

THE Leader


American Federation of
School Administrators
AFSA, AFL-CIO

Volume 99, Winter 2021/22

A NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

AFSA: 50 Years Strong

As we close this year, we mark the start of the 50-year anniversary celebration of the American Federation of School Administrators (AFSA). For five decades, AFSA has been providing a powerful network of support and services to school administrators and supervisors across the nation.

"During this moment in history, it is important to acknowledge the tireless efforts of the dedicated activists who turned the vision of creating one

strong, national voice for school leaders into a reality," said AFSA President Ernest Logan. "We stand on their shoulders. Without our early leaders, our voices would not be as loud today. They broke the norms and said we must have a voice, not only to improve the lives of our members, but to improve the way we deliver educational services to the children and families we serve every day."

(continued on page 28)



History is made as George Meany (fourth from right), then president of the AFL-CIO, presents the national charter to the School Administrators and Supervisors Organizing Committee (SASOC) in 1971. SASOC becomes AFSA in 1976.

Denver Lands First Contract

Close to 50% of Denver principals and assistant principals will see a pay increase of more than \$10,000 and 88% will be awarded raises this school year thanks to a new contract negotiated by the Denver School Leaders Association (DSLAs), AFSA Local 136.

Less than a year after forming a union and getting recognition as the collective bargaining agent for school principals and assistant principals in the Denver School District, DSLA negotiated and ratified its first contract, giving

(continued on page 10)

School Leaders Joining AFSA in Record Numbers

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See page 3

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See page 5

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See page 9

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AFSA President Ernest Logan



Creating Hope and Light in Difficult Times

It may be my brain chemistry or the “never say die” attitude of a union leader or my religious convictions, but I have always been inclined to accentuate the positive.

So, as we say farewell to 2021, I dig down into my pandemic memories and find a well of hope. Right now, there’s a lot of noise about educators being under attack and public schools being doomed, but I believe the opposite. I think most of the negative chatter is rhetorical. Naysayers love to hear themselves talk. For the malicious, it’s a way of killing our spirit and making us give up.

Mostly, the news is good. First of all, the world now knows that there’s never been anyone like you. In March 2020, school leaders worked out the intricate logistics of programming and staffing in-person, online and hybrid instruction. Then, many of you went from home to home delivering laptops and hotspots. You started grab-and-go meal programs in your buildings. You connected families with soup kitchens, medical clinics and even employment opportunities. Some of you helped nurse your students’ loved ones and bury their dead, while dealing with loss in your own families.

Yes, it can seem thankless because the public is supposedly turning on you. And now, you find yourselves on the brink of the third year of the pandemic without having taken much vacation. Some of you are said to be driving school buses and cleaning bathrooms.

You’re short-staffed and just want to get the job done. But make sure you live long enough to enjoy your union-won retirement benefits. I don’t expect you to find time for yoga retreats, but you should take all your vacation days, relax with your loved ones as much as possible, and get whatever mental or physical therapy you need.

One of the beauties of the pandemic was the way you all came together to help each other. Every principal and administrator I talk to tells the same story of drawing closer to other school leaders and forming peer support groups. Some of you found each other randomly, while others knew each other for years. This is a form of fellowship rare in most secular lives. Hold onto it.

Your unity will give you strength if your school boards are commandeered by the Proud Boys or whomever else may show up spewing invective against vaccination requirements and telling you what books your students aren’t allowed to read, and sometimes threatening your lives. Some formerly respectful parents may have been emotionally retooled to mistrust you and believe that the nation’s historical misdeeds such as slavery and Jim Crow must be left unspoken or denied. We should have compassion for all parents because their

children have lost so much. But don't let anyone rob you of hope. Most of these parents will come back to you.

You want children back in school, too. When there were no mitigation strategies at all, you and your unions led the way to putting safeguards in place in order to protect lives. AFSA was one of the first to come up with guidelines involving personal protective equipment, social distancing and hygiene. Now, we have to find the way to keep schools open as safely as possible.

Most parents are sending their kids back to public schools and most of them still like their own schools. It's also true that achievement, as measured in NAEP scores (The Nation's Report Card), has remained relatively stable since the 1970s. Our aspiration, of course, is to make achievement soar, after ameliorating serious learning losses that developed during the pandemic. I believe that lessons learned in the pandemic may help move us closer to those goals.

For one, the pandemic illuminated the stunning inequities of race, income and disability. Inequity is getting more attention now along with the pandemic learning loss that walloped children from low-income backgrounds as well as children with special needs. Let's keep that light shining.

Federal aid is helping. Following the school closings, AFSA and other unions helped push the federal government to provide unprecedented support services to schools. By now, it has given close to \$190 billion to help the reopening and reverse the effects of the pandemic on learning and emotional well-being. Most schools were able to hold on to their staffs, provide additional professional development, and meet the social and emotional needs of traumatized students. There is now hope of hiring the school nurses, social workers and psychologists you need to save kids and take some pressure off yourselves.

We also woke to the promise of remote learning. While we saw clearly that remote learning is generally inferior to in-person instruction, we also saw the advantages it presents for students with medical needs that keep them out of the classroom. We learned that we could offer courses that aren't in demand by providing them online throughout districts—such as Mandarin, Arabic, meteorology and agriscience. In addition, our recent experience with online learning might help, though not solve, some of the challenges of rural education.

The pandemic also empowered AFSA in its 50th year, and most of your locals as well. Instead of shrinking, as expected, after the Supreme Court's anti-union *Janus* decision, AFSA and many locals grew. Over the past two years, AFSA has seen a 15% increase in union affiliation, translating into 11 new locals. The pandemic made educators care more than ever about sharing ideas on how to run a union and bargain a contract. During the COVID-19 crisis, AFSA connected us all across the nation and helped us feel supported in the face of great challenges.

As we close out the year, I had hoped TIME® magazine's "Person of the Year" would be a legion of school leaders and teachers arm in arm. But TIME didn't celebrate you that way, even though the Brookings Institution had found that the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a much greater appreciation for the importance of public schools. If now the pendulum has swung a little bit away from you, remember this is the virus's fault, not yours, and the pendulum will soon swing back.

Meanwhile, I send you my thanks for your heroism and my wishes for a blessed New Year. Keep the faith, look after yourselves and your families, and stay off Twitter. ■



School Leaders Joining AFSA in Record Numbers

School leaders are demanding a stronger voice in their communities and they see a union as the key to power. That is why AFSA has seen a 15% increase in union affiliation, translating into 11 new locals over the past two years. Prior to these new local affiliations, the last union to join AFSA was in 2013. In raw numbers, AFSA has added more than 1,000 new members, with total union membership now standing at greater than 21,000, both active and retired.

"We have dozens of inquiries on how to form a union coming into the AFSA national headquarters. It's clear that school leaders are looking for help on how to amplify their voices," said AFSA President Ernest Logan. "While we see workers in every profession around the nation speaking loudly in Striketober, school leaders are looking for ways to create change, and many are turning toward unionization."

"School leaders understand that it's time to invest in ourselves," Logan added. "We deserve improvements in the support that is provided us in running schools, better lifestyles and, most importantly, a real voice on how to deliver the best education possible to the children and families we serve." ■



MAXIMIZE YOUR AFSA INVESTMENT



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AS PART OF YOUR AFSA MEMBERSHIP*, YOU RECEIVE AT NO CHARGE:

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- ▶ \$25,000 criminal defense coverage ◀
- ▶ \$15,000 total disability benefit ◀
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To qualify for these specific AFSA benefits, your most current information must be on file, or you may be denied coverage.

** Active members in a local union qualify for all four benefits listed.
Associate members only receive the educators professional liability policy.
Retired members only receive the accidental death insurance.*

For all member benefits, visit
[www.theschoolleader.org/
member-benefits](https://www.theschoolleader.org/member-benefits), or scan
the QR Code.



Take Care of Yourself First

School leaders think they are invincible. “We have to be strong to keep our community together,” said one assistant principal in a private discussion on social emotional learning during the California Association of Urban School Administrators (CAUSA) meeting held in October in San Diego.

“People are struggling and don’t want to admit they need help because it makes them feel they have failed, which just fuels the downward fall,” said a district transportation coordinator. “We hear a lot of chatter about individuals thinking of quitting their jobs because the work and environment have become too difficult to manage.”

“People are struggling and don’t want to admit they need help because it makes them feel they have failed, which just fuels the downward fall.”

“Educators themselves are experiencing a mental health crisis years in the making,” wrote Teach for America CEO Elisa Villanueva Beard in The Hechinger Report. “We won’t be doing right by our students in this moment if we don’t also provide our educators with the supports they need and deserve.”

She suggests that one place to start is by expanding educators’ access to affordable therapy, coaching and other

resources that foster well-being. “The need for these social and emotional supports is even more urgent in the extended face of the pandemic and its disruptions,” she added.

