

THE Leader


American Federation of
School Administrators
AFSA, AFL-CIO

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A NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Convention Delegates Chart Course for AFSA's Future

13 Policy Resolutions Passed

More than 300 American Federation of School Administrators (AFSA) members from locals across the country participated as delegates, guests and speakers at AFSA's 16th Triennial Constitutional Convention in Puerto Rico held this past July.

Convention participants heard from nationally renowned speakers, took part in professional learning opportunities and shared ideas to sharpen education in their communities.

Most importantly, delegates discussed and voted on 13 policy resolutions and



one constitutional amendment that will drive the direction of the union for the next three years.

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Students Need Holistic Education, Emotional Learning

Administrators are shaping the human brain in their profession, said Paul Nussbaum in his keynote address at the AFSA's 16th Triennial Constitutional Convention.

Nussbaum, who holds a Ph.D. and is the founder and president of Brain Health Center Inc., proclaimed that "the real brain health center is in schools," as he spoke to delegates about how to maximize holistic education.

Holistic education, which emphasizes emotional learning, is what we need to bring out in our students, Nussbaum asserted. By being in the classroom, learning from enthusiastic teachers, finding happiness in them and interacting with them, human connection and learning is strengthened.

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AFSA Stands in Solidarity at AFL-CIO Convention

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AFL-CIO's Redmond: You Helped Save a Generation

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Fredrick D. Redmond, in delivering fiery remarks to AFSA convention delegates, said the past two years of COVID-19 have been rough on all workers.

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Union Approval Hits Highest Point Since 1965

It's been nearly 60 years since approval for unions in the United States has been this high. More than 70% of Americans now approve of labor unions. Those are the findings of a Gallup poll released in September, and they shouldn't be surprising.

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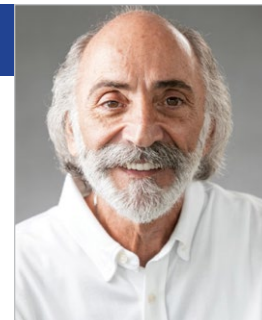
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The Future of Our Profession is at Stake

School is back in full swing and you're probably feeling more enthusiasm than you have in a couple of years. Whatever your leadership role, you're crossing your fingers, hoping to help kids be kids again. Your teachers and other staff likely share your excitement—and look to you to keep up their spirits in still-uncertain times.

As we finish celebrating National Principals Month, we're a little more cautious than we would have been before the pandemic and all the political hullabaloo that followed. Whether you're a principal or intend to be one someday, or prefer to continue along your present administrative path, you're aware of the reality that job-related stress has just about shot through the roof.

And principals, arguably the single most important factor to the success of a school, are feared to be a vanishing breed. You've seen the National Association of Secondary School Principals statistics, revealing that 38% of principals say they hope to leave their positions in three years, with 14% planning to leave in the next year. Yet all we see are headlines about the teacher shortage. This is frustrating because we realize the shortage is limited to geography and subject areas, and we know that teachers tend to stay when they have strong school leaders who address all their needs, including those emotional needs exacerbated by the pandemic.

'Great Schools Begin with Great Leaders'

I'm convinced that AFSA and your locals must champion you as the vital link to make schools great. This means we must urge your districts and communities to give you plenty of reasons to stick around, and we have to beat the drum for your mental and physical well-being.

At the AFSA convention in July, we unanimously adopted a resolution that deals with principal recruitment and retention. We also will focus our energy on the recruitment and retention of assistant principals and other administrators and school leaders. To borrow a tag line from Local 1, we have to remind society that "Great schools begin with great leaders."

To keep more school leaders in their positions, we have to convince districts they must reduce your outrageous workloads—from dealing with tidal waves of unnecessary paperwork to managing school bus logistics—and let you get back to what you love: educating children. We also need to make sure they recognize that school safety can't be ensured until principals have the discretion to keep some semblance of order in their buildings.

It is vitally important that states and districts rethink accountability measures, which rarely reflect how well you're educating your students. And

old-fashioned accountability measures make no sense when so many of your students have barely seen the inside of a classroom since COVID-19 struck. It's time to face the facts behind the Sept. 1 New York Times headline: "The Pandemic Erased Two Decades of Progress in Math and Reading."

Holding on to principals also means providing the resources your unions demand—leadership-focused professional development, feedback, coaching and mentoring—along with annual salary increases and, in some cases, incentive pay at schools with high percentages of low-performing students and in situations where COVID-19 remediation required extra hours of intense work. Districts with strong locals have already won this pandemic-related "hardship pay"—but many others haven't seen an extra cent.

Standing Up for You; Standing Up for Each Other

It's time your districts protect you against hostile reactions to your efforts to carry out their mandates to protect school communities against disease. And increasingly, some of you have been dealing with personal attacks for allowing your staff to teach about slavery, or for having library books such as Anne Frank's "The Diary of a Young Girl." Receiving email threats and being attacked at school board meetings is not an option.

No matter what, principals remain the most trusted professionals in society, according to the Pew Research Center. That level of respect applies to all

school leaders. To be effective, you have had to take care of each other. During the pandemic, it was common for you to stick together. Sometimes, it was high school leaders starting an informal group that checked in with each other, like clockwork, every week. Sometimes, it was school leaders from different grade levels who met at an event and spontaneously formed support groups that called each other every day. It would be smart to hold on to those groups now.

Being Alone With Your Thoughts

But when it comes to taking care of yourselves, a lot of school leaders laugh. Who has time for meditation, massage or talk therapy? No, really, insist on going on vacation and taking your personal days so you can be with those you love. You owe it to them to stay out of the hospital. And don't scoff at the confidential employee assistance program offered by your district or your local.

Sometimes it's enough to promise yourself you'll do one thing a day that makes you happy. For me, it's strolling down to a nearby pond for 5 minutes to listen to the melodious calls of different birds. It may be allowing yourself an extra half-hour of decompression time in your car, with just your favorite music. Right now, we all need a daily refuge where we can have a private laugh or be alone with our thoughts—or empty our heads and not think at all.

