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Newark Superintendent Cancels in D.C., Refuses to Publicly Address Newark Residents

On Nov. 13, state-appointed Newark Schools Superintendent Cami Anderson was scheduled to give a public presentation at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) in Washington, D.C. However, after discovering busloads of Newark students, parents and educators had registered and planned to attend, security shut down the event and instructed the audience to leave, shuttling Anderson to a separate room where she taped her presentation in private.

"Unfortunately, even though everyone registered as required, security came in and told us we had to leave," said Michael Dixon, secretary-treasurer of the Newark Teachers Union. After the event's cancellation, shunned Newark residents continued to hold their ground outside AEI, chanting "Stop One Newark," with some signs saying "One Newark is Not Our Newark" and others featuring Anderson's face with "LIAR" scrawled across her forehead.

The presentation, "The story of Newark: Cami Anderson on the challenges, successes, and lessons of school reform," was supposed to discuss the One Newark plan, which officially was implemented in September. While Anderson describes the plan as "a community-wide agenda to ensure all students are in excellent schools and thriving communities, and are on the path to excel in college and 21st century careers," research has shown schools slated for closure or charter takeover serve higher shares of black students and low-income students.

One Newark replaces school districts with a lottery system in which students "win" seats at traditional schools or charters. This system relocates students to unfamiliar neighborhoods and has resulted in 1,000 job cuts for school employees and educators.

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A Look at the Midterm Elections

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A recently released School Leaders Network report, titled "CHURN: The High Cost of Principal Turnover," found that schools, leaders, educators and students face significant hardships when districts fail to retain principals.

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PANOPSI and NOPSE Plan to Appeal U.S. Supreme Court on Overturned Class-Action Lawsuit

Three weeks after Hurricane Katrina hit in August 2005, the New Orleans public school system was effectively wiped out and replaced with charter schools, resulting in the wrongful termination of 7,500 school employees

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Legislative Update: AFSA Joins With NAESP and NASSP to Promote Positive Change in Policy for School Leaders

Throughout 2014, AFSA has collaborated with the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), advocating for increased, meaningful and targeted professional development for principals.

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A Wake-up Call for School Leaders



AFSA President Diann Woodard

What do you say after an election night like Nov. 4? We lost. As a matter of fact, some have called it “a bloodbath.” A bloodbath that has us looking at each other wondering, how did this happen?

But was it really a surprise? Since the 2008 presidential election, we have been searching to fulfill our mandate for change, a mandate that promised to give families a share of the nation's prosperity and the hope there would be employment for all.

Almost as quickly as that election was over, the dream evaporated. No one wanted to talk about how to achieve full employment and expanded opportunities for all. Instead, the new agenda was set by focusing on issues that had no real solutions, but that lent themselves to lots of rhetoric.

“Reformers” began cropping up everywhere, from charter cheerleaders to Common Core advocates, funded by the wealthy, telling us the United States was not able to supply businesses with quality workers because the current students lacked the skills needed to compete in today's marketplace.

As educators, we remained relatively silent, waiting to see how this was going to develop, because we understood that we were falling short of our goals for the children we serve, but for totally different reasons than those being voiced by our critics. We let the so-called reformers flood the public with their propaganda that our children were unprepared and we allowed them to place the blame on us.

Teachers and their unions became the reason why Johnny/Jane can't

read—despite the fact the states with the highest test scores had unionized educators and those with the lowest had no unions whatsoever.

Educators were deemed incompetent and unwilling to change because they were only concerned about themselves. Sadly, much of our time was spent defending rather than proactively defining ourselves and our goals for the nation's children.

The idea painted by the so-called reformers was that we were obstructionists trying to hold on to the status quo, propaganda that stuck because we did nothing but try to deny the claim rather than assert for parents who we are and what the agenda should be for their children.

As a result, private interests in the guise of reformers have made it acceptable to prostitute the concept of education for all, and earn money on the state and its children through voucher programs, charters, profit-driven textbook and technology sales, and ceaseless testing—privatization initiatives that have succeeded in large part because educators have done little to show why our professions are essential, not expendable commodities.

Watching the midterm election results, it was amazing to see voters in state after state choose the party whose message, right or wrong, forced their more progressive opponents onto defense rather than articulating the core values of education and prosperity for all.

These circumstances bring us to today's aftermath of the midterm elections. So, yes, we share responsibility for the loss

with those we supported, because we never have been able to establish for the public that we know what is best for the nation's children and thus gain its confidence.

In the wake of this defeat, the words of gospel singer Donnie McClurken ring in my ears: “What do you do when you've done all you can and it seems like It's never enough? YOU STAND!”

Yes, colleagues, we must stand. But it is not enough for us to stand and complain. Standing means articulating what we want to achieve for our students, and how to achieve it. We no longer can afford simply to react to what is happening to us. We must start to take control of the debate about what is needed to turn around our schools.

This is not the time to isolate ourselves in our individual schools and think everything is fine because some of us here or there may be doing well.

We are educators. Many of us have multiple degrees and varied experiences. It is inconceivable we don't know how to take control of the message and reclaim our destiny. And that begins with speaking out about what it takes to produce college- and career-ready students. We must talk to our communities and business partners about what is right for our schools. We need to share our successes with the public and with each other, and we need to network and mentor other school leaders.

As school leaders we need to set the education agenda; assert our

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A Look at the Midterm Elections

The midterm elections resulted in a Republican takeover of the Senate and an increase in the Republican majority in the House, setting the stage for a new landscape for education and labor advocates. With all of these changes, the administration, particularly the Department of Education, also may face a shift in priorities.

Wins and Losses for Education and Labor Across the Country

Controversial Republican governors Rick Scott (Florida), Rick Snyder (Michigan) and Scott Walker (Wisconsin), who have sought to take away collective bargaining rights, cut K-12 spending, reduce pensions and expand voucher programs, won their elections.

Republican Bruce Rauner, who has publicly discussed intentions to decrease union influence and increase private-sector influence in public education, defeated incumbent Democratic Gov. Pat Quinn in Illinois. This was a particularly disappointing loss, as Illinois traditionally stands by labor-supported candidates.

Despite facing losses across the nation, labor and education advocates experienced a major victory in Pennsylvania, with Democrat Tom Wolf unseating incumbent Republican Gov. Tom Corbett. Throughout his time in office, Corbett cut funding to K-12 schools and withheld \$45 million in federal funds from an already-struggling Philadelphia school district.

