

New Orleans Public School Educators Awarded \$1.3 Million

Court Rules Louisiana Used Fictitious Regulation in Scheme to Replace Public Schools with Charter

Over 7,500 New Orleans educators, including teachers and school administrators, were fired in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Seven of the terminated educators were awarded \$1,362,632 in lost wages and benefits on June 20 by a Louisiana Court, capping a seven-year class action lawsuit battle waged by a legal team that included AFSA's lawyers.

"This is an exciting day for all of us in AFSA. Especially for our members of the Professional Administrators of New Orleans Public Schools Inc. (PANOPSI), AFSA Local 17, who were victims of a grievous injustice," said AFSA President Diann Woodard after learning of Judge

Ethel Simms Julien's ruling. "We had high hopes for a ruling in our favor and the Louisiana Court came through by ruling against the massive wrongdoing perpetrated by the state of Louisiana."

The court ruling resulted from a class action suit for wrongful termination filed on behalf of the employees against the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE), the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB), and the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE).

Three weeks after Hurricane Katrina hit in August 2005, the New Orleans public school system was effectively wiped out and replaced with charter schools when over 7,500 administrators and teachers were summarily fired due to a "Disaster Leave Without Pay" provision, which the court ruled did not exist.

"As a result of Katrina there was a purging of career educators from the New Orleans school system who were replaced with a network of charter and state-run schools," said Bruce Bryant, AFSA's legal council. "The court has provided just compensation for the victims of this purging."



AFSA/PANOPSI members and community supporters hold a Still Standing- Six Years Later rally, to remember those New Orleans Public School employees who suffered after being wrongfully terminated shortly after the storm.

A Triennial Tradition AFSA Heads to Puerto Rico for its 13th Convention

Every three years AFSA hosts a convention bringing members together to voice their ideas and concerns and collaborate to improve AFSA's performance.

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The Abbottston School Scandal: Hearings Find Alonso's Cheating Accusations to be Unfounded and Unjust

School administrators throughout the country are experiencing violations of their rights by school boards and supervisors, but none more egregious than the attempt to use allegations of cheating in the Baltimore City Public Schools' (BCPS) testing program to impugn the reputations of our members.

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Aona Jefferson, president of AFSA Local 4 attended a reception for labor union leaders hosted by Vice President Joe Biden at his residence in Washington, DC on Wednesday, May 23, 2012. Jefferson said of the vice president, "He was a very gracious host and ultimately concerned about organized labor and the middle class. He stressed that every person is entitled to a sense of dignity and their right to the American Dream saying, 'The middle class is not a number, it's a value set.'"

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Asserting Ourselves as Community Leaders

Gov. Scott Walker's victory in the Wisconsin recall election in early June leaves little doubt about the stakes our profession faces in the election this November. Financed by some of the wealthiest ultraconservatives in the nation, Walker was unabashed in characterizing his assault on public employees' bargaining rights as a "necessary reform."

Walker's "reforms" undoubtedly will be heralded by Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney who, as governor of Massachusetts, was so committed to expanding charter schools he vetoed a bill passed overwhelmingly by the legislature that would have put a moratorium on charters.

Indeed, the assault on public employees Walker champions is part of a radical movement, now more than 30 years in

from being recalled make unmistakably clear.

The all-out attack on public employees, and educators in particular, is more than an attempt by private interests to seize power—they've always done that. It's an attempt to supplant our commitment to the public's well-being with a self-interested drive for private gain. It is, in fact, an all-out assault on democracy as we have known it.

It's an assault on those of us committed to the principle of serving the interests of our fellow citizens, those of us who represent a community of interest, instead of privilege or private gain.

Ours is a commitment to a principle that's really at the heart of our constitution, the Preamble, which calls on us to "promote the general welfare."

"It is the vision statement of our democracy, which articulates with powerful simplicity the belief that we have a responsibility to each other as citizens, which is why our system of universal education was created in the first place—to promote good citizenship."

— AFSA President Diann Woodard

the making, that seeks to privatize government services by villainizing those of us committed to serving the public good.

We in the public sector have our challenges, many of which our members are coping with every day of their work lives. But we are not THE problem. We're the people with the targets on our backs, as the millions of dollars poured into defending Gov. Walker

It doesn't call on us to make sure market considerations drive our decisions. It doesn't say that if the challenges we face sometimes prove insuperable, we should be condemned and disgraced.

It is the vision statement of our democracy, which articulates with powerful simplicity the belief that we have a responsibility to each other as citizens, which is why our system of universal



AFSA President Diann Woodard

education was created in the first place—to promote good citizenship.

And the assault on the principle of serving the public good didn't start in Madison, Wis., or Columbus, Ohio, or in the Republican takeover of the House of Representatives in 2010. It started more than 30 years ago in school districts throughout the country.

I witnessed the game of creeping privatization firsthand when elected officials started privatizing any noninstructional services in the Detroit schools, long before privateers like Walker were emboldened by corporate money.

They picked our local apart, profession by profession, job by job. Architectural services came first. "We don't need those people, do we?" they said. Then they cut a couple of our members in auditing. Then it was food services.

Step by step they systematically eroded public management of our schools, and put it in the hands of private management. And, when they saw that going after our members wasn't creating an outcry in the labor movement, they zeroed in on principals and killed our right to bargain collectively.

The assault was repeated time and again in school districts all over the country.

What the members of our locals really proved to be were canaries in the mine shaft—except a lot of folks in other unions didn't realize the explosive danger they were creating by

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2012 AFSA Convention

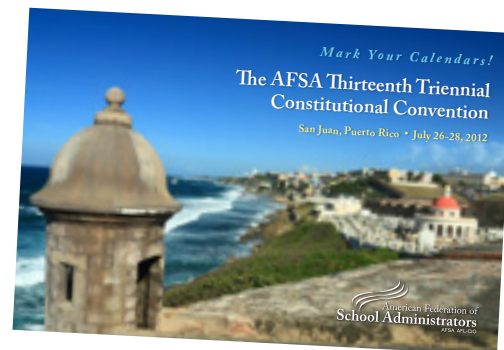
A Triennial Tradition

AFSA Heads to Puerto Rico for its 13th Convention

Every three years AFSA hosts a convention bringing members together to voice their ideas and concerns and collaborate to improve AFSA's performance.

