

THE Leader


American Federation of
School Administrators
AFSA, AFL-CIO

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A NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Engaged Leadership in New Orleans

Administrators Come Together for 14th Triennial Constitutional Convention

AFSA's recent convention featured an eventful four days filled with valuable presentations, panels and workshops along with great Southern cuisine and entertainment. Hundreds of school leaders from across the nation gathered in the Crescent City for an unforgettable educational experience.

Attendees received a warm welcome to New Orleans at the opening reception, "Let the Good Times Roll," with greetings from AFSA President Diann Woodard and WBOK radio host Oliver Thomas. Local performers and a parade also got the convention off to a terrific start.

On the second day, attendees heard insightful speeches from Dr. Tyrone Howard, Newark, New Jersey, Mayor Ras J. Baraka and Executive Director of the First Five Years Fund Kris Perry. Workshops presented throughout the day focused on improving child literacy, building education

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The opening reception's local performances were enjoyed by all.

Convention Elects New Officers and GEB Members

At the conclusion of the AFSA 14th Triennial Constitutional Convention, the AFSA officers and General Executive Board members were sworn in.

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Delegates Vote on Important Resolutions

Delegates to AFSA's 14th Triennial Convention engaged in debate on a number of resolutions on issues of significant concern to school leaders, including testing and evaluation, charter schools, student privacy and building coalitions in support of our profession, among others.

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2016 Presidential Candidates Attend AFL-CIO Executive Council Meeting

AFSA President Diann Woodard attended the AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting in Silver Spring, Maryland, in late July. During the meeting, the Executive Council met with five of the 2016 presidential candidates; however, no presidential endorsement was made.

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The Time is Now

In the labor movement, we often say each election is the most important. Well, this election is, because we will elect a new president and a Congress that will set the education agenda that will determine the future of our profession and the children we serve.



AFSA President Diann Woodard

The reauthorization of the Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is the closest it has been in years to actually being passed and beginning to repair the flaws in No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

The presidential election is especially important this time around because, for the first time in memory, education appears to be high on the candidates' agendas.

It is not enough to select a candidate because he or she is the lesser of two evils. For seven years, we have suffered from that syndrome. Our next president needs to be firmly committed to policies that ensure public education for all children is more than lofty rhetoric. We also need to elect a Congress that shares our commitment to an education agenda that recognizes and empowers our crucial role in running successful schools.

As educators, we therefore must sift through the rhetoric and the candidates' records to see who really believes all children are important, and that the professionals who work in schools should be entitled to a voice in the development of educational policy.

AFSA, in collaboration with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), continues to push for better principal preparation and professional development programs, comprehensive literacy programs for children, digital learning initiatives, early childhood education alignment and professional development for pre-K-3 educators, and additional supports for students in middle level and high schools, as well as the elimination of Draconian accountability measures.

To make a difference this election year, we will need money to advocate for these issues. In a perfect world, money should not be needed to see that the voices of all are heard. But Washington is anything but perfect these days. And advocacy in the nation's capital doesn't come cheap.

We currently have an excellent lobbyist working on our behalf, but we need to be able to support members of Congress who support our issues; to do that, AFSA must strengthen our political action committee (PAC).

At the recent convention a resolution was passed to develop a PAC program and to encourage members to contribute to the federal fund. The monies in the PAC will help us to advocate more forcefully on behalf of our members, and in support of educational policies that are truly best for all children.

With the resources in place on the ground in D.C., and a unionwide commitment to build the power of our PAC, the time is now for all of us to share in making sure our profession's voice is heard by contributing to our PAC as never before. ■

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*The Leader is a member of the
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Convention Elects New Officers and GEB Members

At the conclusion of the AFSA 14th Triennial Constitutional Convention, the AFSA officers and General Executive Board members were sworn in. AFSA welcomes newly elected GEB members Lauran Waters-Cherry and Mark Cannizzaro, as well as new AFSA Executive Vice President Ernest Logan and Secretary-Treasurer Dr. Leonard Pugliese.

"I am honored to have been elected as AFSA secretary-treasurer," Local 20's Pugliese said. "I look forward to working with the other members of the GEB as we continue to advocate on behalf of the thousands of administrators and supervisors who are represented by AFSA. I say thank you to the members of AFSA for giving me the opportunity to serve them in this new and challenging capacity."

Cannizzaro said he looks forward "to collaborating with the AFSA leadership and all those interested in furthering

public education for our nation's students. The work our members do is incredibly rewarding and equally as challenging. Our schools and our children will benefit when school leaders are supported and respected."

"Today, some may say 'public education is under attack.' Once again, public education is the civil rights fight of our century," said Waters-Cherry. "The opportunity to join passionate and dedicated leaders from around our nation championing the right to have and advocate for quality, equitable and effective public schools, their site leaders and the children we serve is a worthwhile cause. I am honored, humbled and ready to join the American Federation of School Administrators toward accomplishing this task."

Former officers James Dierke and Wendi Caporicci also join the General Executive Board. ■



AFSA congratulates the newly elected AFSA officers and GEB members.

