retirement.

AFSA: Tell us a little about your career in Newark. What positions have you held?

DY: I started in the Newark Public Schools as a seventh-grade classroom teacher at Warren Street School, a K–8 elementary school. While teaching at Warren Street School, I had the honor of being named Newark’s “Teacher of the Year.”

My position after Warren Street School was as a teacher trainer/resource teacher for our district’s High School Proficiency Department. As such, I facilitated professional development sessions based on Madeline Hunter’s direct instruction model for our teachers. Upon completion of the professional development session, we engaged in follow-up peer coaching sessions. This experience led to my participation in the Harold Wilson Professional Development School, a district-Montclair State University-Newark Teachers Union initiative that supported the teaching/learning dynamic for middle school teachers via a five-week professional development experience.

Currently, I am the supervisor in the Office of Instructional Staff Development. As such, I am responsible for planning and facilitating professional development experiences for new teachers, tenured teachers and district administrators in accordance with our district’s strategic plan.

AFSA: You currently serve as an elected member of the CASA Executive Board. Have you found this to be a positive experience?

DY: Serving on CASA’s Executive Board has most definitely been a positive

experience! This opportunity has allowed me to grow in so many ways and taught me the more technical aspects of managing our district. It has given me the opportunity and privilege to represent a group of administrators and the responsibility of ensuring their concerns are voiced and that, when possible, appropriate action is taken. It also has given me the chance to influence district policy as it relates to administrators and supervisors and the opportunity to learn and grow with my other Executive Board members as we examine, analyze and discuss district and state policies that impact our constituent groups.

AFSA: Would you recommend that other administrators and supervisors across the country become involved in their unions?

DY: “Gentlemen, we must all hang together or we shall most assuredly all hang separately!” These words, by Benjamin Franklin, clearly provide the answer to that question—ALL administrators need to belong to their unions. As we consider the climate in the country today, each administrator needs to realize the importance of being affiliated with his/her union. History tells us the story of education sans unions, and it is not a pretty one. There was abuse, and because of nepotism and patronage, one’s job was not secure. Administrators and supervisors give much of their time and energy to supporting the educational process in their schools and districts. They understand the need to do whatever it takes to get the job done. However, I believe that without the agreements between the union and the district, the districts would make demands above and beyond that which one would deem reasonable. So, in my opinion, all administrators and supervisors need to belong to their union—there is power in numbers!

AFSA: What is your view regarding collective bargaining for public-sector employees?

DY: The collective bargaining process was born out of “need,” not “greed!” We, public-sector employees, take on the responsibility of providing services to the citizens of our respective communities. In order for us to complete our jobs to the best of our abilities, we need the assurance that our jobs are secure. And, to ensure that the job is being done by competent people, in each sector there are criteria available which allow the removal of those who are not living up to their roles and responsibilities. When we consider the collapse of the financial and banking industries, we know that with downsizing, many former business people are looking to the education profession as their next career move. Without collective bargaining rights, districts might begin to sacrifice veteran administrators and supervisors for people who are unfamiliar with education.

AFSA: We understand you plan to retire this July. What are your plans for retirement?

DY: Retire from the district, yes! Retire from education, no! My career has been awesome, and, because I have a vested interest in the education profession and a drive to continue to learn what is best for the teaching/learning dynamic, I want to continue to learn and grow. The best way to achieve these goals is to continue to research the best and most promising practices, and then to observe and discuss with students, teachers and administrators the application of those practices in schools and district offices. So, I look forward to offering my services to educational communities as an educational consultant. Additionally, I plan to become a member of CASA-R, the branch of our affiliate that is composed of our retired members, so that I can remain committed to advocating for administrators and supervisors as we continue to navigate the waters of educational reform. ■

Money Matters: ESEA and the Federal Budget

An Update on the Reauthorization of ESEA and the Federal Budget

Background

The stage for the current budget battle was set during the fiscal year 2011 (FY11) budget process, when Congress failed to pass any regular appropriations bills. Although there was some support for a yearlong omnibus appropriations bill for FY11 that would have increased federal education spending by more than \$2 billion, that measure ultimately failed.