In 2003, for example, convention members tackled practical approaches to the "No Child Left Behind Act." In 2006, convention attendees discussed the importance of school administrators, the challenges they face and the reasons why unions are crucial for facing these challenges.

This year, hundreds of AFSA delegates, alternates, members and guests from across the country will gather in San Juan, Puerto Rico, from July 26 to July 28 for the Thirteenth Triennial Constitutional Convention. The three-day convention is open to all AFSA members and will include speakers and workshops designed to equip members with information and resources for coping with the most pertinent issues in education reform and union rights. This year's professional development session includes presentations on Common Core Standards, the administrator evaluation process, technology in schools and creating a positive school climate.



On Friday, July 27, convention attendees will hear from speaker Tavis Smiley, host of "Tavis Smiley" on PBS and "The Tavis Smiley Show" from PRI. Mr. Smiley will discuss the importance of leadership in schools and the profound effect one educator can have on a child's life and future.

Friday attendees also will hear from Dr. John H. Jackson, president and CEO of The Schott Foundation for Public Education. Dr. Jackson will discuss his foundation's "Opportunity to Learn" framing of educational policy, which strives to reach higher student achievement outcomes by providing equal learning opportunities for all students.

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2012 Speakers...



Featured speaker Tavis Smiley, host of "Tavis Smiley" on PBS and "The Tavis Smiley Show" from PRI will be speaking at AFSA's convention on Friday, July 27.



Dr. John Jackson, president and CEO of The Schott Foundation, will be speaking about "The Opportunity to Learn" campaign at AFSA's convention on Friday, July 27.



Featured speaker Lee Hirsch, director of "Bully," will be speaking at AFSA's convention on Saturday, July 28.

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Dr. Jackson will discuss a new report released by the foundation this spring, "A Rotting Apple: Education Redlining in New York City," which found that African-American and Hispanic students in New York are concentrated in the city's lowest-performing schools, and that inequitable distribution of educational resources in the New York City public school system is a problem that needs to be addressed.

On Saturday, July 28, AFSA delegates, alternates and guests will hear from Lee Hirsch, director of "Bully," a powerful documentary on peer-to-peer bullying in schools. Mr. Hirsch will play selected clips from the film, which will be followed by a discussion on what school leaders can do to help end bullying. Hirsch also will discuss The Bully Project's initiative to have 1 million children see the film, and potential ways AFSA members can help reach that goal. AFSA passed a resolution on

bullying in April at the AFSA General Executive Board meeting and is now a proud partner of The Bully Project.

In addition to the speakers and workshops, delegates will vote on AFSA's leadership for the next three years, amendments to the AFSA Constitution, and on a set of resolutions that will shape AFSA's stance on critical policy areas. ■

2012 AFSA Convention

AFSA on Social Media

A Great Way to Follow the Convention from Home

As union members, we know there is strength in numbers. Today, one of the quickest ways to spread news, increase support and start conversations is through social networking. AFSA is active on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube—however, we still need you! Participation from union members and other education experts on social media helps to bolster the continued success of AFSA and its allies.

Social media is an ever-growing and popular way to network with people throughout the country and the world. Be sure to follow us during AFSA's national convention in Puerto Rico this July 26–28, where we will be blogging live, tweeting and posting on Facebook. You, other educators and your family and friends can join the conversation by liking us on Facebook, following us on Twitter and subscribing to us on YouTube!

Facebook

Facebook works as a forum for sharing and discussing current affairs and new ideas related to AFSA. To check out our Facebook page, go to www.facebook.com/AFSAunion and click "Like." AFSA's stories then will appear in your news feed, where you can read, like, share and comment on articles posted for discussion. This is a great way to share your opinions and to learn more about topics affecting the AFSA community.

Twitter

Do you have a Twitter account? If so, search for **@AFSAUnion** and click "Follow." AFSA now will appear in your Twitter feed with news, activities and stories relevant to our union. Twitter is an excellent conversation starter and a great way to follow AFSA's current activities and related news. Use @AFSAUnion in your tweets to post comments, questions and concerns directly to us!

YouTube

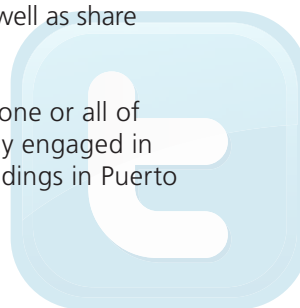
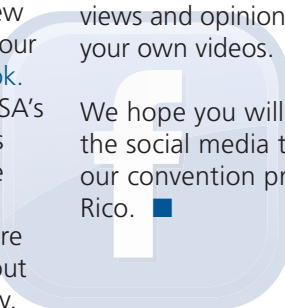
Another great way to keep up with us is through YouTube, a video sharing social media site. On our channel, AFSAUnion (www.youtube.com/user/afsaunion?feature=results_main), viewers can watch commentaries and highlights from our AFSA leaders and events. With a YouTube account, you also can comment on videos, sharing views and opinions as well as share your own videos.

We hope you will use one or all of the social media to stay engaged in our convention proceedings in Puerto Rico. ■



Be sure to follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube!

We will be blogging, tweeting and posting on Facebook live throughout AFSA's triennial conference in Puerto Rico, July 26–28.



Puerto Rican Educators in Action Welcomes Convention Goers

The prospect of AFSA's upcoming triennial convention has Domingo Madera and his members in Educadores Puertorriqueños en Acción, Puerto Rican Educators in Action (EPA), AFSA Local 105, very excited.

"This convention is important because all of ASFA will be here in Puerto Rico.

We have been planning for some time and [EPA] hopes to assist in any way we can," said Madera. "Not all of the directors in Puerto Rico are AFSA members. I want to expose our union to those who are not members and get as many people as I can involved. This convention will be one of the ways we can do that."