Mayor Baraka Electrifies Convention

With his impassioned call to revitalize American education and restore community schools, Mayor Ras J. Baraka of Newark, New Jersey, inspired delegates to the union's 14th Triennial Constitutional Convention in New Orleans.

"There is not a crisis in education," AFSA member Baraka trumpeted. "There is only a crisis in economic deprivation and racial segregation."

Other successful countries do not look at schools as a byproduct of the economy, he said, berating the test-driven approach of No Child Left Behind.

"The problem is we have a lot of people coming out of these schools that know how to pass a test but can't think."

The mayor asserted that the current attack on public schools is really an attack on public-sector unions. "They actually believe," he said, "that they

don't really need a principal anymore. They believe that schools can just be managed. And they're absolutely wrong."

"Imagination and courage built the greatness of America," he said, "not tests. I believe in community schools, because I went to a community school," Baraka said, adding that there is a need for wraparound city services to make community schools work.

Before being elected mayor on May 13, 2014, Baraka was an educator for 22 years, including a stint as a Newark principal before the state took control of the school system, a takeover he continues to challenge.

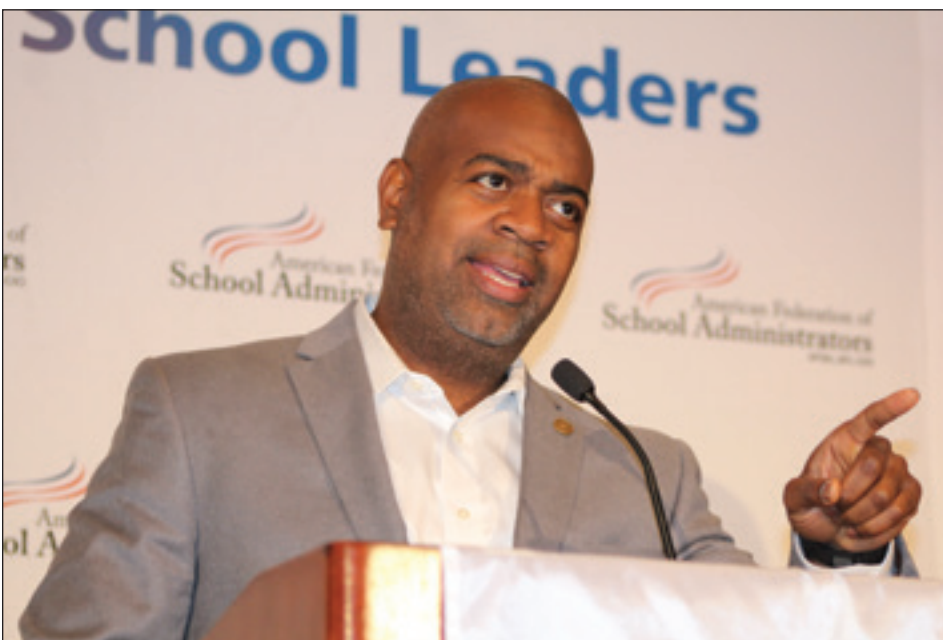
On short notice, he was thrust into the leadership of Central High School. He moved quickly to make the school the center of community activity. "I knew that we needed a community wrapped around the school. And that's what we need to do in this country. We need to wrap communities around the schools, to make the schools the center of our communities."

The leaders of the public schools are very, very important, Baraka told convention attendees, and he mocked the fact that when he ran for mayor, people actually questioned whether he had administrative experience.

"The one thing I learned [quickly as a principal] was to think on my feet," he said to appreciative laughter. "To make sure that by noon the school ran like none of the bad things that happened before 8 o'clock had really happened."

He encouraged the attendees not to be discouraged, because a majority of Americans, he said, continue to believe in the value of public education.

"If we followed No Child Left Behind, every school in America would be a failure," he said. "So we can't get discouraged by a policy that was false in the first place."



Mayor Ras J. Baraka

"The problem is we have a lot of people coming out of these schools that know how to pass a test but can't think."

Of charter schools, Baraka said they were not public, "because they are not governed by the public. And if they're not governed by the public, they're private schools."

He expressed pride in the work of school leaders. "We know the importance of public school leaders. We should make our schools the best schools that there are in any community where we are. We know how important we are in this whole equation. We

taught people to teach people how to teach people every day, sometimes in very difficult circumstances."

Forty percent of children in Newark live in poverty, he noted. Those who are school leaders working in such dire situations, he said, "are heroes."

"We need to begin to put people to work. Give them a job. Full employment is important. Poverty exists because of unemployment.

"Fix that," he declared, "and you will fix everything."

At the end of his speech, Baraka was presented a crystal plaque hailing his advocacy for public schools. In presenting the award, President Woodard commended the mayor for what she called "the Ras effect," which she said calls on all to stand up and speak out. ■

"Why Are You Excited to Attend the Convention?"

