

THE Leader


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AFSA, AFL-CIO

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Keeping Our Voices Heard: AFSA Fights for Professional Development

AFSA worked long and hard on Capitol Hill to advocate for principals in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the biggest change in k-12 federal education law since No Child Left Behind. The law was signed by President Obama on December 10, 2015. "We are so proud to see that our efforts paid off. States will now have the power to reserve up to three percent of their Title II dollars for principal-specific professional development, giving school leaders more opportunities to succeed and improve our schools," said AFSA President Diann Woodard.

This unprecedented support for principals and other school leaders was a direct result of the collaboration of AFSA, the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and

the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). However, under ESSA, states will have the authority to decide how they wish to allocate their Title II dollars, including whether or not to take advantage of the new language and invest in principal professional development.

In an effort to improve federal policies that will help states and districts build the capacity of principals and advance school performance, AFSA members joined NAESP on Capitol Hill to advocate for ESSA implementation. Over 200 principals gathered in the nation's capital on March 15. The organizations advocated for several objectives, including:

- To ensure oversight of ESSA implementation so that states and districts

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Principal organizations meet at NAESP's Hill Day on March 15, 2016 in Washington, D.C. (Left to right: Nick Spina, director of operations and government affairs, AFSA; John McKenna, president, School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS); Liza Carabello, President, New York City Elementary School Principals Association (NYCESPA) and member of the Council of Supervisors and Administrators (CSA), AFSA Local 1; Pierre Lehmuller, executive director, NYCESPA and member of CSA, AFSA Local 1; and Herman Merritt, director of political affairs and governmental relations, CSA, AFSA Local 1.)

Chicago Principals Challenged to Achieve the Impossible

Officials of the Chicago Public School (CPS) system recently directed principals to cut their individual budgets and to do so without laying off teachers, a task that some principals told the Chicago Sun Times they were advised to achieve through parent fundraising.

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How to Secure Block Grants for School Districts

Title IV, Part A of ESSA: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) includes a flexible block grant program (Title IV Part A), which is authorized at \$1.65 billion in FY 2017.

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Victory for Unions in Friedrichs Court Ruling

Resulting in a major win for workers nationwide, the Supreme Court ruled 4-4 on Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association on March 29, 2016. The tie sustains lower court rulings for the teachers and for unions' right to collect agency fees.

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Demanding the Accountability Our Children Deserve

As someone who worked for years as a teacher and principal in Detroit's public schools, many of which are now crumbling and unsafe, I often ask myself why the "free enterprise" educational system touted by would-be reformers is only a good thing for poor and minority children.

For too long we have allowed these "good, concerned" people to come in because they say they care about children, when in reality they have simply eliminated essential services and depleted districts of all their resources and the ability to sustain themselves.

As experience has shown, when the dust settles and the excitement over proposed reforms fades, the community is left with only the dedication of those who work with and love the children, whose ministerial pledges to "make do" or "I do it because I love what I do" ring in our ears as they echo through the halls of countless underserved schools.

It is these devoted souls who will then have to figure out how to sustain the investment in our children, because poor and minority students should not have to depend on charity or "entrepreneurs" to receive a fair and equitable education as guaranteed by most state constitutions.

The issues presented in many public schools are often health and safety concerns. Innocent children report to school on a daily basis with mold and vermin feces wafting in the air, posing potential hazards to staff and the children they serve.

After the release of City of Detroit Property Maintenance Division report number ANN2004-13051, and others, about wretched conditions, the legislature responded with bills that would punish educators if they spoke out about their schools. State Senators Phil Pavlov (District 25), Joe Hune (District 22), David B. Robertson (District 14), and Goeff Hansen (District 34) introduced Senate bills 713, 714, and 715.

In 1999, I was working in the Detroit district when the schools were taken over by the state under the auspices of improving academics and balancing the budget: Fast forward 15 years and the budget has ballooned to over 700 million dollars, and 170 schools have since closed. According to the Associated Press, from 2002 to 2013, the number of school-aged children in Detroit fell from nearly 197,000 to about 120,000. Eighty-five percent, or 167,000, of those kids attended a DPS school 13 years ago. Now just 42 percent, or 47,000, do. The rest attend traditional suburban schools, charters in the city or the suburbs, and schools operated by the state-run Education Achievement Authority. Basic health and safety issues were ignored with little regard for the precious lives of children in the schools.



AFSA President Diann Woodard

Charitable help is great; however, it is not the solution. As educators we cannot remain silent about the conditions to which children are being subjected. As UCLA professor John Rogers stated, "They need to forge deep and ongoing relationships between teachers and the communities they serve....they need to push for conditions that support the well-being and development of youth inside and outside of schools."

As a people we refuse to acknowledge that every school requires the same level of maintenance and staff as every other school does, regardless of the zip code in which it is located. Accountability is not just a word for what happens in the classroom; it is a word to be used in all phases of the education community.