Wolf promises to revamp the state's K-12 funding formula, increase funding for public schools, address low-performing charters and expand access to higher education through new programs for veterans and low-income students.

In California, Superintendent Tom Torlakson won against former charter school executive Marshall Tuck, 52 percent to 48 percent. Tuck, who supports expanding charter schools and who called teacher tenure an obstacle to improving schools, was backed by a bipartisan coalition of wealthy

education reformers, including former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, philanthropist Eli Broad and heirs to the Walmart family fortune.

Other wins for education included:

- Voters in both Seattle and Denver approved ballot measures to raise taxes for expanded access to preschool.
- Voters in Missouri overwhelmingly rejected a constitutional amendment to require using student test scores as a key factor in teacher pay, promotions and layoffs.
- Voters in New York approved a \$2 billion bond measure to raise funds for education technology and classroom renovations.

A Shift in Leadership for Federal Education Policy

With a new Republican majority in the Senate, Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) will become the chairman of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP). Alexander is a former U.S. secretary of education under President George H.W. Bush and is the current ranking member on the education panel.

After the retirement of Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), a longtime ally of education and labor, there is speculation that Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.) will take over as the ranking member of the HELP Committee. Harkin's Strong Start for America's Children Act, introduced in the Senate last year, is unlikely to have Alexander's support. The act calls for high levels of federal and state

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A LOOK AT THE MIDTERM ELECTIONS

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investment in early learning and an expansion of pre-K programs nationally.

According to several analysts, Alexander has indicated he does not support federal involvement in pre-K programs. His top priority likely will be reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) with legislation to consolidate individual, targeted programs into block grants and to expand school choice. Additionally, he likely will move to change or eliminate some ESEA programs, such as the School Improvement Grant and Race to the Top.

On the House side, after 40 years of service, Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.), the ranking member on the House Education and the Workforce Committee, will retire, with Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Va.) expected to take his place. Miller is a longtime advocate of early education and co-sponsored the House version of the Strong Start for

America's Children Act. Rep. John Kline (R-Minn.) will maintain his position as the committee's chairman.

Kline is likely to push through ESEA reauthorization legislation that closely tracks the Student Success Act (SSA) bill, which the House already approved, but that did not become law. SSA would turn Title I and Title II into block grants, consolidating and eliminating many programs and increasing local spending flexibility.

Kline also has taken a strong interest in student privacy issues, and his staff is engaged in drafting legislation to update the 40-year-old Federal Educational Records Privacy Act (FERPA).

Voters Show Support for Middle-Class Values

Despite voters showing a loss in faith for many candidates supporting education and labor, voters expressed dedication to issues facing the middle and working class, according to an election-night survey conducted by Peter D. Hart Research Associates. The survey

reached out to 803 general election voters in 11 Senate battleground states and found that voters:

- support raising the minimum wage, 62 to 34 percent;
- believe more funding is needed for public schools and higher education, 75 to 21 percent;
- support raising taxes on the wealthy and large corporations for education, job training and deficit reduction, 62 to 32 percent; and
- support increasing Social Security taxes for high-income individuals to increase benefits, 61 to 30 percent.

Voters also overwhelmingly chose to increase wages in Alaska, Arkansas, Illinois, Nebraska and South Dakota.

"It's clear that American workers and their families are way ahead of the political elite when it comes to envisioning the next American chapter," said AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka in a statement after the midterm election. "Their desire for bold, comprehensive and lasting economic change is the most real thing I've ever heard." ■

DIVERSITY WEBINAR RECAP:

AFSA and ELI Partner to Promote Diversity in Today's Schools

To create greater awareness of how best to foster a culture of diversity in today's schools, AFSA partnered with the Executive Leadership Institute (ELI) of the Council of School Supervisors & Administrators, AFSA Local 1 to produce a webinar, led by ELI Coordinators Mickie Jones and Judith List, that explored the diverse classrooms of 21st-century schools.

"Every classroom will reflect the culture of the community," Jones said. "If we are to effectively lead our schools, we have to provide appropriate instruction."

"Schools reflect the myriad ways we are different from each other," List added.

List and Jones walked participants through a definition of diversity in their schools and shared anecdotal stories of their own experiences in accepting and promoting school diversity.

List and Jones provided recommendations for promoting diversity, such as displaying cultures from all students or families in the community, having

teachers plan for diverse instruction, and analyzing the physical layout of the school to identify any divisiveness—and reorganizing the layout if necessary.

The webinar can be watched in its entirety here: AFSAadmin.org/events/past-webinars/fostering-a-culture-of-diversity-in-todays-schools/. ■



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New Report Highlights the Importance of Principal Retention

A recently released School Leaders Network report, titled “CHURN: The High Cost of Principal Turnover,” found that schools, leaders, educators and students face significant hardships when districts fail to retain principals.

According to the report, only 50 percent of new principals stay for three years and only 30 percent stay beyond five. Additionally:

- districts spend an average of \$75,000 to hire, train and bring a new principal onboard;
- districts spend an average of \$5,580 per hired principal, which translates into \$36 million annually for all districts; and
- the federal government provides local districts more than \$1 billion annually for training programs, but only 2 percent of those funds are used for ongoing principal support (NAESP numbers).

High-poverty and charter schools are particularly hard hit by churn, with 27 and 29 percent of principals, respectively, leaving after the first year. High churn rate can cause student achievement to drop in reading and math in the year after a principal's resignation. Additionally, graduation rates are lower in schools with novice principals, and it can take up to three years for a new principal to regain progress.

The report suggests that “it takes an average of five years to put a mobilizing vision in place, improve teaching staff, and fully implement policies and practices that positively impact the school's performance.”

“These findings solidify what we have been saying all along,” said Diann Woodard, president of AFSA, “that school improvement does not happen overnight and that it takes time, resources and support. Churning principals in and out of schools does nothing but stall the possibility of progress.”

CHURN's findings show that investing \$50,000 to \$150,000 per principal in professional development can reduce principal turnover by as much as 70 percent. Increasing principal retention rates in urban school districts to match those of affluent schools also could save U.S. school districts \$163 million annually.

At its 2012 Triennial Convention, AFSA passed a resolution in support of increasing leadership development, and the union has continued to advocate for investing more in school leaders through letters, calls and meetings with members of Congress. AFSA also has continued to advocate against the pattern of principal removal in policies, such as the original turnaround models for School Improvement Grants (see page 10).