AFSA had sent letters to Congress and met with staff in congressional offices to advocate for the increase, and was disappointed by its failure to pass. Instead, Congress passed a continuing resolution (CR) in October 2010 that kept the government funded through March 4, 2011, and avoided a governmentwide shutdown. On March 2, a two-week stopgap measure was approved by President Obama to keep the government running until March 18. This measure kept funding for education and other programs at FY 2010 spending levels.

In February 2011, with a new Republican majority, Congress passed a \$1.2 trillion dollar CR (HR 1) for the remainder of FY11. The bill would cut \$62 billion in non-defense discretionary spending, and includes more than \$11.2 billion in drastic cuts to education programs and other critical areas. To combat this, AFSA sent a letter to every member of the House and met with staff in individual offices to express opposition to the cuts.

Senate Democrats opposed the drastic cuts, as stated in their "Agenda for Winning the Future by Cutting Spending, Creating High-Paying Jobs and Keeping America Competitive." The plan supports Obama's call for a five-year discretionary freeze, while "...making smart investments in education, innovation and infrastructure... to out-educate our competitors and make sure American workers can compete for the high-paying jobs of today and tomorrow."

The Democrats' plan also calls for reforms to the nation's education system to ensure a competitive workforce, and proposes college tax credits that will expand opportunities for American workers.

The President's Budget

On Monday, Feb. 14, 2011, President Obama presented his fiscal year 2012 (FY12) budget request, which totaled \$3.7 trillion. Released amidst a national focus on reducing federal spending, deficits and the national debt, the president's budget does include many cuts, such as those proposed for community service block grants and energy assistance for the poor.

The president's budget request still is better than the House CR for FY11, as education was one of the few areas not slated by the administration to be cut. The budget also included critical investments in early childhood education, including the Early Learning Challenge Fund, Head Start, Early Head Start and the Child Care and Development Fund. In fact, the president's FY12 budget and the House FY11 CR are so far apart that President Obama announced he would veto the House measure if it reached his desk.

ESEA and the President's Budget

The president's budget invests \$26.8 billion in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). In addition, the budget proposes to consolidate 38 ESEA programs into 11 new flexible funding streams. The consolidation proposal mirrors the president's FY11 budget request, and AFSA's concerns remain the same: any program consolidations must not result in the elimination of essential education functions.

The president's request also includes new investments in "innovative, outcome-oriented programs that build on the Race to the Top model," and proposes \$600 million for school turnaround grants, \$300 million in new Title I funding, \$372 million to "expand

educational options by helping grow effective charter schools and other autonomous public schools that achieve positive results and give parents more choices."

President Woodard has expressed concern with the continued push by the administration for unproven education reform proposals, stating that "the Race to the Top competition is an unfair competition that by its very design creates 'losers' and leaves far too many children behind. This is an unproven approach to funding education that continues to force a business model upon schools."

AFSA was pleased, however, that the president's request would remove the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) measure and would allow for individual student progress to be measured over time, hopefully not based on test scores alone.

Congress and ESEA

Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee Chairman Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), Ranking Member Sen. Michael Enzi (R-Wyo.) and committee member Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) participated in a conference call sponsored by U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan in January to discuss the reauthorization of ESEA.

During the call, Harkin was optimistic about the potential for reauthorization, stating the committee held several hearings and bipartisan discussions in 2010. He added there is a consensus on "fixing the accountability system, targeting interventions at the lowest-performing schools, advancing teacher evaluation and improvement systems and restoring flexibility to states so they can provide innovative and localized ways to help students succeed." Harkin also said he expects the Senate to have a bill done by mid-April.

