

THE Leader


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A NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

AFSA Conference Addresses Labor Issues and Education Reform



AFSA GEB members met at the AFSA Midwestern and Southern Regional Leadership Conference in New Orleans in April. Pictured left to right, starting back left: Bruce Bryant, Esq., Domingo Madera, Crystal Boling-Barton, Ernest Logan, Wendi Caporicci, Dr. Leonard Pugliese, James Smallwood, Charles Whelan, Dominic Sacchetti, Carver Farrow, Florida Woods, James Dierke, Diann Woodard, Cynthia Warren, Elaine Papas and Clarice Berry.

New Orleans Public School Employees Case Finally Goes to Court

Wrongful Termination Lawsuit Heard After Five Years

Nearly 7,500 New Orleans Public School Employees (NOPSE) and PANOPSI members have been embroiled in a wrongful-termination lawsuit for more than five years against the Louisiana State Department of Education, the Recovery School District, and the Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Three weeks after Hurricane Katrina, the state decided to overhaul the education system and terminated nearly 7,500 public school employees in New Orleans. Willie Zanders, Esq., is the lead attorney in the case, and the lawsuit finally went to court in May 2011, more than five years after it was filed.

The trial phase of the case was completed on June 23. One of the educational experts for NOPSE still needs to give testimony, and the

court reporter is compiling a written transcript of all of the testimonies. Additionally, the attorneys for both sides have the opportunity to submit written briefs.

The judge most likely will issue her decision sometime after August after the attorneys have presented their briefs.

"We are fortunate to have had strong and dedicated colleagues to take the stand and represent each of us," said Florida Woods, executive director of the Professional Administrators of New Orleans Public Schools Inc., AFSA Local 17 (PANOPSI).

After all this time, PANOPSI and NOPSE employees have not given up their fight to reclaim the livelihoods that so wrongfully were stripped from them. Their inspiring story and updates of the case can be found at www.nopsejustice.com. ■

Liz Shuler, Cecil Roberts Energize Conference Attendees

In April, school leaders convened in New Orleans at the AFSA Midwestern and Southern Regional Leadership Conference to discuss the struggles educators and labor unionists are facing. Attendees heard from Liz Shuler, Cecil Roberts, AFSA GEB members and many more on how to handle today's political and economic climate.

See page 3.

Five High School Students Win AFSA National Scholarship

AFSA Awards \$2,500 Scholarships for College Tuition

Five high school seniors have been awarded scholarships by AFSA to continue their achievements this fall as they pursue their college degrees. The students are from AFSA locals in California, Connecticut, Michigan, New Jersey and Maryland.

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AFSA rallies with AFGE Rally Part of Day of Action by AFL-CIO

On April 4, AFSA President Diann Woodard and Nick Spina, AFSA's director of government affairs, attended an AFGE solidarity event at BWI Airport. The event was held to honor the work of the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and to support AFGE as the exclusive union representative at the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

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It's The Poverty, Stupid



AFSA President Diann Woodard

The urgent call for radical changes to public education being trumpeted by business leaders is predicated on the assertion that America's public schools are literally failing. The evidence insistently offered in support of their missionary zeal is the "fact" that U.S. students lag far behind students internationally.

While there is ample cause for concern about the performance of children in our schools, the argument of the business-model reformers that the American system of public education is "failing" is a half-truth, which is worse than a lie because it is intended to discredit public education by smearing the system as a whole.

All of our children are not performing worse than their foreign counterparts—quite the contrary. Indeed, a significant number of U.S. students rank first in the world in several key disciplines. The most recent results from the International Reading Literacy Study and the Trends in International Math and Science, conducted in 2006, revealed that a major group of American students ranked first in reading, first in science and third in math.

Who were these students? They were kids in U.S. schools that enjoyed a poverty rate of less than 10 percent. Even students in U.S. schools where

the poverty rate rose to as high as 25 percent still ranked first in reading and science. As the percent of students in poverty in a school rises, the tests scores decline.

The problem overall is that fully 20 percent of all U.S. schools have poverty rates greater than 75 percent. A 2009 study in the Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine warned doctors to be on the lookout for signs of malnutrition, concluding that half of all children are on food stamps. Repeated studies have shown the gap in cognitive, physical and social development between children in poverty and middle-class children is set by age 3.

Rather than declaim, "It's poverty, stupid," the business-model reformers paint the entire system with the black brush of failure, knowing full well that socioeconomic circumstances are the core cause of lowered scores in many instances.

The fact that these reformers willfully turn a blind eye to one of the central problems undermining educators and instead blame school leaders, teachers and our unions should come as little surprise, given the source of funding for the assault on the public sector.

The Big Three of the reform movement campaign is composed of the Gates, Broad and Walton foundations, with collective endowments of \$66.4 billion (The Gates Foundation treasure chest, already the largest, rose from \$33 billion to \$63 billion when Warren Buffet turned his \$30 billion fund over to Gates to handle).

Their misbegotten condemnation of educators, coupled with their passion for charter schools, standardized tests and merit pay for teachers as solutions to the challenges facing public education are as ill-informed about the value of these approaches as is their grasp of poverty's impact on test scores.

Stanford University's 2009 study of charter schools, the most comprehensive to date, concluded that 83 percent of them perform either worse or no better than traditional public schools. A Vanderbilt University study published in 2010 showed definitively that merit pay for teachers does not produce higher tests scores for students. And a National Research Council report confirmed multiple studies that show standardized test scores do not measure student learning adequately.

What have the business-model reformers learned from these comprehensive studies? Absolutely nothing. Since Bill Gates, Eli Broad and the Waltons cannot be mistaken for dunces, one can conclude only that theirs is a willful ignorance, a blindness to evidence born of an interest in privatizing the public school system—and they're not about to let the facts get in their way.

The callous practices common to many charters offer further evidence of this ill intent. Students who enroll in charters in poor areas but are deemed "incompatible" with the charter's program are cut loose as soon as state student enrollment counts have been reported.