The CHURN report concludes with four recommendations to improve principal and school leadership and to help solve the dire retention problem:

- invest in ongoing professional development;
- engage principals in meaningful network opportunities;
- provide one-to-one support; and
- restructure central office roles and policies.

CHURN makes clear that improving the nation's schools starts with supporting its school leaders. Districts must break down policy barriers hindering principal success and put in place better structures that effectively support, develop and sustain principals. ■

“These findings solidify what we have been saying all along,” said Diann Woodard, president of AFSA, “that school improvement does not happen overnight and that it takes time, resources and support. Churning principals in and out of schools does nothing but stall the possibility of progress.”

Keeping Your School Safe All Year

As the Ebola virus shook Dallas, the importance of emergency preparation, especially in communal environments, became more palpable than ever. Infectious diseases and disaster can strike at any time, and being prepared is essential. With the school year now well under way, it's well advised for school leaders to check in and make sure all details are accurate and up to date in their Emergency Operation Plan (EOP).

Regular Review is Crucial

Having a regular review process in place is the best way to ensure all new insights and priorities are reflected in your EOP. With the amount of responsibility school leaders bear, reviewing a plan for updates may feel overwhelming. One way to address this challenge is to break the review down into sections during natural breaks in the academic year, or in a way that makes sense for your school. At the very least, each section of the plan should be reviewed every two years, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

As you review your plan, you can use the five areas of Presidential Policy Directive to help better understand the strength of your plan. These five areas are prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery.

- **Prevention:** These are the steps you have in place to avoid and stop imminent threats.
- **Protection:** These steps help secure your school against imminent man-made or natural disasters and violence.
- **Mitigation:** These steps will help you reduce the impact of an emergency and eliminate or lessen the loss of life and property damage.
- **Response:** These steps will outline your plans for stabilizing an area after an emergency occurs.
- **Recovery:** These steps will help you plan for how to restore your school's learning environment after an emergency.

You will know your plan is complete and up to date when the plan:

- has a course of action for all identified threats and hazards;
- integrates the needs of the whole school community;
- provides a complete picture of what should happen, when, and at whose direction;
- estimates time for achieving objectives, with safety remaining as the utmost priority; and
- identifies success criteria and a desired end state.

Collaboration is the Key to Success

It is crucial for your EOP to result from collaboration among your school leadership, local fire and police departments, your school board and your community's emergency manager.

As you work through finalizing and training for your EOP, include those who have a responsibility in the plan, such as first responders and local emergency management staff, as well as stakeholders in the school and any organizations that may use the building.

While EOP plans will differ depending on each school's unique environment, there are basic steps through the planning process that every school leader can follow to ensure the plan is effective:



Source: <http://j.mp/FEMAPreparedness>

In any emergency, school leaders must respond immediately, providing first aid, notifying response partners and instructing other personnel and students before first responders arrive.

For more detailed information on creating and updating your EOP, visit <http://j.mp/FEMAppreparedness> or www.AFSAadmin.org/afsa-doe-school-safety/. ■

Simple Steps to Controlling Infectious Diseases in Your School

Each year, 22 million days of school are lost to the cold alone, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), which recommends the following steps when controlling infectious diseases and stopping them from spreading in your schools:

- Encourage sick students and staff to stay home and seek medical attention for severe illness.
- Supply soap and paper towels and teach good hand hygiene practices.
- Be vigilant about cleaning and disinfecting classroom materials and surfaces.
- Provide messages in daily announcements about preventing infectious disease.
- Adopt healthy practices, such as safe handling of food and use of standard precautions when handling body fluids and excretions.
- Encourage students and staff to get annual influenza vaccinations.

PANOPSI and NOPSE Plan to Appeal Overturned Class-Action Lawsuit to U.S. Supreme Court

In a unanimous decision on Jan. 15, 2014, a five-judge panel of the Louisiana Court of Appeal, 4th Circuit, upheld key rulings of a June 20, 2012, judgment by Justice Ethel Simms Julien that former New Orleans public school employees were fired unjustly after Hurricane Katrina.

This ruling was in regard to a class-action lawsuit filed in 2011 by The Professional Administrators of New Orleans Public Schools, Inc. (PANOPSI), AFSA Local 17, in conjunction with other New Orleans Public School Employees (NOPSE) against the Louisiana State Department of Education, its Recovery School District and the Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) for wrongful termination.

Three weeks after Hurricane Katrina hit in August 2005, the New Orleans public school system effectively was wiped out. The lawsuit's report showed that while Superintendent Cecil J. Picard requested \$2.4 billion in federal funding to continue paying the public school district's staff from districts closed after the hurricane, more than \$500 million of the funds were invested in creating charter schools and training 125 new teachers. This resulted in the wrongful termination of 7,500 public school employees due to a "Disaster Leave Without Pay" provision, which Justice Julien ruled was fabricated, as all fired employees were in good standing.

The five-judge panel on Jan. 15 ordered the New Orleans school board to pay two years of back pay and benefits and required the state to pay an additional year of pay and

benefits to school employees who met certain requirements.

However this ruling did not entitle anyone to immediate compensation, and on Oct. 31, following a Feb. 14 request from the school board and the state to review the appeals court's decision, the Louisiana Supreme Court overturned both rulings.

"We respectfully but strongly disagree with today's ruling, which overturned nearly nine years of case law," said class members' lead counsel Willie M. Zanders Sr. in a statement after the ruling. In an email to class reps, Zanders stated his plans to meet the 90-day timeline asking the U.S. Supreme Court to review the ruling, saying, "I must tell you that our voices will get louder and with some national help, we will be heard locally and nationally."

On Nov. 17, NOPSE filed a request for the Louisiana Supreme Court to reconsider its ruling through a rehearing.

For immediate updates, visit www.NOPSEJustice.com. ■

GEB Holds Final Meeting of the Year

The AFSA General Executive Board (GEB) held its final meeting of 2014 on Oct. 17 in Washington, D.C., where it discussed details for the union's upcoming convention and heard from guest speakers on key education policy and legislative issues, including Dr. Robert Slavin, chairman of the Success for All Foundation (SFA); Venitia Richardson, director, Teachers Quality Programs (TQP), U.S. Department of Education; and Zealan Hoover, policy assistant for education, White House Domestic Policy Council.