During the AFSA 14th Triennial Constitutional Convention, excitement filled the air as attendees arrived for registration and check-in on the first day. Enthusiastic delegates shared their thoughts about what they were looking forward to the most.



"I'm excited to be here in New Orleans to learn more about media, cyber safety and privacy. These are very crucial issues in education right now."

***Rajinder Kaur**, AFSA Local 1, Council of School Supervisors & Administrators (CSA), New York, New York*

"I'm very excited to learn various skills and strategies to enhance my organization [and] most importantly to strengthen our union. I'm also looking forward to gaining support from our community stakeholders."

***Carey Cunningham**, AFSA Local 44, Administrators Association of the St. Louis Public Schools*



"I came to participate in the sessions to gain knowledge. I am particularly interested in and looking forward to the session on grieving. I want to be able to apply those techniques to help the students who [have] gone through these experiences."

***Felix Durana**, AFSA Local 101, St. Thomas/St. John Educational Administrators' Association, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands*

Caring for Grieving Students Discussed

“Crisis and loss have a number of impacts on grieving children, including a negative impact on cognitive functioning,” bereavement expert Dr. David Schonfeld told a plenary of AFSA’s 14th Triennial Constitutional Convention.

Schonfeld, whose expertise on student grieving was essential in creating the 14-member (including AFSA) Coalition to Support Grieving Students, explained that absenteeism and social regression may result, which leads to the need for educators to “take time in school to help children adjust to crisis and loss.”

“You should not fear that you feel human emotions,” he said. Expressing such emotions “allows you to connect with people. Showing human emotions is not something you should ever regret.” He counseled caution, though, on sharing one’s personal experiences with a grieving student, for such comments are likely to be considered comparisons and feel inherently competitive to the aggrieved child.

“We need to allow children to deal with their grief in a way that is not emotionally destructive,” he said. “We, too, need to recognize that it’s distressing for us to witness children who are in distress.”

Schonfeld shared survey data on the pervasive need among educators for training on how to deal with grieving students, because “loss is common among children.”

From their early years, children are taught not to talk about death, which predisposes bereaved children to repress their grief. They often are very distressed by the grief their parents are experiencing, which leads them to withdraw emotionally. They also fear being

overwhelmed emotionally in public settings. They keep their loss—and the extent of its impact on them—private.

These repressed feelings often have a negative impact on a child’s ability to concentrate academically. Schonfeld shared a video of a child who was diagnosed as having a learning disability after his father had been murdered, when, in fact, the student was finding it difficult to concentrate and learn because of his grief.

Schonfeld offered a series of examples of things not to say to children who have experienced a loss, including not trying to “cheer up” survivors or “encourage them to be strong or cover their emotions.” Children should be encouraged “to share their emotions,” he said.

“You need to allow the child or the parent to be upset and tolerate them,” suspending any judgment. Children’s inherent egocentrism, and their capacity for magical thinking, limits their ability to react emotionally to loss, death or crisis.

In almost all instances, children assume they share some guilt for the loss of a loved one because they are ill equipped to cope with causality. He therefore encouraged reassuring children that they lack responsibility for the loss.

Children in communities that experience violence do not get used to the loss of their peers, Schonfeld noted. “Kids don’t get used to loss when they repeatedly experience violent death



Dr. David Schonfeld

in their community. They just see it as futile to ask for help,” he said.

He suggested that valid expressions of support include attending the family’s funeral, being aware of community resources and offering them to the family, such as assigning a mentor to the grieving child, and providing follow up, as grieving is a long-term experience.

Schonfeld addressed the issue of “grief triggers,” which he said are common among grieving students, and can be almost anything that reminds them of the person they have lost. Procedures should be set for the student to obtain support, such as calling a parent or being allowed to visit a nurse.

“It’s an honor and a privilege to care for children when they have experienced loss,” he concluded, and encouraged attendees to visit the coalition’s website, www.grievingstudents.org. ■

Children’s inherent egocentrism, and their capacity for magical thinking, limits their ability to react emotionally to loss, death or crisis.

Human Touch Essential for Educational Equity

Dr. Tyrone Howard Gives Speech at the 14th Triennial Constitutional Convention

"You have the toughest job in the world," Dr. Tyrone Howard, professor of education at the Urban Division of the UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, told delegates to AFSA's convention in New Orleans. "When there's a conversation about what's wrong with public education, the critics point to your doorstep."

Howard, who hails from Compton, California, is the founder and director of the Black Male Institute at UCLA, and is also the director of Center X, a consortium of urban school professionals working toward social justice and educational equity.

"Educators," he said, "are called on to fix problems they did not create. The challenges that school leaders see every day are often beyond their ability to rectify," leading him to conclude, "We need bold, courageous leaders."

Leadership requires a clear purpose, unwavering passion and a powerful purpose, Howard said. "Our singular purpose should be to improve the lives of students—first, foremost and always."

"We cannot get to the academic side of the job if we can't reach the children personally. If the basic needs of children are not being met," he said, "everything else we are doing is just spinning our wheels."