Some of those rejected by charters return to the public system, but some, who have been encouraged to believe the public system is worthless, simply fall into a black hole of anonymity, joining a growing underclass that threatens to become permanent as the ranks of those in poverty (earning less than \$22,464 annually) rises toward one-third of the U.S. population.

The hopelessness induced by the condemnation of the business-model reformers is bad enough; their monomaniacal insistence on "teacher-led" reforms is worse. School leaders, such as principals, administrators and counselors, are deemed irrelevant to their notions of reform. They imagine

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*(It's the Poverty, Stupid...
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instead a world in which teachers become "miracle workers."

Experienced teachers may not always agree with their principals, but they are far too seasoned to believe that they can work miracles, which is what would be required to teach children while running the business operations of the school, let alone keeping the school physically secure in environments often plagued by drugs, gang violence and the occasional hostile parent.



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Principals who have standing within their communities may resist attempts to factor them out of efforts to turn around their schools, but many others labor under the misguided belief that if they "go along to get along," they will somehow survive.

**"Rather than declaim,
'It's poverty, stupid,'
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— Diann Woodard, AFSA President

But silence is a fool's errand in a democracy; indeed, it is the antithesis of democratic vitality, especially when powerful moneyed interests attempt to use their wealth to impose their will on public policy.

And since nurturing a more informed democracy is what our educational calling is all about, school leaders are well advised to be an example to teachers, their students and communities by standing up and fighting for a voice in advancing public education, because it's increasingly clear the future of a public school system that serves the needs of all children is what's at stake. ■

In Solidarity,

Diann Woodard

AFSA Conference Addresses Labor Issues and Education Reform

Liz Shuler, Cecil Roberts Energize Attendees

AFSA members convened

in New Orleans in April to discuss the struggles educators and labor unionists are facing in the current political and economic climate. Attendees heard from union leaders, university researchers, fellow AFSA members and a motivational speaker on how to handle misguided education reforms and attacks from anti-union politicians.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler spoke on the aggressive actions taken against the labor movement by Republican governors around the United States. Most notably, Shuler highlighted the actions of Gov. Scott Walker in Wisconsin and called for increased solidarity against his and other threatening legislation.

United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) President Cecil Roberts spoke on the importance of solidarity and the meaning of being united. Roberts said his presence at a school leaders conference spoke to the depth and breadth of the labor movement and the

solidarity that exists between every layer of union activism.

Participants also were engaged in a research presentation on leadership and collaboration techniques. An attorney panel that included AFSA General Counsel Bruce Bryant and attorney Willie Zanders addressed the lawsuit that PANOPSI, AFSA Local 17, is involved in, and attendees were provided with useful legal advice on how to handle certain situations.

The two-day conference included food, entertainment and an address by the Louisiana AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer. Conference attendees had the opportunity to network and were given materials to take home and share with fellow union members.

The next AFSA leadership conference will be held in San Francisco Oct. 28–29. Registration will be available shortly. To learn more about the West Coast Regional Leadership Conference, visit www.afsaadmin.org. ■

Five High School Students Win AFSA National Scholarships

AFSA Awards \$2,500 Scholarships for College Tuition

Five high school seniors who demonstrated academic excellence, personal growth and strong community involvement have been awarded \$2,500 scholarships by AFSA to continue their achievements this fall as they pursue their college degrees.

"We are proud to support our nation's students who demonstrate the qualities that make them leaders in their schools and communities," said AFSA President Diann Woodard. "These are the students who help make our nation great, and we look forward to following their success in their college and professional careers."

The scholarship recipients are Andres Bustamante, United Administrators of San Francisco, AFSA Local 3; Brad Ness, New Milford School Administrators Association, AFSA Local 90; Emily Pastor, Southgate Principals and Supervisor's Association, AFSA Local 62; Alexandra Peluso, City Association of Supervisors and Administrators, AFSA Local 20; and Christopher Sutton, Public School Administrators and Supervisors Association of Baltimore City, AFSA Local 25.

Andres Bustamante



Andres Bustamante of San Francisco says that because of his interest in his heritage, history is his favorite subject. Six years ago, he embarked on a project

retracing his family's past, and since starting, he has built a family tree that dates back to 1667. When not working on his family tree, Bustamante plays baroque classical and world music on his marimba, a unique instrument he taught himself to play due to the lack of local instructors.

Bustamante stayed active in his community by working as a bilingual counselor at the Housing Rights Committee of San Francisco. He also worked as an assistant teacher at a Spanish language summer camp.

"Andres is an exceptional individual whom I am confident will continue to strive and succeed in any university environment," said Meghan Mahoney, Bustamante's math teacher. Bustamante will be attending Yale University in the fall.

Brad Ness



Another scholarship recipient is Brad Ness of New Milford, Conn. Because of his love for hands-on activities and interesting projects, Ness says science is his subject of choice. Working with animals, camping and being outdoors are his passions, and during high school Ness completed nearly 170 hours of volunteer work with the National Parks Service repairing bridges, taking care of plant life and building new trails. He plans to pursue a career that involves working

with the environment and nature. When not working outdoors, Ness played in his high school marching band. He started playing in the band in fourth grade and advanced to marching band when he reached high school.

Additionally, Ness actively volunteered at United Way, Elliot Pratt Nature Center and Student Conservation Association and has held down a part-time job since his sophomore year. Ryan Fitzsimmons, Ness's wrestling coach of two years, said his commitment to environmental issues is truly commendable and his dedication both inside and outside of the classroom is hard to match. Ness will be attending either Green Mountain College, Juniata College or Paul Smith's College this fall.

Emily Pastor



Emily Pastor of Southgate, Mich., is another AFSA scholarship winner; she says her interest in math has led her to pursue a degree in the field of actuarial sciences. Pastor says math is stimulating and stabilizing, and she enjoys the challenge it presents her.