Dr. Slavin discussed the importance of evidence and research in all education policy, especially in whole-school reform strategies. He also provided an update on the Department of Education's proposed requirements to the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program, and the proposal's new whole-school reform option. AFSA supports this option, as it is evidence-based and does not require the removal of the existing principal.

Richardson discussed several programs she oversees, including The Teacher Incentive Fund, the School Leadership Program, Supporting Effective Educator Development, Teaching American History, Teacher Quality Partnership and Transition to Teaching. As a former administrator and AFSA member of the Hartford Principals' and Supervisors' Association, AFSA Local 22, Richardson understands the importance of principals and strong school leaders in education. She invited AFSA to continue

working with her office to support and provide perspective on critical programs.

Finally, Hoover spoke about his work across federal agencies and with partners and communities nationwide to produce stronger education programs for African American students. He highlighted his work supporting the administration's cradle-to-career initiative, which aims to ensure all African American students receive an education that fully prepares them for higher education and productive careers. The initiative's goal is to increase college completion rates, employment rates and the number of African American teachers.

Program Committee

The board also approved the schedule for AFSA's Triennial Convention, to be held July 23–26, 2015. At its next meeting in January 2015, GEB members will participate in the 2015 AFL-CIO Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Civil and Human Rights

Conference. This will include participating in community service and engagement activities and attending workshops on civil rights and labor issues.

Scholarship Committee

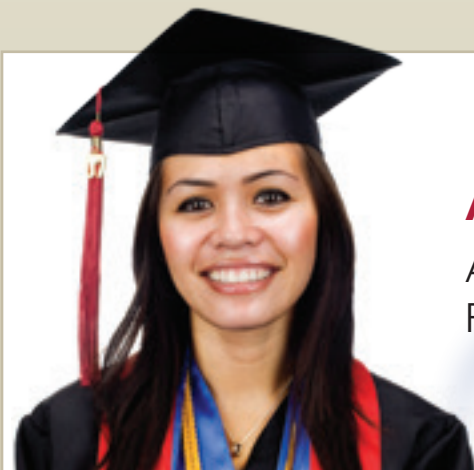
The committee approved the 2014–2015 AFSA Scholarship Program. There will be five scholarships of \$2,500 awarded. The deadline for submitting completed applications is Feb. 28, 2015. For more details, visit afsaadmin.org/scholarship2015.

Legislative Committee

AFSA, NASSP and NAESP have collaborated throughout 2014 in support of principals and school leaders and are in the process of creating a formal coalition. To help inform the issues, policies and legislation the coalition will focus on, the groups are drafting a "Guiding Principles" document, which the GEB reviewed for recommendations.

As a result of this ongoing collaboration, Hill visits, letters, meetings and other work of AFSA, NASSP and NAESP, the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee included report language in its bill emphasizing the importance of principals:

"The Committee is aware that research over the past 10 years has proven that strong school leadership is second only to teaching among in-school influences on student success, and the impact of leadership is most significant in schools with the greatest needs. However, a 2013 Report



ATTENTION AFSA MEMBERS

AFSA Scholarship applications are due **Feb. 28, 2015**.
For details, visit **AFSAadmin.org/scholarship2015**.

from the Department of Education on "The Use of Funds Under Title II," of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act indicates that only 4 percent of these funds are spent on principal professional development. The committee is concerned that as the roles and responsibilities of principals continue to expand, including the implementation of State-led teacher evaluation systems, college and career-ready standards and new on-line assessments, they must be afforded specialized opportunities for professional learning and growth targeted to their role as instructional leaders. Therefore, the Committee requests that the Department of Education provide guidance to SEAs on ensuring that sufficient professional development opportunities are provided to principals in order to help them improve instructional leadership capacity."

This recognition for the role of principals is a strong step forward and will help lay the groundwork in advocating for an increase in Title II professional development funding for principals next year.

In other developments, the GEB reviewed joint comments filed by AFSA, NASSP and NAESP in response to a request from the Department of Education for comments in regard to use of funds under Title II, Part A. AFSA, NASSP and NAESP support the Title II program, which provides funding for principal professional development.

The GEB also reviewed the AFSA, NASSP and NAESP joint comments in response to the Department of Education's Proposed Requirements for the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program. The joint comments expressed strong opposition to the new and continued requirements to immediately remove existing principals under certain models. The comments also expressed support for some of the new, evidence-based models that do not require the immediate dismissal of principals. ■

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

AFSA Joins With NAESP and NASSP to Promote Positive Change in Policy for School Leaders

Throughout 2014, AFSA has collaborated with the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), advocating for increased, meaningful and targeted professional development for principals.

On Oct. 22, AFSA, NAESP and NASSP sent a joint letter to the chairman and ranking member of the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Appropriations. The letter urged these key senators to complete and pass an omnibus appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2015, and to make a strong investment in education within the package.

The letter also called for increasing investment in several specific programs that support principals and school leaders in their efforts to provide all children with a high-quality education. The letter called for Congress to:

- Increase principal professional learning opportunities for pre-K, elementary, middle-level and high school principals by including language requiring education agencies receiving Title II funds from ESEA to allocate no less than 10 percent of the total funds available toward professional development.
- Reinstate funding for the School Leadership Program at the president's FY 2015 requested level of \$35 million. The program, which has been cut since FY 2012, is the only federal program dedicated to recruiting, mentoring and training principals and assistant principals serving in high-need schools.

- Fund 40 percent of the national average cost per pupil for students receiving Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) services as promised. To date, Congress has provided less than half this amount for several years, despite increasing costs and inflation.

The letter also praised the subcommittee for approving a slight increase in Title I funding for the neediest students and school districts to \$14.4 billion in FY 2015, and for providing \$350 million to support preschool development grants.

AFSA, NAESP and NASSP are in the process of scheduling meetings with several key Senate Appropriations Committee members to advocate for increases to these critical programs, and to ensure the voices of principals and school leaders are heard.

AFSA also is proud to report that as a result of many letters, meetings with members of Congress and phone calls, the Senate Appropriations subcommittee included report language emphasizing the importance of principals in its FY 2015 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies bill.

For more details on these updates, visit AFSAadmin.com/. ■

Update on School Improvement Grants (SIG)

AFSA long has opposed the four School Improvement Grant (SIG) turnaround models, which require either removing the principal immediately, closing the school or converting the school to a charter. On Sept. 8, the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) released a proposal outlining additional models for the SIG program. While this proposal makes several positive changes, DOE's proposal does nothing to change the requirement of removing principals in the existing turnaround and transformation models.