Aside from taking care of business matters, Madera is encouraging convention goers to tour the island. "It [the convention] will be a great way to see Puerto Rico, interact with other Puerto Ricans, as well as connect with AFSA members from across America." ■

The Abbottston School Scandal Hearings Find Alonso's Cheating Accusations to be Unfounded and Unjust

School administrators throughout the country are experiencing violations of their rights by school boards and supervisors, but none more egregious than the attempt to use allegations of cheating in the Baltimore City Public Schools' (BCPS) testing program to impugn the reputations of our members.

On June 23, 2011, Dr. Andrés A. Alonso, BCPS CEO, held a news conference in which he publicly accused AFSA local members Marcy Isaac and Dr. Angela Faltz of cheating during the 2008–2009 school year at Abbottston Elementary School. Alonso said Isaac and Dr. Faltz "erased and corrected students' [answers]" in the Maryland School Assessment test booklets. Both Isaac and Dr. Faltz held unblemished records, with 24 and 27 years of veteran experience, respectively.

Alonso stated the conclusions drawn about the educators' actions were based on a thorough, yearlong investigation completed by the Baltimore City Public Schools and the Maryland State Department of Education. After the news conference and formal charges, both women were placed on unpaid leave.

AFSA and PSASA "believe that cheating is wrong and that the guilty should be punished. But AFSA and PSASA also believe it is wrong to make accusations before conducting a full and fair investigation, and it is wrong, when the evidence on which the charges are based is shown to be unreliable, to continue to try to impose severe punishments on innocent people."

– Jimmy Gittings, president of AFSA Local 25

Jimmy Gittings, president of AFSA Local 25, acted immediately, taking the case to AFSA's board members and requesting assistance for the educators. After Gittings made his case, the AFSA board provided the educators with a total of \$50,000 in assistance, to ensure their side of the story was heard. By the time the case was concluded, it had been made clear the educators were not responsible for, or connected to, any form of cheating.

After two lengthy hearings, independent hearing examiners issued their recommendations that all of Dr. Alonso's charges be dismissed and that Isaac and Dr. Faltz be reinstated to their former positions with full back pay. According

to *The Baltimore Sun*, the techniques the State Board of Education used while investigating the allegations against the two AFSA members were conducted by somebody without any training in developing evidence. The hearing officers also found the "investigation" was "riddled with false assumptions, mathematical errors and flawed methodology" that "simply does not withstand any test of scientific validity."

All notes made during the erasure analysis also were destroyed, ensuring independent experts could not confirm the results. President Gittings noted there were "no effort(s) to determine whether factors other than cheating

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Obama Backpedaling on Vouchers?

The Latest Development in a Back-and-Forth Battle for D.C. Public Schools

On June 18, the White House announced President Barack Obama's approval not only to continue funding the District of Columbia's private school voucher program, but to increase the number of students eligible for vouchers. Previously, the president had opposed this program, which provides low-income students with federal funding to attend private schools of their parents' choice.

The president's decision is the latest chapter in the ongoing policy debate over the D.C. public school system, and one that weakens the administration's support of public education and unions.

The D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP) was established in 2004 and was phased out initially in 2009 by Obama and the Democrat-controlled Congress. AFSA and many other education-related unions and advocacy groups oppose OSP because it takes away students from public schools deemed "under-performing" by standardized test scores and out-of-touch evaluation systems instead of providing additional funding to the schools to strengthen them.

According to initial reports, President Obama reached agreements with Sen. Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.) and Speaker of the House John Boehner (R-Ohio) to reauthorize the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results (SOAR) Act, appropriating \$60 million to be distributed evenly between the voucher program, D.C. public schools and D.C. charter schools. The president also committed to raising the cap on the number

of students able to receive SOAR scholarships by 85, taking a step away from his previous course toward phasing out the program entirely.

Following these agreements, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan released a statement that the Obama administration's stance had not changed. "Our focus is on making sure all students get a world-class education. The best way to do that is by reforming our public school system....There has been absolutely no change in policy." Duncan further defended the president, saying it "allows for a statistically valid evaluation of the program," in order to "comply with a congressionally mandated study."

In the last four years, President Obama and his administration have taken several missteps on education. He and Duncan were champions of the Race to the Top program in 2009, which requires participating states to implement educator evaluation systems based on students' standardized test scores. AFSA and other educators' unions have long held this practice as a misguided attempt to put a numerical value on a complex learning process. Race to the Top also pits schools against one another, as it provides grants to the highest performers. This leads to many teachers focusing their efforts on tailoring their instruction to fit the standardized tests, rather than on providing personalized attention to individual student's needs and learning styles.

In April, the AFSA General Executive Board voted unanimously to endorse Obama's campaign for re-election.



President Diann Woodard said in a statement following the endorsement, "President Obama shares AFSA's belief that investing in public education is the key to our nation's future. While we may not always see eye to eye on every policy detail, we look forward to working with his administration to provide the highest quality education to all children."

The president's recent decision to compromise on the D.C. vouchers is certainly in conflict with AFSA's position. "As I see it, [private school vouchers] minimize opportunities for public school students," said Aona Jefferson, president of AFSA Local 4 and a former DCPS principal. "It's hard to tell exactly what programs and funds are lost as a direct result of these Opportunity Scholarships, but opportunities for students are definitely decreasing."

Secretary of Education Duncan and President Obama both insist their focus remains on strengthening America's public school system as the means to improve and reform education. While Obama has made some questionable education policy decisions in the face of determined partisan opposition, he has demonstrably done more good than harm. "President Obama made historic investments in education through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), as well as the education jobs bill, both of which saved and created millions of education jobs, reduced class sizes and protected vital education programs and services from being cut or eliminated," said Woodard in her post-endorsement statement.

"In addition, the Affordable Care Act will provide health care to millions of children who currently do not have it." AFSA leadership holds that President Obama's plan for education is far better than that of Republican presidential hopeful Mitt Romney.

On May 23, Romney rolled out his education plan in a speech at the Latino Coalition's Annual Economic Summit in Washington, D.C. The plan includes widespread "school choice" voucher systems for low-income and special needs students. He concluded his speech by bashing President Obama on his connection with teachers' unions and his stance on the Opportunity Scholarship Program.