“We’re Facing a Looming Crisis of Principal Burnout,” shouts the headline in Education Week. The subhead line adds “School leaders are besieged by the pandemic and political battles.” The author of the story, David E. DeMatthews, an associate professor in the college of education at the University of Texas at Austin, says in conversations with principals he asks, “How’s everything going?” And lately he finds people giving disheartening responses and sometimes responding with tears.

“These political pressures add great stress to an already-tough daily job,” said American Federation of School Administrators (AFSA) Executive Vice President Leonard Pugliese, as he made a passionate plea to school leaders at the California gathering that they must take care of themselves first.

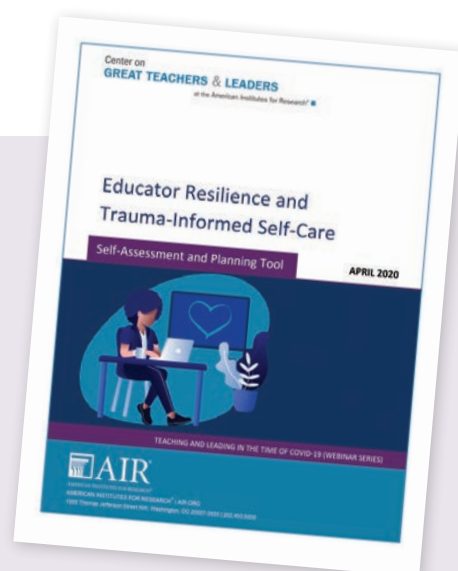
“Tomorrow I will be boarding an airplane and at some point, after all the passengers are aboard, the flight attendant will give instructions that if there is a loss of cabin pressure, you can expect an oxygen mask to drop from the ceiling. If

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Educator Resilience and Trauma-Informed Self-Care

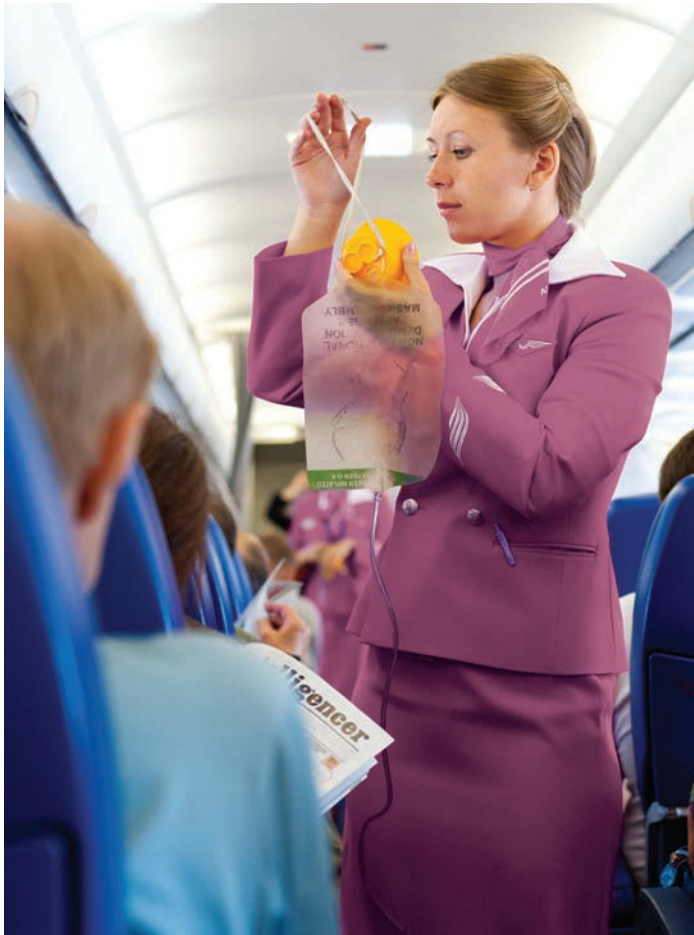
The Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center) at the American Institutes for Research (AIR) has a tool that focuses on an educator self-assessment. It includes an array of trauma-informed strategies. Scan the QR code to access the guide.

<https://gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/Educator-Resilience-Trauma-Informed-Self-Care-Self-Assessment.pdf>



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this happens, take your mask and put it on first. After you have securely done that, you can assist your children,” said Pugliese. “Why would the flight attendant tell me to put my mask on first? Because I can’t take care of others if I don’t take care of myself first.”



“I know you are dedicated to the children you serve each day, but remember, you can’t take care of others if you don’t take care of yourself first.”

Pugliese is urging school leaders around the country to put their masks on first by taking care of themselves physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. “I know you are dedicated to the children you serve each day, but remember, you can’t take care of others if you don’t take care of yourself first.” ■

What Your School District Can Do to Support Mental Health

“Educators have gone above and beyond during the pandemic, leaving many burnt out and with little time to process the events of the past year,” said Megan Ferren, a research assistant for the K–12 Education team at the Center for American Progress.

“The influx of federal relief funds presents a unique opportunity to transform how educators are supported in their profession, not just during the recovery but also in the long term,” she said. “In order to ensure that the education system is able to fully recover from the impacts of the pandemic, it is critical that schools and districts invest in their educators, especially in their social and emotional health.”

Ferren writes in a July 2021 paper that providing social and emotional supports for educators is a key part of the conversation.

“School districts and individual schools should invest some of the federal relief funds they receive from the American Rescue Plan in efforts to establish norms, practices, and resources that support educators’ social and emotional needs. These should both address immediate concerns and be sustainable in the long term,” said Ferren. She adds the U.S. Department of Education has affirmed that funds can and should be used to support educators’ social and emotional needs.

Ferren recommended the following:

- School districts should offer self-care and wellness programs for staff and make sure they are aware of offerings. They should provide staff with resources to assess their self-care and well-being, as well as offer on-site counseling. They may even choose to develop staff well-being toolkits.
- Schools should assist educators in establishing a set of norms and expectations that prioritize their social and emotional needs; this may include limiting school communications outside of school hours or establishing a schoolwide “emotional intelligence charter.”
- Educators should be provided with ongoing professional development opportunities to enhance their social and emotional learning (SEL) skills and learn how to best use those skills to provide SEL supports to their students. ■

Retired School Leaders Needed: Help Support Public Education and Build Our Union

Join the AFSA Mentor Squad

School leaders who have retired from their jobs but are still looking for adventure—something meaningful and fulfilling to do with their time—can consider joining the AFSA Mentor Squad, created to help improve our professions, support children, build our union and, ultimately, improve communities.

Using your time in retirement to give back to civic activities like union work is a great way to stay active. Moreover, imparting your wisdom and experience to the next generation of leaders can provide you with a rewarding experience, while at the same time change the lives of the people you are

- Research and develop materials and collect information for AFSA publications, social media, professional development programs and our website.
- Serve on AFSA committees to help develop programs and policies, or represent us at meetings.

“The most successful people in retirement look to use their talents and passions to make a contribution.”

helping. Your work today can be an inspiration to others to do the same if you take advantage of this “pay it forward” opportunity.

Here are just some of the ways you can support the AFSA mission:

- Become an organizer and recruiter for AFSA. Let people know how the union changed your life.
- Lobby for public education at the local, state and national level.
- Run for public office, like school board, city council, state representative or even Congress.

Research indicates that those who are happiest in retirement note that “giving back” and discovering a sense of purpose is the key. For a growing number of retirees, it often comes in

Did You Know?

The average length of retirement is approximately 20 years, according to the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College. That breaks down into approximately:

- 7,300 days
- 175,200 hours
- 10,512,000 minutes

What will you be doing with your time?

the form of a significant volunteer position or encore career, said Stewart Friedman, practice professor of management at Wharton and founding director of the Wharton Work/Life Integration Project. “The most successful people in retirement look to use their talents and passions to make a contribution,” he said.

The lack of a sense of purpose in your life increases the risk of dissatisfaction, according to several surveys of retirees—and what should be a meaningful time becomes an anxious or uninspiring one.

Over the past few years, older adults have reported volunteer work as the driving source of happiness and providing their life with meaning. The notion of retirement as a time of leisure is outdated. Most older adults want a similar level of engagement and meaning as in their working years, writes Jacob Schroeder, manager of investor education for Advance Capital Management in Kiplinger.

To join the AFSA Mentor Squad, email us at: TakeAction@TheSchoolLeader.org. ■

NYC School Leaders Receive Just Compensation for Endless Calls on Weekends, Holidays and Late Nights

By Chuck Wilbanks

One middle school principal was preparing her table for a family dinner after the Yom Kippur fast when the phone rang. Calls began coming for another middle school principal as he was entertaining a house full of people for his daughter's birthday celebration last April. Over Labor Day weekend, a high school principal was hiking with her husband through a lush Adirondack forest, the woods so dense that cell phone coverage was impossible, an idyllic lull in connectivity that ended as soon as they reached a high clearing and her device began an incessant ping and ringing.