Besides excelling in math, Pastor was the president of her class congress three years in a row. "Emily is extremely organized, assertive, competent and has an excellent rapport with both staff and students," said Amanda Herrick-Kujat, Pastor's English teacher.

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*(National Scholarship...
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In fourth grade, Pastor and her father started the Chormann Volleyball Club with the intent to engage youth in aerobic activities. Among other accomplishments, Pastor played on the varsity golf team, participated in Key Club and D.E.C.A., and is a member of the National Honors Society. Pastor is planning to attend Wayne State University in the fall.

Alexandra Peluso



Math can be challenging for some, but to Alexandra Peluso of Cresskill, N.J., math comes as second nature. Peluso says she enjoys solving math problems, and because of her love for math she spent her time tutoring students in algebra throughout her high school career.

Math was not the only thing Peluso excelled in. She was very active in high school as a three-sport athlete on the varsity softball, soccer and basketball teams. Additionally, Peluso was a member of various clubs, including a recycling club called S.A.V.E., the Spanish club and the Help the Hungry club. She also was a member of the National Honor Society.

According to guidance counselor Michelle Hicks, Peluso "encompasses all of the qualities of a highly academic student who dedicates herself to each activity in which she is involved and sets and example for others to follow." At the time of publication, Peluso had not made her final selection of a college.

Christopher Sutton



Christopher Sutton of Baltimore developed an interest in science from his mother, who, before becoming an assistant principal, was a biology, chemistry and anatomy teacher. Engineering also fascinates Sutton, and his internship with Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems, along with the Engineering Innovations program at John Hopkins University, only fueled his passions. As a result of his studies, Sutton says he wants to pursue a degree in biomedical engineering with the possibility of attending medical school.

Besides earning a near-perfect GPA, Sutton actively participated in his school and community. Sutton played multiple instruments in various school bands for eight years and volunteered with the OrchKids Program put on by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.

Additionally, Sutton found his passion for traveling during his trips to China, Australia and New Zealand while volunteering with the People to People Student Ambassador Program. Sutton also tutored peers in the National Honor Society and volunteered with his school's food drive. His mentor at Northrop Grumman said Sutton demonstrated some of the most impressive raw engineering talent he has seen in his eight years of mentoring. Sutton plans to attend Georgia Tech this fall.

These five young adults have an enormous amount of talent and determination, and have demonstrated sincere dedication to give back to the communities in which they live. AFSA is proud to support these five young

adults who have exemplified what it means to be a leader, and AFSA looks forward to supporting more scholarship students. ■

The Dog Days of Summer A Principal Shares How She Prepares for the New School Year

As a school leader and principal, Fatima Morrell has a wealth of knowledge about the education system today. A member of the Buffalo Council of Supervisors & Administrators, AFSA Local 10, Morrell discussed how she prepares students and teachers for a new school year and the challenges associated with it, including dealing with budget cuts, the importance of creating a sense of community and why education is so important.

AFSA: Tell us a little about your career in Buffalo. What are some of your more recent positions?

Morrell: I was a principal at Lafayette High School for three years and ended my position this spring. I am taking a new job this fall, as the principal at Dr. Lydia T. Wright School of Excellence.

AFSA: As an administrator, how do you help prepare students for the new school year?

Morrell: I invite students and parents to meet with me. I have a "Principal's Coffee Hour," where I talk to parents about what they can do to make sure their kids don't lose the academic structure and information they gained this year. I make sure the parents understand the importance of their child being a good reader and a good listener. Students should read and write over the summer to not lose the skills they learned. It is also important for the students to get a good night's sleep and eat a good breakfast in the morning.

The schools belong to the parents and children. We serve the students with the best academic structure we can provide. There is a sense of community with the parents and students. We have

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A Lucky Life

California Principal Reflects on Her 50 Years of Work



James Dierke, president of the United Administrators of San Francisco, AFSA Local 3, recognized Marion Grady in April for her 50 years of education service. Grady was awarded at the AFSA Midwestern and Southern Regional Leadership Conference in New Orleans.

Marion Grady is the type of person who defines experiences rather than letting them define her. She sees opportunities at every turn, which may explain why she likes working with challenging students.

"Their artistic quality is not artificial, not like someone forced them to take piano lessons for a few years," said Grady. "I believe they are so much smarter than adults. I want to show them that."

Grady said she enjoys working with students who have been labeled as challenging because she can find ways to relate to their situations and backgrounds.

Growing up, Grady had wanted to be an artist. However, the effects of the Great Depression had left a strong impression on her father, and when she expressed this to him, he looked at her

and exclaimed, "But you'll starve!"

To quell her father's fears, Grady pursued teaching, a career she said she never wanted to do. After a few years, however, Grady grew to like teaching and found she could incorporate her love of arts and crafts into her classroom.

"There was always an opportunity to do something with the visual arts," she said. "Students don't have the experiences that we fell into. I like teaching arts and crafts, but in reality I have a toolbox with a Phillips screwdriver under my desk."

Grady said in the 1960s she was one of 25 teachers in California who was recognized as an outstanding English teacher. At the time, the superintendent was enthusiastic about reaching out to every student and saw Grady's teaching and supervisory abilities as

an opportunity to open a new school. Subsequently, Grady was put in charge of opening and supervising a high school of the arts for students with challenges. Grady said opening the school was a highlight in her career.

The success of the arts school helped promote Grady to the position of principal, and she took a position at an overcrowded school badly in need of repairs. Grady said she found ways to get what she needed, and ultimately she was able to guide the school through a major renovation.

"I liked every position except being a principal, at first," she said. "There was a lot of crying that first year."

The role of a principal is both a rewarding and frustrating one, she said, in part because the principal is pulled in so many directions at once. "I think principals have a tremendously difficult job," Grady said. "I still think it's not fully understood."