"Mitt Romney's plan for our education system is a step in a bad direction for America," said President Woodard in response to Romney's speech. "His proposed course of action, which includes sending federal education dollars to private schools and expanding the role of onerous standardized tests in education reform, will only make it

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— AFSA President Diann Woodard

more difficult for the nation's public schools to provide a better education for America's young people. To improve our education standards and produce an education system that is competitive on the global stage, we have to focus on improving our public school system. Instead, Mitt Romney plans to take funding away from public school students and send it to private schools, while implementing even stricter testing standards on ailing public institutions."

As the November election approaches, President Obama faces determined partisan opposition to all of his policy efforts. With a hard-fought election on the

horizon, Obama cannot afford to start flip-flopping on issues like education or he risks losing the support of those who genuinely want to stand behind him.

President Woodard said, "The Opportunity Scholarship Program and the SOAR Act set a bad example for education reform. The president and his administration should make every effort to improve the quality of education for those students in Washington, D.C., and those across the country, but the key to doing that lies in efforts to improve public schools and not in spending taxpayer dollars in private schools." ■

Public Employees Paying the Price for Budget Deficits

According to a new report from the Pew Center, state governments are facing a funding gap of \$1.4 trillion for state retirement benefits. This gap has grown significantly since 2008, when the economic recession led to investment losses and budget shortfalls in many states.

The report found that, as of the 2010 fiscal year, states have about \$757 billion less on hand than what they owe in pension obligations. They also have a combined liability to workers of approximately \$660 billion in health benefits, yet have set aside only about \$33 billion to fund them.

Many states seek to address these funding shortfalls by reforming their pension

systems and cutting or eliminating benefits for public employees. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, 43 states made benefit cuts, increased employee contributions or both between 2009 and 2011. Many of AFSA's locals have felt the consequences of these cuts.

"Right now all government employees are receiving an 8 percent pay cut," said President Carver Farrow of the St. Thomas/St. John Educational Administrator's Association, AFSA Local 101. "And if you have been working 30 years, you receive an additional 3 percent cut. We are looking for ways to fix that, but right now it's not looking good for us here on the Virgin Islands."

Carver also serves as a board member for the Government Employee Retirement System and took part in a retreat during the week of June 25 with a financial team to discuss potential ways to tackle the issues facing public workers in the Virgin Islands.

AFSA thinks public employees and public-sector benefits and pensions should not suffer because states failed to make the required contributions to their plans during good economic times. Many states' plans are in good health and do not need drastic actions, but governors across the nation are using the perceived crisis to attack public employees and union workers.

"Governor Brown has proposed several pension reform bills that are working their way through the Assembly and Senate at this time," said James S. Dierke, president of the United Administrators of San Francisco (UASF), AFSA Local 3. "He wants to take away

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AFSA Endorses the Movie “Bully” and The Bully Project: 1 Million Kids Initiative

Executive Board Resolves to Work to End Bullying in our Schools

Some students in America’s schools are daily victims of brutal verbal and physical harassment and violence. With the growing popularity of online chat rooms and social media among students, these attacks are spilling over into their homes until the victims feel like nowhere is safe. AFSA, along with countless other organizations and individuals, has taken a step to protect every student in

AFSA’s leaders did not stop at the endorsement. President Diann Woodard led the way to additional action, saying, “We aren’t just going to ignore this and wait for others to prescribe what to do about bullying. We are going to play an active part in writing the prescription.” With that, the executive board took action. On April 22, the executive board adopted

This was more than a hollow promise. Many AFSA members already have bullying-prevention measures in place. James S. Dierke, AFSA’s executive vice president, also is president of the United Administrators of San Francisco (UASF), AFSA Local 3, and principal of Visitacion Valley Middle School in the San Francisco Unified School District. Dierke and the staff at VVMS have created a hotline that students can call and report bullying they see in school and in the community. The school also has instituted a mentor program for students who are at risk of being bullied, and has opened a wellness center where students can go to feel safe during lunch or after school.

For Dierke, the bullying problem doesn’t disappear when the school day ends. “We have spent a great deal of time discussing cyber-bullying, its effects on the individuals who are bullied and the consequences for those who participate in cyber-bullying. Cyber-bullying leaves fingerprints that lead right back to those who initiate the bullying and they are then held accountable and can be arrested for their actions as well.”

“Adults need to take the time to understand what is happening, listen to the voices of the young people who come to them with problems and become more proactive and not reactive in handling problems presented by the young people. We need to spend more time looking into the causes of the problems and not just dealing with the outcomes.”

James S. Dierke, Executive Vice President, AFSA

America by endorsing the film “Bully” and resolving to take all possible action against bullying in our schools.

In April, executive AFSA officers attended a screening of “Bully” in Washington, D.C. After the film, AFSA took action, adding its voice to the growing list of endorsements for the movie and its message of preventing bullying.

a policy resolution to “urge members to assist in developing strong anti-bullying programs in our schools to educate students, parents, and staff members about bullying issues that all of us face daily in our communities, and endorse national and local programs that support school administrators with training, resources and knowledge aimed at ending bullying in our society.”

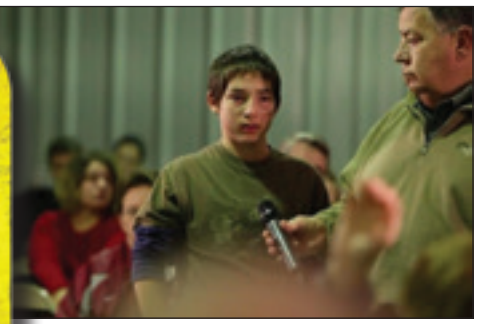
Dierke was instrumental in supporting the endorsement of “Bully” and in drafting the AFSA resolution on bullying. He said of the film: “I feel that ‘Bully’ shows what is happening all across the country today in our schools. School administrators, teachers and parents should all see the film and learn from it. Adults need to listen and observe what is happening with our young people so that extreme

incidents like that which were noted in this film do not happen to young people we work with. Adults need to take the time to understand what is happening, listen to the voices of the young people who come to them with problems and become more proactive and not reactive in handling problems presented by the young people. We need to spend more time looking into the causes of the problems and not just dealing with the outcomes."