Be well, stay well. ■

Principals Having a Hard Time Finding Teachers

The teacher shortage had principals and assistant principals struggling for staff when the school year started, adding to the stress of an already difficult time. The Washington Post reported that the teacher shortage in America has hit crisis levels—and school officials everywhere scrambled to ensure that, as students returned to classrooms, someone was there to educate them.

Rural school districts in Texas reportedly moved to four-day weeks this fall due to lack of staff. Florida is asking veterans with no teaching background to enter classrooms. Arizona is allowing college students to step in and instruct children.

"While we may have an someone in every classroom, in doesn't mean they are ready to teach, yet school leaders will be held accountable," said one principal in a Post story. "This just shows how our entire system is broken," she added. ■

Standardized Testing Over Air Conditioning

More than 45 Denver school campuses don't have air conditioning, according to Chalkbeat Colorado, even though voters passed a \$795 million bond in 2020 for a number of projects, including installing air conditioning at 24 schools. As of August 2022, seven schools have new air conditioners, eight more are in the works and 31 still need units. "If our district or state cared more about air conditioning and the wellness of children than testing and framework," said former Denver School Leaders Association, AFSA Local 136, Co-President Cesar Rivera, "the world would be a lot different." School leaders reported temperatures in the 90s in many schools, with one principal saying, "we are off to a sweaty start!"—not the ideal way to teach and learn. ■

AFSA Stands in Solidarity at AFL-CIO Convention

More than 1,000 delegates gathered in Philadelphia in June for the long-awaited 29th AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention. Much had happened for the AFL-CIO in particular and the labor movement in general since the quadrennial convention was postponed in 2021 because of COVID-19 concerns.

A full slate of related activities awaited participants, including American Federation of School Administrators delegates Aona Jefferson, Ernest Logan, Leonard Pugliese and Lauran Waters-Cherry, and alternate delegate Troy LaRaviere, including organizing action workshops, a rally with local union members, sessions on global issues, clean energy, building an inclusive movement for gender and racial equity, and Labor in the Pulpit.

Convention delegates elected Liz Shuler to serve as president of the federation. Shuler is the first woman to hold the office. Delegates also elected Fred Redmond to serve as secretary-treasurer, the first African American person to hold the office. AFSA President Emeritus Ernest A. Logan was re-elected as a vice president and continues to serve on the Executive Council.

Logan served as vice chair of the Credentials Committee for this convention and he also was given the honor of introducing the resolution on the fight for racial justice. Then-AFSA Secretary-Treasurer Waters-Cherry spoke on that resolution during debate, touching on her family's history and experiences.

"If we don't support this resolution to take bold action to promote equity, safety, security and dignity for all people, regardless of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or



AFSA was represented at the AFL-CIO convention by (from left): Dr. Leonard P. Pugliese, Lauran Waters-Cherry, Troy LaRaviere, Ernest A. Logan, Aona Jefferson and Nick Spina.

gender expression," she said, "we will once again live in a time that is akin to which my grandparents and great grandparents lived, a time of open fear, hate, lynchings, racism. It is the cornerstone to white supremacy."

Logan supported AFSA members via his remarks on Resolution 1—Building Worker Power to Increase the Pace and Scale of Organizing, and Resolution 7—The Time is Now for Fixing America's Broken Labor Laws.

"I represent school administrators around this country who don't have a right to have collective bargaining, who sometimes are even fought by our brothers and sisters here to organize," he said. "We stand here saying, we are just like everyone else in labor, but we need your support."

"Principals and assistant principals are workers. They are not the bosses. They are workers," Logan pointed out. "They implement the policy that the bosses have decided upon."


"Principals, assistant principals or supervisors—they deserve the right to have a collective voice, and the last two years we realized that those of us who had a collective voice were able

to maintain our dignity through that crazy pandemic. But those that did not have that voice were put in harm's way, made to do things that were not great for students or their families."

Delegates approved Resolution 12—Ensuring That Public Education Remains a Beacon of Democracy, which declared that "Public education is how we help our children have a bright future. It is an economic necessity, an anchor of democracy, a moral imperative and a fundamental civil right."

The resolution noted that public schools were overwhelmingly trusted by families and communities, and that providing public schools that are safe, healthy and welcoming spaces is fundamental to giving all students an equal opportunity to succeed, as well as protect and participate in democracy.

Lastly, Resolution 12 praised public school staff for their heroic efforts during the pandemic, and called for necessary resources and adequate staff and supports to continue to meet children's educational, mental health and social emotional needs—and to defend public education from right-wing attacks. ■



“For many principals and teachers, available mental health supports were not helpful or convenient or were too limited to address their needs.”

Principal, Teacher Stress Running Twice the Rate of General Public

School principals and teachers are experiencing frequent job-related stress at a rate about twice that of the general population of working adults, according to a RAND Corporation survey released in June.

Well-being is reported as especially poor among Hispanic/Latinx teachers, mid-career teachers, and female teachers and principals.

Nearly half of the teachers said supporting students’ academic learning was one of their main sources of job-related stress, while staffing was a top source of stress for principals. Teachers of color and principals of color were also more likely to experience racial discrimination.

“Two-thirds of the teachers we interviewed reported taking on extra responsibilities during the pandemic, like covering classes or taking additional students in their own classrooms as the result of staff shortages,” said Elizabeth D. Steiner, lead author of the report and a policy researcher at RAND, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization. “Teachers told us that their dedication to working with students kept them in their jobs, even though pandemic conditions have made teaching more challenging. Teaching conditions—not

the work of teaching itself—are what they find to be stressful.”

The survey findings suggest that access to employer-provided mental health supports is linked to lower levels of job-related stress and higher levels of resilience for both principals and teachers. About 20% of principals and 35% of teachers reported that they did not have access to employer-provided mental health supports or did not know whether they had such access.