Things do not appear to be moving as rapidly in the House. Although

(continued on page 15)

Committees Have New Priorities, New Members

Changes Reflect Republican Control of House

The Reublicans, who took control of the House of Representatives after the November elections, have taken over leadership of the House Education and Labor Committee. With 22 Republicans and 17 Democrats on the committee, it was clear things would be different from the start.

One of the first actions incoming Chairman Rep. John Kline (R-Minn.) took was to drop “Labor” from the committee’s name, changing it back to its original title, the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, setting an unmistakable tone for the committee.

At a Feb. 16 committee hearing on policies and priorities at the U.S. Department of Labor, a comment by Kline suggested that dropping “labor” from the committee’s title made it clear what his feelings are about labor unions.

“Initiatives such as project labor agreements and high-road contracting are clearly designed to favor big labor at the expense of small businesses,” he said.

Kline also named several new Republican members to the committee, all of whom lack any actual education experience. The new members are sure to bring a conservative approach to education issues, as many ran for office pledging to reduce federal spending, restore fiscal responsibility and reduce the size of government.

On the Senate side, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) has four new members, two Democrats and two Republicans. There are 22 committee members—12 Democrats and 10 Republicans. Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) remains the committee chairman and a strong supporter for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

On the same day as the Feb. 16 House committee hearing, Harkin released a statement saying, “America’s success in the future will depend largely on how well we prepare our workforce for the jobs of the future. That starts in our nation’s schools. We must fix the No Child Left Behind law to ensure that all students graduate from high school prepared for college and a career in the 21st century global economy.”

Different Priorities

The House Committee on Education and the Workforce has focused its work this year on education reform, health care, reducing the size of government, the economy and job-related issues.

Regarding education, it is clear the committee does not support increased funding for education for all. Rather, its majority members appear to have a clear preference for vouchers, tying student performance to federal dollars and holding schools accountable when student achievement is not improved. In a March 9 hearing on education, Chairman Kline expressed concern with education spending to the hearing witness, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

“Winning the future is a goal we all share, but it can’t be won through record spending and record debt,” said Kline. “It is time we changed the status quo, not only in how we approach our fiscal future, but also in the way we support our nation’s education system.”

The committee held its first education-related hearing on Feb. 10, titled, “Education in the Nation: Examining the Challenges and Opportunities Facing America’s Classrooms,” and it is expected to hold several hearings regarding the reauthorization of ESEA this spring.

Regarding health care—dubbed ‘ObamaCare’ by the committee majority—there are persistent references to the provision in the bill

requiring coverage as a ‘job-killing mandate’ for businesses. This was clear at the Feb. 9 hearing, “The Impact of the Health Care Law on the Economy, Employers, and the Workforce.”

Kline stated, “It has been less than a year and already this 2,700-page law has led to more than 4,000 pages in new government regulations. A proposal designed to reduce health care costs will instead increase national health care spending by \$311 billion. And during a time of stubbornly high unemployment, job creators are forced to wrestle with the uncertainty of what the law and its new regulations mean and how that all fits into their plans for the future....Employers already struggling to keep their doors open now must choose between higher health care costs or costly penalties. To suggest this doesn’t undermine job creation is to deny reality.”

Meanwhile, the Senate has focused on similar issues, but with a markedly different approach.

Chairman Harkin released a statement opposing the health care law’s repeal. In his statement, he said, “The Department’s [Health and Human Services] analysis shows that up to 129 million Americans under the age of 65 have a pre-existing condition, and millions more are likely to develop such a condition in the next eight years. If Congressional Republicans had their way, these Americans would face denial or restriction of health benefits. This report makes clear that we can’t afford to deprive half of Americans under the age of 65 of this vital protection.”