America is shifting away from the kids-will-be-kids perception of bullying. "Bully" provides graphic examples of the real impact that bullies have on their victims. An anti-bullying movement is gaining steam across the country and AFSA members are doing their part to help eradicate bullying. "Bully" director Lee Hirsch is the driving force behind The Bully Project, an initiative to show "Bully" to 1 million students. You can join The Bully Project e-mail list to receive news about "Bully" showings in your area at action.TheBullyProject.com. ■



Scenes from "Bully",
courtesy of The
Weinstein Company.



Hartford Local Takes Initiative in Sharing Message of "Bully"

In response to AFSA's promotion of the documentary "Bully," Elaine Papas, a member of AFSA's General Executive Board and President of the of Hartford Principals' and Supervisors' Association, AFSA Local 22, knew her support was needed. On June 8, she led 265 fourth to eighth graders from the Latino Studies Academy at Burns in participating in the DonorChoose initiative, an effort to have 1 million students watch the film prior to the end of the school year.

"The experience itself and the trip's purpose were very effective," said Papas. "Students often use the term 'bullying,' but for some of the students, the term is too abstract and often misused. The students actually saw bullying [in their lives and

in the film] and heard the feelings of students who were bullied in this documentary." Students' emotions in response to "Bully" carried similar sentiments expressed by those interviewed in the documentary.

Eighth graders at the Latino Studies Academy at Burns felt they "could relate to the situations in the film." Watching the film also started conversations, as many felt they "often don't know where to go or what to do if no one's listening." Many seventh graders also felt empathy for the students depicted in the movie.

"It made a lot of the students think about how they interact with each other," said Papas. "Many students wanted to say it doesn't happen to

them or anyone they know, but it's difficult for many students their age to truly express their feelings."

Originally released in April 2011, the movie was extremely well received at the Tribeca Film Festival, Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival and Los Angeles Film Festival. Since May of this year, the film has been more widely released. Himself a victim of bullying in grade school, Lee Hirsch wrote and directed "Bully" to depict present-day antagonizing in schools. Hirsch is joining AFSA at the triennial conference in Puerto Rico this summer as a keynote speaker, sharing his past experiences and why bullying needs to be addressed. ■

The Fight to be Heard Continues

Principals Still Not Included in the Conversation

A historic labor management conference was held in Denver last year to address the need for improving relationships between superintendents, school boards and teachers, with the goal of improving student achievement. While the conference was a step in the right direction, a key component of the group not only was left out of the discussion, but excluded from the conference—principals.

AFSA President Diann Woodard attended the conference to draw attention to the irony of leaving principals out of any discussions about school system collaboration. “If true collaboration is to be achieved in schools,” she said, “then no one should be excluded.”

By the end of the conference, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan made it clear the administration was invested in improving all aspects of education. The hope was for principals to receive their invitation this year. Unfortunately, the 2012 Labor Management Conference in Cincinnati once again failed to include principals.

Education leaders from all over the country gathered in the Queen City to create a seven-part plan to increase student achievement, with steps toward building effective and productive collaboration between teachers and school administrators. Although principals were included in the action points of the seven-part plan, they were not included in the conversation.

“The seven-part plan is a prescription written for principals and school leaders without their direct input,” said President Woodard. “When those who do the work have input in their job, great things happen both for the employees and the students.”

The seven-part plan includes:

- A culture of shared responsibility, leadership and shared decision making;
- A focus on recruiting new teachers from a high-performing and a diverse talent pool;
- Ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers to provide career-long learning;
- A robust, well-rounded school district evaluation plan created with teacher and principal input that measures teachers and principals based on student academic growth, as well as other contributions;

- A professional career continuum with competitive compensation to provide teachers with career paths that have competitive pay and advancement opportunities;
- Improved conditions for successful teaching and learning environments for teachers to succeed in addressing the intensive needs of some students;
- Increased engagement between schools and their communities, fostered by school leaders.

Although the seven-part plan aligns with AFSA’s values and goals for education, it cannot be achieved if the voices of all educators are not recognized and heard. Hopefully more than lip service will be paid to the crucial importance of their involvement in the future.

“The seven-part plan is a beginning road map to providing success in the classroom, increased morale and the creation of positive school climates,” said President Woodard. “Greater input from principals is necessary, because the prescription for the cure revolves around good leadership.” ■

Action Taken to Protect Members' Rights in St. Croix

Tensions are growing between AFSA members and the superintendent of St. Croix schools in the U.S. Virgin Islands after several members received letters of disciplinary action from Superintendent Gary Malloy. The letters accused AFSA members of infractions including insubordination, neglect of duty and unprofessional conduct, with no explanation of the alleged violations.

These disciplinary cases have gone to arbitration, with the district delaying the hearings for months. The case of Rosa White, president of the St. Croix Educational Administrators Association (EAA), AFSA Local 100, for example, was more than a year old, and many others still are ongoing. President White suspects Superintendent Malloy's actions "may be hinging on union-busting tactics."

The delays have not gone unnoticed. AFSA members began to speak out about the arbitration logjam, which resulted in consequences from the school district. Union members who spoke out in support of their membership faced harassment, and some were faced with their own charges of insubordination.

On May 25, President Woodard traveled to St. Croix to defend members of the EAA and spoke with President White and her executive leadership team. "The right to freely associate and participate in your union is a protected right," Woodard said. "AFSA will fight to assure that the members in St. Croix are free to conduct union business without fear of retribution."

President Woodard pledged AFSA funding for legal services. Lawyers currently are investigating why the logjam exists in the arbitration cases, and whether members are being harassed due to their union affiliation.

While President White's case is scheduled for a hearing, many cases, including those of AFSA members, still go unheard. The relationship between local union members and the district continues to be strained, but progress is being made, and according to President Woodard, "The intervention of the national union has had a huge impact on the membership. They know that they are not alone and it helps them to see the value of belonging to a national union." ■

Union members who spoke out in support of their membership faced harassment, and some were faced with their own charges of insubordination.