At the AFSA Midwestern and Southern Regional Leadership Conference in New Orleans in April, James Dierke, the president of the United Administrators of San Francisco (UASF) AFSA local 3, recognized Grady for her 50 years of work in education.

Grady said that she is not ready to leave education, for she is not yet finished. Although her retinas detached more than five years ago, she has not let her blindness stop her from fulfilling her calling as an educator.

"I do what I do because I love it. I'm frequently in the school on the weekends," she said. "I am very, very lucky."

Grady said when she is asked what her future professional goals are, she usually laughs and says she doesn't really know.

"I call it a career, but it's really a life." ■

Boston Unions and City Use Collective Bargaining Process to Achieve Landmark Agreement

BASAS, AFSA Local 6, Part of Successful Negotiations

A coalition of Boston public employee unions, including BASAS (Boston Association of School Administrators and Supervisors, AFSA Local 6) signed a landmark four-year agreement with the Menino administration that will save the city and taxpayers an estimated \$70 million in public employee health insurance costs.

Using the existing collective bargaining process and laws, the unions agreed to a plan that will bring the city's health care costs and plan designs more in line with coverage offered through the state's Group Insurance Commission (GIC), which provides insurance coverage to state and higher education workers. The agreement was signed in April by the unions and Mayor Menino at Boston City Hall.

The agreement was the result of intensive negotiating sessions between

the union coalition representing every union public employee in the city, including Boston school administrators, and the Menino administration. The coalition thinks the agreement proves there is no need to strip school leaders, firefighters, public works employees and hundreds of thousands of other public employees of basic union rights.

"Anyone who doubts that meaningful reform can still be achieved within the confines of existing collective bargaining laws and processes need only look at what we have accomplished in just a few short months by working cooperatively with the Menino administration," said Jen Springer, a lead negotiator for the union coalition.

The union's agreement includes a 2.5 percent increase in premium contribution rates, as well as increases in co-payments for prescription drugs,

office visits and emergency room care. This premium contribution rate increase is on top of a 5 percent increase accepted by the unions in the most recent contract agreement.

The new agreement with the city also includes the elimination of the Master Medical Plan for retirees—the most expensive health care plan offered to employees—effective Jan. 1, 2012. The Master Medical Plan has been closed to active employees for the past year.

The concessions by the unions will reduce overall plan costs for the city, but will shift more of the remaining cost burden to city employees. Union leaders involved in the negotiations are calling for more long-term meaningful reform that will reduce the cost of health care instead of merely shifting more costs to public- and private sector workers. ■

St. Louis Symphony Presents "Principal of the Year" Award to SLPS Principal

The St. Louis Public School District is pleased to announce that Debra Leto, principal at Mason School of Academic and Cultural Literacy, was named Principal of the Year by the St. Louis Symphony on April 18. An educator and a school leader with the district since 1994, Leto partnered with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra while an instructional coordinator at Carver Elementary.

"Carver School is located in the Grandel Center, a few blocks from Powell Hall, and I remember the symphony musicians wheeling their instruments on a weekly basis the two blocks to the school to perform for the students," said Leto.

From Carver to Jefferson Elementary and then to Shaw Visual and Performing Elementary School, Leto maintained her connection with the

symphony. As a principal, Leto received the award for her influential role in the development of the symphony's Adopt-a-School program, which teaches a variety of musical concepts during the school year.

"At Shaw, our partnership blossomed into more when Marc Thayer accepted my challenge of teaching Suzuki-style violin to the second grade classes," she said.

The Adopt-A-School program is facilitated by the symphony's education staff collaborating with partner schools' music specialists and administration and is presented at no cost to schools. The program is intended for second grade, as a 12–16 week program, for those teachers and administrators who are motivated to add another level of resources to their students' learning.

Special opportunities include STL Symphony musician visits from each instrument family, a visit from a conductor, a special interactive demonstration of the percussion family on the stage at Powell Hall, tickets to a Kinder Konzert at Powell Hall, professional development in co-teaching and access to Instrument Playground Kits. Each school puts on a final cumulative event in collaboration with STL Symphony staff and musicians.

David Robertson, St. Louis Symphony music director, presented the award to Leto before an April 15 concert at Powell Hall featuring pianist Yefim Bronfman performing Tchaikovsky's "Piano Concerto No. 1." Leto's school's second grade students performed "Peter and the Wolf" with symphony members in May. ■

Local News

*(Dog Days of Summer...
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a “Welcome Back Meeting,” where the parents can ask questions and become more engaged in the school issues.

AFSA: Are there certain challenges, as a school leader, in preparing for the new school year?

Morrell: A lot of time is spent figuring out what are the best instructional programs to put into place that address the needs of at-risk students. Some of these at-risk students are ones not on track for graduation or have limited English proficiency skills. Another challenge is how to make sure the at-risk students get the classes they need to progress to an acceptable level of basic skills.

AFSA: Besides helping the kids, do you help prepare the teachers for the new school year?

Morrell: I’m here for the teachers and support them. Together, we can figure out the problems by working collaboratively in building a community of professional learners. I set targets and goals with the teachers. The key is that when teachers feel they have a principal that listens to them and when they feel they are valued as a professional, teachers will work harder. When this happens, it creates a sense of community. I want to work hard and I am willing to learn more. Principals never do it alone.

AFSA: Have any of the schools you’ve worked at as a principal dealt with budget cuts? If so, how did you work around those cuts?

Morrell: You have to brace for it and create a sense of community. We are all in this together. Collaboration has to be very strong to pull through together. I try to save staff and lead by example. By picking up the slack and doing an extra duty or two, the teachers and staff will see the principal going the extra mile, and as such, go an extra mile themselves. If the principal is doing



Fatima Morrell said she is looking forward to her new job this fall as principal at Dr. Lydia T. Wright School of Excellence. Morrell is a member of the Buffalo Council of Supervisors and Administrators, AFSA Local 10.

more, the teachers think, ‘we can, too.’ People are inherently good. People go into education for the intrinsic value.