In all these cases and many more, members of the Council of School Supervisors & Administrators (CSA), AFSA Local 1, saw much-needed time with their families ripped apart as they were flooded with urgent calls from New York City Department of Education employees at the so-called Situation Room. When it was launched in September 2020 by Mayor de Blasio and then-Chancellor Richard Carranza, the center was billed as a coherent clearinghouse of solutions to COVID cases in schools that would aid school leaders as they wrestled with myriad problems arising from the pandemic.

It was to be a “nimble, efficient one-stop shop” that would guide school leaders from an initial call to a case's final disposition.

Meant to foster solutions, the Situation Room became another layer of difficulty burdening already overly stressed administrators.

The sad reality was it quickly became one more layer of burdensome mandates for already-stressed-out principals and assistant principals, now required to receive and make phone calls not only on evenings and weekends, but sometimes in the middle of the night as well. Often there were hours of follow-up work that had to be done at the Situation Room's directive.

From early on, CSA told the city and DOE that this mandated work must be recognized as such. Finally, in January 2021, CSA began an arbitration seeking compensation for members who were taking on the new, after-hours demands. CSA had compiled a forbidding list of witnesses prepared to testify on behalf of members, including a former superintendent who well understood how abusive the system had become.

On Oct. 30, as CSA's annual leadership conference at the New York Hilton was under way, officials from CSA and DOE hammered out the details and finalized a settlement. CSA President Mark Cannizzaro announced the breakthrough during his speech to a packed crowd of members.



"The Situation Room, which was designed to reduce your workload, became a full-time job in and of itself," Cannizzaro told the crowd. "Out of concern for your communities, you continued to respond at all hours, even as we pleaded with you to turn off your phones. Did you ever notice that the Situation Room staff works in shifts while you just continue to work?"

When he announced that CSA negotiators had just come to a fitting settlement with the city, he was met with thunderous applause.

Retroactive to Sept. 14, 2020—the date the Situation Room was created—the DOE has agreed to fund an allocation equivalent to five supervisory per-session hours to each school for each actionable COVID-19-related case the Situation Room has been notified of, to be distributed among the CSA-represented employees who performed the related work. The agreement has no sunset clause—as long as there is a Situation Room, the terms of this deal will apply.

Importantly, the cap on supervisory per-session hours does not apply to these allocations. The DOE was to fund the allocations by no later than Nov. 12, 2021. However, DOE has yet to operationalize a process for how to distribute the funds. CSA is in daily contact with the DOE; members will receive more information as it becomes available.

As of mid-November, there were more than 22,000 actionable cases—defined as one that resulted in a full or partial classroom closure, a full or partial school closure, or any quarantine situation.

CSA also pushed forward reforms and efficiencies to the system itself. The DOE agreed to operationalize a process by no later than Dec. 6, 2021, where Central DOE will automatically generate necessary contact lists and share the prepopulated potential close contact list with the school. The school will identify potential close contacts and confirm actual close contacts based on proximity and other related health protocols (masking, social distancing). Central DOE will confirm vaccination status of potential close contacts and send a final list to the school for formal notification, and then schools will send final notifications upon the conclusion of the Situation Room's determination of the outcome.

"We know that our members will always do everything necessary to keep their school communities safe and healthy," said CSA General Counsel David Grandwetter. "This settlement recognizes them for doing just that, in the face of the tremendous stress and difficulties caused by this pandemic." ■

Chuck Wilbanks is the editor of Local 1's CSA News. This article originally appeared in the CSA News December issue.

Local 3 Condemns Hate

The Executive Board of the United Administrators of San Francisco (UASF), AFSA Local 3, passed a resolution this year condemning all forms of hatred against Asian American and Pacific Islander Americans ignited by the COVID-19 pandemic and called for immediate action in the city to protect these communities.

Moreover, the resolution states, "UASF recognizes that the science education of COVID-19, racial tolerance and the health and safety of all Americans, no matter their background, must be the utmost priority."

The resolution continues, "UASF denounces all forms of racism, xenophobia, misogyny, homophobia, ableism, ageism, religious and cultural intolerance, discrimination, and violent actions. UASF calls all government and education leaders at Federal, State, Local levels to report, investigate, document and prosecute all hate crimes, harassment, bullying, and threats against the Asian American and Pacific Islander American communities across the United States."

"UASF calls to expand education and curriculum for cultural competence with linguist appropriate education campaigns on tolerance. We call on district and local leaders to issue guidance describing best practices to mitigate racially discriminatory language in describing the COVID-19 pandemic; [and] to combat misinformation, hate and discrimination that put Asian Americans and Pacific Islander Americans of all ages and genders at risk. We are committed to amplifying the voices of all Asian American and Pacific Islander Americans and empowering them to stand up and in solidarity against violence and hate crimes." ■



Photo Credit: Victoria Pickering (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)



Denver Lands First Contract

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them a stronger voice in districtwide educational decisions and providing raises for most school leaders. The contract comes with the school leaders' first salary schedule.

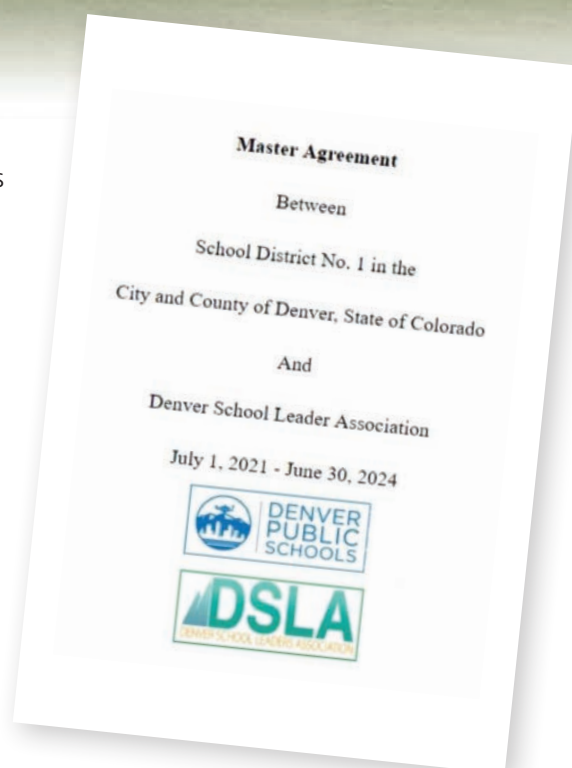
DSLA joined AFSA in the summer of 2020 and won recognition from the school board shortly thereafter. Contract negotiations began in January 2021 and concluded by June on an agreement that will run from July 1, 2021–June 30, 2024.

Members voted 99.3% for the agreement, with more than 81% of eligible members casting a ballot.

"This is an historic feat in Colorado, a contract between a principal/assistant principal union and a school district," said DSLA Co-President Eric Rowe.

In addition to addressing school leader compensation, work year, leave and benefits, the contract includes:

- Definitions of the school leaders who are covered under the master agreement.
- Processes for negotiations between DPS and DSLA, including how issues can be addressed during the life of the contract.
- Union rights, working conditions and protections for principals and assistant principals, including fair and transparent processes for addressing grievances, corrective action and complaints against school leaders.
- Systems for elevating the collective voices of principals and assistant principals at the regional and district levels regarding priorities, policies, professional learning and evaluation of schools.
- Fair and transparent evaluation and accountability practices for school leaders, including regular collaboration with supervisors.
- Mechanisms to ensure leaders' voices and collaboration in developing individual and school-level professional development plans to enhance leaders' skill sets and school designs.
- Creation of several "collaborative committees" to give the union a seat at the table on districtwide decisions. The contract also includes monthly meetings between the union president and the superintendent, and regional meetings between union representatives and district leaders.



All school leaders who work in the district will benefit from the union contract, even if they are not union members. In total, the union represents about 310 principals and assistant principals; more than half are union members.

"Having a contract eliminates uncertainty and ambiguity and opens the door to a better future," said DSLA Co-President Cesar Rivera. "However, we also know this contract is not a panacea, but it is a step in the right direction." ■

New President Elected at Local 25

Veteran Baltimore City school administrator Karl Perry was overwhelmingly elected president of the Baltimore City Public School Administrators and Supervisors Association (PSASA), AFSA Local 25, on a platform of three guiding principles: transparency, unity and trust.

More than 65% of local union members voted in the election, which Perry won with 75% of the ballots cast. His term will run through 2024.

Perry has diligently served in education for the past 29 years, with 24 of those years as an administrator. His philosophy is to view all of his students as his own children.