THE ABBOTTSTON SCHOOL SCANDAL *continued from page 5*

could have caused the drop in student test scores from 2009–2010."

The experience of Dr. Faltz and Isaac not only is a testament to the importance of unions such as AFSA in defending fellow educators against unjust actions, but also of the extensive list of potential negative outcomes that can occur when schools are forced to place undue emphasis on testing.

"AFSA and the Public School Administrators and Supervisors

Association (PSASA) believe that cheating is wrong and that the guilty should be punished," Gittings said. "But AFSA and PSASA also believe it is wrong to make accusations before conducting a full and fair investigation, and it is wrong, when the evidence on which the charges are based is shown to be unreliable, to continue to try to impose severe punishments on innocent people."

Cheating accusations unfortunately are becoming commonplace in media

coverage, with school districts in large cities, such as Atlanta and Washington, D.C., suffering through recent scandals involving education professionals. With its support for Dr. Faltz and Isaac, AFSA has set the standard for how to provide a support system for locals. Rather than pitting education professionals against each other, school systems should be implementing positive changes that address student need, and avoid relying solely on test scores as indicators of progress. ■

Woodard Calls for Solidarity Among Unions at Wayne State University Labor Conference

At the Future of Public Sector Unions and Collective Bargaining conference held on May 21 at Wayne State University in Detroit, AFSA President Diann Woodard did not hold back her views on the importance of union camaraderie. During her panel, President Woodard said, "If we don't stand tall for each other's rights when they're under attack, all we stand to be is the next victim."

The conference's conversation focused on the current environment for public-sector union workers and the ongoing struggle for collective bargaining rights. While speaking on a panel, Woodard emphasized her call to action for unions to build a unified voice across all fields of work. Woodard said, "An injury to one is an injury to all. And unless we stand united in solidarity to challenge every last attempt to replace our commitment to public good with the push for private gain, it's more than our jobs that will be lost."

Her message not only is reinforced by the current economic crisis facing most state and local governments, but also by the unfortunate outcome of the Wisconsin recall election. The audience was receptive to the message of union solidarity and engaging in active discussion about unions collaborating on labor issues beyond their own interests. Audience members agreed that unions coming together is a good suggestion, but that unions also need to increase their public visibility and community support.

Barry Bluestone and Jeffrey Keefe also attended the conference. Bluestone is the dean of Northeastern's School of Public Affairs, and Keefe is an associate professor at Rutgers School of

"An injury to one is an injury to all. And unless we stand united in solidarity to challenge every last attempt to replace our commitment to public good with the push for private gain, it's more than our jobs that will be lost."

– AFSA President Diann Woodard

Management and Labor Relations. Both speakers addressed the current environment for unions, discussing the potential benefits of rethinking the relationship between unions and management. One solution both speakers suggested is creating opportunities for collaboration between labor and management.

During a separate panel, Chris Michalakakis, president of the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO, spoke about the issues of collective bargaining rights and the benefits of extending labor rights to public-sector workers. On a panel with President Woodard, Phil Thompson of SEIU Local 517 also spoke on how SEIU restructured its organization.

The meeting concluded with David Hecker, president of AFT Michigan, calling for conference attendees to rally around the "Protect Our Jobs" petition, which advocates amending the Michigan state constitution to guarantee individuals the right to form and join labor organizations and to bargain collectively. ■



AFSA President Diann Woodard speaking at the Future of Public Sector Unions and Collective Bargaining conference held on May 21 at Wayne State University in Detroit.

A Full Career

Roch Girard Retires After Long, Fulfilling Career as an Educator and AFSA Representative

Roch Girard always wanted to be an educator. "The work of providing quality education for students has been the heartbeat of my professional life," said Girard. "I believe that an educated person is free to be what he or she wants to be. When a person has an education, personal and employment doors open."

After 40 years of dedicating his career to improving education and the national education system, Girard is retiring.

As an administrator, Girard enjoyed interacting with students. He has seen thousands of students grow from kindergarten to 12th grade, and when asked about his students, Girard said, "To read about former students moving on and doing great things with their lives is very rewarding. Having some of those students coming back to see you and thank you is humbling and gratifying."

Girard worked in organizing the Connecticut Federation of School Administrators (CFSA), which was the first union for school administrators in Connecticut. He served as CFSA's secretary and treasurer, and later as Local 42 president, a position to which he was re-elected an unprecedented five times, most recently in May 2009.

After becoming president of Local 42, Girard wasted no time in taking the issues of his local constituents to a national audience. "I became involved with AFSA almost immediately upon becoming president of the East Hartford Local 42," Girard said. "I attended the national conventions and meetings. The national issues reflected the needs of many of our locals, and trying to work collectively in hopes of resolving issues was most gratifying."

Girard's experience and enthusiasm led to Joe Green, AFSA's president at



Roch Girard, president of the Connecticut Federation of School Administrators, AFSA Local 42, at a 2010 rally for jobs.

the time, offering him a position on the union's executive board in 1997. Girard served two terms as a general executive board member and was later elected as the AFSA national secretary. In July 2006, Girard was re-elected to his third term as the AFSA national secretary. Girard fulfilled the requirements for his AFSA positions admirably, while filling his roles as CFSA president, Local 42 president and as a principal. Dedicating his time to these positions was an honor for Girard and it allowed him to effect change by being a union representative at the highest levels of government.

"I was gratified that now our voice in a national union could be heard. It was a lot of work, but the insight gained at our meetings, the working relationships with dignitaries from all over the country, the political involvement with AFSA working with congressman and senators, and with the president of the U.S. was invigorating."

Girard plans to spend quality time with his wife in retirement. "My wife Jeanine, who was so supportive of my career and activities, plans to do a lot of traveling. We are planning a Mediterranean cruise this September with our two sons. We also belong to a travel club and hope to take advantage of good deals."

Reflecting on his career, Girard said, "Basically having served on so many committees and commissions over the past 34 years has been most rewarding—knowing school administrators were represented and had a voice in decisions affecting them in their daily work. The good work must continue. AFSA must continue to be the national voice for school administrators." ■

Bringing Positive Change to Education

Jim Dierke Reflects on 40-plus Years in Education

After almost 41 years of service, Principal Jim Dierke of Visitacion Valley Middle School will retire from the San Francisco Unified School District and from active leadership in Local 3, UASF, joining Local 3R Emeritus UASF.