Our challenge is to demand that accountability before even one more school or child is subjected to what is happening to students and educators in public schools like those in Detroit and in poorer communities throughout the country. ■

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Chicago Principals Challenged to Achieve the Impossible

Officials of the Chicago Public School (CPS) system recently directed principals to cut their individual budgets and to do so without laying off teachers, a task that some principals told the Chicago Sun Times they were advised to achieve through parent fundraising.

Anticipating possible layoffs, Walter Payton College Prep had already raised several hundred thousand dollars as CPS tried to plug a \$480 million hole in its current operating budget.

The Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) cried foul over the cuts being demanded of principals, calling them a ploy to put unnecessary pressure on the union, which is engaged in contract negotiations with CPS and had earlier rejected a CPS contract proposal.

"After just three weeks of negotiations, the district made an offer that relied on a reduction of more than 2,000 educators from the system, made no provision against subsequent ballooning class sizes and included nothing but the vaguest indicators of where new revenue would be found," CTU spokeswoman Stephanie Gadlin said.

"More importantly, the terms of that offer would not have impacted the current school year or existing school budgets in any way, so we find CPS' reduction in school budgets by \$120 million unnecessary and completely retaliatory, and not at all evidence of some urgent crisis in our schools."

The unprecedented cuts that CPS is demanding principals make in their operating budgets total \$85 million this school year. The implausible task that principals have been charged with means that students, who just passed

the halfway mark of the 2015–16 school year, may soon find themselves in new classrooms.

Principals throughout the city have been forced to scramble to find ways to fill massive holes in their budgets. Many principals say there isn't anything left to get rid of that won't directly affect what happens in classrooms across the city.

"Once again, school leaders have been charged with doing the impossible," said AFSA General Vice President Clarice Berry, who is president of the Chicago Principals and Administrators Association, AFSA Local 2. "Of course, the students who will inevitably be hurt most by the demands being made on school leaders are those in the city's most economically challenged communities." ■

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How to Secure Block Grants for School Districts

Title IV, Part A of ESSA: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) includes a flexible block grant program (Title IV Part A), which is authorized at \$1.65 billion in FY 2017.

Title IV, Part A authorizes activities in three broad areas:

- Providing students with a well-rounded education (e.g., college and career counseling, STEM, arts, civics, IB/AP);
- Supporting safe and healthy students (e.g., comprehensive school mental health, drug and violence prevention, training on trauma-informed practices, health and physical education); and
- Supporting the effective use of technology (professional development, blended learning, devices).

Distribution of Funds

Each state will receive an allocation based on the Title I funding formula. Each state, in turn, will allocate funds to school districts, also via the Title I formula. Each district is to receive at least \$10,000.

Districts receiving more than \$30,000 annually must:

- Conduct needs assessments;
- Expend 20 percent of their grants on safe and healthy school activities;
- Expend 20 percent on programs that provide a well-rounded education;
- Expend some of the remaining 60 percent on technology and technology professional development; and
- Not spend more than 15 percent of funds received on devices, equipment, software and digital content.

Districts receiving less than \$30,000 annually do not have to conduct needs assessments or reserve 20 percent of their funding for safe and healthy school activities or well-rounded education programs. However, the 15 percent technology purchase cap would continue to apply. ■

Victory for Unions in Friedrichs Court Ruling

Resulting in a major win for workers nationwide, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 4-4 on *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association* on March 29, 2016. The tie sustains lower court rulings for the teachers and for unions' right to collect agency fees.

"This ruling marks a significant victory for everyone who supports fair wages, safe working conditions and a voice on the job. It was blatantly clear to all that this case was a direct attack on those

Fair share fees are necessary because unions are required by law to represent everyone in the workplace, even if the employee is not a member of the union. Employees who do not wish to join the union are simply required to contribute the cost of the representation, benefits, job security and other protections they receive. *Friedrichs* would still require unions to represent all workers, yet it would allow workers to refuse to pay for any of the representation they receive.

on Feb. 13, 2016. No successor has been confirmed.

Complicating this process, Senate Republicans have publicly vowed not to hold any confirmation hearings for President Obama's nominee, Judge Merrick Garland. It is too early to tell if Garland will ever be on the Supreme Court.

This is not the end of the road for *Friedrichs*. The opponents of the case are expected to demand a retrial. If granted, it could put *Friedrichs* back in the position it was in several weeks ago, putting considerable weight on whomever will be confirmed as the ninth judge. If Merrick Garland is confirmed, *Friedrichs* supporters will likely not have much reason to worry. If Congress gets its way and stalls the nomination until it can install a justice favorable to Republicans, the case would face daunting odds.