Dr. Tyrone Howard

Howard is the author of *Why Race and Culture Matter in Schools: Closing the Achievement Gap in America's Classrooms*, and more recently *Black Male* (d). Houghton Mifflin Harcourt publishing company sponsored his appearance at the convention. ■

You Protect Your Students on the Playground... Why Not Online?

A Webcast on Making Online Student Safety a Priority

If you missed our live webcast on Oct. 7, it is now available online.

A free and open Internet is not an option for our students, but walled gardens don't protect them, either. Every school needs a digital playground monitored by adults with plenty of open gates. When something happens, it becomes a "teachable moment," ultimately incorporating digital citizenship into a curriculum.

AFSA members have the opportunity for professional development by gaining new skills and knowledge about this online safety issue. Hear personal stories about how potentially harmful student situations were avoided, helpful tips to add digital citizenship into your curriculum, and much more.

Watch the entire webcast: <http://gaggle.net/webcasts>.



Delegates Vote on Important Resolutions

Delegates to AFSA's 14th Triennial Constitutional Convention engaged in debate on a number of resolutions on issues of significant concern to school leaders, including testing and evaluation, charter schools, student privacy and building coalitions in support of our profession, among others.

One of the more extensive resolutions passed addressed testing and evaluation, with delegates voting to support federal legislation, regulation and guidance that would provide dedicated funding specifically for professional development and mentoring for principals and educational leaders at all levels.

Such legislation would restrict the federal government from imposing assessment requirements on the individual states. It also would support the continuity of state-driven assessments in key subject areas and differentiated state accountability systems that capture how schools are performing so that curriculum and instruction can be aligned to



Martin Christopher Fiasconaro, Council of School Supervisors & Administrators (CSA), AFSA Local 1, engages in the debate on resolutions.

Delegates also passed a resolution on student privacy and security seeking to prohibit the federal government from overriding the student privacy laws enacted by individual states.

best meet the needs of students. AFSA will support efforts to determine which testing instrument is most suitable for the specific student population.

In particular, the resolution called for only supporting legislation and regulations "that lead to the development of fair and transparent principal evaluation systems that place a high priority on outcomes that principals control rather than those they have limited or no ability to impact and where no more than 25 percent of the evaluations are based on the results of student assessments and where the evaluation system is collaboratively developed with the input of principals, is designed to measure multiple domains of effective school leadership, provides meaningful feedback to individual principals, is based on multiple measures, and takes into account student growth as well as evidence of effective school leadership practice."

Delegates also passed a resolution on student privacy and security seeking to prohibit the federal government from overriding the student privacy laws enacted by individual states. The resolution strikes an appropriate balance between protecting and securing student data and promoting personalized learning informed by data and powered by educational technology. To learn more about student privacy, watch the

AFSA-sponsored webcast on safe online learning at gaggle.net/webcasts.

To strengthen the voice of our profession, the delegates also passed a resolution commending the coalition partners and the founding partners of the National Center on School Crisis and Bereavement and the New York Life Foundation for working collaboratively on issues of crucial importance to students and educators.

In another crucial area, the convention resolved that AFSA opposes the arming of school personnel or school volunteers (other than sworn peace officers) at school sites.

The convention also resolved that any charter school-related legislation should expressly prohibit charter schools from discriminating on the basis of race, sex, religion, socioeconomic status, language or mental, physical, emotional or behavioral disability, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity; and that federal, state and local policy makers should not divert funding from traditional public schools to fund charter schools. ■

2016 Presidential Candidates Attend AFL-CIO Executive Council Meeting

AFSA President Diann Woodard attended the AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting in Silver Spring, Maryland, in late July. During the meeting, the Executive Council met with five of the 2016 presidential candidates; however, no presidential endorsement was made.

The council heard from Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), former Sen. Jim Webb (D-Va.), former Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y.), who also served as secretary of state and lived in the White House eight years as first lady, as well as former Govs. Martin O'Malley (D-Md.) and Mike Huckabee (R-Ark.). Each candidate was given one hour, which provided for a genuine exchange of views on a wide range of topics. During the discussions, the Executive Council, led by AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, emphasized the importance of the AFL-CIO's Raising Wages agenda, which would rewrite our nation's economic rules to put workers first.

Following the appearances of the five candidates, the Executive Council unanimously decided not to endorse any particular candidate for the time being. Affiliate unions are free to undertake their own internal processes and solicit their respective members' interests and preferences prior to making their own candidate endorsements. Each union agreed to provide its members with information regarding the candidates' positions on key issues, and their stands on the AFL-CIO's Raising Wages agenda.

The Executive Council also passed statements on overtime protection, Social Security disability benefits, immigration and trade policy.

Although Congress recently approved Fast Track authority as a precursor to

a vote on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), the fight on trade is not over. "Let there be no mistake," the council statement read, "although Congress has approved fast track—the failed process by which the U.S. negotiates and approves trade agreements—the larger battle for better trade policy continues. The labor movement remains unified and resolute in its opposition to the corporate trade agenda."