“For many principals and teachers, available mental health supports were not helpful or convenient or were too limited to address their needs,” said Sy Doan, co-author and an associate policy researcher at RAND. “District leaders should avoid the appearance of treating wellness as a superficial or short-term problem, and offer mental health and well-being supports tailored to educators’ needs.”

Despite the prevalence of reported job-related stress and concerning signals about educator well-being, the survey data show many educators are managing their stress and find joy in their work.

District and school leaders who have not made adult relationships within schools a priority could consider transferring the strategies they use to build positive student-staff relationships to focus on adults, researchers suggest. District leaders could take a burden off pandemic-weary principals with system-level efforts to focus teachers and principals on their core responsibilities of instructing students and instructional leadership. ■

Ernest Logan Says Goodbye as Union President

"I was born an advocate and an activist, and I'll die an advocate and activist," former American Federation of School Administrators President Ernest Logan told attendees of the union's 16th Triennial Constitutional Convention. "We must never forget that we are here to make change.

"Already some of you and your staffs are facing criticism and even punishment for admitting who you're married to or for hiring too many people of color or for using textbooks that acknowledge the existence of slavery in America," he said.

To combat this, Logan forcefully spoke about the power of the union. "Without leadership from every one of you, think where this could go," he said. He exhorted his listeners to "lead the way and be helped by the power of the union that you have behind you" to successfully preserve civil rights and collective bargaining rights, and fight off threats to public education.

"I was born an advocate and an activist, and I'll die an advocate and activist. We must never forget that we are here to make change."

Logan emphasized strength in numbers, using the force of the union for productivity and to battle any challenge. Fighting a mental health crisis, an explosion of violence in schools and the politicizing of education all during the pandemic is not an easy task for America's school leaders.

"In districts where school leaders weren't unionized, they weren't

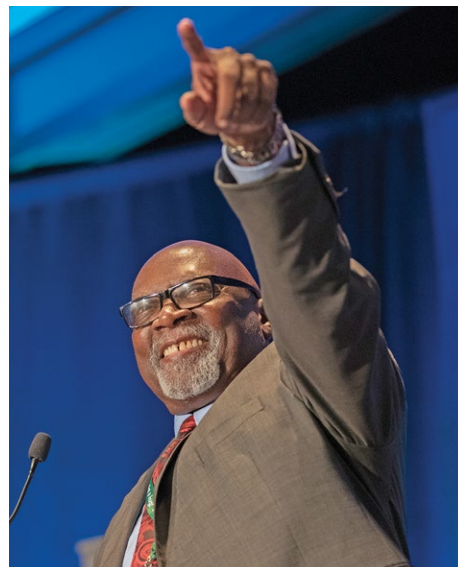
protected and they weren't compensated for the staggering amount of work they took on because of COVID-19," Logan said in introducing the myriad ways AFSA supported its members.

Logan described school leaders' superhuman role during the pandemic, as first responders and America's heroes. AFSA provided virtual training and launched the Task Force to Reopen Schools. Due to being unionized, the challenge of COVID-19 was met with strength and solidarity.

A large part of Logan's journey as president started by learning from Diann Woodard. His immediate predecessor, Woodard, was remembered by Logan as a "gentle but determined leader" who won the hearts of those across the union movement, and he noted AFSA had honored her with the establishment of The Diann Woodard AFSA Scholarship Program.

Logan called late AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, who passed away in August 2021, "a big, tough guy, with the kindest of instincts and a powerful sense of right and wrong."

Closer to home, Logan said former Buffalo Council of Supervisors & Administrators, AFSA Local 10, President Crystal Boling-Barton, who passed away one month before the



(Photo by Rachel Elkind)

convention, was "one of the most important voices" on the General Executive Board for more than a decade and "a feisty, strong union leader."

Logan called on all delegates to continue their organizing efforts, telling them to "reach out and talk union." He urged retirees—whom he called his "secret weapon," founders, fierce advocates and "the people who opened the doors so we could meet as a powerful national union today"—to get involved and stay involved. He urged every member to consider running for elected office, pledging union members' support.

"I am vowing to remain in the fight on every level," he said. "How could I stop at a moment when social justice is under threat and we have a Supreme Court that is no friend of women's rights, civil rights, the concept of separation of church and state, controls against climate change and the freedom to be safe from guns? When those rights crumble, so does the right to a free and equal education. So, I am here for this struggle. And I am here until the struggle is over."

Logan's remarks can be viewed by scanning the QR code. ■





(Photo by Rachel Elkind)

New AFSA Leadership Elected

Leonard P. Pugliese, Ed.D., was elected president of the American Federation of School Administrators at the 16th Triennial Constitutional Convention. Delegates also elected Lauran Waters-Cherry as executive vice president and Mark Cannizzaro as secretary-treasurer.

A longtime Newark, New Jersey, educator, Pugliese most recently served as AFSA's executive vice president. He previously served as president and executive director of the City Association of Supervisors and Administrators of Newark, AFSA Local 20.

"When you have all the tools to accomplish your goals, the children, families and communities you serve will be the real winners," he said as he accepted the top role at AFSA. "We're here to help children learn and be successful in life—to build more inclusive, functioning communities leading to a better, stronger nation."

Waters-Cherry, from the United Administrators of Oakland Schools, AFSA Local 83, most recent served as secretary-treasurer. Cannizzaro, from the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators, AFSA Local 1, had been a general vice president.

Delegates also selected a slate of general vice presidents, who make up AFSA's General Executive Board.

Ten of the GEB members will be serving for the first time. "With the majority being newly elected, we have the chance to bring innovative ideas, fresh activism and a generation of imaginative trailblazers into our leadership," said Pugliese.