In addition, there are several other cases that could potentially declare fair share fees unconstitutional or chip away at unions in other areas. At the very least, states appear poised to continue to adopt "right-to-work" laws that prohibit mandatory union fees or strip away collective bargaining rights for public employees.

"We must make sure that collective bargaining rights are not weakened and that the voice of educators is heard loud and clear. AFSA will continue fighting alongside our union brothers and sisters on this critical issue," Woodard said.

Please be on the lookout for future webinars and trainings on this important case, as well as trainings for AFSA locals on how to improve communication with members. ■

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basic workers' rights and was supported by extremely wealthy special interests," said AFSA President Diann Woodard.

Friedrichs was a special case from beginning to end. Most Supreme Court cases take over seven years to reach the bench. *Friedrichs* was voted on slightly over a year after introduction, proving its significance.

In 1977, under *Abood v. Detroit Board of Education*, the Supreme Court affirmed that it is constitutional for unions to collect agency or "fair share" fees. However, the plaintiffs in the current *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association* case had sought to curb union rights by overturning *Abood*'s nearly 40 years of precedent allowing the use of fair share fees for public sector unions.

Friedrichs has been funded by the conservative group Center for Individual Rights, as well as by the Koch brothers. Their primary objective is to make it even harder for working people to come together, speak up for each other and get ahead by negotiating to make the rules fairer concerning benefits, hours and wages.

On January 11, the Supreme Court heard oral arguments on *Friedrichs*, after which it became increasingly evident that the Court was going to rule against unions. The most likely scenario would have been a 5-4 vote concluding that an agency fee (or fair share, as we know it) is unconstitutional and a violation of the First Amendment. However, Justice Antonin Scalia, the leader of the court's conservative bloc, passed away

Prioritizing Student Online Safety in Your School

By Rob Yoegel

Your school or district likely isn't much different than Redding School District in Northern California. Sure, you might have a larger student population and be separated by hundreds, if not thousands, of miles, but you both are looking for new ways to create digital learning environments that facilitate critical thinking, creativity and collaboration.

When it comes to student online safety, your school or district isn't unlike those around the country that have made this important initiative a priority. Thanks to many of you who participated in a recent AFSA survey. Almost all respondents (9.3 out of 10, in fact) said it's vital to assure that your students are safe and protected from cyber bullying, pornography and inappropriate content.

By adding digital citizenship to the curriculum, conducting inspiring school assemblies and adding Gaggle Safety Management, building principals and district superintendents can go home every day knowing that their students are safer using school-issued technology, such as a learning management system, Google Apps for Education or Office 365.

Just like you, Redding School District also strives to keep pace with the latest advances in technology. The district recently provided Chromebooks to about 1,200 students in fourth through

eighth grade as part of a 1:1 initiative. As it turns out, that was the easy part. Despite mastering Google's management console and implementing a leading web filtering product, the district needed a way to assure the safety of its students when sharing files and sending email back and forth.

In our latest case study, we show how Redding School District:

- Fills in gaps in the security and protection of its Chromebooks;
- Proactively responds and stays ahead of misuse, cyber bullying and other threats; and,
- Relies on the 24/7 real-time monitoring by Gaggle Student Safety Representatives, who detect potential issues and alert school officials if a threat is imminent.

Technology in the classroom, and at home, isn't going away. Unfortunately, neither are incidents of violence,

self-harm and other threats to students. In our new infographic, which is being made available to AFSA members before anyone else, you can learn how to lay a foundation for digital citizenship while taking a closer look at the threats to students in just one school semester.

For instance, we identified nearly seven million items in email messages, documents and images involving sex, violence, drugs, suicide and other issues facing students every day. And while 95 percent of you indicated that you have an Internet safety policy, teacher-driven or district-based strategies and training around Internet safety is lacking in many of your schools.

At Gaggle, we're extremely honored to be able to elevate the importance of student online safety to AFSA members. What's next? Since the start of this year, we've held Student Online Safety Symposiums in Louisiana, Colorado and Arizona with a hope of bringing similar events to as many educators as possible, including AFSA members.

The symposiums are free for school and district administrators, cabinet members and other educators responsible for student online safety. Attendees engage in strategic and tactical discussions, learn more about keeping students safe and enjoy plenty of networking opportunities. If you're interested in bringing a symposium to your school, I would love to hear from you. ■

Rob Yoegel is vice president of marketing at Gaggle, a provider of safe online learning products, solutions and services to the K-12 market since 1999. Gaggle's focus is, and always has been, on student safety so educators can have the confidence to allow learners to take advantage of current technology for communication, collaboration and productivity. To reach Rob, email him at ryoegel@gaggle.net or call (800) 288-7750 x 167.

Prioritizing Student Online SAFETY



School-issued technology—whether it's a learning management system, Google Apps for Education™ or Office 365™—has led school districts to consider an around-the-clock approach to looking after the safety of their students while also helping them learn how to be good digital citizens.