Dierke became active in the California Teachers Association in the 1970s, where he helped win the district's first collective bargaining contract. He later was asked to join the executive board of the United Administrators of San Francisco, where he worked on the bargaining team. He was elected president in 1999, and became a member of the General Executive Board of AFSA. In 2009, he was elected as executive vice president of the AFSA.

After announcing his retirement plans, Dierke received San Francisco's middle school principal of the year award from Mayor Ed Lee. He also received proclamations from the State Senate and Assembly for his educational contributions, and a personal letter from U.S. House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi thanking him for his more than 40 years of service to education. At his retirement dinner, Dierke received an outstanding leadership award and was pronounced a Paramount Chief of Sonoma by the San Francisco Samoan Community. Following are some of Jim's thoughts on his career, being a principal and a union member.

What has been the most rewarding part of being a principal?

I came to Visitacion Valley Middle School in 1999, when it was in need of a transformation. Like many inner-city urban schools, it had all the predictors of being a low-performing school. By 2008, I was named the principal of the year by the National Association

of Secondary Schools. I did not achieve this alone. It took building a great faculty and a commitment from the community to believe in our transformation.

As a union member, what are you most proud of?

I am particularly proud that we can work together to assist individual locals. When Katrina struck in New Orleans, we mobilized our locals to send funds assisting the members of that local when they were cut off by the city and state government. We later helped the local fund a lawsuit on behalf of their members. To me this is the power of having an effective national union and I, for one, am very glad to have been a member of this executive board. In union there is strength.

What are the successes you have seen unions bring to education?

We found that having multiyear contracts for individual administrators allowed administrators to have the time in a position or school to make positive changes. This in turn makes for a more consistent school environment. Data shows that a consistent and well-run school results in better test scores, higher achievement by students and a more joyful place to work.

What are your thoughts on standardized testing?

As we moved into NCLB, we narrowed the field of what we could teach in schools. Music, technology and practically all creative arts went away. We



James Dierke, president of the United Administrators of San Francisco, AFSA Local 3 (second from right) is recognized June 1 by San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee (third from right) as an administrator of the year for San Francisco.

have done a disservice to a generation of students in the name of one-size-fits-all educational practice. We need to move back into educating the whole child.

What would you say is the most important element in supporting a future with equal educational opportunities for all students?

Our founding fathers realized that in order to have a strong democratic government, they needed to have strong public schools to educate all the people. Our society seems to have forgotten this important concept. I see the fight for the continuance of free public education for all children as the number one issue before us today in our society. ■

Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Progress Moves Slowly

Now is the Time to Voice Your Support for Positive Reform

ESEA

Since the last edition of *The AFSA Leader*, Congress has made little progress toward the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The Senate's last ESEA act was in October 2011, and the House last acted in February of this year. Given the major legislation differences in each chamber and that 2012 is an election year, things appear to be at a stalemate.

Meanwhile, the Obama administration is moving forward rapidly to grant states waivers from certain ESEA/NCLB requirements and provisions. In late May alone, the Obama administration approved waivers from key provisions of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) for eight additional states, bringing the total number of state waivers to 19. Currently there are 18 applications under review by the Department of Education.

In exchange for these waivers, states must agree to reforms proposed by the Department of Education. These reforms include:

- Implementing college and career-ready standards and assessments;
- developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability and support; and,
- evaluating teacher and principal effectiveness.

With the House and Senate stalled on NCLB reauthorization and the Department of Education's push for new policy, now is the time for school leaders to voice their opinions to members of Congress. AFSA

With the House and Senate stalled on NCLB reauthorization and the Department of Education's push for new policy, now is a good time for school leaders to voice their opinions to members of Congress.

recommends the following for ESEA's reauthorization:

- **Standards and Assessments:** A reauthorized ESEA must not require states to measure student progress using test scores alone. Assessments must incorporate a wider variety of subject matter and also must include portfolios of student work and individual performance assessments to provide a more dynamic representation of each student's achievement.
- **Accountability:** AFSA strongly thinks a reauthorized ESEA must reject punitive sanctions based on flawed measurements. The lowest-performing schools must be offered the greatest support and time to meet clear indicators, and cannot be subject to unproven reform policies and turnaround methods. Rather than calling for their immediate removal, principals should be looked to as key players when school reform initiatives are implemented. Principals can provide a unique understanding of a school's culture and needs, and they are able to create a system of core values within a school environment.
- **Professional Development:** A reauthorized ESEA must emphasize ongoing, locally developed professional development for educators and school administrators. Additionally, professional development programs must be created in conjunction with organized groups representing the local school administrators to ensure the specific needs of the school are met.
- **Evaluations:** A reauthorized ESEA must not include the current evaluation policies in place for measuring the performance of educators. A principal's performance should be measured on the quality of his/her overall school-level leadership and performance. According to a recent study completed by the American Institutes for Research (AIR), the current methods in place for measuring a principal's performance often are inaccurate. The study concluded with recommendations for policy-makers to implement measurements that consider a "principal's practice, direct effects on schools and teachers, and indirect effects on instruction and learning." AFSA encourages all

continued on next page

members to use this report as a tool when reaching out to their members of Congress about principal evaluation reform.

- **Funding:** The reauthorization of ESEA must create federal incentives for states to reform inequitable school funding systems that consistently favor wealthier districts. States and districts should be required to conduct a needs analysis and target their resources accordingly. Congress must provide increased resources and ensure the law is fully funded.

AFSA will continue advocating for these policies in the reauthorization of ESEA. To stay up to date on the progress of ESEA legislation, please sign up for the AFSA Action Network at www.AFSAadmin.org/issues-advocacy/take-action/. We will be sending out alerts on ESEA and other critical matters.

Education Funding

In an effort to reduce the nation's growing debt, Congress passed the Budget Control Act of 2011. This put in place caps on funding for discretionary programs over the next decade for a savings of \$1 trillion, and also charged a congressional Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction to find an additional \$1.2 trillion in savings over that span. However, the bipartisan "super committee" failed to come to agreement, resulting in an automatic sequestration under the law, which will take place on Jan. 2, 2013.