The general vice presidents are:

- **Wendi C. Caporicci**
California Association of School Administration
- **Donis Coronel**
Local 134—Administrators Association San Diego City Schools
- **Jody Covington***
Local 10—Buffalo Council of Supervisors & Administrators
- **Victor Cristofaro**
Local 22—Hartford Principals' and Supervisors' Association
- **Carver Farrow**
Local 101—St. Thomas/St. John Educational Administrators' Association
- **Richard Jackson**
Local 4—Council of School Officers
- **Robert Motley**
Local 36—Howard County Association of Supervisors and Administrators
- **Luis Orengo**
Local 105—Educadores Puertorriqueños en Acción, Inc.
- **Karl Perry**
Local 25—Baltimore City Public School Administrators and Supervisors Association
- **Benjamin Pryor**
Local 109—Association of Supervisory and Administrative School Personnel
- **Henry Rubio**
Local 1—Council of School Supervisors and Administrators
- **Dominic Sacchetti**
Local 6—Boston Association of School Administrators and Supervisors
- **Dr. Anthony Salvatore**
Connecticut Federation of School Administrators
- **Caroline Satoda**
Local 3—United Administrators of San Francisco
- **Dr. Cynthia Warren**
Local 44—Administrators Association of the St. Louis Public Schools

*Covington was elected by the GEB to fill the vacant seat of Crystal Boling-Barton, who passed away in June. ■

Find Your 'True North'

Principals, assistant principals and other school leaders must lead not only their schools, but their communities, Deputy Secretary of Education Cindy Marten emphasized in her speech at AFSA's 16th Triennial Constitutional Convention.

"My power and energy did not come from my title," she asserted, "it came from looking at the community that I served and cared most about."

Marten told school leaders in attendance at the July gathering in Puerto Rico they were to be commended for their community leadership during the pandemic, as they were tasked to "find a path where there was no path." She praised them for working with their community and opening "hearts and minds and [getting] their community to understand and name what it cares most about."

Discussing the burden placed on school leaders during the pandemic, Marten drew heavily from her own experiences as superintendent of the San Diego Unified School District, working alongside the Administrators Association San Diego City Schools, AFSA Local 134.

"You cannot take exquisite care of your communities without taking exquisite care of yourself."



Marten emphasized, "You cannot take exquisite care of your communities without taking exquisite care of yourself," touching upon the themes of AFSA's Resolution 8 — School Leader Wellness Support.

Marten recalled her own strategies for navigating the pandemic as a school leader, relying on her moral compass and consistently seeking her "true north." Finding your "true north," as Marten described it, means "reconnecting to your why" and evaluating the reasons you continue to choose to serve your community as a school leader.

Marten found that by remaining focused throughout the pandemic on her value as a leader of her community, she was able to find her strength even when doing so was incredibly difficult.

"I didn't work for the district, I didn't work for the board of education, I didn't work for the superintendent, I worked for the community," she said. "Remember who you work for."

Marten also affirmed her commitment to supporting and working alongside school leaders across the nation in her role with the Department of Education. "I'm with you, [Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona] is with you and your organization. We are going to continue to lead with purpose and passion, because our students and our country need us."

Citing a "historic investment in students," Marten highlighted some of the work the Department of Education has already done to support school leaders under the Biden administration, including guiding the introduction of the Full-Service Community School Expansion Act of 2021 in Congress and launching the National Partnership for Student Success.

Marten's remarks can be viewed by scanning the QR code. ■



AFL-CIO's Redmond: You Helped Save a Generation

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Fredrick D. Redmond, delivering fiery remarks to AFSA convention delegates, said the past two years of COVID-19 have been rough on all workers. "We've been put through the wringer. Workers across the country have borne the brunt of the pandemic—and that includes you, our school leaders."

"But without your hard work and leadership, a generation of America's children would have been lost," said Redmond. "You kept our schools running. You adapted. You helped teachers move lesson plans to a virtual environment. And you provided students the resources and support they needed to keep learning."

"America would be nothing without you, and America would be nothing without public schools."

"And when we returned to in-person learning, you helped direct the conversation for what is best for our schools, our children and our communities," he added. "You don't get enough recognition for the sacrifices you made."

"America would be nothing without you, and America would be nothing without public schools," Redmond said, honoring all of the educators that filled the room. "The fact of the matter is, you are the heroes in this story," he added.

"Now is the time to invest in our public schools, so that our children can learn

in a safe environment," Redmond said. "It is not just about the students—educators, school administrators, all of us need resources, too."

Quality of education is key, he noted, encouraging school leaders to talk to their students about what a career means to them, whether learning a trade or pursuing higher education.

Redmond emphasized the advantage of unions and working to grow the movement, as when unions do well, America does well. Unions are garnering their highest favorability ratings in national polls in more than 40 years, with nearly 70% of those polled saying unions are critical to their ability to receive livable wages, fair benefits, affordable health care, and the ability to retire with dignity and respect.

Though large numbers of workers want a union, there are institutional obstacles to their having one on the job. Labor laws are broken, making it nearly impossible to organize and collectively bargain. Redmond urged members to help give workers a voice so that students and educators can receive the attention and resources they rightfully deserve.

Standing strong with our siblings across unions and across professions starts with one-on-one conversations with our members about what is happening to workers in this country, hearing about issues that our members care about, and moving forward to reestablish a connection with them to build trust. He encouraged everyone to start by discussing our democracy, asking the question of who in Washington, D.C., has our back going into November's elections and beyond.

"Freedom is not free and basic fundamental rights are not guaranteed under the Supreme Court," Redmond

said. "We need folks to know that unions are what is going to help us fight. Some of us in this room were the first to have the opportunity to go to college because of this democracy. To lead and to develop minds—those rights came through democracy."



(Photo by Rachel Elkind)

Redmond closed by urging school leaders to use our union voice during these challenging times to continue to organize and build capacity in our community. He said we cannot afford to have our school leaders burn out by being underpaid and overworked, because they are crucial to the future of our democracy. He asked school leaders to wake up every day and fight for the change we want to see.