He has been an active union member and officer for 22 years, spending the

last four years serving as PSASA vice president, working on the Contract Negotiations Team and the Joint Oversight Committee, and operating as a staunch advocate for equity and fair treatment of all administrators.

He was selected as MSDE Service-Learning Principal of the Year, a MetLife Foundation Ambassador in Education (an award sponsored by the National Civic League Foundation) and he is a former Teacher of the Year.



Karl Perry

Karl E. Perry is a devout Christian, loving husband and proud father of four brilliant children. He holds degrees from West Virginia University and Coppin State University, and has dedicated his life to the advancement of the staff, students and families of Baltimore City Public Schools. ■

Vice Principal Gets Makeover on National TV

Monique Jenkins, an assistant principal in Newark, New Jersey, and a member of the City Association of Supervisors and Administrators, AFSA Local 20, was picked for an image makeover on "The Drew Barrymore Show" in November. Barrymore invited makeup icon and UOMA Beauty founder/CEO Sharon Chuter to do a makeover "for one incredible mother and vice principal, Monique."

Jenkins said she was very grateful to have the makeover opportunity. "With all that's going on this school year, school leaders like principals and vice principals very often forget to take care of themselves," she noted. "The challenges are extraordinary, keeping students and staff and community safe, while also making up for the learning loss that took place over the last 19 months. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to exhale." ■



Photo from "The Drew Barrymore Show"

To watch the segment, scan the QR Code.



Local 2 is Winning for School Leaders

For two years the Chicago Principals & Administrators Association (CPAA), AFSA Local 2, has been working in the state legislature trying to regain collective bargaining rights lost decades ago.



CPAA, Local 2 team in New York City attending the Council of School Supervisors & Administrators (CSA), AFSA Local 1, Leadership Conference in October. The gathering featured training opportunities, discussions and a full-day conversation with our AFSA family in New York City to learn the strategies they use to engage their members, create meaningful professional opportunities for members and wage winning issue campaigns.

Although the bill passed overwhelmingly in the Illinois House, tweaking continues in the state Senate, where it has been re-referred to the Senate Assignments Committee. CPAA continues to be in contact with Senate leadership regarding the trajectory of the bill and hopes to make headway next year.

While having collective bargaining and a binding contract is always the goal of the union, there is still a lot getting done by the CPAA team in support of the membership.

"It's important that we be able to articulate the efficacy of the collective work that we do together," said Local

2 President Troy LaRaviere. "When Chicago school leaders review our accomplishments, they can see the return on their monthly membership investment. Getting an institution like Chicago Public Schools to say 'yes' when they want to say 'no' requires power, and on multiple occasions we've been able to use intelligent strategy and collective might to generate the power to change CPS' response."



Check out just a handful of the union's accomplishments during the past year. (For a full list, scan the QR code.)

Compensation

- Compelled Chicago Public Schools (CPS) to increase pay by \$15,000 over four years by lobbying CPS board members to support the raise, and through an appeal to racial equity.
- Won additional compensation for all administrators at year-round schools.
- Attained five additional days off during winter break and accrual of five additional vacation days.

Due Process Job Protections and Eligibility

- Despite more than 120 CPS hearings and investigations of principals and assistant principals, not a single school leader represented by CPAA lost their job in 2020 and 2021.
- An Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL) manager was investigated and removed from his duties after CPAA announced findings from our investigation of his abuse and harassment of principals. CPS also announced that it will dissolve the AUSL turnaround school network and reintegrate those schools into CPS networks.

Pandemic Wins and Accomplishments

- Quickly and successfully shifted all Illinois Administrator Academy courses to a virtual format, allowing hundreds of school leaders to stay current on licensure renewal coursework.
- CPS created health exceptions to the requirement that principals and assistant principals report in person during the initial stages of the pandemic after CPAA appealed to the governor and the Illinois Department of Public Health.
- CPAA members compelled CPS to change the requirement that both principals and assistant principals report in person and, instead, allow them to alternate.
- Created an alternative reopening plan, and CPS adopted some elements. ■



Patrick Henry Middle School

November 16 · 🌐

...

Congratulations to Mr. G on being named Principal of the Year by the Michigan School Counselor Association! His dedication, heart for kids, and relentless passion for improving education are evident every day. PHMS is truly blessed to have Mr. G, along with our amazing counselors, Mrs. Smith & Mrs. Kanagawa, taking care of our students!



👍❤️ 192

43 Comments 1 Share

MI Administrator of the Year

Roger Gurganus, principal at Patrick Henry Middle School in Woodhaven, Michigan, has been named the administrator of the year for 2021–22 by the Michigan School Counselor Association.

Gurganus is a member of the Woodhaven Administrators Association, AFSA Local 9.

This isn't Gurganus' first time being recognized as an outstanding leader; in 2018, he received the Assistant Principal of the Year Award while working at Brownstown Middle School in a neighboring community. ■



Shelley Bills

Congratulations 🎉🎉🎉 couldn't go to a better man He is truly amazing.



Priscilla Grossenheider-Albano

Woohoo way to go Roger! 🏆🥳💜



Lynn DeHaan Cerasuolo

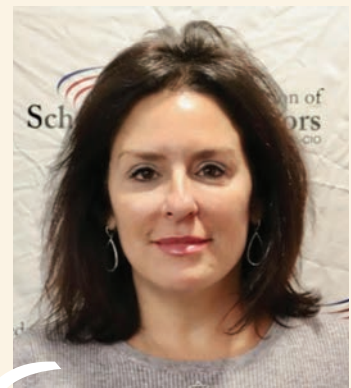
Congratulations! Well deserved! Such an amazing, caring leader for our kids! 🌟🌟🌟❤️

Leaders Speak Up



While D.C. Public Schools has contact tracers, the task of determining who must quarantine after potential exposure to the virus has, on some campuses, fallen to principals who are already strained. Principals are bombarded by emails from frustrated parents, who believe the city should be moving faster to notify the community of a positive test.

—Richard Jackson, president of the Council of School Officers (CSO), AFSA Local 4



The Yonkers [New York] Council of Administrators (YCA), AFSA Local 8, is privileged to continue to serve our students and their families during this ongoing crisis. A school is not a school without our children here with us. Collaboration with our families is the essence of our work, and it is our deepest wish that, like a jigsaw puzzle, all of our pieces come together to make each of us all whole again.

—YCA President Jane Wermuth, who also serves as an AFSA general vice president, talking about school reopening during a Board of Education meeting in early 2021

School Leaders Take COVID Shots in Boston

The Boston Association of School Administrators and Supervisors (BASAS), AFSA Local 6, reports a COVID compliance rate greater than 99% of its membership! As of the end of November 2021, 233 of 234 BASAS members were in compliance with the Boston Public Schools' policy on immunization. ■



Photo Credit: Christian Emmer

Principals Driving Buses

Donna Robinson, a principal at John M. Stumbo Elementary in Floyd County, Kentucky, is also driving a bus to get her kids home, according to WSAZ-TV in Huntington, West Virginia. As in the rest of the country, the district is experiencing a shortage of transportation personnel and bus drivers. The TV station reports Robinson has been in education for 25 years, but only behind the wheel of a bus this school year. She participated in training during the summer to become a certified bus driver in Kentucky. ■



Photo From WSAZ-TV

Summit School District Leadership Association Wins Meet-and-Confer Agreement

Local 140 Becomes 2nd School Leaders Union in Colorado



Principals and assistant principals in Summit County, Colorado, won official recognition as a bargaining agent at the end of October with the county school board adopting a meet-and-confer agreement with administrators.

Summit School District Leadership Association (SSDLA), AFSA Local 140, was chartered in May of this year. The association, which represents principals and assistant principals, was formed after the district kept pushing for principals to have an "at-will" clause in their individual contracts allowing termination of an administrator at any time without cause or notice.

The new meet-and-confer agreement outlines the rights of the board and administrators, work schedules, leave and pay, benefits and the meet-and-confer procedures. The agreement is valid for the school year and will be evaluated on a yearly basis.

Crystal Miller, principal at Summit Cove Elementary and president of SSDLA, said the process of working through the agreement was a positive experience for administrators. "We really do want equity moving forward, we want student success, and we feel like when you have stable administrators that we can accomplish those things," she said. ■

Welcome Aboard

The Portland (Oregon) Association of Public School Administrators (PAPSA) and the Maine School Administrators District 17 are the latest unions to affiliate with AFSA. Both groups were chartered in October 2021.