The Executive Council also strongly supports strengthening and protecting Social Security, and defending it against the latest attacks on the disability insurance program, and expressed its unwavering commitment to key principles aimed at implementing an

immigration system that is fair and builds an economy that works for all.

Council members lauded President Obama's proposal for updating overtime rules for workers who currently are not being paid anything for their overtime work, nor are receiving any overtime protection. "Extending overtime protection will also benefit working people in other ways. Some workers who are currently working excessive hours will be able to work fewer hours and spend more time at home with their families with no reduction in pay. Some unemployed workers will find employment when businesses increase hiring to 'spread the work.'... All working people will benefit from stronger wage growth and a stronger economy—all good outcomes for working people," according to the EC statement.

Visit www.aflcio.org/About/Exec-Council/EC-Statements to read each statement in its entirety. ■



AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka listens as former Sen. Hillary Clinton discusses various topics during the Executive Council meeting. (Photo courtesy of the AFL-CIO.)

Iline Tracey: A Devoted Leader in Her Community

It takes true dedication and commitment to both serve and be an active member of your community. Dr. Iline P. Tracey, member of School Administrators Association of New Haven (Conn.) (SAA), AFSA Local 18, exemplifies just that.

She is being honored by the Black and Hispanic Caucus of New Haven for her more than 31 years of service to the community. This honor is given to individuals who have made a pronounced positive impact on the community—an apt description of Dr. Tracey, who has served as a teacher, assistant principal, principal and director of instruction for New Haven Public Schools.

In her years as principal, she turned around a school, bringing it from failing to making adequate yearly progress (AYP). Under her leadership, the school received a national Magnet School of Excellence Award as well as International Baccalaureate authorization for both its primary and middle years program. Most recently, she facilitated two comprehensive high school redesign processes. Additionally, Dr. Tracey has taught at Southern Connecticut State University, addressing the needs of incoming freshmen. She is highly respected by her colleagues and sought after by many other educators within the New Haven Public Schools community.

“Dr. Iline Tracey is a staunch advocate for children, a mentor/coach for new and veteran leaders and a pillar of integrity,” says Cheryl Brown, SAA, AFSA Local 18 member. “She has touched the lives of hundreds of students and families.”

If you would like to nominate an AFSA member for our next newsletter, please email nspina@AFSAadmin.org. ■



Dr. Iline Tracey (Photo courtesy of School Administrators Association of New Haven.)

“Dr. Iline Tracey is a staunch advocate for children, a mentor/coach for new and veteran leaders and a pillar of integrity. She has touched the lives of hundreds of students and families.”

—Cheryl Brown, SAA, AFSA Local 18

From the Mailbox

"A few of the major points made by the keynote presenters all had lasting implications for the need to maintain a strong union to help support and save our public (community-based) schools from privatization, which is impacting all the states. Privatization is one of the key strategies being employed by legislators and the private sector to weaken and cause the demise of unions.

"Another key point focused on increasing the numbers of active union members/chapters needed to keep the focus on a strong union to combat the growing numbers who would turn our schools over to the private, for-profit sector.

"Dr. Tyrone Howard's presentation focused on the importance of recognizing and celebrating race and culture in our schools. He provided some very insightful information about our classrooms across the nation. His delivery heightened our awareness of how many of our students are impacted by poverty, homelessness, abuse, trauma and lack of a stable home, and how many of our students may grow up in a home whose primary language is not English. These are challenges that school leaders must truly understand. Our delivery system of education/curriculum strategies and programs should be embedded with concepts of prevention to address all of these situations if we as education leaders expect to make a difference in the lives of our students and families.

"David Schonfeld, M.D., provided a very insightful overview of the importance of educating our school administrators and staff on the importance of understanding how school personnel can support students who are grieving and how school communities can organize to provide leadership, implement resources, and establish procedures and partnerships with community-based organizations to provide resources to address the epidemic of grieving students on a national level."