Highlights from New Models

Whole School Reform/ Partnership Model

This model allows a district to use SIG funds to implement an evidence-based, whole-school reform strategy in partnership with a strategy developer. The proposed strategy requires evidence of effectiveness, including a "statistically significant" impact on student academic achievement or attainment.

State Choice Model

This model allows states to implement one state-determined intervention model, providing states with more flexibility to design a model that works for them. In this model, the principal's performance must be reviewed. Following review, the principal must

be replaced OR evidence must show the principal is capable of leading the school transformation.

Early Learning Model

This model allows districts to use SIG money to establish an early learning intervention program for elementary schools. It also requires the school to offer full-day kindergarten and establish or expand a "high-quality preschool program." The program must "include structural elements that are evidence based and nationally recognized as important for ensuring program quality."

While this model takes a comprehensive approach to retaining and rewarding high-quality leaders, it also requires replacing the school's principal.

Response to the SIG Program Proposal

On Oct. 8, AFSA, NAESP and NASSP worked together to review the department's proposal and submitted official comments and recommendations. The comments expressed praise for elements of the new models and support for new rules, which call for:

- all models to address training and support as part of a school's intervention;
- extending SIG awards to five years to provide sufficient turnaround time; and
- including teacher and principal input in designing and developing evaluations.

However, in their comments to Congress, AFSA, NAESP and NASSP expressed concern for the continued option to replace principals.

"Typically, the existing principal and supervisory staffs have deep ties within the community and a unique understanding of the surrounding community and local culture. Rather than immediately replace them, all principals and staff should first have the opportunity to be evaluated and provided with the necessary support to lead the successful school turnaround."

The comments and recommendations concluded that "the required removal of the principal in each of the original four school turnaround models as a condition for receiving SIG funding leaves us greatly concerned about the ultimate success of this critical program." ■

"Typically, the existing principal and supervisory staffs have deep ties within the community and a unique understanding of the surrounding community and local culture. Rather than immediately replace them, all principals and staff should first have the opportunity to be evaluated and provided with the necessary support to lead the successful school turnaround."

AFSA Joins Leaders at White House Summit for Working Families

With working families continuing to face daily hardships in the current economy, The White House Summit on Working Families attended by AFSA President Diann Woodard, along with AFSA Secretary Wendi Caporicci and AFSA Executive Board members, Sandra Inga and Aona Jefferson, proved to be a powerful discussion on the challenges posed by America's work-life balance.

Hosted jointly by the Center for American Progress, the Department of Labor, and the White House Council on Women and Girls, the summit's goal was to create momentum toward stronger U.S. policies and laws in favor of workers. The discussions were joined by an audience of more than 1,500 people—business and labor leaders as well as legislators, the media and everyday citizens—who addressed workplace flexibility, equal pay, opportunities for low-wage workers, and access to child care and early childhood education. Inevitably, much of the summit focused on issues facing working women.

"The summit was very exciting," said Jefferson. "I thoroughly enjoyed the workshops as well as the messages brought to us by President Obama and Vice President Biden."

Attendees heard from a wide range of high-profile speakers and leaders on women's issues, including Maria Shriver, Gloria Steinem, Rep. Nancy Pelosi and First Lady Michelle Obama, among others.

"Although the political speakers on stage were amazing, the really inspiring stories came from the everyday working woman," said Inga. "Being in that room, among many other working women, made it so evident that we are all tightly connected."

This is not the first time AFSA has joined in supporting the needs of working women. At the AFL-CIO Convention in September 2013, President Woodard,

as a member of the AFL-CIO Executive Council and vice chair of the Executive Council Committee on Women Workers, presented Resolution 18, "AFL-CIO Women's Initiative: Shared Values, Shared Leadership, Shared Prosperity." This resolution calls for equality in pay and opportunity for all, and respect for work, family and community, including respect for women's choices. It also urges joining allies in a shared agenda, as well as building a movement to revitalize democracy, responding to the global economic crisis and developing durable community partnerships.

At the summit, President Obama reminded the audience the United States is one of two "developed countries in the world that does not offer paid maternity leave." He encouraged employers to accommodate pregnant workers, and to increase safety and efficiency.

"This is about you, too, men. Anything that makes life harder for women makes life harder for families, and makes life harder for children." The president also spoke strongly in support of paid family leave and affordable child care, saying the two are not "frills," they are "basic needs."

When Wendy Caporicci was asked what inspired her most about the summit, she spoke of her admiration for the working women who discussed their experiences in having to choose between their families or their jobs, and for such employers as Bob Moritz, CEO of PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), who spoke of his company's refusal to deny workers quality family benefits.

"It was impressive to see so many key leaders come together to aggressively support family and women's issues," Caporicci said.

The first lady called the summit a new movement, and encouraged workers not to lose hope on work-life flexibility. While the summit presented a promising start to a united front among leaders, keeping legislators accountable for their support of working families is a continual process and must stay at the forefront of our conversation.

"The importance of unions carrying on to support the working class was manifested two times over," AFSA Executive Board member Inga concluded. "I marvel at the plight of the working woman and am proud, as a union member, to support the cause." ■



From left, Sandra Inga, Aona Jefferson, Wendi Caporicci and Diann Woodard at The White House Summit on Working Families.

BASAS Wins Contract Arbitration

In late July, the Boston Association of School Administrators and Supervisors (BASAS), AFSA Local 6, achieved a huge victory in an arbitration case involving improper employment notifications for 33 school leaders.

"This is a huge win for us because it means a number of people will be made whole," said BASAS President Dominic Sacchetti.

Per the contract between Boston Public Schools (BPS) and BASAS, administrators are to receive a written notice of changes in employment by a certain date agreed to by BASAS and BPS. Previous arbitration with BPS dictated that employment notices be sent by certified mail and read-receipted by a certain date.

At the end of the 2012–2013 school year, 33 administrators received emails from BPS stating official written layoff notices would be sent by BPS in a few days. However, the administrators did not receive the written notices by the time dictated by contract. Sacchetti filed the case.

BASAS leadership maintained the emails from BPS did not constitute a written notice as agreed to by the two groups.

The arbitrator for the case agreed with BASAS, basing the decision on previous arbitration and past practices. The arbitrator also determined BPS still was under obligation to send the certified letter, ruling that BPS's language in the email and the email itself were not official written notifications.