What Are Your Students Doing?



79%
of students have talked online with someone they never met in person.

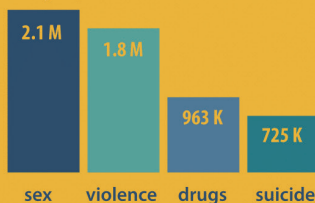


70%
of students have sent or received inappropriate photos.



66%
of students have felt bullied or know someone who has.

6,879,986 items reviewed by Gaggle Student Safety Representatives in one semester.



A closer look...

Here's a breakdown of threats to students during the first semester of the 2015-16 school year from email as well as documents and files shared in Google Drive™ and OneDrive®.



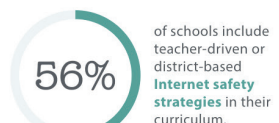
9.3 out of 10 school officials believe that it's vital to assure their students are safe and protected from cyberbullying, pornography and other inappropriate content.



95% of schools have an Internet safety policy.

How to Keep Your Students Safe

A walled-garden approach to student online safety doesn't work. There still are plenty of situations occurring within school walls. Instead, every school needs a garden, or a playground with open gates, monitored by adults who also teach lessons on how to correctly use the equipment.



Lay a Foundation for Digital Citizenship

Explain the importance

Help students understand the risks associated with misbehaving online. Stress that rules are in place to help.

Give students a seat at the table

Let students be a part of the conversation. Hear them out and consider their suggestions.

Breakdown the privacy myth

Make sure students truly understand that nothing is private. Everyone behaves differently when there's no privacy.

Remind students of their brand

Give students real-life examples of individuals who have tarnished their reputations due to online activity.

Set consequences and enforce them

Lessons and rules won't steer some students away from misbehaving online. Turn missteps into teachable moments and stand firm on any consequences.

REP explains, as well as teaches, the themes of digital citizenship. Within each REP are three important topics, so students as young as kindergarten can understand the basic ideas of digital citizenship.



RESPECT
Etiquette
Access
Law

EDUCATE
Literacy
Communication
Commerce

PROTECT
Responsibility
Safety & Security
Health & Welfare

How are Schools Keeping Students Safe?

Gaggle Safety Management removes the need for educators to review questionable communications so they can concentrate on classroom instruction or other tasks.



Anti-Pornography Scanner

Ensure CIPA compliance with proprietary, real-time image analysis that prevents pornography from reaching students.



Content Filtering

Messages, documents and email attachments are scanned for inappropriate words and links to ensure that content is safe.



Student Safety Representatives

24/7 monitoring by trained professionals who detect potentially serious issues and alert school officials or law enforcement if a threat is imminent.



Sources: American Federation of School Administrators (AFSA) | Mike Ribble

Create a Safe Digital Learning Environment

Learn more at gaggle.net

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Takes One to Know One: AFSA Officers Help Select National School Leader Award Winners

Each year, the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) recognizes a principal and an assistant principal who have demonstrated success in leadership and curriculum and who provide high-quality learning opportunities for students. The NASSP National Principal of the Year and NASSP Assistant Principal of the Year programs each award school leaders for their outstanding work.

One principal and assistant principal are selected by each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity and the U.S. Department of State Office of Overseas Schools. Once state winners are selected, judges choose the finalists.

Dr. Leonard P. Pugliese, AFSA secretary-treasurer and City Association of Supervisors and Administrators (CASA), AFSA Local 20 member, had the opportunity to be part of the selection process for the 2016 National Assistant Principal of the Year. After each NASSP-affiliated state principals association submitted their state assistant principal of the year, a panel of judges reviewed each applicant. Pugliese served on the panel of school leaders and educational thought leaders who reduced the number of finalists to 10.

"It was an honor and a privilege to have the opportunity to review such wonderful candidates for the award of Assistant Principal of the Year," says Pugliese. "It was clear to me that each of the applicants is a hard-working, successful assistant principal. I congratulate each of the applicants, and assistant principals from around the country, for their commitment and dedication."

Holly Ripley of West Fargo High School in West Fargo, N.D. was announced the 2016 NASSP National Assistant Principal of the Year during NASSP's national conference, Ignite '16.

Ernest Logan, AFSA executive vice president and Council of School Supervisors & Administrators (CSA), AFSA Local 1 president, participated in selecting the 2016 NASSP National Principal of the Year.

Once each state principals association selected its state principals of the year, a panel of judges picked three finalists. Logan was one of the judges who helped select the winner after the finalists gave presentations and went through an interview process.

"I was a principal for much of my career, so I have a deep appreciation for the job and the men and women who lead schools from these educational hot seats," Logan said. "Just being nominated for NASSP's Principal of the Year award is proof of the exemplary job each candidate has done running her or his respective institution and a testimony to the many young lives they have touched, molded, and sometimes, saved."