The sad thing about budget cuts is how music and the arts are the first things to go. That is tough. The whole notion of art and music going first is nonsense. Music helps students in math, for example. When these cuts occur, I try to get volunteer teachers to teach the students about art and music.

AFSA: Unfortunately, education has taken a hit recently around the country. Why should education not be cut during budget cuts?

Morrell: We live in a global society. What we are doing with education in our country pales in comparison to other countries. It seems that every time in America we are hit with hardships, education is always cut first. Then, we wonder why we have a low graduation rate. It’s ludicrous. We aren’t going to be competitive with other countries in the next 20 years and our students won’t be able to compete for jobs.

In urban schools, many students live in poor environments. Education is the only hope for these kids to have a better future. Cutting education is hurting thousands of students. We are saying to them that we don’t value your future. We won’t help you. We won’t give you the arts or after-school programs. We won’t give you money. It’s horrible to see us fall behind in education. Education is the key for a successful future. Save the schools. ■

Update on Detroit: A System Still in Strife

Governor Creates Separate District for Low-Performing Schools

Detroit is working hard to get the American Dream back into education, but there still are many obstacles standing in the way. Since the spring edition of *The Leader*, in which the situation regarding Detroit was profiled, several important updates have occurred relating to Detroit and its education system.

Roy Roberts has replaced Robert Bobb as the new emergency financial manager (EFM). Bobb's contract had been extended until June, but Republican Gov. Rick Snyder named Roberts the new EFM in May for a one-year term. Roberts is a former General Motors executive who served as group vice president for the North American vehicle sales, service and marketing division.

Snyder wasn't done after naming Roberts the new EFM. On June 20, the governor announced a new, statewide plan for the lowest 5 percent of performing schools: all Michigan schools deemed underachieving will be placed in a new district called Education Achievement System (EAS). By the fall of 2012, the EAS will overhaul and absorb more than 40 struggling schools.

The EAS will be under the direction of Roberts and will not have a school board or a central administration. Roberts will be charged with creating and publishing the criteria that will be used to determine which schools are selected for EAS, and will lead an executive committee that will provide oversight for the new district. Principals of the schools will hire the teachers and handle the day-to-day operations with their staff.

In addition to the creation of EAS, Detroit should expect to see more charter schools. In an uncanny resemblance to former Chicago Mayor Daley's Renaissance 2010, Roberts plans to turn 50 DPS schools into charter schools in an effort titled Renaissance 2012. The plan has been marketed as "a transformative plan to engage proven



Gov. Rick Snyder recently announced that a new school district, called the Education Achievement System (EAS), will absorb more than 40 of the lowest-performing schools in Michigan.

charter school operators and create a portfolio of outstanding schools."

Many have voiced strong opinions about the chartering effort and the state's complete takeover of the education system. Barbara Haug, a teacher at Carstens Elementary in Detroit, opposes Renaissance 2012 because she thinks charter schools reject struggling students.

"They get the kids, they get the cash, and then a little bit after that [the students are] suddenly not a good fit anymore," said Haug in a May 31 National Public Radio piece.

Detroit should expect to see more charter schools. In an uncanny resemblance to former Chicago Mayor Daley's Renaissance 2010, Roberts plans to turn 50 DPS schools into charter schools in an effort titled Renaissance 2012.

On July 13, Roberts named Doug Ross director of the DPS Charter Schools Office. Ross reports directly to Roberts starting in September and is responsible for the implementation of Renaissance 2012. Ross is a former U.S. assistant secretary of labor and co-founder and CEO of New Urban Learning, a charter school company that has opened seven charter schools in Detroit.

Detroit also is experiencing more budget cuts. A 10 percent wage cut is planned for all DPS employees, along with the termination of 853 staff positions and the selling of \$200 million in bonds. These measures took effect July 1 as part of the attempt to trim the district's \$327 budget deficit for the 2011–2012 year.

The DPS budget cuts are based on the reduced number of students, an entirely different problem in itself. Since last year, the number of students enrolled in DPS dropped from 73,000 to 66,360. A decade ago, the student population in Detroit was 162,000. ■

AFSA Joins Forces with IUPAT

Partnership Will Help Direct Students to Careers Outside of Traditional College Degrees

AFSA is excited to announce a partnership

with the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT) and IUPAT District Council 51 in Lanham, Md.

The goal of the partnership is to educate students about career opportunities available in the finishing trades—i.e., options available outside of attending a traditional four-year college. The pilot program will launch this fall with the Association of Supervisory and Administrative School Personnel, AFSA Local 109, at Suitland High School in Forestville, Md.

The IUPAT first approached AFSA in 2010 with the proposal, which includes training and education services through the Finishing Trades Institute (FTI).

FTI provides apprenticeships and job training programs that develop the skills

necessary to pursue a career in a variety of areas. Additionally, FTI enrollees earn college credit toward an associate or bachelor's degree through partnerships with Mountwest Community & Technical College and the National Labor College.

"This is a partnership that will help those students that might not be considering a path toward a traditional college," said AFSA President Diann Woodard. "By offering apprenticeships and job training, these programs will also help students to develop the skills necessary to pursue a career in a variety of areas."

AFSA Local 109 Executive Director Doris Reed and Assistant Executive Director Hugh Weathers added, "We have been working for a number of years to bring such a program to our students. We look forward to working with the IUPAT and expanding the opportunities to

other schools in PGCPs and beyond." "I would like to thank AFSA President Diann Woodard and AFSA Local 109 on their foresight in making this opportunity a reality," IUPAT/FTI Recruitment Manager Greg Renne said.

"The IUPAT is looking to make the pilot program at Suitland High School a success and is looking forward to expanding this program nationwide. This program will bring young men and women into the IUPAT apprenticeship at a time where our aging membership is heading toward retirement." ■

"This is a partnership that will help those students that might not be considering a path toward a traditional college."