He said that as a part of something bigger than ourselves, we must lead the way for those who come after us. Our children and grandchildren will hold us accountable in the future, and the next generation of workers should be able to say: "Union, yes."

"The labor union is for them, and the labor union is for everyone," he exclaimed as the audience cheered. "Show people that the doors of the labor union are wide open."

Redmond's remarks can be viewed by scanning the QR code. ■





(Photo by Rachel Elkind)

Convention Delegates Chart Course for AFSA's Future *(continued from page 1)*

Delayed by a year, this was the first in-person AFSA event since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Convention-goers considered measures specific to schools and classrooms on school safety and school violence; recruitment, training and retention; assistant principals; wellness support; school district policy; and social-emotional learning (SEL). They also OK'd measures on building worker power; quality health care; labor training; public education; and creating AFSA union veterans and national retiree chapters.

The following is a brief look at each resolution:

Resolution 1—Threats and Assaults Against School Supervisors and Administrators

- AFSA commits to support and enhance legislation to make it a felony crime to assault a school supervisor or administrator and/or their immediate family.
- The union will continue to raise awareness regarding the damage to school communities resulting from increased violence against school leaders.

Resolution 2—Enhance Principal Recruitment Training, Improve Retention Rates Among Principals and Reduce Principal Turnover

- AFSA will partner with local chapters, school districts and accredited higher education programs to identify, mentor and train assistant principals, school supervisors and others to become principals.

Resolution 3—Support Legislation That Mandates an Assistant Principal in Every Public School

- AFSA will continue to educate lawmakers on the role and value of assistant principals and support legislation that makes having an assistant principal in every school part of the statutory framework.

Resolution 4—Building Worker Power to Enhance Organizing

- AFSA will support new and existing locals to become organized, and develop a strategy to increase the scale and pace of organizing.
- The union will help locals join state and local labor federations and assist the local chapters in forging key partnerships with allies.
- On a broader scale, AFSA will continue fighting for state and national legislation to guarantee that all public employees have the right to join a union.

Resolution 5—Fight for Quality Health Care

- AFSA will fight for quality health care for all, and will continue to support its locals in their efforts to bargain for quality health care benefits for their members.

Resolution 6—Building Stronger Local Unions Through Labor Training

- AFSA understands basic knowledge of the labor movement's mission can only enhance its members' efforts to successfully bargain for better wages, benefits and retirement protections. Therefore, the union will continue to provide expert trainings to further develop local leaders, strengthen affiliate organization and increase local and member engagement.

Resolution 7—Public Education, the Beacon of Democracy

- Public education is key to a bright future for all of our children—it's an economic necessity, a moral imperative and a fundamental civil right.
- To ensure public education remains safe, healthy and welcoming spaces staffed by supported leaders helping children do their best, the nation must address educator shortages, mental health challenges and the effects on students due to COVID-19 pandemic-related disruption.
- AFSA will continue to work with Congress, state and local school boards and governments to ensure that administrators, school employees, communities and parents are able to work together and speak with one voice to garner equitable education for all students, the freedom to teach history and civics, and ensure diversity; that resources are employed to expand community schools and wraparound services; and that new pathways for students, including career and technical education, are available for all.

Resolution 8—School Leader Wellness Support

- AFSA will assist members in developing skills to handle various mental health problems facing administrators daily, and work with partners to develop materials school administrators can use to assist in remediating such problems.
- Locals will work with school districts and other organizations to develop mental health protocols to assist all members of the school community.
- AFSA will make the mental health of members a top priority.

Resolution 9—Enhancing School Safety/Stopping School Violence

- AFSA demands effective and comprehensive action from the federal government to protect schoolchildren, including a nationwide ban on the manufacture, sale, purchase, possession and use of all semiautomatic weapons and large-capacity ammunition cartridges (except for the military and law enforcement), along with a federal law strengthening universal background checks.
- AFSA will oppose any law or regulation at any level that requires or incentivizes the arming of school administrators.
- AFSA calls on the federal government to appropriate adequate new funds to allow for coordinated school security plans and to increase the number of counselors, mental health staff, psychologists and social workers in schools.

Resolution 10—Support Collective Bargaining and Active Participation in School District Policy Making

- AFSA encourages local unions to push for a stronger voice in school districts via collective bargaining, and urges participation by local unions in school district committees, coalitions and task forces to gain a voice as district policies are being created. AFSA will assist these endeavors through various trainings and resources.

Resolution 11—Social Emotional Learning as Part of Pre-K–12 Learning

- AFSA supports integration of SEL concepts and use of SEL programs in pre-K–12 education, and objects to the politicization of SEL.

Resolution 12—Creating a Union Veterans Chapter

- AFSA establishes a veterans chapter as a union constituency group organization.

Resolution 13—Creating a National Retiree Chapter

- AFSA establishes a national retiree chapter, open to existing retirees through their current local or as direct members if there is no local retiree chapter available to them.

Constitutional Amendment

- Amends Article I, Section 2, and Article II to allow the creation of the national retiree chapter.



To read all the resolutions in full, scan the QR code. ■

Students Need Holistic Education, Emotional Learning *(continued from page 1)*

With emotional intelligence as fuel, students are sure to be successful, but it does not stop in the classroom. At home, children still need the same support from their families so that their brains can develop the ability to listen, express their needs and to understand.

"This is not fancy, high-tech stuff," Nussbaum added. "It goes back to what Grandma taught us—we need to be with one another."

Nussbaum is known for being many things—professor, scholar, speaker, expert and the face of brain health for many companies and organizations, as he makes neuroscience tenets more accessible to the general public. The Brain Health Center provides independent medical examinations, record reviews and case management for those with neurological and neurobehavioral disorders.

"There is no single greater miracle on planet Earth, in this universe, or any universe, than the human brain," Nussbaum said.