In addition to receiving a \$250 grant for being a finalist, the national winner also receives an extra \$250 to be used to improve learning at his or her school. Alan Tenreiro of Cumberland High School in Cumberland, R.I. was awarded the NASSP 2016 National Principal of the Year Award.

AFSA is very pleased to be represented by members in such a rewarding experience for school leaders. ■

2016 NASSP National
Assistant Principal of the Year

Holly Ripley
West Fargo High School
West Fargo, N.D.

2016 NASSP National
Principal of the Year

Alan Tenreiro
Cumberland High School
Cumberland, R.I.

NBA Star Joins Youth Life Skills Program for Local Underserved Students

Many students in California's Oakland and Hayward school districts grow up in less than ideal conditions and often go without having a mentor. The First Tee of the East Bay (TFTEB), a positive youth development program that teaches life lessons and character education through golf, dedicates itself to inspiring and motivating underserved and at-risk local youth. Since 2009, TFTEB has reached over 16,000 inner-city youth in the area.

Draymond Green, 2015 NBA Champion Golden State Warriors forward, recently joined TFTEB in December. "Having the chance to talk to young people and meet with the principals gave me a chance to inspire kids and expand First Tee programs that teaches life lessons through golf," Green said. "Young people need to know that no matter where they start in life, they can achieve their dreams. My message is: give your best effort, believe in yourself, stay in school and don't give up."

While Green has no previous golfing experience, he said he is excited to spend time with the kids and to learn to golf alongside them. Green's partnership includes making appearances, working with students at TFTEB participating schools and supporting local TFTEB fundraising efforts.

Green visited Acorn Woodland Elementary in March, where he participated in a presentation to Oakland principals encouraging schools to enroll in The First Tee's National Schools Program. He also spoke to the entire student body at a full school assembly.

"The students were so excited when they heard Draymond Green was coming to Acorn. With the Warriors' amazing success and Draymond's personal journey and accomplishments, there's no better role model," said Leroy Gaines, principal at Acorn Woodland

and secretary of Unified Administrators of Oakland Schools, AFSA Local 83.

Gaines explained that his school has been participating in the program for the past three years, "Our teachers and administrators work every day to instill Acorn's 9 Core Values but will likely not make the impact that Draymond will make."

The biggest lessons TFTEB aims to teach children are structured around self-development. Leaders want the students to be well-rounded individuals destined for success despite their unfortunate upbringings. TFTEB curriculum is designed around nine core values, which include honesty, integrity, sportsmanship, respect, confidence, responsibility, perseverance, courtesy and judgment.

Each week, the children go through different golf exercises that parallel one of the core values. If they become proficient in the value of the week, they earn a badge, which brings them closer

to completing the graduation process at the end of the eight-week program.

The lessons children learn throughout this program are often skipped over or nonexistent at home. TFTEB gives these children the opportunity to gain valuable life skills, such as problem solving, goal setting, time management, emotional self-regulation, teamwork, healthy relationship development and persistence in overcoming challenges. The program also provides an additional emphasis on obesity and high school dropout rates.

Eighty percent of the students in the program are sponsored by an individual donor or a corporation. It costs \$150 per student for the entire eight-week program. TFTEB is a nonprofit organization and is always accepting donations. Learn more at www.thefirstteeeastbay.org.

Draymond Green is a graduate of Michigan State University, where AFSA President Diann Woodard serves as a trustee. ■



A basketball pro and a school principal take their first swings as they face off in a round of golf during Green's visit to Acorn Woodland Elementary on March 8. (Left to right: Draymond Green and Leroy Gaines, Acorn Woodland Elementary principal and United Administrators of Oakland Schools secretary, AFSA Local 83.)

Photo courtesy of The First Tee of the East Bay.

Not Everyone Wants to Talk About Death: Understanding Different Reactions to Death

Children's reactions to the death of a loved one vary greatly. Adults are sometimes confused if a grieving child doesn't behave as expected. Sometimes children appear happy and play as usual. Sometimes they say angry or unkind things about the person who died.

It's important to understand that after the death of someone close, children will be experiencing deep and powerful emotions, even if this is not at first clear from the things they say and do.

For example, children may appear calm and unemotional on the surface because they are working to keep their powerful feelings hidden from others. They may express anger and resentment because the loss leaves them feeling anxious and out of control. They may act out and take risks in an effort to master new feelings of personal vulnerability. They may regress and act like a younger child in an effort to gain attention and be comforted.

Education professionals can take steps to let children know they care, want to listen and are willing to help. Here are some good ways to start:

1. **Ask grieving children what they are feeling.** Check in regularly and invite them to talk about what's going on in their lives.
2. **Observe and listen.** Rather than directly interpreting children's behaviors, comments or creative work, ask them to describe what they mean or what they have created and what it means to them.
3. **Normalize the emotional experiences of grief.** It can be helpful for children to understand that it's common to feel strong emotions after a death. Let them know that over time, these feelings usually become less powerful, and that talking about them often helps in this process.