The arbitrator ruled the laid-off administrators were to be made "whole" due to BPS's inability to follow the terms of the contract. While the two groups have yet to agree on the terms of being made whole, Sacchetti said he was confident the administrators would be treated fairly.

In addition to the 33 administrators affected in the 2012–2013 school year, 16 administrators were issued employment notices in the same way after the 2013–2014 school year. BPS and BASAS came to an agreement outside of court that will make these administrators whole and allow them to keep their jobs with BPS. ■



Boston Association of School Administrators and Supervisors President Dominic Sacchetti filed a case against Boston Public Schools regarding the improper notification of layoffs to administrators.



D.C. City Council Finally Approves CSO Contract With DCPS

After a seven-year stalemate, the Council of School Officers, AFSA, Local 4, AFL-CIO in Washington, D.C., and DC Public Schools (DCPS) have reached a collective bargaining agreement. The D.C. City Council OK'd the agreement unanimously on Oct. 7, four months after CSO members ratified the contract.

Contract implementation can't come soon enough for CSO members—due to ongoing negotiation delays for the contract as well as salary freezes, many of them have not received a raise since the previous contract ended in 2007.

Last fall, DCPS and CSO came close to an agreement, but CSO vetoed the contract due to an outlined, high penalty fee of \$5,000 for principals not providing notification of intent to leave by February, and other compensation issues.

On May 30, CSO overwhelmingly approved a tentative contract signed by both CSO and DCPS. The pact secured:

- a raise over the duration of the contract effective retroactively from Oct. 1, 2013, through Sept. 30, 2017. Principals will receive a 2 percent raise for 2014 and a 3 percent raise for the next three years. All other members will receive a 3 percent raise per year for the four years of the contract;
- salary parity for related service providers (RSPs) to ensure their pay is consistent with WTU (Washington Teachers' Union) RSPs;
- additional time off for members during the Thanksgiving break, and more flexibility to ensure members can use earned vacation time;
- an extended March 15 deadline for principals to declare their intent to leave, with the penalty reduced to \$3,000;

- a say in building security coverage for school leaders, with a call for a principal task force to determine security changes;
- a \$50,000 annual payment from DCPS over the life of the contract for CSO members to pay membership dues to their respective national organizations; and
- an outlined bonus structure for CSO members who receive an end-of-year rating of "highly effective."

On Sept. 30, Aona Jefferson, president of the CSO, offered the following testimony at the hearing held by Chairman Phil Mendelson and D.C. City Council members regarding the ongoing delay of action or movement on the contract:

"Our members are hardworking employees who render quality service to the children of the District of Columbia every day. They are truly deserving of this contract.... I implore you, Chairman Mendelson and council members, to swiftly approve our contract. It's time to show appreciation for the members of the Council of School Officers in DC Public Schools and thank them for their unselfish service they give daily to the students in this capital city."

Following Jefferson's testimony, the collective bargaining agreement was passed unanimously by the DC City Council. Exact dates of payment were not provided, but the CSO was assured that all retroactive money from Oct. 1, 2013, will be given in a lump-sum payment to members. ■

Harris v. Quinn Ruling Could Weaken Unions

Sending shock waves through the labor community, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on June 30 that home health care workers in Illinois are not “full-fledged public employees” and therefore do not have to pay agency fees. The ruling was a major disappointment and potential setback to SEIU, which includes some 400,000 home health care workers in its membership.

Illinois is one of 26 states that require all public-sector employees to pay agency fees, or the partial union dues collected from employees by unions, regardless of membership. These fees cover the representation and negotiation help all public-sector employees receive from unions. Despite receiving part of their pay through Medicaid, the Supreme Court ruling stated that because home health care workers are hired or fired by individual patients and because they

work in private homes, they are outside of the agency fee requirements.

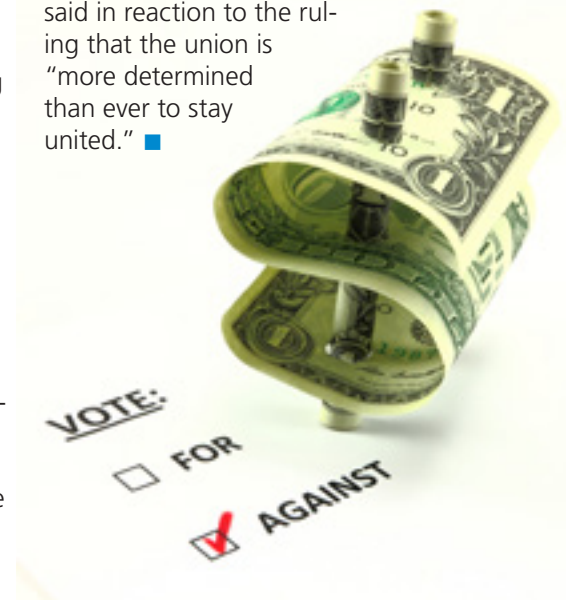
“Fortunately, because the court’s decision focused on the quasi-public status of the home health care workers who work for the patients who hire them, not the state who pays them, the ruling does not invalidate the agency fee laws for most public employees, including school administrators, teachers, police, firefighters and others,” said AFSA General Counsel Bruce Bryant.

While the ruling focused specifically on home health care workers, the labor community expressed concern over the ruling’s significance for all workers moving forward.

“The extreme views of today’s Supreme Court aimed at home care workers aren’t just bad for unions—they’re bad

for all workers and the middle class,” said AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka in response to the ruling. “But the attacks on the freedom of workers to come together are nothing new. They are part of an onslaught from anti-worker organizations hostile to raising wages or improving benefits for millions of people.”

SEIU President Mary Kay Henry said in reaction to the ruling that the union is “more determined than ever to stay united.” ■



School Leader Standards Update Brings Focus to Community Involvement

For the first time since 2008, updates for the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards for guiding, preparing and evaluating school leaders are under way. The ISLLC is composed of 32 education agencies and 13 education administrative associations with the purpose of providing “a means through which states can work together to develop and implement model standards, assessments, professional development and licensing procedures for school leaders.”

The ISLLC’s standards first were introduced in 1996, and have faced continual updates to match the increasingly complex responsibilities of school leaders. State adoption of the standards is voluntary and standards can

be modified to fit a state’s needs. The 2008 edited standards were adopted by 45 states and the District of Columbia.