— Diann Woodard, AFSA President

Legislative News

A Vision for Our Nation's Children

How the 2012 Presidential Hopefuls View Education

As November 2012 approaches,

multiple presidential hopefuls have thrown their hats into the ring. Although no Democrats have come forth to challenge President Obama, more than eight Republicans have formally announced their run for office.

In three years, President Obama has worked to revive the nation's education system by passing multiple acts that invest in education. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), which President Obama signed into law in 2009, allots billions of dollars to education, including \$3.35 billion for the Race to the Top Fund.

According to details provided by the White House, the ARRA invests \$5

billion into early learning programs and \$77 billion for reforms to strengthen elementary and secondary education. This also includes \$48.6 billion to be used to support state education budgets. Additionally, the ARRA allots \$30 billion to help make college more affordable and accessible and provides \$5 billion in "competitive funds to spur innovation and chart ambition reform to close the achievement gap."

The president also passed the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act in 2010 that invests in higher education by creating more stable funding for Pell Grants and allotting \$2 billion to community colleges. Additionally, this act provides \$2.55 billion in mandatory funding toward minority-serving

institutions and creates initiatives that help relieve students of their student loans.

President Obama also launched a host of programs and campaigns to encourage student learning and achievement. The "Educate to Innovate" campaign focuses on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) learning, and the Race To The Top Commencement Challenge allows public high schools to showcase how they best prepare students for college. The winning school gets President Obama as their commencement speaker.

The president has expressed his commitment to bettering the nation's

(continued on page 11)

*(Vision for Our Nation's Children...
continued from page 10)*

education system, and set a goal that by 2020, the U.S. will again have the highest proportion of students graduating college in the world. He has also said he is committed to reforming the nation's public schools, and supports the expansion of high-quality charter schools.

The Republicans who are running for president have also outlined their education goals, and with the first primaries starting in six months, debates about the future of our education system will allow the nation to get a preview of what could be.

As a representative from Minnesota's 6th District, Michele Bachmann has been a very outspoken supporter of teaching intelligent design in school. She thinks educators should not "censor information out of discussion because it doesn't meet within someone's dogmatic beliefs." When Bachmann was a state legislator, she was an author of a bill that would require intelligent design to be included in the science curriculum.

Bachmann thinks that while No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was well intended, it has created an environment of "teaching to the test," which is why she was a co-sponsor of H.R. 1539, the A-Plus Act. The bill would allow each state to submit to the secretary of education a declaration of intent to receive federal funds on a consolidated basis. However, with regard to Minnesota schools, Bachmann thinks federal funding leads to federal control and that NCLB cannot be tailored to local educational programs. Because of this, Bachmann thinks NCLB must be repealed and education must return to the local level.

Herman Cain, the former CEO of Godfather's Pizza, thinks students should be at the heart of education and they always should be "put before union interests." Cain said

he thinks the current administration has shifted away from focusing on students to maintaining an excessive level of bureaucracy through expanded unionization and regulation. Cain wants to decentralize education and give control to local and state levels while expanding school vouchers and charter schools.

In an interview in Nevada, Cain said he wants to cut or end all programs that contain unfunded mandates like NCLB. When asked about the Department of Education, Cain said he would reduce the size of the department dramatically.

Former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich thinks home-schooled children should have the same educational opportunities as any public school student and teachers should have the right to use historical examples that involve religion in their classrooms. Gingrich has also said modern, bureaucratic, unionized education is a form of intellectual child abuse.

As a former governor of Utah, Jon Huntsman rarely has brought up education policy. Once asked about which federal department he would cut if president, Huntsman answered he would cut the Department of Education. "I'm still trying to figure out what the Department of Education does," he said.

"I'm still trying to figure out what the Department of Education does."

—Jon Huntsman, former Utah governor and Republican presidential candidate

Ron Paul, a representative from the 14th District of Texas, thinks parents should be in control of education and that education is a privilege, not a right. During an interview on "Meet the Press," Paul said he wants to reverse the trend of increasing the size of the

Department of Education. When Paul ran in 2008 for president, he said the federal government is the largest obstacle for improving education. He said Americans should look to local resources for help and encourages Americans to home school their children.

Tim Pawlenty, the former governor of Minnesota, thinks the American education system has failed many children and politicians have done very little to change that. Referencing his time as governor, Pawlenty said the teachers' unions blocked his administration at every turn. Pawlenty also said when he was governor, he created the nation's first statewide performance-pay program. Pawlenty is in favor of teaching creationism in classrooms, and has stated that students need more options in education, such as charter schools and home schooling.

Mitt Romney is the former governor of Massachusetts who thinks the government must cut spending and end wasteful programs. Romney sees the Department of Education as a way to hold down the interests of teachers' unions in order to put children first. From Romney's perspective, the unions are the biggest obstacle to changing education.

Rick Santorum is a former senator from Pennsylvania who voted in favor of NCLB and a voucher program during his term. As a senator, Santorum pushed for his "Santorum Amendment," which would include intelligent design in NCLB. Santorum has likened the current administration's stance on education to one of an industrial factory. One of Santorum's criticisms about public schools is that they emphasize uniformity instead of addressing individual strengths and weaknesses.

AFSA will be monitoring closely the debates and statements the presidential hopefuls make in the following months to stay ahead of the changes that could be coming to the nation's education system. ■

ESEA Reauthorization Continues to Move Slowly

House and Senate Tackling Bill in Different Approaches

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

is four years overdue for reauthorization, and the current pace of negotiations continues to remain uninspiring. The House and the Senate have approached the reauthorization of the bill in separate ways and have yet to present anything that suggests the bill will be finished before the end of the summer.

The House's Approach

The House Committee on Education and the Workforce is approaching the reauthorization of ESEA in a piecemeal fashion by addressing the major sections of the law in a series of five bills.