"My board and members are excited in our movement

toward becoming a strong administrators union," said Karmin Williams, president of PAPSA. "We have been around for decades but have served more as a social club than a unified voice talking about workplace issues, education quality and equity. We have finally hit a tipping point where district leaders don't provide us the respect we deserve as professionals that keep our community together." ■

Pugliese: Your Voice Can Make Change Locally and Nationally

Administrators recently heard a rallying cry to help strengthen and expand the power and voice of school leaders, and offer ideas and priorities to guide our union's future, from Leonard Pugliese, AFSA executive vice president. He spoke to the California Association of Urban School Administrators (CAUSA) this fall in San Diego.

"Too many of us sit back and stay silent or frustrated when it comes to our working conditions," said Pugliese. "It is time for that attitude to change if we are going to make changes for our professions, our schools, our children and our communities."

From complaining in a parking lot to joining AFSA: Executive Vice President Len Pugliese talks with Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi about the challenges school leaders deal with every day around the country.



**California
Association of
Urban School
Administrators**



"I got active with AFSA to amplify my voice at the national level, where we must fight for resources for our schools and educate lawmakers about our professions and how we create the school learning environment designed to educate our children."

"Like many of you, before joining the union my voice was heard, but not in places where it could lead to positive change. Before joining the local union, my voice was heard in the parking lot after an administrative meeting and my words evaporated into the atmosphere," said Pugliese.

"Before I became active in the union, my voice was heard at my dinner table, where my family had to suffer through another one of my outbursts, as I complained about the working and learning conditions in my school district. And then I had my 'aha' moment."

Ultimately, Pugliese joined the City Association of Supervisors and Administrators, AFSA Local 20, in Newark, New Jersey, because he wanted his voice to be heard in places where it would make a difference, and to help make change.

"I got active with AFSA to amplify my voice at the national level, where we must fight for resources for our schools and educate lawmakers about our professions and how we create the school learning environment designed to educate our children."

Pugliese is urging school leaders to call friends around the country and tell them now is the time to unite and join the American Federation of School Administrators. "One national voice can make a difference." ■

Mr. Transportation: Getting Kids to School

By Rachel Bennett

Tony Spruill, a devoted transportation operations supervisor for Prince George's County (Maryland) Public Schools, stands out among his peers in this time of global pandemic and countrywide school transportation woes.

For 17 years, Spruill, a member of the Association of Supervisory & Administrative School Personnel (ASASP), AFSA Local 109, has led his team in transporting 90,000 students to and from school daily, at one of the largest transportation units in the country. He has developed numerous initiatives to elevate safety precautions, increase productivity and reduce spending. In addition, Spruill has been a part of successful union negotiations leading to improved staff performance and adherence to vehicle laws.

"My love for transportation came from seeing how beautiful the buses look all around the county," said Spruill. "I enjoy watching the buses grow—with different technology we put on our buses each year."

Spruill has always had a passion for students. Before becoming a supervisor, he taught social studies and special education for 10 years. He has continued his

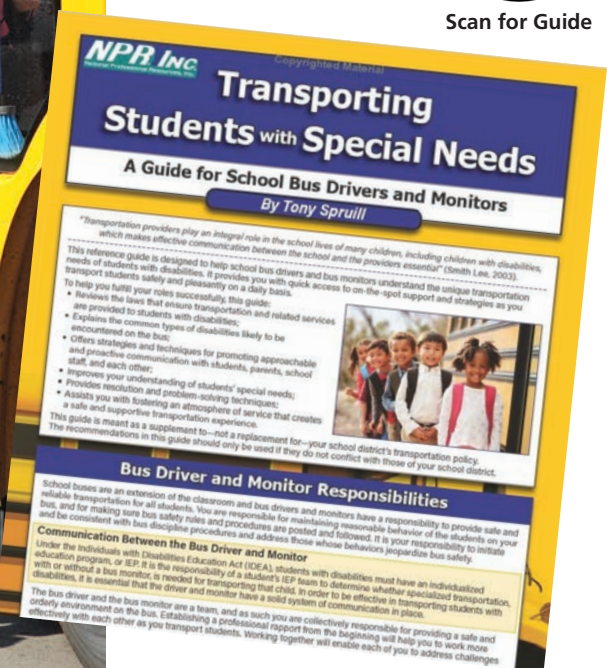
work in support of special education students, like providing the best possible door-to-door transportation.

"What drew me to this profession is the special ed needs for students—to not only make sure that our general education students are receiving the type of services they need, but making sure that the same thing was given to our special needs population," explained Spruill. "So, my focus in the beginning was on them."

After realizing that many school drivers had little knowledge about children with disabilities, he came up with a plan to train and teach them. To that end, he created a guide, "Transporting Students with Special Needs," to offer tips and assistance. School districts from around the country are using his guide to help their drivers and monitors to better support this population of students.



Scan for Guide





Tony Spruill

One of the biggest challenges Spruill faces these days is the school bus driver shortage—Prince George’s County needs an additional 200 drivers to be fully staffed across all bus lots.

“The most defining thing for me is coming to work every day, with the shortages we have, and making adjustments on a daily basis in order to get students to school on time,” he said.

Although the pandemic exacerbated this issue, the transportation industry itself contributes to the shortage. All school bus drivers are required to obtain a commercial driver’s license (CDL), which is the same license required by truck drivers, public transportation drivers and corporate drivers such as Amazon. Unlike school systems that offer 10-month contracts with lower pay, Amazon and other entities offer drivers 12-month contracts with a higher rate of pay.

“If you have the same license and have the opportunity to do 12 months or 10 months, it’s a no brainer. You’d go for the 12-month contract,” Spruill said.

The CDL license includes drug and alcohol testing, driver improvement programs and other safety measure protocols. He explained that with the same license, workers could apply for places like Walmart and make more

“What drew me to this profession is the special ed needs for students—to not only make sure that our general education students are receiving the type of services they need, but making sure that the same thing was given to our special needs population.”



money. School systems were seeing a large pool of drivers leave for 12-month positions before the pandemic hit, forcing them to come up with solutions for the shortages.

Recruiting and retaining employees proved to be a constant juggle. Spruill said offering incentives, increasing hours for workers and starting off employees at eight hours per day instead of five were some options for lessening the driver shortage. ■

MEMBER PROFILE

Sean Nichols

Fresh Start Academy, located within Sumner High School in the historic Ville section of Northern St. Louis, is an alternative school that removes as many barriers as possible to gaining the academic and life skills needed to meet Missouri's graduation requirements. A great many students come from disadvantaged situations, but they attend a school with a staff that is devoted to resurrecting the cultural heritage of an old community.

"I have to recruit teachers with a developing and progressive mindset, not necessarily a traditional mindset," said Dr. Sean Nichols, principal of both Fresh Start and Sumner, and a member of Administrators Association of the St. Louis Public Schools, AFSA Local 44. "Our teachers have to be prepared for change all the time. We have to keep our students interested and try to get them to graduate."

Nichols is a veteran principal who led other programs for high school

Fresh Start held no surprises, although the intense shock of an international pandemic lurked in the wings. From his earliest days at Fresh Start, Nichols knew how to recruit faculty and attract community, university and political partners, all while keeping his eyes on the more traditional population of Sumner High School.



Sean Nichols

to be successful. I'm continuing a lot of that, even now, so students can prepare. And some do."

Quite a few ultimately take the ACT, and Nichols is noticeably proud of that. "Some of them...if they came to school after being involved in conflict in the community, they would be scared of who they could encounter on school grounds. 'Oh, hey, it's you.' They could get seriously hurt.

"Our community is very historic," he went on. "The Ville is the oldest African American community west of the Mississippi River. It is one of the challenging communities in Northern St. Louis, and yet it is not as tough as some think it is. That's because this community once had a middle class. It was a thriving community at one time, but the population has moved to

"Our teachers have to be prepared for change all the time. We have to keep our students interested and try to get them to graduate."

dropouts for nearly 10 years before he was recruited to take over Fresh Start from its founders. However, he left the school in 2011 for eight years to create a K-8 school in another area of the city.

"We've had some gang disputes in our neighborhood," he said, "and a few students may drop out of school for fear of retaliation, so I try to create some online opportunities for them

the suburbs like in many cities. Some of that middle-class attitude remains. Other parts of St. Louis don't have that memory."

In the 1920s and '30s, The Ville was home to prosperous African Americans, some of whom had lived there as early as the 1870s. It was the site of Sumner High School, the first secondary school for Black people west of the Mississippi River; Harriet Beecher Stowe College, one of the earliest Black teacher education institutions; and Homer G. Phillips Hospital, one of the few Black teaching colleges in the country. It produced such celebrities as opera luminary Grace Bumbry, tennis great Arthur Ashe, Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Famer Chuck Berry, legendary singer Tina Turner, and the first Black four-star general in the U.S. Army, Roscoe Robinson Jr. Through the 1950s, The Ville was the cradle of African American cultural life for St. Louis.