Efforts to update the standards are being led by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA), with \$1 million in funding from the Wallace Foundation.

Currently, the standards focus on promoting student success, nurturing school culture, engaging families and communities, and strengthening the integrity and preparedness of school administrators. The revision increases the list of standards from six to 11, and will contain a greater emphasis on

community engagement, creating a stronger collaborative mode of school leadership and ethical leadership, according to *Education Week*.

To update the standards, CCSSO had more than 1,000 principals and superintendents complete surveys and more than 100 participated in focus groups. For the first time, the standards also included a public comment period, which ended Oct. 10, providing school leaders with a chance to offer feedback. Using that feedback from the public, the standards are expected to be finalized and released by early next year. To review a draft of the updated standards, visit www.ccsso.org. ■

Vergara v. California: A Deeply Flawed Lawsuit With Far-Reaching Implications

In a June 10, 16-page ruling, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Rolf M. Treu ruled California's tenure process for grade school teachers unconstitutional and stripped rules that made dismissing instructors more difficult and expensive than firing other state employees. He also eliminated regulations that made seniority the primary factor in deciding which teachers were to be laid off.

Treu described the laws as allowing "grossly ineffective" teachers to remain in the classroom, putting students—specifically minority and low-income students—at a huge disadvantage with their peers.

The plaintiffs in the case included nine students who were organized and supported by Students Matter, a non-profit group created by Silicon Valley multimillionaire David Welch. Backed by other corporate education reformers who support privatizing public education and who continually attack teachers' unions, Welch launched an aggressive, one-sided public relations campaign against the state of California and the California Teachers Association.

"The most concerning issue regarding this ruling is that it once again places all blame for poor student performance on the shoulders of public educators, which is short-sighted," said AFSA President Diann Woodard.

The attack on teacher tenure continues to spread with Students Matter and the Vergara legal team recently challenging teacher tenure in New York.

The suit was filed on behalf of seven students by the New York City Parents Union, which is arguing that tenure and too many due process rights for teachers deprive students of a good education.

"The tenure and seniority laws being challenged in California and New York exist to protect experienced and qualified educators from arbitrary removal by hostile school boards and superintendents," noted AFSA General Counsel Bruce Bryant. "Eliminating these protections would not result in better education for students, but rather would put them at greater risk of poor instruction."

"Prior to having a tenure law, it was very difficult to keep good teachers in school districts," AFSA Executive Vice President James S. Dierke said. "There were not a lot of protections for teachers, so you

just didn't get a lot of quality people going into education."

California Common Sense, a nonpartisan think tank, discussed the Vergara case, highlighting the lack of resources often facing teachers. "In addition to having less education and less experience," Common Sense pointed out, "teachers in schools with more minority students and students in poverty are more likely to teach outside of their own field of training, a phenomena (sic) known as out-of-field teaching."

Following the Vergara v. California ruling, AFSA sent out an Action Alert urging members to:

- Stand with Teachers in California,
- and to sign an online thank you card expressing appreciation for all that teachers do.

"When educators are stretched thin, forced to make do within their constrained resources and then punished for their efforts, we only bolster the walls of inequality that we are trying to break down," Woodard said. "Instead of stripping our educators of crucial rights, we need to look at the big picture and address the root of the problem, which is the resource and professional development gaps facing many of our lower-income school districts." ■

"The most concerning issue regarding this ruling is that it once again places all blame for poor student performance on the shoulders of public educators, which is short-sighted," said AFSA President Diann Woodard.

Unaccompanied Migrant Children Guaranteed Access to Public Education

With Congress unable to agree on comprehensive immigration reform, on November 20, President Obama announced his plans to take executive action on immigration. This includes a new program, which would allow parents of U.S. citizens who are unauthorized immigrants to be eligible for legal status, pending background checks. While this plan is a step in the right direction, affecting up to 5 million people, many aspiring immigrants that contribute to our communities, our economy and our country will still be denied a voice in the workplace and essential rights in our society.

In addition to undocumented workers, the United States continues to experience an influx of unaccompanied migrant children. In a 2014 report released by the nonprofit Kids in Need of Defense, an estimated 74,000 unaccompanied migrant children will attempt to cross the border this year. While the ultimate fate of these children is unclear, one fact is certain—these children have the right under current law to an education and a safe learning environment in our nation's public schools.

To address this surge of unaccompanied children crossing into the United States, the Department of Education (DOE) recently released a fact sheet to help education leaders better understand the rights of children in the midst of immigration.

When unaccompanied minors cross the border, they are handed over to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and placed in an HHS shelter. These shelters provide educational services; however, these children are not enrolled in schools until they are released to their sponsors. Federal law then entitles children living with sponsors and working through the

immigration process “to enroll in public elementary and secondary schools in their local communities and to benefit from educational services.”

While defining these rights for education leaders is a step in the right direction, the lack of a comprehensive immigration policy will continue to affect students negatively.

“School leaders are charged with providing a safe and secure place for all children, regardless of their immigration status,” said AFSA President Diann Woodard. “However, without comprehensive immigration reform, there are several issues that hinder our ability to provide all students with these basic needs.”

In April 2012, Woodard traveled to Alabama with the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists and the AFL-CIO after the state's enactment of an anti-immigration law, HB 56, which among other harsh policies required K–12 school officials to question students about their immigration status and that of their parents. According to

the detailed report provided by the AFL-CIO: “By the first Monday after HB 56 was allowed to take effect, 2,285 Latino students were absent from schools across Alabama—7 percent of the total Latino school population.” Other teachers in the report discussed how the policy “zapped the drive to learn, succeed and hope for a better life” from students.

In a resolution passed at its 2012 Triennial Convention, AFSA called on Congress to pass “common-sense immigration reform that includes a practical and inclusive road map to citizenship.”

Schools can find additional resources on unaccompanied minors in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA); English Language Acquisition Programs mandated by ESEA Title III; and other programs named in the DOE's fact sheet. To access the DOE's fact sheet for education leaders, visit www2.ed.gov/policy/rights/guid/unaccompanied-children.pdf. ■



Academic Success Requires a Common Core of Resource Equality

In 2011, Stanford University sociologist Sean F. Reardon published his study reviewing student test scores from 1960 to 2007. Reardon compared children from families in the 90th percentile of income and children from the 10th percentile. The study revealed that in the early years, the achievement gap occurred along racial lines, with black and Hispanic students performing substantially worse on education measures. While Reardon saw the black-white achievement gap decrease considerably by the end of the 47-year study, he found a 40 percent increase in the achievement gap relating to income.