Winston Johnson
Hartford Principals' and Supervisors' Association
AFSA Local 22

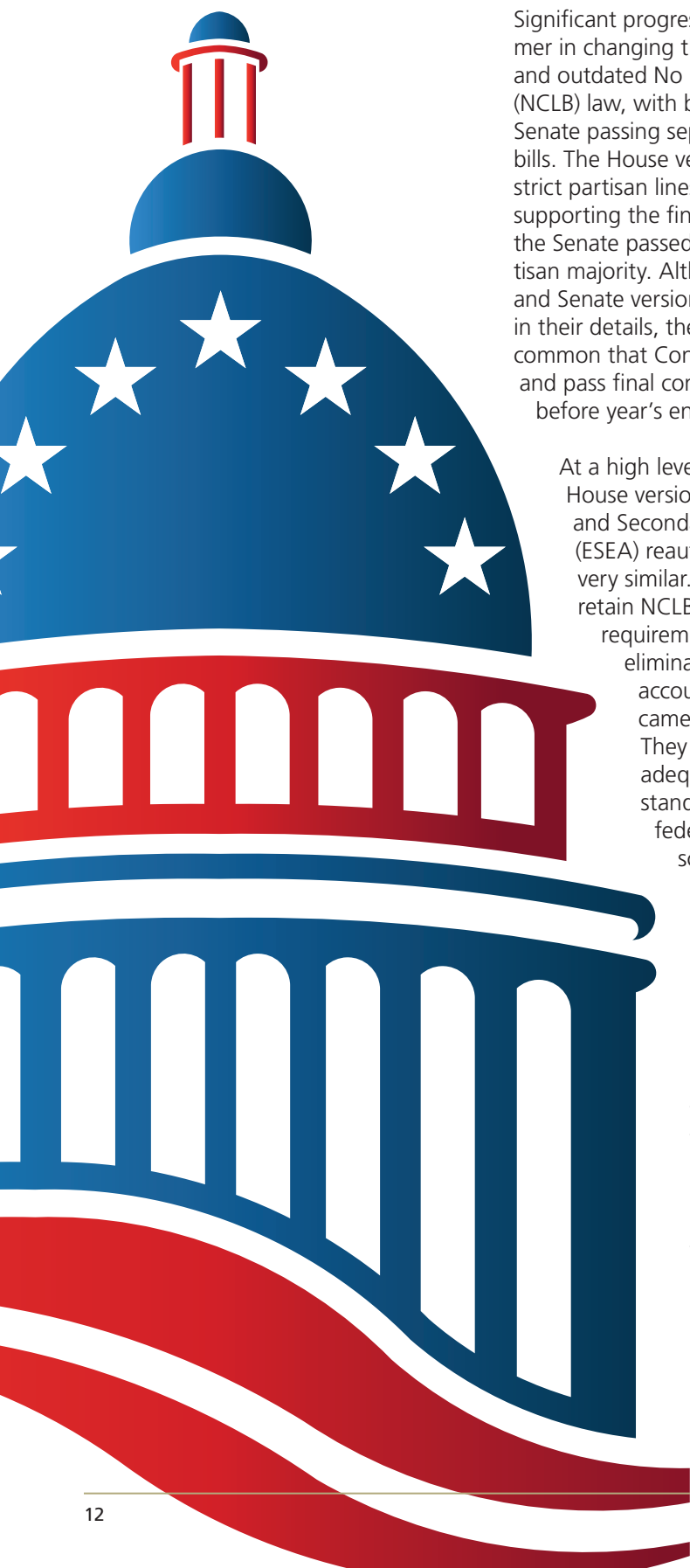
"I would like to thank Florida Woods for all the great work she did to organize the AFSA convention. I personally witnessed how much time she put in to organize the speakers and workshops, the room requests, the materials, the food, the publicity, and the work to make the entire convention successful and informative to all AFSA members. She did a superb job!"

Gary C. Maynard
Connecticut Federation of School
Administrators

"The AFSA Conference was the best one I have attended. It was organized and the learning was focused, but more importantly, it was crucial to the development of our understanding in regard to the need for us to develop our political know how. The workshop topics were extremely relevant to issues and concerns that are affecting our students and helped us to see and feel things from their perspective."

Sherlye Jackson
Hartford Principals' and Supervisors' Association
AFSA Local 22

Legislative Update: ESEA Reauthorization Moves Forward



Significant progress was made this summer in changing the severely broken and outdated No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law, with both the House and Senate passing separate reauthorization bills. The House version passed along strict partisan lines, with no Democrat supporting the final measure, while the Senate passed with a large bipartisan majority. Although the House and Senate versions differ significantly in their details, they have enough in common that Congress may negotiate and pass final compromise legislation before year's end.

At a high level, the Senate and the House versions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorizations look very similar. Both bills would retain NCLB's annualized testing requirements, but would eliminate the federal accountability regime that came along with the tests. They would terminate the adequate yearly progress standard and repeal federally mandated school improvement, corrective action, and restructuring labels and interventions. Most significantly for principals and school leaders, both bills would bring an end to the four school turnaround models for consistently "failing" schools, each of which presupposed the firing of principals.

Instead of a robust federal accountability system for "failing" schools, both bills would allow states to create their own accountability systems and design their own interventions for low-performing schools. However, both bills contain relatively high-level requirements for what state accountability systems should look like, including requiring that states use testing results as part of their accountability systems. The House version also requires that state accountability systems annually evaluate and identify the academic performance of each of their public schools and require interventions in poor-performing Title I schools. Additionally, the House bill would require states to set aside 7 percent of their Title I funding for school improvement, while the Senate bill would provide federal dollars to support state-devised school improvement interventions. House and Senate Democrats continue to advocate for stronger state accountability requirements than appear in either bill, a potential sticking point to reaching a deal.

The House and Senate bills also softened teacher and principal evaluation systems, allowing but not requiring states and districts to develop them. Although not recommending that principal evaluations be based on the six domains of school leadership, something AFSA and its allies have pushed, the Senate bill would accomplish a significant AFSA policy goal: requiring that states include within their teacher and principal evaluation systems multiple measures of educator performance, *based only in part on evidence of student achievement*. The House bill also includes multiple measures of performance in its five optional parameters for teacher evaluations, but would *continue making student achievement data, derived from a variety of sources, a significant part of evaluations*.