(Photo by Rachel Elkind)

Paul Nussbaum giving the keynote address at the AFSA 16th Triennial Constitutional Convention.

After discussing the stressors of COVID-19, the politicization in the classroom, general anger in culture and on social media, Nussbaum noted that feelings of anxiety and depression are normal responses to the chaos of reality. He noted that it does not make those who experience these feelings in any way abnormal—that when we lose control, it heightens these responses.

Starting with the pandemic-related shutdowns of 2020, anxiety and depression became a national problem; he explained that this was not being talked about enough. The fault is not our own, but now that we are starting to take back control by reconnecting in person, we are beginning to heal.

"This is not fancy, high-tech stuff. It goes back to what Grandma taught us—we need to be with one another."

Neurologically, he also explained that students need to be with their teachers. He explained the term neuroplasticity and just how important it is, how the brain changes and adapts in response to experiences. It is no surprise that distance learning has caused children to fall behind, he said, noting that, as educators, the brains of students—now back in the classroom—lay in their hands.

Educators need to be utilized as "brain health people and promoters," Nussbaum said. He advocated for an ongoing curriculum for teachers, students and parents so they all understand how the brain works and what impacts it. He also called for lessons in how to feel love, to be kind and to have compassion, using the holistic approach.

Staying active, spending time in daylight, playing music and meditating are just a few ways to reduce stress so that learning can take place. On the other hand, spending too much time using technology, eating poorly and not getting enough sleep all cause emotional stress, which affects learning. He advised teachers to not be afraid to incorporate yoga, breathing exercises or going for a walk into how they teach, because brains work best when allowed a break. As humans, we are at our peak when we engage in activities that we love.

He emphasized technology is here to stay, and our brains have changed because of it. We need not be afraid of it—it is not as eminent as we think—but we need to learn how to use this in our lives in a positive way.

To watch the entire speech, scan the QR code. ■



Pugliese: Our Union is Our Power

(Photo by Rachel Elkind)



In his presidential acceptance speech to delegates at the union's 16th triennial convention, AFSA President Len P. Pugliese made one thing clear: "When we stand solidly together as a community, as a family, we are strong. Our union is our power. That message is at the root of your work and mine."

He reminded delegates that AFSA locals have helped school leaders by "negotiating collective bargaining agreements that gave us a voice on the job, protection from the whims of our employers and a compensation package that has allowed us and our families to live comfortably and look forward to retiring with dignity. Our union gave us the American dream."

That's why we're recommitting to grow AFSA, he added. "We want to protect the American dream and share it with nonunionized colleagues across America," said Pugliese. "Let it be known—AFSA is going to get bigger."

He empathized that AFSA is in the midst of a generational change, and the new leadership will help steer our organization forward so each local and each member can achieve its goals.

"Our union is about advocacy, politics, community organizing, communications and determination that you won't settle for anything less than equal opportunity," said Pugliese.

"In some of our communities, there is a move away from equity that we never thought we'd see. In some of our communities, there is a move to stop teaching the causes of inequity. So, pay very close attention to what is happening in your communities."

Pugliese said throughout our nation, there has been a rebirth of interest in unions.

"Look at Starbucks, Amazon, Microsoft and most recently Apple—longtime union-busting companies finally getting unions in place. Workers are saying, 'Enough is enough,'" he added.

"We are seeing the same thing in our schools," said Pugliese. "COVID-19 has been a turning point. In districts without school leader unions, the workload has increased, but the compensation hasn't moved

accordingly. We need to help organize the unorganized school leaders, so they can protect themselves, too."

Pugliese called out to every delegate and every member to reach out to friends and colleagues in other communities around the nation that are not union or not affiliated with AFSA and see how to help them form a union.

"I am profoundly moved to stand here in solidarity with every member," said Pugliese. "You are my heroes, my family, my tribe. God bless you, our public schools and the United States of America."

Watch Pugliese's acceptance speech at the AFSA convention by scanning the QR code. ■



My Only Goal is to Help You Succeed

"Union is family," says AFSA President Len P. Pugliese, who on the first day walking a strike picket line some 50 years ago saw another teacher picketing and it was love at first sight. That teacher was Arlene Cardinale, and they were together until her passing a year and a half ago.

"My wife Arlene was like all of you," said Pugliese. "She was the principal of First Avenue Elementary School in Newark, and she couldn't wait to see the kids in the morning and couldn't stop talking about them when she came home at night.

"Arlene knew that nobody had a more important and rewarding job than we have as school leaders," he added. "Arlene was an inspired teacher and principal who appreciated the solidarity of unionism. She put the happiness of children above everything else—she was the kind of educator we all wish to be.

"As I take over as AFSA president," said Pugliese, "my only goal is to help you succeed in your jobs. When you have all the tools to accomplish your goals, the children, families and communities you serve will be the real winners." ■





Union Approval Hits Highest Point Since 1965

by Celine McNicholas and Eve Tahmincioglu
of the Economic Policy Institute

It's been nearly 60 years since approval for unions in the United States has been this high. More than 70% of Americans now approve of labor unions. Those are the findings of a Gallup poll released in September, and they shouldn't be surprising.

Why? U.S. workers see unions as critical to fixing our nation's broken workplace—where most workers have little power or agency at work.

The pandemic revealed much about work in this country. We saw countless examples of workers performing essential jobs—such as health care and food service. They were forced to work without appropriate health and safety gear, and certainly without pay commensurate with the critical nature of the work they were doing.

Those conditions, however, predated the pandemic. The pandemic merely exposed these decades-old anti-worker dynamics. Clearly, as the new poll and recent data on strikes and union organizing shows, workers today are rejecting these dynamics and awakening to the benefits of unions.

Nonunion workers are forced to take their jobs—accept their employer's terms as is—or leave them. Unions enable workers to have a voice in those terms and set them through collective bargaining.

We know the powerful impact unions have on workers' lives, and broader

effects on communities and on our democracy.