"His mom died, and he didn't even look sad:" Understanding Children's Hidden Emotions

This does not mean they are not greatly affected by the death. Reese, an elementary school student, put it this way:

"Emotions really affect me a lot, so I just don't talk about it a lot. I just keep it in my body sometimes. It's hard. I do different ways to just keep it in and not out."

This eloquently describes the experience of many grieving children. They make an extraordinary effort to keep their emotions hidden from others.

These children may not trust themselves to control their feelings—they would be embarrassed if they began to cry at school. They may be uncomfortable about appearing emotional or needy in front of peers. They may have sensed discomfort from family, teachers and classmates when they *did* express strong feelings, and they may be hiding their feelings to protect others.

Sometimes children don't even understand why they are keeping their emotions hidden.

Conversations, check-ins and invitations to ask questions or discuss feelings can be helpful for any student experiencing grief, regardless of how he or she appears to be coping.

Learn more about children's experiences during grief and ways to offer support at the website of the [Coalition to Support Grieving Students](#). Our organization is a member of the Coalition. ■

The Coalition to Support Grieving Students was convened by the New York Life Foundation, a pioneering advocate for the cause of childhood bereavement, and the National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement, which is led by pediatrician and childhood bereavement expert David J. Schonfeld, M.D. The Coalition, which AFSA is a charter member of, has worked with Scholastic Inc., a long-standing supporter of teachers and kids, to create [grievingstudents.org](#), a groundbreaking, practitioner-oriented website designed to provide educators with the information, insights and practical advice they need to better understand and meet the needs of the millions of grieving kids in America's classrooms.

Breaking the Silence: National Town Halls Shed Light on Issues Women Face

President Obama recently gave a speech highlighting the needs of women and girls of color. The issue of racial violence has been brought to the attention of the government time and time again, but women are usually left out of the discussion.

The Breaking the Silence Town Hall (BTSTH), a national series of meetings, is being convened to elevate the experiences of these women across a range of issues. Areas of focus include police violence, criminalization, school push out, sexual assault, domestic violence and poverty.

These town hall meetings are being held in major cities throughout the country to focus attention on the under-reported violence against—and deaths of—girls and women of color in the hope of inspiring communities to participate in the #sayhername campaign.

Lauran Cherry, AFSA General Vice President and President of United Administrators of Oakland Schools (UAOS), AFSA Local 83, participated in the Breaking The Silence Oakland Town Hall on Girls & Women of Color on Feb. 27, 2016. Cherry served as an educational commissioner during the town hall, which was sponsored by the African American Policy Forum (AAPF) at ImpactHub in Oakland, Calif.

“There is definitely an awareness within Alameda County, and specifically within Oakland Unified School District, about the need for services to help our administrators support students and families in this national conversation around the experiences of the girls we serve, both academically and socially-emotionally,” says Cherry. “Being a part of this conversation and partnership helps lift up our district’s current social emotional skills work with students and adults. This experience showed the power of community organizations coming together to bring a concerted awareness

and public commitment to better provide for our girls and thereby make a positive difference in their lives.”

BTSTH features experts from a range of fields who share their expertise and demonstrate that these issues are present and ongoing. During the Oakland town hall, Antwan Wilson, Oakland Unified School District superintendent; Kimberly Bryant, Black Girls Code founder and executive director; Alicia Dixon, Marcus Foster Education Institute executive director; Dr. Kimberle Crenshaw, professor of law at UCLA and Columbia Law School and AAPF co-founder, shared the stage and served as educational commissioners.

The four key issues BTSTH seeks to address are education, interpersonal and inter-community violence, the criminal legal system and the assault

to prison pipeline, and displacement/gentrification.

During these discussions, women speak to shed light on situations they have personally endured or have lost someone to. They aim to educate as many people as they can on the danger that lies so close to them, but that no one is addressing.

BTSTH tackles the topics of interpersonal and intercommunity violence, raising awareness of the fact that 50 percent of assaults occur between people who know each other. Women share their personal experiences on how they have been victims in their community. Stories of unreported assaults are common, due to women not wanting to burden their families.

Other discussions evaluate current laws and procedures in the legal system, with women debating whether they work or are biased, as well as what can be done to improve them.