The first bill approved by the committee is the Setting New Priorities in Education Spending Act (H.R. 1891), sponsored by Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-Calif.), which eliminates more than 40 Elementary and Secondary Education Act programs.

The second bill approved by the committee is the Empowering Parents through Quality Charter Schools Act, (H.R. 2218), also sponsored by Rep. Hunter. This legislation would update the federal charter school program, currently authorized under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which makes funding available to states to plan and start new schools.

H.R. 2218 also specifies that state educational agencies, state charter school boards and state governors also may award subgrants for the replication and expansion of high-quality charter schools. The bill authorizes \$300 million for fiscal year 2012 and for each of the five years thereafter, and was approved in a 34–5 bipartisan vote.

On July 7, Committee Chairman Rep. John Kline (R-Minn.) introduced the third bill, which allows Local Education Agencies and State Education Agencies

to transfer up to 100 percent of funds from any ESEA formula program (other than impact aid) into any other (including to and from Title I). It also allows LEAs to transfer ESEA funds into Early Intervening Services under Section 613(f) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

The Senate's Approach

This year, Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), chairman of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, set the spring recess as the deadline for introducing legislation to reauthorize ESEA. That deadline has passed and although a new deadline of July has been set, it is questionable as to whether anything will be agreed upon before the fall. Among other issues, it is reported that the areas of accountability and teacher effectiveness are holding up the process.

“If Congress does not complete work on reauthorization soon, we will be prepared with a process that will enable schools to move ahead with reform in the fall.”

—Arne Duncan,
Secretary of Education

Unlike the House's piecemeal approach, the Senate is working on a comprehensive bill. Sen. Harkin has been negotiating with members of both parties in the hopes of drafting a bipartisan bill. AFSA is reviewing several pieces of legislation introduced by members of the committee, including proposals that relate to turning around the lowest-performing schools, training for school leaders and improving literacy.

Duncan's Unauthorized Relief Waivers

The number of schools labeled as failing under NCLB's punitive sanctions continues to grow, and if changes are not made to the law soon, an overwhelming number of schools across the nation could be labeled as failing.

In a twist to the negotiations on Capitol Hill to reauthorize ESEA, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced the Department of Education is beginning to investigate how to address NCLB's problems through regulatory flexibility, if necessary.

In a recent op-ed in *Politico*, Secretary Duncan said state and local school districts are buckling under the law's goals and mandates as they wait for Congress to reauthorize NCLB.

“For this reason, our administration will develop a plan that trades regulatory flexibility for reform,” said Duncan. “If Congress does not complete work on reauthorization soon, we will be prepared with a process that will enable schools to move ahead with reform in the fall.”

AFSA members can continue to trust that AFSA will monitor the reauthorization process of ESEA closely and will keep members informed of any changes the secretary, House and Senate make to the nation's education system. ■

Facebook, Twitter and YouTube

An Introduction to Using Social Media Effectively

Social media can be an effective tool for school administrators and local union leaders when used correctly. Union leaders can use social media to activate and increase membership, while school administrators, with permission from their schools, can use social media to positively promote their school or other organizations. Twitter, Facebook and YouTube are three popular social media sites that could be advantageous for schools and union leaders.



Facebook, a social networking site with more than 600 million users, allows users to create their own profile with the ability to add photos, find friends and send out messages to their connections. As a school or union leader, is it important to understand the difference between creating a profile and a page. A profile has a limit on the number of friends one can have and a user has to be invited to be able to see and interact with the profile. A page, however, has no limit on the number of "fans" it can have, and is more widely accessible than a profile because anyone can click the "Like" button to have access to the information on the page.

A Facebook page allows the user to control the settings when needed. For example, a user can change the settings for the page so that profane words are blocked. Being aware of this and other settings allows for a school or local union's Facebook page to be clean and appropriate for everyone.

Facebook allows for users of both profiles and pages to create statuses or posts. These are updates on what a person or organization is doing. It can be as simple as "We're organizing a rally tomorrow" or "Smith Elementary School is having its choir concert

tonight at 7 p.m." The benefit of a post is that everyone who is a fan of the organization's Facebook page will see that post on his or her home page. This allows for greater visibility and publicity for the organization, whether it is a school or a local union.

A feature to utilize on Facebook is the "Event" tab. Any type of happening can be marked as an event, and from there people can see and RSVP to the event. Using events regularly leads to more publicity and visibility for the school or local union. There are many other ways Facebook can be utilized to increase communication and interest in a school or organization, but posting statuses regularly and creating events are the easiest ways to engage others. Be sure to check out AFSA's Facebook page at www.Facebook.com/AFSAUnion.



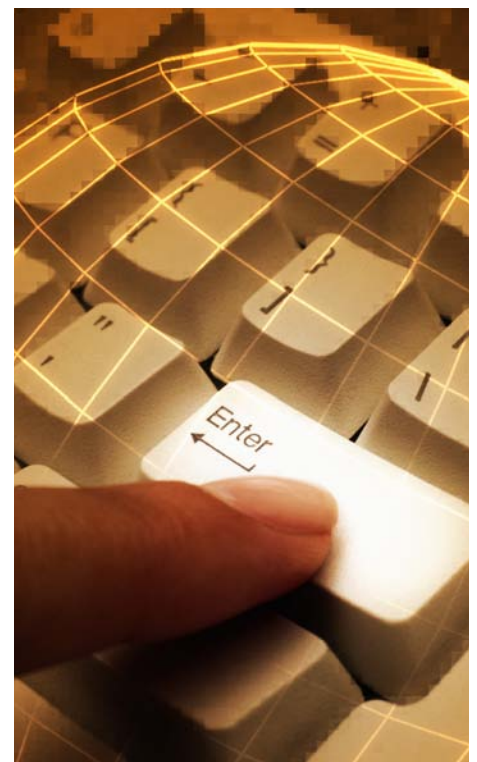
Twitter is an online microblogging and social networking site that allows users to send "tweets" of 140 characters or less. Tweeting is simple; a user creates a basic profile with a username and password, picks a Twitter name, and then types up whatever he or she wants to say. The best way to avoid trouble and scandal on Twitter is to not send suggestive, controversial or defamatory tweets. Twitter can be a serious asset to a local union or school in helping to spread information quickly to a large audience.