What Reardon's study reveals is that the shifting job market, which increasingly favors workers with a college degree and an education model that places high value on standardized test scores, combine to put family income disproportionately high on the list of crucial factors in determining a student's success.

Paramount Importance of Resource Equality

"As educators, we have yet to see a solution for ensuring that all students, no matter their family background, receive the tools they need to succeed," said Diann Woodard, president of AFSA. "While we have seen Common Core State Standards implemented, we lack a national standard for providing necessary resources. Instead, schools and districts are still being required to compete for funds. How can we standardize curriculum when we have yet to standardize resource allocation across all schools and classrooms?"

Although the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) initially were met with widespread acceptance—with 43 states adopting them before they were written, vetted and approved—states now are repealing or amending these standards in droves. Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, Oklahoma and South Carolina have passed legislation repealing the standards, while other states have tried to pass legislation repealing or revising the standards.

The intent of the CCSS, according to its authors, is to generate "high standards that are consistent across states," and to "provide teachers, parents, and students with a set of clear expectations to ensure all students have the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in college, career, and life upon graduation from high school, regardless of where they live."

However, even at the start of the implementation of CCSS, there was an imbalance in resources and implementation, with certain states and districts already having a better support system in place to prepare classrooms for new material.

"With the right allotment of resources, increased professional development and input from educators, the Common Core State Standards could be a step in the right direction," said Woodard. "But until those pieces are in place, we are not decreasing any gaps."

According to a working paper published in May 2014 by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), increasing overall school spending could make a valuable impact on the income achievement gap.

While the study found limited effects on children from higher-income families, graduation rates rose by 23 percent for low-income students who spent 12 years in districts that increased spending by 20 percent. Later in life, these same students were 20 percent less likely to fall into poverty during any given year between ages 25 and 45. Their individual wages were 25 percent higher and their family incomes were 52 percent higher than they would have been without the changes in district financing. The authors of the study concluded that the effects of the increased spending could "eliminate between two-thirds and all of the gaps" between adults that were raised in poor and nonpoor families.

"As standards increase for our students, we must also raise the standards of our elected officials and decision makers. Moving forward in education must begin with sufficient resources and professional development. Without these pieces, we are stuck in the mud," Woodard said. ■



Classrooms Gear Up for More Web Connectivity

FCC Approves First Step Toward E-Rate Overhaul

In July, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) approved a proposal 3-2 to phase out phone and “legacy” services to schools and libraries and revamp its E-Rate program, taking the largest step toward bringing 21st-century technologies to all students since the program started in 1996.

The new reforms will phase out support for obsolete services, allocating \$1 billion in 2015 for Wi-Fi in schools and libraries, and another \$1 billion in 2016. The current plan locks in funding for the next two years, but does not commit the FCC to any future amount.

Schools with high poverty levels will be given preference with the program match set at 4 to 1, meaning the FCC will match every dollar spent with four in the nation’s most impoverished schools. This will increase the amount of funding given to urban schools by 60 percent and rural schools by 75 percent.

AESA President Diann Woodard praised the FCC’s E-Rate overhaul, but expressed concern for potentially overlooked students.

“We need every student to have access to 21st-century technologies and the E-Rate redesign helps us move toward this goal,” she said. “However, there are many students out there living in rural areas where the most basic Internet connection is not a reality. We must address these infrastructure needs first and foremost if we truly want to make progress toward closing the achievement gap nationwide.”

Tom Wheeler, chairman of the FCC, took another step forward in the overhaul process on Nov. 17, submitting a proposal to increase the FCC’s yearly cap on E-Rate funding from \$1.5 billion annually to \$3.9 billion.

Wheeler’s proposal emphasizes the importance of improving broadband

infrastructure to close gaps between affluent and low-income areas and to ensure sustainable progress in Internet access and speed nationwide.

According to the proposal’s fact sheet, while 39 percent of schools in affluent areas currently meet speed targets, only 14 percent of schools in low-income rural and urban areas meet those targets.

Wheeler estimates the spending increases will cost the average consumer an extra \$1.90 per year. “While the impact on consumers will be small, the impact on children, teachers, local communities and American competitiveness will be significant,” the proposal’s fact sheet states.

The FCC will vote on Wheeler’s newest proposal on Dec. 11. The E-Rate modernization order and related documents can be accessed at www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-releases-e-rate-modernization-order. ■



NEWARK SUPERINTENDENT CANCELS IN D.C., REFUSES TO PUBLICLY ADDRESS NEWARK RESIDENTS

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Many local residents feel that under One Newark they have no say in what happens in their schools, and that Anderson is severely inaccessible.

"She won't come to the board meetings," said Dixon. "She's taken away the community in our schools. The whole One Newark plan was created without the input of the community."

AFSA, which registered for the event and attended the protest outside of AEI, defended five of its local members in Newark this year after they were suspended for being involved in events related to speaking out against the

One Newark plan. To date, only one has been reinstated. All others were relocated or left the district.

"Supporters of One Newark continue to ignore and shun those most affected by its agenda, and today's cancellation was no exception," said Diann Woodard, president of AFSA. "Closing schools that are the very fabric holding our communities together and often providing the one constant in a child's life is unacceptable. We stand by concerned Newark community members, and will work to ensure their collective concerns and voices are heard." ■



A WAKE-UP CALL FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

continued from page 2

professional role as community leaders who accept responsibility for educating and informing the public; and be bold in our willingness to make the unpopular decisions necessary for the success of the children and our school communities.

If we take these steps to re-establish ourselves as the preeminent authority on what it takes to turn around schools and to develop quality graduates, in years to come we will not look back at this election as a defeat, but rather as a wake-up call that reminded us to forge ahead on the "road less traveled," a road on which we will have been the driving force in making the difference for the children of our public schools, who need our leadership more than ever. ■

UPCOMING EVENTS 2015

Jan. 15–19
AFL-CIO Martin Luther King Jr. Civil and Human Rights Conference
ATLANTA

Jan. 16–17
AFSA General Executive Board Meeting
ATLANTA

Feb. 19–21
NASSP Ignite 15 Conference
SAN DIEGO

Feb. 24–25
AFL-CIO Executive Council Committee Meeting
ATLANTA

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