Here's a run-down based on the Economic Policy Institute's extensive research on unions:

Pay and Benefits

- Unionized workers (workers covered by a union contract) earn on average 10.2% more in wages than nonunionized peers (workers in the same industry and occupation with similar education and experience).
- Unions don't just help union workers—they help all of us. When union density is high, nonunion workers benefit, because unions effectively set broader standards—including higher wages.
- Union workers are more likely to be covered by employer-provided health insurance. More than 9 in 10 workers covered by a union contract (95%) have access to employer-sponsored health benefits, compared with just 69% of nonunion workers.
- Union workers have greater access to paid vacation days. Some 90% of workers covered by a union contract

We are experiencing a labor enlightenment of sorts in this country, one in which workers are fed up with an economy and workplace that does not work for them.

received paid holidays off, compared with 78% of nonunion workers.

- Union workers also have greater access to paid sick days. Slightly more than 9 in 10 workers covered by a union contract (92%) have access to paid sick days, compared with 77% of nonunion workers.

Workers have increasingly felt empowered to fight for what they want.

The 17 U.S. states with the highest union densities:

- Have state minimum wages that are on average 19% higher than the national average and 40% higher than those in low-union-density states.
- Have median annual incomes \$6,000 higher than the national average.
- Have higher-than-average unemployment insurance reciprocity rates (that is, a higher share of those who are unemployed actually receive unemployment insurance).

Equity and Equality

- Black and Hispanic workers get a larger boost from unionization. Black workers represented by a union are paid 13.1% more than their nonunionized peers. Hispanic workers represented by unions are paid 18.8% more than their nonunionized peers.
- Unions help raise women's pay. Hourly wages for women represented by a union are 4.7% higher on average than for nonunionized women with comparable characteristics.
- Research shows that deunionization accounts for a sizable share of the

growth in inequality between typical (median) workers and workers at the high end of the wage distribution in recent decades—on the order of 13%–20% for women and 33%–37% for men.

Democracy

- Significantly fewer restrictive voting laws have been passed in the 17 highest-union-density states than in the middle 17 states (including D.C.) and the 17 lowest-union-density states.
- More than 70% of low-union-density states passed at least one voter suppression law between 2011 and 2019.

The growing approval of unions is playing out on the ground with more workers seeking to exercise their collective bargaining rights.

Data from the National Labor Relations Board recently analyzed by Bloomberg Law show the exponential increase in election petitions being filed. While the Gallup poll states that most nonunion workers do not respond that they want to join a union, clearly workers

are petitioning for union elections at elevated rates.

And workers have increasingly felt empowered to fight for what they want.

We were already seeing signs of workers being willing to strike to demand better wages and working conditions. Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics showed an upsurge in major strike activity in 2018 and 2019, marking a 35-year high.

We are experiencing a labor enlightenment of sorts in this country, one in which workers are fed up with an economy and workplace that does not work for them. With approval for unions at the highest rate since 1965, there is a growing realization that unions can potentially make both work better for all.

The Economic Policy Institute's mission is to inform and empower individuals to seek solutions that ensure broadly shared prosperity and opportunity. Celine McNicholas serves as EPI's director of policy and government affairs and general counsel. Eve Tahmircioglu is EPI's director of communications. ■

Americans' Approval of Labor Unions, 1936–2022

Do you approve or disapprove of labor unions?



GALLUP

Standing Up for Public Education

The AFSA PAC Amplifies Your Voice

The AFSA PAC is a fund that members contribute to voluntarily supporting our union's efforts to elect pro-public education, pro-worker, pro-union lawmakers. The AFSA PAC is the voice of school leaders in the political process in the nation's capital.

To increase the visibility of school leaders, gain access to policymakers and to truly impact policy on a national level, we strongly urge you to contribute to the AFSA PAC. Your contributions go a long way in supporting political candidates who share AFSA's beliefs about public education and the importance of great school leaders.

Organized and strategic political action is crucial in influencing government. Political action is an integral part of unionism. Not only does it reinforce our rights on the job, but it also provides AFSA members with a powerful and effective means to influence policy.

The AFSA PAC supports candidates who pledge to fight for quality public schools, improved working conditions for school leaders, school leader-specific professional development,

school safety, retirement security and policies that will provide the tools education professionals need to provide America's youth with the highest-quality education possible. ■

AFSA members can donate at www.TheSchoolLeader.org; click on AFSA PAC or scan the following QR code.

AFSA members also can make a donation by sending a personal check made out to:



AFSA PAC
815 16th St. NW
Suite 4125
Washington, DC 20006

AFSA PAC FACTS

AFSA PAC is nonpartisan.

Contributions or gifts to AFSA PAC are not deductible for federal income tax purposes.

All contributions to AFSA PAC are voluntary and will be used for political purposes.

AFSA PAC does not accept or receive any member dues or per capita fees paid to AFSA or any of its locals or state federations.

Contributions are not a condition of membership or employment, and refusal to contribute is free of reprisal.

In accordance with federal law, AFSA PAC only accepts contributions from members, executive and administrative personnel, and their families. Contributions from other persons will be returned to the contributor. ■



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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.



The Diann Woodard SCHOLARSHIP

**\$2,500 Awards Exclusively for Children of AFSA
Members Attending College for the First Time in 2023**

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.

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 2023.

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



**The application deadline
is March 31, 2023.**

**To apply, visit:
www.AFSAScholarshipApplication.org
or scan the QR code.**

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This competitive scholarship program for union families evaluates applicants according to academic ability, social awareness, financial need and appreciation of labor.

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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 2023. Students may reapply each year. A complete application must be received on or before noon Eastern Standard Time on Jan. 31, 2023. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered.

Since 1991, the Union Plus Scholarship Program has awarded more than \$5.2 million to students of working families who want to begin or continue their post-secondary education. More than 3,600 families have benefited from our commitment to higher education.