Sean Nichols is not a St. Louis native. Raised in central Mississippi in a family of six children, he earned his bachelor of arts in economics at Tougaloo College, a historically Black college (HBCU) in Jackson, Mississippi. He dreamed of becoming a stockbroker, striking it rich and impressing people.

"It was selfish," he said. "I think a lot of people are like that when they're very young. But I was bored by it. As a senior in college, I realized I wanted to push my thinking and help young people be successful. Money slipped away as a motivation. I didn't like that person anymore."

With that revelation, Nichols headed off to another HBCU, Harris-Stowe State University in St. Louis, where he earned his second bachelor's degree, this one in social studies and education. He began his education career by teaching high school social studies for nine years; while teaching, he earned degrees and credentials all the way through to a doctor of education in administration from the University of Missouri at St. Louis, and an urban superintendent certification from Howard University.

"All the civil rights activists and advocates who fought for the lives of others have influenced me," he said. "Richard Wright, Dr. King, Fannie Lou Hamer, Malcolm X, Ella Baker, W.E.B. Dubois."

Culturally responsive education became his passion. In 2010, he founded the first public culturally responsive school in the district, the Bertha Knox Gilkey Pamoja Preparatory Academy, for grades pre-K to 8, named after a

"These were [uncharted] waters," he said. "Some days you felt incompetent because you can't possibly know the answers. You had to develop an innovative mindset."

There was a sudden shift to total online instruction.

"This stopped us from building relationships we need with children," Nichols said, echoing principals all over the country. "Many didn't attend.

"We're bringing light back into this community, opening up the school to resurrect the thriving spirit of young African Americans who graduated from here."

community organizer who became known nationally for fighting for tenants' rights and public housing improvements.

At the greater Sumner High School, in which the Fresh Start Academy began, Nichols has embraced the same culturally responsive zeitgeist since 2018.

"We're bringing light back into this community, opening up the school to resurrect the thriving spirit of young African Americans who graduated from here," he said. In addition to Bumbry, Ashe, Berry, Turner and Robinson, graduates include Tuskegee Airman George W. Hickman Jr., comedian Dick Gregory and musician Bobby McFerrin, plus a long line of distinguished educators, attorneys and elected officials. "That preservation of our culture is monumental in this community. If you don't know where you've been, you're not going to know where you're going."

The school's momentum—like that of educational institutions nationwide—was severely challenged in 2020 when COVID-19 was unleashed.

Many who did couldn't turn on their cameras because of their home conditions. Overall, it wasn't good for students from my community."

The administration and staff mobilized, often partnering with churches, to establish a meal center in the school and deliver meals to families. Home visits, which ended at the doorstep, were common. "There was a lot of death," he said, but he and his staff put their full energy into their families 24/7.

Some families were devastated. The travails of one senior stayed with Nichols. When he would drop schoolwork off at her front door in the afternoon, she often was still sleeping, but he always circled back in his car and attempted to pick up whatever she had managed to do. She did not graduate this year.

Today, almost all his students have returned to the building. While enforcing mask mandates and such, Nichols and his staff are trying to foster technology skills, provide as much tutoring as possible, think differently, adjust expectations and, above all, rebuild culture. ■

As Newark Schools Face Crossing Guard Shortage, One Principal Directs Traffic Himself

By Patrick Wall, Senior Reporter, Chalkbeat Newark

The principal of Hawthorne Avenue School in Newark, New Jersey, stood in the middle of a busy intersection Friday morning, halting traffic with a cardboard “STOP” sign.

Principal H. Grady James IV, who sported a dapper suit and bow tie, was there to hold back cars so his elementary school students, some wearing tiaras and cowboy hats to celebrate Halloween, could make it safely across the street.

Normally, that would be the job of a crossing guard. But James has been playing that role since the school’s guard got sick a couple weeks into the school year and wasn’t replaced.

Hawthorne Avenue is one of several schools without a crossing guard this year as Newark and other cities in New Jersey and different states struggle to

fill openings. Schools have also had trouble staffing other positions during the pandemic, including teachers and bus drivers, which has disrupted some students’ learning.

But the crossing guard shortage is especially high stakes: With many children walking unaccompanied back and forth from their newly reopened schools, this shortage could put children’s lives at risk.

“It’s an emergency,” said Sharon Redding, a community activist who lives near Hawthorne Avenue School and recently waved her cane to stop traffic so students could cross the street. “We

could have a child that’s injured or killed right here on this corner.”

Newark has 11 openings in a force of 126 crossing guards, according to the city police department, which employs them. More than 57,000 students attend at least 115 different public schools in Newark, including traditional and charter schools.

Even if all the crossing guard positions were filled, Newark would still have fewer guards than it budgeted for five years ago, when the city said it was hiring dozens of additional guards to bring the total to 161. Since then, several new public schools have opened, presumably creating a need for even more guards.

Redding raised the issue at a public safety meeting in late October, where Capt. Rasheen Peppers, commanding officer of the Fifth Precinct in Newark’s South Ward, acknowledged the crossing guard shortage.

“What you’re saying, Ms. Sharon, is something I’m hearing from a lot of schools that are calling and asking for that assistance,” Peppers said, but added that he cannot send officers to help students travel safely to school because they have other urgent duties. “That would cause me to utilize resources where now I’m going to neglect people that are actually calling for service.”

Dawn Haynes, president of the Newark school board, said at the meeting that she put in a request for more crossing guards in her capacity as an aide to Mayor Ras Baraka. However,



Photo Credit: Patrick Wall/Chalkbeat

the school board cannot force the police department to make hires, she added, noting that she has personally witnessed Principal James take on the role of crossing guard.

"It's kind of disheartening watching one of our amazing principals use his morning time to cross students," she said during the Tuesday meeting.

In a statement, Newark Public Safety Director Brian O'Hara said his department will seek to fill the crossing guard vacancies at a career fair the agency is hosting in the coming weeks. He added that the existing guards are assigned to schools based on a variety of factors, including school enrollment, student ages and traffic patterns.

Across the country, schools and companies are struggling to fill job openings for a variety of reasons, including workers' lingering concerns about COVID-19 and their search for higher-paying jobs.

"We could have a child that's injured or killed right here on this corner."

Jersey City responded to its crossing guard shortage by paying police officers overtime to fill the staffing gap. Other New Jersey municipalities, including Ridgewood and Westfield, also are using police officers as makeshift crossing guards and paying search firms to help with hiring.

In Newark, a group of community outreach workers has volunteered to double as crossing guards. The workers, part of the Newark Community Street Team's Safe Passage program, already patrol the streets around several South Ward schools in an effort to keep students safe during their daily commutes. Mayor Baraka, who established the group to help reduce community violence, said this week that he wants to expand the Safe Passage program to all five wards.



However, the group's offer appears to have hit a snag because the police department evaluates the criminal history of crossing guard applicants and some of the outreach workers, who help mediate neighborhood conflicts, were previously incarcerated. Any applicant convicted of a crime in the first through fourth degree is automatically disqualified from becoming a crossing guard, a police department spokesperson said.

district has asked the police department to fill the openings.

When school let out one afternoon this week, groups of students rushed to cross Hawthorne Avenue whenever the traffic light flashed red. Other children gripped their parents' hands as they made their way across the intersection, which does not have pedestrian crossing signals. Occasionally, cars drove through the crosswalk with children still in the street.

"It's really dangerous," said Shaneice Lewis, whose three children attend Hawthorne Avenue School. She noted that, in August, a motorist died after crashing her car into a city bus in front of the school.

"I have to come up here and get them if I'm not working," Lewis said as she picked up her children Wednesday. "If not, only prayers can help them." ■

As a compromise, the group has asked the department to train its outreach workers to serve as crossing guards without actually hiring or certifying them, said Daamin X. Ali, the Newark Community Street Team's field director.

"The actual certification could not be given to us," he said at the public safety meeting. "However, the training could be done."

In the meantime, some Newark students are left to traverse busy city streets without adult supervision.

Principal James has directed traffic most mornings outside Hawthorne Avenue School since the crossing guard left last month, according to parents and students. James referred questions to a district spokesperson, who said the



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EDUCATION REFORM

A Mostly Cloudy/Partly Sunny Federal Education Policy Forecast for 2022

For years, we hoped that education policy would move to the top tier of federal issues, receiving more than one question at a campaign debate and more than the occasional story in the media.

We yearned for in-depth examinations of policy and funding inequities, and proposals that would bridge learning and resource divides. And we had

sought more attention to the hard, truly transformative work that school leaders perform every day for students, teachers and the nation as a whole.

We yearned for in-depth examinations of policy and funding inequities, and proposals that would bridge learning and resource divides.