Instead of a robust federal accountability system for “failing” schools, both bills would allow states to create their own accountability systems and design their own interventions for low-performing schools. However, both bills contain relatively high-level requirements for what state accountability systems should look like, including requiring that states use testing results as part of their accountability systems.

The Senate bill stands out particularly from its House counterpart in its efforts to enhance principal preparation, recruitment and training—a key AFSA priority. AFSA, the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) were glad to see that the Senate bill included an amendment, offered by Sen. Al Franken (D-Minn.), that would direct 40 percent of Title II funds to improve the recruitment, preparation, and retention of principals and other school leaders in high-need schools. AFSA and the principal groups also support the provision in the Senate bill that would allow states to reserve up to 3 percent of Title II funds for principals. However, the 3 percent state fund reservation only can occur if Congress appropriates more funds to states than in the previous fiscal year—highly unlikely, given the lower Title II funding levels in both the House and Senate funding bills.

The major obstacles to completing action on ESEA are major policy differences in two areas: 1) block grants; and 2) Title I portability. Regarding block grants, the House bill would eliminate or consolidate 70 existing programs in favor of large block grants, while the Senate bill contains almost every currently authorized and previously funded program, plus a new preschool program. A compromise is likely to be reached where some individual programs survive and a number of programs are folded into block grants.

The portability issue is much trickier. The House bill would permit Title I funds to follow students to public or charter schools. Even though Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander’s (R-Tenn.) effort to add portability via amendment failed on the Senate floor, he remains steadfast in his support for this concept and may attempt to retain the House’s Title I portability language in conference. AFSA strongly opposes Title I portability, as it would undercut funding for low-income schools and would serve as a steppingstone for federal government support of private school vouchers.

Federal Education Funding Stalls

Congress began work on education appropriations bills at the end of June, but came to a screeching halt by the end of July, when proposed low funding levels and riders focused on the Confederate flag arose. The House appropriations bills foundered in the wake of Democrats voicing staunch disapproval of low funding levels and Republicans’ opposition to Democratic efforts to add language to the Interior appropriations bills that would have banned the use of federal funds for displaying the Confederate flag on public lands. In the Senate, Democrats took to filibustering and made it impossible for the Republicans to pass any of the 12 funding bills out of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

The House Appropriations Committee’s relevant bill would be a funding disaster for education. That bill would cut funding for the Education Department by \$2.771 billion, or -4.1 percent (a cut larger than the FY 2013 sequester cuts), and would eliminate at least 27 education programs. Overall, K–12 programs would be cut by \$2.03 billion, even after accounting for a proposed \$502 million increase for special education. Not nearly as severe as the House’s cuts, the Senate’s relevant appropriations bill would reduce education funding to \$5 billion below the president’s request level and \$1.36 billion (-2.8 percent) below the fiscal year 2015 enacted level—and would eliminate 20 programs. If the Senate bill became law, discretionary funding for the Education Department still would be below the FY 2004 funding level.

When Congress returns from its August recess, it only will have 10 legislative days to hammer out a plan to fund the federal government. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell recently stated he plans to discuss a possible short-term continuing resolution immediately upon return from recess. While a short-term continuing resolution means neither the House nor Senate funding bills would be enacted—and thus no cuts to education programs—it prevents the programs that would have received increases under the bills, like Title I, Head Start and IDEA, from receiving those increases.

In addition, if Congress is unable to reach a long-term deal to raise the federal spending caps by December, spending would remain frozen at FY16 levels, possibly for the next two years. AFSA will continue to advocate for lawmakers to raise the federal spending caps and urge Congress to make robust investments in education so that all education programs, like Title II, which supports professional development for principals and school leaders, can receive increases in the next funding cycle.

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ENGAGED LEADERSHIP IN NEW ORLEANS

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and community partnerships, managing a local, motivating school staff and Internet safety. The day ended with a dinner cruise on the Mississippi River.

President of both the Greater New Orleans AFL-CIO and the Louisiana State Building and Construction Trades Robert "Tiger" Hammond, AFT Michigan President David Hecker and resident commissioner of Puerto Rico Pedro Pierluisi started off the third day with welcoming remarks. Attendees gained more knowledge on how to support grieving students from Dr. David Schonfeld's presentation supplemented by an expert panel. The day concluded with informative workshops on improving media relations, an update on congressional activity, tips for retirees and the importance of remaining active in a union. Delegates also held a business meeting, where they voted on resolutions and elected officers and GEB members.

The convention came to an end on Sunday with a jazz brunch marking the swearing-in and installation of new officers and the new General Executive Board, and an afternoon swamp tour.

AFSA thanks all of those who had the opportunity to join us at this summer's convention. From attending the daily plenaries to participating in the many workshops and social activities, this event would not have been successful without the support of our members.