If a school were to use Twitter, a school leader could tweet about a student or club's achievement, an announcement about an upcoming event or a news article about the school. A local union also could tweet about union events or about relevant news stories. Twitter is a fast and easy way to connect people to an organization, and for an example of a Twitter page, visit AFSA's at www.twitter.com/AFSAUnion.



YouTube is a video-sharing social media site that allows users to upload and search videos. When used in education, for example, school leaders could put videos of school-related events on YouTube. A great way for other people to see the videos is to use tags. Tags are words or phrases that can be paired with the video. For instance, if someone types "education" into the search field on YouTube, he or she will see all videos tagged with education. This makes it much easier to find videos on YouTube.

Facebook, Twitter and YouTube can be powerful organizing and communication tools for unions and school leaders and provide a great way for members to stay abreast of all of the issues being debated. ■



School Leaders United Gains Momentum

Members Can Still Sign Up for Action Alerts

AFSA launched the School Leaders United campaign in March to activate and engage members in response to business-model education reforms and the attacks on collective bargaining rights.

Members were sent mail and email correspondence announcing the campaign and business reply cards to sign up for AFSA Action Alerts. Since

the campaign began, hundreds of members have signed up for alerts and multiple Action Alerts have been sent out announcing rallies and events specific to members' locations.

It's not too late to sign up for Action Alerts. Visit www.afsaadmin.org or email Nick Spina at nspina@afsaadmin.org to get involved. ■

AFSA rallies with AFGE

Rally Part of Day of Action by AFL-CIO

The conflict in Wisconsin and the widespread assault on workers' rights has ignited the labor movement. To combat the attacks on the hardworking middle class, the AFL-CIO hosted a national Day of Action on April 4 that AFSA participated in with fellow unions.

Beginning with worship services over the weekend and continuing throughout the week, unions, people of faith, civil and human rights activists, students and other allies across the nation hosted a range of community- and workplace-focused actions.

On April 4, AFSA President Diann Woodard and Nick Spina, AFSA's director of government affairs, attended an American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) solidarity event at BWI Airport near

Baltimore, Md. The event was held to honor the work of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and to support AFGE as the exclusive union representative at the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

On June 23, it was announced that AFGE had won the election among Transportation Security Officers (TSOs). This was a long campaign in which AFGE worked by the side of TSOs for almost 10 years.

The office of AFL-CIO President Rich Trumka released a statement saying, "Congratulations to President Gage and his team for this victory. We could not be happier to welcome 43,000 new workers into our Federation."

AFSA is proud to support AFGE at the April 4 rally and in its recent election success. ■



Amy Lloyd, AFGE District 4 Legislative and Political Director, with AFSA President Diann Woodard at the Solidarity event at BWI Airport on April 4.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

I read with interest the article "Advancing Student Achievement Through Labor-Management Collaboration" in the Spring 2011 issue of *The Leader*.

I long for a new approach to improving education. The more I see children separated into age-level/grade-level classrooms, segregated from children of other ages/levels, the more I see opportunities missed and learning thwarted.

"Accountability" within the current system is less possible by far. Trying to "fix things" is not a wise approach when we need to examine options that are built upon how people of all ages learn best.

Please don't confine our children's educational gains to the current awkward educational choices which are mostly in place across the nation.

Sincerely,

Amy Felty
Champaign, Ill.



Hitting Hard Times?

Union Plus Offers Help

Union Plus has an innovative program of unique benefits for union members facing economic hardship. It's called **Union SAFE** and provides \$3 million in assistance to working families. Benefits include:

- **Job Loss Grants** of \$250 for qualified Union Plus Credit Card holders who have been recently laid off for more than 90 days.
- **Medical Bill Negotiating Service** may help union members reduce large, outstanding out-of-pocket medical bills from hospitals, physicians, dentists, diagnostic centers and more.
- **Hospital Care Grants** of \$1,000 for qualified participants in the Union Plus Credit Card, Mortgage or Union Plus Insurance programs who have been recently hit with large, unreimbursed hospital expenses.
- **Disability Grants** of \$1,000 to \$2,000 for qualified Union Plus Credit Card holders who have significant income loss due to a recent long-term illness or disability.
- **Strike Grants** \$250 for qualified Union Plus Credit Card holders who are on strike or locked out for more than 30 days.
- **Credit Counseling Services**, budgeting advice and no-fee debt management and bankruptcy counseling benefits (Call 1-877-833-1745).
- **Furlough Grants** of \$250 for qualified Union Plus Credit Card holders who have been recently furloughed for 15 days or more.
- **Save My Home Hotline** to help union members avoid foreclosure (Call 1-866-490-5361).
- **Mortgage Assistance** to help Union Plus Mortgage holders who are unemployed, disabled or on strike make their mortgage payments.
- **Insurance Premium Waivers** for members with Union Plus Life Insurance who have been recently laid off for more than 30 days.
- **College Saving Grants** of \$500 for union members and retirees who open a new 529 tax-free college savings or pre-paid tuition account for their children or grandchildren (age 12 and younger), and contribute at least \$1,000.

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To apply, visit:
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Upcoming Events

Aug. 2-4	AFL-CIO Executive Council Meeting, National Labor College, Silver Spring, MD
Sept. 6-9	Alliance for Retired Americans Legislative Conference, Hilton Washington, Washington, DC
Oct. 5	Committee for Education Funding Legislative Conference and Gala, Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill, Washington, DC
Oct. 28-29	AFSA West Coast Regional Leadership Conference, San Francisco, CA
Jan. 12-16, 2012	AFL-CIO Martin Luther King, Jr., Observance, Detroit, MI



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