To apply, visit: <https://www.UnionPlus.org/benefits/education/union-plus-scholarships> or scan the QR code. ■



Meet the 2022 Diann Woodard Scholarship Recipients

The annual Diann Woodard Scholarship awardees have been selected for the 2022–23 school year from more than 80 applications. The scholarship winners 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.

At the 16th Triennial Constitutional Convention in July 2022, Kelly Woodard, Diann's daughter, thanked AFSA for keeping her mom's dream of college education alive. "Diann would say there is a college for everyone. The problem is access," she said. "And while the AFSA Scholarship doesn't cover all the costs, it makes it a little easier for some students, especially in their first year." ■

Jackson Bell

High School:
Norwich Free Academy

Hometown:
Waterford, Connecticut

College/University: University of Connecticut

Major: Music Education

AFSA Parent: Michael Kaiser, Connecticut Vocational-Technical School Administrators Association, Local 61 (Storrs, CT)

In 6th grade, Jackson's life changed when his school district brought back instrumental music education. He was able to study music theory, the clarinet, and the cello. He became the marching band drum major his junior and senior years of high school, and served as a Heather Bernard Moore Music Scholar.

In addition to his musical talents, Jackson was in the National Honor Society and the Spanish National Honor Society, as well as on the golf team and varsity swim team. He served as captain of the swim team his senior year.

Although so much of life came to a standstill during the pandemic, he continued volunteering each week as he and his dad would make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches as a grab-and-go meal for their local food pantry.

Jackson graduated summa cum laude and is attending the University of Connecticut, pursuing a degree in music education. He can't wait to be a part of the Pride of Connecticut, the UConn Marching Band!



Margaret Cole

High School:
Oakdale High School

Hometown:
New Market, Maryland

College/University: Lebanon Valley College

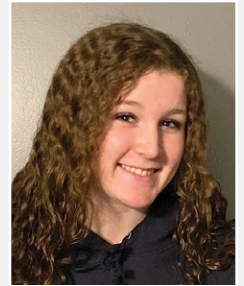
Major: Early Childhood Education and Special Education

AFSA Parent: Robert Cole, Howard County Association of Supervisors and Administrators, Local 36 (Howard County, MD)

Maggie Cole has lived in Maryland her whole life, first in downtown Frederick and now in New Market. She graduated from Oakdale High School, where she was a four-year varsity starter on the volleyball team. Throughout her high school years, she fostered her passion for education and working with children.

At Oakdale High School, Maggie was a member of the National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, the Red Cross Club and the Future Teachers of America Club. She also finished the child development completer program and was an intern in a kindergarten classroom at a local elementary school. Maggie has also worked at the Kiddie Academy of New Market. Her career choice of education fits with her love of working with children.

She is attending Lebanon Valley College in Annville, Pennsylvania, majoring in early childhood education and special education, and playing on the women's volleyball team.



Rithika Jayaprakash

High School:
Bridgewater-
Raritan High
School

Hometown:
Bridgewater,
New Jersey

College/University: Temple University

Major: Neuroscience

AFSA Parent: Mini Jayaprakash,
City Association of Supervisors and
Administrators, Local 20 (Newark, NJ)

Rithika Jayaprakash is from Bridgewater, New Jersey, where she attended Bridgewater-Raritan High School. She was an active member and officer of the National Honor Society, Future Health Leaders of America & HOSA, Science National Honor Society, Model UN and Girl Up, a program that focuses specifically on expanding young women's skills, rights and opportunities to lead.

Outside the classroom, Rithika devoted time to volunteer work related to medicine, and also to enjoying personal hobbies like dancing, running, hiking and traveling. She gives back to her community as a dedicated volunteer at the Robert Wood Johnson Hospital and as an EMT at her local rescue squad. Both of these extracurriculars have provided her with the invaluable opportunity to explore her strong passion and interest in medicine.

She is a neuroscience major at Temple University as a part of the Honors Program.



Mikayla Kennedy

High School: The
Nightingale-
Bamford School

Hometown:
Brooklyn, New
York

College/University: Brown University

Major: Sociology

AFSA Parent: JeanMarie Kennedy,
Council of School Supervisors and
Administrators, Local 1 (New York, NY)

Mikayla Kennedy was born and raised in New York City. As the child of two educators (her mother is an assistant principal and her father was a teacher when she was younger), she has always been very engaged in her schoolwork.

Mikayla is most interested in the humanities, especially her history classes. In her senior year she took classes that focused on such topics as gender, current events, indigenous people's history, economics and modern Latin American history. She also really loves athletics and was a captain of the varsity soccer, swimming and softball teams.

Outside of her academic and athletic engagements, she also gave her time to advancing the social issues she cares about. Equity is particularly important to her. For the past three years, she tutored a group of 10 to 15 underprivileged elementary students in math and English. Within her high school, she served as co-head of the Inclusivity Board.

Mikayla graduated from The Nightingale-Bamford School and is studying sociology at Brown University.



Matthew Spry

High School:
Santana

Hometown:
Lakeside,
California

College/ University: University of California,
San Diego

Major: Structural Engineering

AFSA Parent: Brian Spry,
Administrators Association San Diego
City Schools, Local 134 (San Diego, CA)

Matthew is from Lakeside, California, and graduated as salutatorian from Santana High School. His academic achievements and engagement—he was junior class president—are matched by his success and leadership across several sports, particularly water polo.

Matthew served as the captain of the only water polo team in the history of Santana to win the California Interscholastic Federation championship. He earned the CIF sportsmanship award after that victorious season. In addition to water polo, Matthew played basketball, baseball and soccer, and was on the swim team.

He earned league honors in both swim and water polo, and after participating in the USA water polo Junior Olympics was named an Academic All-American. Most recently, he was named the HSSA Scholar-Athlete of the Year for Santana High School.

Matthew is studying at the University of California, San Diego, where he is majoring in structural engineering.



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