Regarding education, the Senate HELP Committee concluded its 10 hearings on the reauthorization of ESEA last year and the committee staff has been working on the legislation since. Harkin has expressed his desire to get a bill ready to mark up by the Easter recess and on the floor of the Senate by summer. ■

Special Education: An Underfunded Promise

Budget Cuts, Inadequate Teacher Training Undermine Special Education

Compared with education in general, special education only has been developed recently. Attention was drawn to the need for special education in 1975, when the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) was passed, marking the first time schools were required to make accommodations for children with disabilities.

"Before then, students with disabilities were encouraged to stay home," said Myrna Mandlawitz, president of MRM Associates LLC, and a consultant and lobbyist for special education groups. "Schools just couldn't accommodate them."

EHA went through a series of amendments until 2004, when it was reauthorized as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This landmark bill requires state and local governments to set aside a specific amount of money for IDEA, some of which has been passed through from the federal government.

"When the law was originally passed, the federal government agreed to pay for 40 percent of the excess cost of educating students with disabilities," said Mandlawitz. "Right now, the government is only paying about 17 percent of that cost."

Cuts in federal funding to general education translate into less and less money allotted to special education. This means states must draw money out of general education programs to fund the special education programs as required by IDEA.

Educating a student with special needs is expensive. According to Lindsay Jones, the senior director of policy and advocacy services at the Council for Exceptional Children, the latest study shows that on average, the cost to educate a child with special needs is double the cost to educate a child without special needs.

"Districts have depleted resources," said Jones. "And right now, everyone is marching to the drumbeat of 'cut funding, cut funding, cut funding.' "

The "cut funding" drumbeat seems to have deafened state and federal lawmakers to the needs of education. For example, Pennsylvania's newly elected Republican governor recently cut funding for public education in half. Ironically, the lack of money has not stopped lawmakers from charging forth with their ambitious education reform initiatives.

"Reform is not all about money," said Jones, "but to act as though reform and money are separate is a lie."

Part of the problem with current education reform initiatives is their dependency on test scores. The Obama administration has helped encourage this dependency by enacting programs such as Race to the Top, which rewards school systems with high test scores. Among other complaints, Race to the Top creates a competitive atmosphere that forces schools into two categories: winners or losers.

"Reform is not all about money, but to act as though reform and money are separate is a lie."

—Lindsay Jones,
Senior Director of Policy &
Advocacy Services,
Council for Exceptional Children

"A lot of education reform initiatives that we're seeing from federal programs are coming in the form of competitive grants," said Jones.

The competitive atmosphere of the grants is problematic for many reasons. In 1997, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) began requiring states to include English as a Second Language (ESL) students and students with disabilities in general state education assessments. Test scores for any group of students—ESL students, students with disabilities and general education students—can vary greatly from school to school; comparisons, to be fair, must be of similar items. Since no two schools' teachers, students or curriculum

are the same, comparing them using standardized test scores is faulty.

Along with a lack of funding, special education is further compounded by the shortage of fully qualified special education teachers.

"The shortages put a lot of pressure on school systems to fill the empty spaces," said Jones.

Some schools try to fill those empty spaces with teachers who are fresh out of school or who come from alternative training, said Jones. Mandlawitz added that part of the problem is the lack of standard special education teacher training.

"Teacher certification is a state issue, and special education training differs radically in each state," said Mandlawitz.

Jones and Mandlawitz said there is more to special education than just students and specialized teachers. Under IDEA requirements, nurses, therapists and numerous other related services personnel are paramount in providing specialized services. Reduced funding hurts not only special education students but also cuts the highly trained individuals' jobs vital in these students' educations.

"There is a segment of the education workforce that is not being addressed," said Mandlawitz. "They provide consultation to teachers and necessary services to students. These personnel are critical."

As the federal budget debate rages on, Jones and Mandlawitz stress there needs to be a heightened focus on how cutting the budget for general education further devastates services for students with special needs.