BTSTH hopes to create opportunities for local decision makers to listen to participants about the challenges they experience on a daily basis in their homes, schools and communities. ■



Educational commissioners discuss key issues during the town hall on Feb. 27 in Oakland, CA. (Left to right: Luran Cherry, president, United Administrators of Oakland Schools (UAOS), AFSA Local 83 and general vice president, AFSA; Kimberle Crenshaw, professor of law at UCLA and Columbia Law School and African American Policy Forum (AAPF) co-founder; Alicia Dixon, executive director, Marcus Foster Education Institute; Kimberly Bryant, founder and executive director, Black Girls Code; and Antwan Wilson, superintendent, Oakland Unified School District)

Photo courtesy of United Administrators of Oakland Schools.

ESSA Moves Forward as Funding Remains Stagnant

The enactment of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in December of 2015 set the stage for an incredibly busy beginning of 2016 for the education community and the federal government. On Washington's agenda this spring: implementing ESSA, passing a budget, and confirming John King as Secretary of Education. While there has been a great deal of activity on all of those agenda items, the only item that can be checked as "complete" is King's confirmation to serve as Secretary of Education until the end of the Obama Administration.

Budget and Appropriations

In mid-February, the president attempted to kick-start the FY17 appropriations process by delivering to Congress the final proposed budget of his tenure. Congress, though, didn't want it. Objecting to his proposals to add billions of dollars in mandatory education spending on things like computer science and coding, Congressional Budget Committee chiefs declared the president's budget "dead-on-arrival" and broke with long-time precedent by refusing to even hold hearings on it. Indeed, in a House Education & the Workforce Committee hearing on the education budget, Rep. Rokita (R-IN) repeatedly asked Acting Education Secretary King to disavow the budget request as it was put together on former Secretary Duncan's watch.

From AFSA's perspective, the president's education budget contained a fair amount to like, with a few concerning pieces. The budget requested \$69.3 billion, or a 2% increase in fiscal year 2017 (FY 17), for the U.S. Department of Education. While it called for increases in key AFSA priorities such as Title I and school leadership programs, it also proposed to cut the Title II Teacher Effectiveness program by \$99 million and 21st Century Community Learning Centers by \$166 million. The new Title IV flex grant, which was established in ESSA to support a myriad of existing programs focused on safe and healthy schools, well-rounded curriculums, and effective implementation of technology, received less than one-third of its just authorized level.

On the positive side, the budget also contained \$125 million for the proposed new Teacher and Principal Pathways program "for grants to institutions of higher education and nonprofit organizations, working closely with school districts, to create or expand high-quality pathways into the teaching profession, particularly into high-needs schools and high-need subjects such as science, technology, engineering and math (STEM)." AFSA President Diann Woodward summed up AFSA's position on the president's budget in this way: "Overall, President Obama's FY17 budget makes the critical investments our nation needs to succeed in areas such as education; training and support for workers and their families; and providing continued access to health care. We are also pleased that the budget prevents the return of the harmful sequestration cuts in 2018."

As the year progresses, Congress will begin its own budget and appropriations process, with an aim towards completing its work on FY17 funding by Sept. 30. Given the political perils of a presidential election year and push-back already from House conservatives who would like to spend far less than the agreed-upon budget caps, completion by Sept. 30 seems unrealistic.

King Nomination

Bowing to a request from Senate HELP Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN), President Obama decided to formally nominate Acting Secretary John King as the new Secretary of Education in February. He performed well during his Senate Education Committee hearing, where members took the time to tell King what priorities they look forward to working with him on over the next year. Despite the friendly subcommittee hearing, Secretary King was confirmed by the full Senate on a close vote of 49-40, with many Republicans voting against his confirmation.

Throughout the various hearings at which Acting Secretary King testified in February, including his confirmation hearing, key AFSA issues arose again and again. A number of Congressional members asked him how Title II ESSA dollars will help recruit and retain principals in high-need areas and elevate the profession. Representatives Wilson (D-FL) and Davis (D-CA) had specific questions about how the proposed budget supports teachers and recruits the diverse teachers desperately needed in schools. King explained that there are multiple programs in the budget to recruit diverse and well-trained teachers, including the teacher incentive program and the use of Title II funds to enhance the teacher and school leader workforce. Addressing concerns raised about teacher shortages and lack of respect for the teaching profession, King said that we must change our attitudes about teachers, as they are critical to student success.

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During another House hearing on ESSA implementation, King explained that supporting teachers and principals is one of the department's main priorities and said ESSA is filled with provisions that can improve the teaching and school administration professions. Representative Davis (D-CA), a longtime champion of principals, said that the department's most important role in supporting teachers and principals through ESSA implementation is to provide guidance and share best practices. She explained that it is particularly important for the department to help principals scale up great practices that help bring up student achievement and said there is no question these practices should be taking place across the country. King agreed and said that Title II gives states and districts the ability to invest in supports for teachers and principals.