In 2021, our wish was partially granted, but not in the way we imagined it would be. Rather than thoughtful, optimistic and progressive attention and coverage, we saw reactionary demagoguery that pitted parents against educators to score political points. And, at least in Virginia, many pundits think the emphasis on parental control of education by Republican Glenn Youngkin led to his victory over Terry McAuliffe, a popular and successful former governor, in the November 2021 gubernatorial election.

How did we get here?

The education policy conversation this year has been driven by the two major issues gripping the nation: 1) the pandemic; and 2) the racial reckoning that began with the death of George Floyd.

For the pandemic, many parents and students are frustrated and angry with how schools have responded and adapted to COVID-19. No matter where they fall on the political spectrum, those who were initially upset with school closures and virtual learning remained upset about mask requirements and vaccine mandates for staff and even students when schools resumed in-person instruction.

grants use materials developed by the 1619 Project, which asserted that America's history truly began when the first slaves were brought here. Others claimed that schools were setting the races against each other by teaching "critical race theory," an actual law school analysis that few, if any, K–12 schools embrace. The fight over CRT raged at school board meetings around the country in 2021, leading

requirements, and more disgruntled parents who want to see their kids learning without interruption and to be able to return to normal work schedules.

The silver lining in all of these clouds, though, is that the Biden administration managed in 2021 to enact some massive education policy changes—with universal pre-K and child care support on the way should the Build Back Better Act pass. Further, billions in new funding from the American Rescue Plan Act will help ameliorate the learning loss that has occurred for so many students since 2020, improve school ventilation, provide professional development opportunities for educators, and furnish home internet connections for students and educators. The coming year may bring additional efforts by Congress and the administration to support K–12 education while Democrats still hold majorities in the Senate and the House, and the presidency.

The silver lining in all of these clouds, though, is that the Biden administration managed in 2021 to enact some massive education policy changes—with universal pre-K and child care support on the way should the Build Back Better Act pass.

For the racial reckoning, George Floyd's death sharpened the focus on more equitable treatment of students, including the need for a more responsive and diverse educator workforce that reflected America. While some school districts canceled contracts with police departments to furnish school resource officers in response to "defund the police" sentiments, the real friction in this area emerged from a battle over curricula. Many on the right objected to the Department of Education's suggestion that applicants for civics

to parents being removed and one national organization seeking federal protection for school board members.

Where are we going?

Unfortunately, it appears these two highly divisive issues are likely here to stay in 2022—and will be amplified by the coming mid-term elections. As different variants continue to emerge from COVID-19, schools will continue to be under significant pressure to protect their students and staff. That will mean temporary closures, more political fights over mask and vaccine

What can you do?

Hearing from real educators about their issues is something members of Congress appreciate—particularly in an election year. That is why AFSA is looking to hold a Virtual Advocacy Day in the spring of 2022. We want to make certain your members of Congress understand how what they do—or don't do—in Washington has real impact on schools and classrooms nationwide. Stay tuned for more details on this exciting event. ■



The Diann Woodard SCHOLARSHIP

**\$2,500 Awards Exclusively for Children of AFSA
Members Attending College for the First Time in 2022**

The Diann Woodard Scholarship is available exclusively to children of AFSA members in good standing. The online application process is now open.

The General Executive Board selects five awardees based on academic excellence, passion for volunteerism and display of exceptional work ethic.

Students who apply must clearly express their goals for the future and appropriately tie these goals to their higher education aspirations. ■

The program helps students continue their education by awarding one-time \$2,500 college tuition scholarships every year to outstanding high school seniors.

An applicant must be a graduating high school senior who will be attending college for the first time in 2022.



The application
deadline is
March 31, 2022.

To apply, visit:
[www.AFSAScholarship
Application.org](http://www.AFSAScholarshipApplication.org).



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Scholarship amounts range from \$500 to \$4,000. These one-time cash awards are for study beginning in the fall of 2022. Students may re-apply each year. A complete application must be received on or before noon Eastern Standard Time on Jan. 31, 2022. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered.

Since 1991, the Union Plus Scholarship Program has awarded more than \$5 million to students of working families who want to begin or continue their post-secondary education. More than 3,400 families have benefited from our commitment to higher education.

To apply, visit: [https://www.unionplus.org/benefits/
education/union-plus-scholarships](https://www.unionplus.org/benefits/education/union-plus-scholarships). ■



Congratulations to the 2021 Diann Woodard Scholarship Recipients

By Benjamin Bronkema-Bekker

The latest recipients of the annual Diann Woodard Scholarship have been selected. These students were chosen for their strong commitment to pursuing post-secondary education, their passion for volunteering and their outstanding work ethic. They each received a one-time \$2,500 award to put toward their higher education tuition. ■

Andrew D'Alessio

High School: Xavier High School, New York City, New York

College/University: Princeton University

Major: Engineering

AFSA Parent: Deirdre DeAngelis-D'Alessio, Local 1, Council of School Supervisors & Administrators (New York City)

Andrew D'Alessio is from Staten Island, New York. A member of the National Honor Society, Advanced Placement Scholars and the Ignatian Scholars, he has always prioritized his studies—but he's also enjoyed baseball, basketball, skiing, traveling, camping and other outdoor activities.

Andrew's participation in service projects made a lasting impression. Volunteering with Habitat for Humanity, working on farms to fill food banks and distributing items to those in need allowed him to experience the world beyond his immediate area.

He is studying engineering at Princeton University and is a member of the Tigers' baseball team; he traces his interest in engineering all the way back to his childhood pastime of building LEGOs.



Malcolm Doster Jr.

High School: Charles Herbert Flowers High School, Springdale, Maryland

College/University: North Carolina A&T State University

Major: Mechanical Engineering

AFSA Parent: Tiffany Doster, Local 109, Association of Supervisory & Administrative School Personnel (Prince George's County, Maryland)

Malcolm Doster Jr. enjoyed a well-rounded high school experience that included an internship at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, where he researched the Internet of Things (IoT). He was also a member of the National Honor Society, chairperson for the Principal's Action Council and a varsity lacrosse team captain.

In his spare time, he found ways to give back to his school community through service learning projects, including serving as a youth lacrosse coach and participating in neighborhood food distributions. He enjoys learning, reading, taking photos, exercising, and spending time with family and friends.

Malcolm attends North Carolina A&T State University in the University Honors Program majoring in mechanical engineering. He says his interest in the subject was sparked early in life, when he first saw an airplane in person.



Luke Pilot

High School: Bishop Ireton High School, Alexandria, Virginia

College/University: Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Major: Computer Science

AFSA Parent: Sonia Pilot, Local 4, Council of School Officers (Washington, D.C.)

Luke Pilot focused on academics and athletics at his Northern Virginia high school and excelled at both. He was a member of the National Honor Society, Math Honor Society and Spanish Honor Society, earning AP Scholar with Distinction recognition.

He also taught coding skills to middle school students and captained the "It's Academic" team, competing in trivia contests against other area high school teams. He played four years of tennis and captained the varsity tennis team his senior year. In his free time, he enjoys street festivals, international food, playing chess, mastering magic tricks and working with Alexa to create smart homes.

He is studying computer science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Luke hopes to use his education to help all communities access the benefits of new technologies.



Emma Poteet

High School: Patuxent High School, Lusby, Maryland

College/University: University of Maryland

Major: Business

AFSA Parent: Matthew Poteet, Local 84, Calvert Association of Supervisors and Administrators

Emma Poteet is an AP Scholar with Distinction and a member of the National Honor Society. The work ethic demonstrated by her academic excellence is reflected in her contributions through her extracurricular involvement. She was a four-year varsity starter for her high school's volleyball team, served as captain her junior and senior years, and competed in USAV travel volleyball for six years.

Outside of school and volleyball, Emma served as a mentor and friend to 5th grade girls in the Big Sisters Mentorship Program and provided support to students in her school system's Special Olympics program, all while maintaining year-round employment at a local restaurant. In her free time, she loves to travel and spend time with family.

Emma is attending the Robert H. Smith School of Business at the University of Maryland. She was admitted into the Honors College, and is excited by opportunities to challenge herself and get involved with student organizations.



Sydney Rosbury

High School: Dearborn High School, Dearborn, Michigan

College/University: University of Michigan

Major: Biopsychology, Cognition and Neuroscience

AFSA Parent: Christine Rosbury, Local 58, Association of Dearborn School Administrators

Sydney Rosbury fully enjoyed her high school years, serving as captain of her high school's varsity cross country team and goalkeeper for her club soccer team. She earned recognition as an AP Scholar with Distinction, was a three varsity sport scholar athlete, Link Crew leader and a member of the National Honor Society.

She also gave back to her community, leading an event that brought together elementary students to create more than 200 handmade, artistic cards with positive messages for nursing home residents isolated from outside family and friends.

She is studying biopsychology, cognition and neuroscience at the University of Michigan in her first steps toward becoming a neurologist. She hopes to work on such issues as Alzheimer's disease or substance use disorders, and to advocate for health care reform.