"The discussion needs to include students with disabilities," said Mandlawitz. "People need to remember that all of these education programs benefit every student. When general education is cut, special education suffers. The programs are complementary." ■

A Defeated System

**Detroit Public Schools Held Hostage by
Mismanaged Budget and School Closings**



Due to the budget crisis, Detroit has planned to close 41 schools. This school is one of the schools to be closed and reopened as a charter school.

Detroit is a byproduct of the diminishing American dream.

Plagued by poverty and social unrest, the city's tipping point came when the financial markets crashed and condemned the American auto industry, and all of Detroit, to unemployment.

Outsourcing of manufacturing jobs and the importation of foreign cars already had taken its toll on the community. The market crash ensured the American dream would stay just that for Detroit's inhabitants: a dream.

"They say when America catches a cold, Detroit catches pneumonia," said Keith Johnson, president of the Detroit Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO Local 231.

Like Detroit's demographics, the city's education system always has been in a state of flux. More recently, it has become an even more vivid reflection of the flux in the nation's education system. Since 1992, a parade of 11 superintendents has marched through Detroit.

"Every time we turned around, we had to acclimate for a new leader and a new vision," Johnson said.

Detroit Public Schools (DPS), one of the larger districts in the country, has

struggled to produce high test scores and acceptable graduation rates. The school district was burdened with another battle when the state decided to take over DPS in 1999.

Prior to the state takeover, DPS received a voter-approved \$1.5 billion bond for capital improvement and had a budget surplus of about \$93 million. Among other reasons for the takeover, the state said it wanted to ensure the money was managed properly. It also saw the district as a cash cow.

In 1999, Gov. John Engler brought in David Adamany to serve as the interim CEO of DPS. The school board was given limited power over Adamany, and as a result many changes were enacted in rapid-fire succession.

In the first year of the state takeover, the principals and vice principals lost their collective bargaining rights and the teachers union was forced to make concessions.

"They took local control away," said Deborah Louis-Ake, president of the Organization of School Administrators and Supervisors, AFL-CIO, AFSA Local 28. "Since 1999, our membership has decreased by half."

(School Leaders...continued from page 1)

leaders to be engaged at every level in formulating education reform.

The campaign comes at a time when the national focus is on labor politics, education reform and state and federal budget crises. Diann Woodard, AFSA international president, said she is looking to position AFSA in a more proactive stance that simultaneously emphasizes school leaders' roles and union rights.

"This is about providing our members with the tools they need to defend their jobs and their livelihoods," Woodard said. "This is about asserting our authority as trade unionists and school leaders and saying, 'enough is enough!'"

The campaign is one of the major initiatives undertaken by AFSA to improve communications throughout the entire organization. Complementing the campaign are the new AFSA logo, the new email communication strategy, the refreshed newsletter layout and a new website that will be unveiled later this spring.

"Recent events have made it clear that now is the time for action," said Woodard. "If we want to be represented, we must do more than just exist; we must shout our existence from the rooftops."

AFSA Financial Statement for the Previous Fiscal Year (August 31, 2009 - August 31, 2010)

Audited Financial Statement American Federation of School Administrators as of August 31, 2010			
	2010	2009	
ASSETS			
Cash	\$ 1,671,601	\$ 1,469,559	
Investments	\$ 744,999	\$ 679,053	
Total Cash and Investments	\$ 2,416,599	\$ 2,148,612	
Security Deposits	\$ 10,160	\$ 10,160	
Property and Equipment	\$ 70,031	\$ 65,324	
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	\$ (60,601)	\$ (50,224)	
Property and Equipment, Net	\$ 9,430	\$ 15,100	
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 2,436,180	\$ 2,173,872	
REVENUE			
Per Capita	\$ 1,527,161	\$ 1,663,091	
Royalty Income	\$ 77,271	\$ 41,561	
Interest Income	\$ 35,376	\$ 49,133	
Unrealized Gain (Loss) on Investments	\$ 31,537	\$ 21,353	
Realized Gain on Investments	\$ 3,896	\$ 1,911	
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 1,675,241	\$ 1,777,049	
EXPENSES			
Per Capita Dues	\$ 203,867	\$ 185,310	
Member Benefits	\$ 197,870	\$ 224,355	
Legal and Other Aid to Locals	\$ 35,860	\$ 24,500	
Leadership Conferences/Conventions	\$ 4,912	\$ 160,393	
General and Administrative	\$ 970,424	\$ 996,304	
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 1,412,933	\$ 1,590,862	
INCREASE IN NET ASSETS	\$ 262,308	\$ 186,187	
NET ASSETS — BEGINNING OF PERIOD	\$ 2,173,871	\$ 1,987,684	
NET ASSETS — END OF PERIOD	\$ 2,436,179	\$ 2,173,871	