ESSA Implementation

While Congress has been busy holding hearings to discuss the implementation of ESSA and gearing up for the appropriations process, the Department

of Education has begun the regulatory process to implement the new law. At the request of the department to send any requests for guidance on ESSA implementation, AFSA, NASSP and NAESP sent a [joint letter](#), which urged the department to prioritize funding and support for principals, assistant principals and other school leaders. In the letter, AFSA and its allies stated, "Without additional guidance from the department, our organizations are concerned that states and districts will overlook ESSA's principal-oriented provisions and fail to take full advantage of these unique opportunities to support the role of principals."

Right now, the department is focused on regulations concerning assessments and "supplement, not supplant" requirements and has selected a panel to commence a negotiated rulemaking process. A final regulation in this area could be months away. ■



Photo courtesy of Howard County Public School System.

Cher Jones: Local Maryland Principal of the Year

"Mrs. Jones demonstrates deep devotion to the success of every student," is the sentiment echoed by many at Bonnie Branch Middle School in Ellicott City, Md. Howard County Public School System has named Cher Jones as 2016 Principal of the Year. Jones, principal of Bonnie Branch and member of Howard County Administrators Association (HCAA), AFSA Local 36, will also serve as the Howard County nominee for the Washington Post Principal of the Year.

Serving Howard County Public School System for over 26 years, she has held roles as a special education teacher and team leader, county special education

resource teacher, assistant principal, and principal. Jones was also a founder and teacher of Private Tutoring Services, serving dyslexic students.

Throughout her time as principal, a role she has held since 2012, Jones has used innovation and collaboration to meet the needs of a diverse student population. She is being recognized for her ability to create a supportive and positive atmosphere in her school community. Jones has earned her reputation as a highly respected school leader because of the quality of her instructional programs and her skill

for building positive relationships with students, staff and parents.

Jones has received praise from the deputy superintendent, teachers, parents, community members and students. A parent recently expressed his admiration of the principal to the Board of Education, stating, "Mrs. Jones has been a great principal. She does all that she says she is going to do... She goes above and beyond."

AFSA is delighted to recognize and honor such an influential school leader. We hope to continue seeing principals make positive impacts in their school communities.

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

"Mrs. Jones has been a great principal. She does all that she says she is going to do... She goes above and beyond."

KEEPING OUR VOICES HEARD: AFSA FIGHTS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

continued from page 1

provide comprehensive support for principal leadership.

- To strengthen the quality of principal recruitment, preparation and retention programs in any efforts to reauthorize the Higher Education Act (HEA), with support for the Educator Preparation Reform Act (EPRA) to provide principal mentoring, induction and residency programs as part of principal preparation programs.
- To build school and educator capacity to address student data privacy, with support for the SAFE KIDS (Safeguarding American Families from Exposure by Keeping Information and Data Secure) Act and the Student Digital Privacy and Parental Rights Act.
- To advocate for \$30 million to fund the School Leader Recruitment and Support Program (SLRSP), the only federal initiative that directly supports the recruitment, preparation, placement, support and retention of effective principals and other school leaders in high-need schools.

Principals also advocated for critical funding of federal education programs that continue to be critically important in helping educators improve student outcomes, such as Title I, Title II Part A, IDEA Part B state grants and the new Title IV formula block grant program.

Additionally, AFSA worked with several of its locals to craft a joint letter on new funding allowed for principal-specific professional development under ESSA in January. The joint letter, from AFSA President Diann Woodard and several AFSA local presidents, was sent to the state education commissioners and superintendents of instruction in several states in which AFSA has locals. The purpose of the letter was

to educate the state-level leaders about the new language included in ESSA, to stress the importance of supporting school leaders and to urge them to use their Title II funds to invest in principal-specific professional development.

Specifically, the letter stated, "ESSA's Title IIA provision allowing states to reserve up to three percent of their allocations for principal professional development is an important acknowledgement of the vital role that principals play in their schools. Investing these new federal dollars in supervisory professional development activities can provide principals with appropriate professional support to help them carry out the multitude of tasks successfully - ultimately benefiting their schools, teachers and the students

they serve. We urge you to capitalize on this opportunity furnished by ESSA to support the improvement of your state's principals by helping them grow professionally and meet the demands of their jobs."

AFSA thanks all of the local presidents who signed the letter. We will continue working with our locals, states, members of Congress and coalition partners to ensure that the voice of school leaders is heard, and that we are supported in the work we do every day.

To learn more about ESSA and how it affects your work, be sure to register for our live webinars. Watch our latest webinar at: <http://afsaadmin.org/new-webinar-available-how-the-essa-affects-afsa/> ■

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UPCOMING EVENTS 2016

May 10–11

**California Labor Federation
2016 Building Workforce
Partnerships Conference**

Sacramento, Calif.

July 6–8

NAESP National Conference

National Harbor, Md.

August 3–4

AFL-CIO Executive Council Meeting

Washington, D.C.

September 28–30

**Illinois AFL-CIO
Constitutional Convention**

Rosemont, Ill.

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