For more detailed highlights and materials of the convention, please visit AFSAadmin.org/events/the-2015-afsa-fourteenth-triennial-constitutional-convention/.

First-time convention attendee Miriam Yeung, Hartford Principals' and Supervisors Association, AFSA Local 22, took note of the keynote speakers and their powerful inspirational messages, as well as the educational and informative sessions.

"Memorable sessions included the Saturday morning panel, 'Insights from the Field on Supporting Students,' led by Donald Schonfeld, M.D.," she said. "Practical advice was given with brochure handouts. 'Sandy Hook and Beyond' was an emotional session sharing a theoretical framework that included individual practices. This session was presented by a former assistant principal who was transferred the year before the shooting on Dec. 14, 2012."

"I also found the 'Retiree Session: Why Do I Need an Advance Planning Directive When Everything is in My Shoe Box... Somewhere?' very helpful," Yeung said. "I am glad I attended the AFSA convention and look forward to attending the next conference in 2018!" ■



Attendees give a standing ovation during the convention's presentations.



Dr. Anthony Salvatore, former assistant principal at Sandy Hook Elementary, gives his insights during a panel on supporting grieving students.



After a day of presentations and workshops, attendees board the "Creole Queen" for a dinner cruise.



Miriam Yeung, Hartford Principals' and Supervisors Association, AFSA Local 22. (Photo courtesy of Miriam Yeung.)

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: ESEA REAUTHORIZATION MOVES FORWARD

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Student Data Privacy Looms

While this summer has been consumed largely by ESEA reauthorization, the issue of privacy is sure to re-emerge come fall, with efforts to update the 40-year-old Federal Educational Records Privacy Act (FERPA). House Education and the Workforce Chairman John Kline (R-Minn.) and Ranking Member Bobby Scott (D-Va.) have been collaborating on an overhaul of FERPA and circulated a discussion draft last spring. The central aim of their updated FERPA is to bring the bill into the Digital Age, ensuring that schools are taking appropriate steps to safeguard students' digital records and not just their paper files. While well intentioned, concerns exist that the draft legislation's monetary penalties for schools that inadvertently violate FERPA are a bit steep for public institutions. AFSA is monitoring this issue closely.

In addition to efforts to rewrite FERPA, Congress is looking into legislation that would penalize companies for misusing student data for commercial purposes. This year, Reps. Jared Polis (D-Colo.) and Luke Messer (R-Ind.) introduced a bill that would prohibit ed-tech companies from selling student data and using data collected to target advertisements to students. The bill also would require vendors to be more transparent about their privacy policies, the type of information collected and with whom that information is shared. It would grant the Federal Trade Commission enforcement authority over the provisions contained in the bill. Sens. Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) and Steve Daines (R-Mont.) have introduced a similar bill in the Senate.

This summer, the most action pertaining to privacy took place on the Senate side, in the form of an amendment to the Senate ESEA reauthorization bill authored by Sens. Ed Markey (D-Mass.) and Orrin Hatch (R-Utah). Their amendment, which was adopted on an 89–0 vote, would establish a Student Privacy Policy Commission to make recommendations regarding the efficacy of federal privacy laws, the enforcement mechanisms of these laws and parental rights over student information. No similar provision was added to the House bill. As the seemingly quiet August recess has come to an end, Congress is sure to be busy since its recent return. Stay tuned to [AFSA's blog](#) for updates on the progress of the ESEA conference committee and news about any movement on the outstanding group of privacy bills. ■

EVENTS CALENDAR

Oct. 9–10, 2015

**AFSA General Executive
Board Meeting**

Washington, D.C.

Nov. 18–21, 2015

**Coalition of Labor Union
Women 18th
Biennial Convention**

Sacramento, California

Feb. 23–25, 2016

**AFL-CIO Executive
Council Meeting**

San Diego

Feb. 25–27, 2016

NASSP Ignite '16

Orlando, Florida

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Visit us at AFSAadmin.org.**



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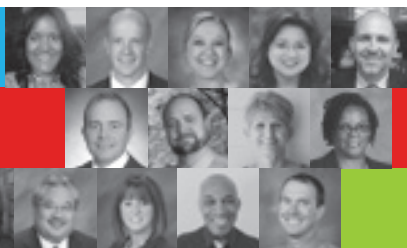


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NATIONAL PRINCIPALS MONTH



OCTOBER 2015

GREAT SCHOOLS HAVE GREAT PRINCIPALS

CELEBRATE YOUR LEADERSHIP

Great schools are the result of great leadership. Every day principals dedicate their lives to pursuing excellence in education, and their tireless efforts have helped countless students achieve in the classroom and beyond.

National Principals Month is a widely recognized celebration that encourages schools and communities to say "thank you" to principals everywhere and to share all the great things that principals do.

This month and year-round, NASSP, NAESP and ASFA are proud to honor principals for their commitment to schools around the country.

Join the celebration.

Visit principalsmonth.org for activities and ideas.

#ThankAPrincipal