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(continued on page 14)

(Defeated System...continued from page 13)



Detroit's population has fled to the suburbs, leaving the city stricken with poverty and civil unrest. This photo, taken in March of 2011, shows that the city still hasn't recovered from the market crash and bankruptcy of the American auto industry.

Plans for the construction and improvement of schools was awarded to a contractor that lacked experience in the field. As a result, 11 new schools and two fully renovated schools were constructed using \$970 million of the bond money.

These projects weren't completed until 2005, and the price still is considered exorbitant given that in 2009, 10 new schools and eight major renovations were constructed on a budget of less than \$500 million. Not surprisingly, the 2009 projects were not awarded to the same contractor who completed the 1999 projects.

When the state takeover ended in 2005, the budget had mushroomed to a \$200 million deficit. Johnson said that, in short, the \$1.5 billion bond was considered terribly mismanaged.

To save Detroit from the state-induced financial ruin, Gov. Jennifer Granholm appointed an emergency financial manager in 2009 to oversee DPS. By then, the deficit had risen to \$327 million.

Robert Bobb the emergency financial

manager was given nearly unlimited power over the district. Bobb eliminated the DPS superintendent and stripped the power away from the Detroit School Board. The school board later challenged him in court and won, but Bobb's court defeat has not stopped him from proposing other extreme measures.

The closing of schools around Detroit has led to severe protests by educators and has eliminated many jobs in the worst economic times. Recently, the state approved Bobb's plan to close at least 70 schools in the coming years and to consolidate classrooms to 60 students or more, a Draconian move that Bobb says would help balance the budget.

Big Brother Bills

Bobb was supposed to leave the emergency financial manager position in March, but was asked to stay until June by Rick Snyder, Michigan's current governor. It is unclear whether Gov. Snyder will appoint a new emergency financial manager after Bobb's departure.

On Feb. 9, 2011, however, six bills

were introduced into the Michigan legislature that allow for the creation of a state emergency financial manager position. These bills, which were passed into law mid-March, give the state emergency financial manager nearly complete control over every aspect of the state government.

These new laws allow for the state emergency financial manager to have the authority to suspend, modify or remove unions' collective bargaining rights and, if deemed applicable, would assume the position of the head of every local government within the state.

The enormous power given to this position is unsettling, especially because there are no specific qualifications for the position. According to one of the bills, "...an emergency manager would be chosen on the basis of competence; need not be a resident of the local government; may be an individual or firm; and would serve at the pleasure of the state treasurer, with the concurrence of the state school superintendent if the local government is a school district."

Although multiple rallies with thousands in attendance were held to protest the bills, the Republican-controlled Michigan House and Senate did not hesitate to pass the bills into law on March 17.

Missing Students and the Role of Charters

Due to social unrest, poverty and myriad other issues, Detroit residents have moved out of the city at unprecedented rates, which skews the headcount at public schools, drives out businesses from the city and draws money away from the school district.

"Anyone who has money gets out of Detroit," said Johnson. "They all flee to the suburbs."

The population exodus has left the city plagued with crime and drained of resources. Most disturbing are the number of students the school district simply can't track down.