AFSA: 50 Years Strong

(continued from page 1)

The effort to build AFSA officially began in 1971 when the Council of School Supervisors & Administrators (CSA) in New York City joined the AFL-CIO as Local 1 and helped create a distinct national entity known as the School Administrators and Supervisors Organizing Committee (SASOC).

representative geographically of the United States; and (4) show numerical growth.

In 1976, SASOC made its move and petitioned the AFL-CIO for a change in status from an organizing committee to a national union. Under

revolution in our country, which had set things in motion almost a decade before AFL-CIO President George Meany recognized school leaders in 1971.

AFSA's history starts with a New York City teachers' strike in November 1960. Educators demanded a voice and contract and, when the storm abated, the United Federation of Teachers had become the first teachers' union in the nation to win collective bargaining; their members became the highest-paid educators in the nation.

"The ability for school leaders everywhere to organize and collectively bargain was the founding mission of AFSA."

At the beginning of the 1973 school year, Walter J. Degnan resigned as CSA president to become the first SASOC president. The organizing committee was seeing remarkable progress, with 47 locals in place by 1976. Degnan saw the growth as an important step to take SASOC to the next level.

The committee's leadership team understood if SASOC were to change status and become a national union, it would mean a greater voice for members. As a national union, SASOC would have equal standing with other national and international unions, as well as a seat at the table of the AFL-CIO Executive Board as an equal partner and independent union representing all educational administrators and supervisors in the country.

To move from an organizing committee to a national union, SASOC needed to meet certain criteria: (1) be self-sustaining; (2) be representative of a group; (3) be

the leadership of then-President George Meany, the AFL-CIO's Executive Council examined SASOC's growth and achievements over the previous five years and approved the change in status.

On July 7–8, 1976, the first constitutional convention of the new organization was held at the Americana Hotel in New York City. Delegates to the convention adopted a constitution, elected officers and a General Executive Board, and named the new national AFL-CIO affiliate.

The American Federation of School Administrators was born.

The Early Years (1960–1976)

While this history seems simple today, the battles and fights that took place over a decade and a half are the real story. It was the turbulent 1960s, a time of unrest, change and eventual

New York City school leaders soon found their salaries lagging significantly behind those of teachers—and they began organizing. By 1962, members of 11 supervisory associations had come together at New York City's High School of Art and Design to form a council to lobby for equitable benefits and salaries, and a stronger voice for school leaders. Dr. Benjamin E. Strumpf, an assistant superintendent in the Bronx, was named president of the new independent association, a part-time post.

Within a year, they won a raise under the united banner of The Council of Supervisory Associations, which would give rise to a full-fledged union called the Council of School Supervisors & Administrators (CSA).

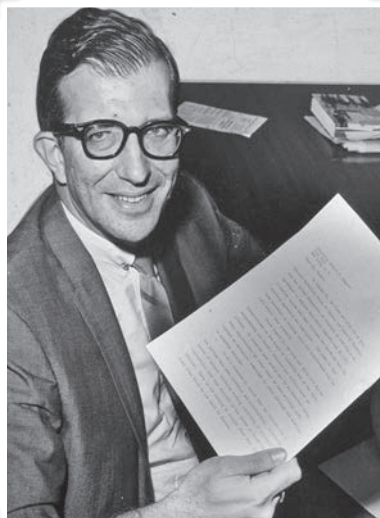
The fledgling CSA had gained tremendous influence by 1965. Leading the way were powerhouse school principals such as Walter Degnan, Jim Millman, Albert Morrison, Peter O'Brien, Irwin Shanes and Jack Zuckerman. The all-male crew was typical of the time, when



few women were school principals, particularly at the middle and high school levels. Women gained a higher profile initially in CSA through the more traditionally female provenances of health care, with Elinor Jaffe, who oversaw health benefits at the Welfare Fund, and child care, with day care directors Lydia Tait and Gladys Weekes.

Who Needs a Union

The year 1968 proved as pivotal for the nascent union as it was for the nation. The UFT's powerful president, Albert Shanker, called for his members to strike over who should teach in the Ocean Hill Brownsville section of Brooklyn, a long, crippling action with racial overtones that shut schools down for 36 days and remains a topic of discussion to this day.



UFT President Albert Shanker

CSA members were divided about the strike—but the increasing power of the teachers further spurred the school leaders, who had been moving toward official unionization for years, even with members' varying attitudes toward unions. CSA officially became a labor union in 1968. DeWitt Clinton High School Principal Degnan became CSA's first full-time paid president and negotiated the first comprehensive contract.



CSA Leadership team that helped create AFSA

During the late 1960s CSA joined forces with school leaders nationwide, all eager to have a voice. The die was cast. By 1971, CSA Local 1 was in discussions with colleagues in places like Chicago, Local 2; San Francisco, Local 3; and Washington, D.C., Local 4, to create the national group called SASOC.

SASOC proved helpful for New York members faced with navigating the city's fiscal crisis in the early 1970s, which had led to the abolishment of a salary index and tenure for supervisors. As part of SASOC, CSA had the strength to fight back, succeeding in overturning the actions in 1975 and showcasing the power of national unity and shared resources.

Yet, there was an emerging divide between members in favor of total unionization and those who were satisfied with the gains that had been achieved. Some members preferred the "white collar" aura of an "association" over the more rough-and-tumble notion of a union. As current AFSA President Ernest Logan puts it, "Trade unionism does not resonate well with some school leaders. It feels unrefined."

'What Was Good for Us Was Good for Children'

There was opposition at the national level to finalizing ties to organized labor. Among those who thought school supervisors were

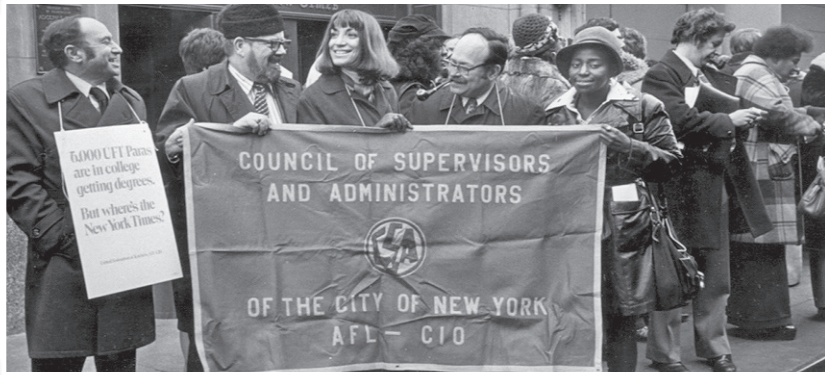
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too professional to be organized were stalwart activists Degnan and Morrison, who would say, "SASOC will become a union over my dead body," according to friend and fellow organizer Shanes.

The opponents of "being a union" would be brought around to the idea by advocates like Zuckerman and O'Brien, who convinced them that a binding contract that provided



fair pay, benefits and the right to organize made administrators better at their jobs. Donald Singer, an emerging force in CSA and a close friend of Degnan and Zuckerman, said, "We all knew that what was good for us was good for children."

But Shanker, now also president of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), proved to be a more stubborn

obstacle. Meany, the legendary first president of the merged AFL-CIO, was close to Shanker and agreed not to create a national school leaders union without his approval. Shanker and his teachers did not want supervisors under their own powerful labor umbrella. As far as Shanker was concerned, SACOC would have to join the International Brotherhood of Teamsters if it

wanted to transform into the American Federation of School Administrators.

Ultimately, a close friendship developed between O'Brien, Zuckerman and Shanker which led to support and, in 1976, SACOC became AFSA.

"The ability for school leaders everywhere to organize and collectively bargain was the founding mission of AFSA. Good learning conditions require good working conditions," says Leonard Pugliese, AFSA's executive vice president. "Unionism is dynamic; it is vigilant; it never rests; it requires action." AFSA's mission and foundation will never change, he says. "We are about effectively advocating for schools, students and their families, and that will always be our foundation. We will do more of it and we will do it better."

Stay tuned for more history from 1977 until today, plus profiles on some of the founding locals. ■

Cover Photo: From left, Max H. Frankle, attorney; Thomas S. Burke, Chicago; Shirley Brown, Washington, D.C.; Joseph Penn, Washington, D.C.; Norman Anthony, Washington, D.C.; George Meany; SASOC President Walter J. Degnan; Joseph H. DiLeonarde, Chicago; Albert L. Morrison, New York.

Special thanks to the late Jack Zuckerman, former CSA president, vice president and delegate to the first convention for historical background information used in this article, and to Chiara Coletti, AFSA communications consultant and former CSA communications director, for her detailed research and writing contributions to this story.

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