"The most recent report said that there are approximately 10,000 school-

“The most recent report said that there are approximately 10,000 school-age children who live within the city limits and are not counted by a public, charter, private or parochial school.”

—Deborah Louis-Ake
president
Organization of School
Administrators and Supervisors
AFL-CIO, AFSA Local 28

age children who live within the city limits and are not counted by a public, charter, private or parochial school,” said Louis-Ake.

Who are these children? And who is looking for them?

“With so much movement between schools, foreclosures, homelessness and economic hard times, we may never know how many of our former students are not getting any education,” Louis-Ake said.

While there is always a certain percentage of students who move out of town, DPS can’t accurately track all of the students. This is due, in part, to students jumping back and forth between schools. And, with the large number of public schools being shut down every year, the student population is constantly shifting. This doesn’t even account for students who simply don’t make it to school.

Twelve years ago, there were approximately 190,000 students in Detroit Public Schools. That number now is less than 74,000.

Johnson and Louis-Ake agree part of the reason students are leaving the district is to attend charter schools, draining the public schools of money. The charter schools, however, are selective, and students are put on waiting lists. Additionally, Louis-Ake said, the charters have a system that she calls “inviting out.”

“These students get in to charters and then after they have been struggling for a while are politely asked to leave,” she said. “They are told that a public school would be a better fit for them.”

Schools receive a certain amount of state taxpayer money for every student that enrolls in that school. When a student leaves after the official headcounts are completed, the money stays with the school instead of being transferred with the student.

Louis-Ake said most charters won’t receive many students after the final counts are completed, although by that time they often are more likely to encourage a failing student to leave.

Louis-Ake, who places special education students in DPS, said the “inviting out” method is especially abused when it comes to students with special needs. Many of the charter schools can’t accommodate these students, and Louis-Ake said that on average, charter schools will spend one to three hours a week educating these students, while Detroit’s public schools spend an average of 25 hours per week.



Detroit’s population loss means more than just abandoned homes. It has caused the destruction of entire neighborhoods and challenged the social cohesion of the city.

“Giving parents options is wonderful, but misrepresenting what you can provide for students is wrong,” Louis-Ake said.

Finally, general education teachers at charter schools don’t have the same qualifications that public school teachers are required to have, so it is unclear whether students are receiving as comprehensive an education as they would in public schools.

“Everyone keeps trying to look for a better way,” said Louis-Ake. “We hope someday, someone will find one.” ■

(Money Matters...continued from page 10)

the House held several hearings and bipartisan discussions regarding the ESEA reauthorization last session, the 2010 November elections created a very different landscape in the House. With a new Republican majority and several freshman members serving on the House Education and the Workforce Committee, progress likely will be slower than in the Senate.

The chairman of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, Rep. John Kline (R-Minn.), held the first education hearing of the 112th Congress, titled “Education in the Nation: Examining the Challenges and Opportunities Facing America’s Classrooms.”

AFSA attended this hearing, which was held to examine the challenges and opportunities that states and local school districts face in preparing students for success, and to examine the current federal role in the nation’s education system.

Although the focus was not solely on the reauthorization of ESEA, there clearly was support for education reform, charter schools, flexibility, rewarding teachers and principals and holding them accountable, and the DC Opportunity Scholarships Program (vouchers). The committee is expected to hold its first ESEA-specific hearing in March or April.

AFSA will continue to monitor ESEA developments as they unfold and communicate our priorities to members of Congress and their staff, as well as to our AFSA membership. ■



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Upcoming Events

June 9–11	Texas AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention; Sheraton Grand Hotel, Irving, Texas
July 25–29	California School Employees Association Annual Convention; Paris Hotel, Las Vegas
Aug. 4–5	AFL-CIO Executive Council Meeting; National Labor College, Silver Spring, Md.
Sept. 6–9	Alliance for Retired Americans Legislative Conference; Hilton Washington, Washington, D.C.



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