The sequester will result in an automatic 8.4 percent cut to all nondefense discretionary programs, including education; job training; medical and scientific research; public safety and law enforcement; infrastructure; public health; housing and social services; and many more.

Funding for the Department of Education alone would be cut by more than \$4 billion—the largest cut to education in our nation's history!

The AIR Report: A Great Tool for AFSA Members and Education Reform

From teacher evaluations to student achievement, it seems all members of schools are being summoned to actively engage in principal evaluations—except for principals. As a result, criteria for teacher evaluations also are being applied to principals, resulting in an incomplete picture of principal effectiveness.

The American Institutes for Research, one of the nation's leading education and social research firms, was engaged by AFSA to develop a report titled "The Ripple Effect: A Synthesis of Research on Principal Influence to Inform Performance Evaluation Design," which makes clear a research-based framework can provide a basis for designing better evaluations and professional supports for school principals.

AFSA and its members should play an active role in education reform. We can start by making sure our voices are heard and our role in the education process is clearly understood. "The Ripple Effect" is a great reference for making the case for our profession. The report reveals that effective principals are pivotal in improving school performance.

"The research presented by the American Institutes for Research on principal evaluation systems only confirms what school leaders have experienced firsthand for years," said AFSA President Diann Woodard. "To guarantee our nation's schools are led by the best there is to offer, a better understanding of the role of the principal is needed to ensure evaluations reflect their work and effectiveness."

"While the focus on ridding the education system of weak educators and school leaders is a noble pursuit, perhaps the greater effort would be to identify strong educational leaders after whom we can model our current and future workforce."

For more information on the AIR report, go to www.air.org.

This is why the Committee for Education Funding (CEF), of which AFSA is a member, helped organize a non-defense discretionary (NDD) network of coalitions concerned about these devastating cuts. The first action of the NDD Summit was a sign-on letter urging Congress to avoid the sequester and take a "balanced approach to deficit reduction that does not include further cuts to NDD programs."

AFSA signed the letter and sent it to locals for their signatures as well. AFSA will work closely with its allies in the NDD network to urge Congress to avoid these devastating cuts and to work toward a balanced approach to deficit reduction that includes actions on revenues. We also urge all AFSA members to go to www.cef.org/action and sign the CEF petition opposing the largest education funding cuts ever. ■

Local President Takes a Stand in Support of Women's Heart Health

Heart disease is the cause of death for one in three American women every year, according to the American Heart Association (AHA). "Go Red for Women" is a national campaign sponsored by the AHA with the goal of raising heart disease awareness in women and empowering them to take control of their heart health through healthy diet and lifestyle choices. In May, Crystal Boling-Barton, president of the Buffalo Council of School Administrators, AFSA Local 10, took part in the campaign and volunteered her time for the cause.

Barton is also a vice president on AFSA's General Executive Board, president of the New York State Federation of School Administrators and the principal at McKinley Comprehensive High School. She and other Buffalo public school educators appeared on a number of billboards across the Buffalo area to raise awareness for the campaign and

promote the "Go Red for Women" luncheon she and other education leaders hosted on May 10. At the luncheon, women of all ages were invited to learn more about heart-healthy eating and exercise, as well as blood pressure and cholesterol management.

Through events and programs like the luncheon in Buffalo, the American Heart Association hopes to reduce the amount of disabilities and deaths from heart disease and strokes by 20 percent and improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20 percent by the year 2020. The efforts of President Barton and other men and women across the country who volunteer their time to help out the AHA are a step in the right direction. For more information about the "Go Red for Women" campaign and the many other programs of the AHA, go to www.Heart.org. ■



Crystal Barton, president of the Buffalo Council of School Supervisors and Administrators, AFSA Local 10, and other local women were featured on the "Go Red" campaign billboard.



Connecticut Local Member Sally Biggs Receives Prestigious Principal of the Year Award

Hartford Principals and Supervisor's Association [HPSA] Local 22 member Sally Biggs, now in her fifth year as principal of Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy (HMTCA) in Hartford, Conn., has been named the 2012 Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) Middle School Principal of the Year.

"I am honored to be recognized from among the many tremendous principals from across the state of Connecticut and the city of Hartford," Biggs said upon learning of her selection. "It is my belief that principals have the best, most rewarding job in the world. Every day, I work alongside an outstanding and dedicated group

of educators and together we strive to create a nurturing and supportive environment, which ensures that every child reaches his or her potential."

Since Ms. Biggs' arrival in 2007, the school's reputation has continued to rise. Until recently, the school was known as Hartford Magnet Middle School (HMMS). After three years of Ms. Biggs' leadership as principal, HMMS received the 2011 Dr. Ronald P. Simpson Distinguished Merit Award from the Magnet Schools of America, chosen from more than 6,000 magnet schools throughout the United States for its commitment to high academic standards, curriculum innovation and successful diversity efforts.



Principal Sally Biggs is seated amid a group of Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy students.

HMMS also completed its partnership with Trinity College in 2011, resulting in the creation of the Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy. This year students in grades 6–9 benefited from a rigorous, college-oriented curriculum. ■

NEW ORLEANS PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATORS AWARDED \$1.3 MILLION *continued from page 1*

The firings may have been part of a larger scheme that used millions of federal emergency dollars secured for re-employing displaced public school educators to create privately run charter schools that supplanted the public school system.

According to the Reason for Judgment report filed by Justice Ethel Simms Julien, OPSB's "Disaster Leave Without Pay" policy was fabricated. All fired employees were in good standing with the OPSB, and their termination was unjustified.

used to pay the salaries or benefits" of the more than 7,500 public school employees," the court ruled.

Laid off school employees were not given the "proper opportunity to appeal their termination," and the "termination letter[s] was not sent to the proper addresses of most class members," despite presented evidence documenting that those addresses were available.

In light of this information, a committee of attorneys who represented local New Orleans Public School Employees



Organizers of the Still Standing—Six Years Later Rally, seated from left: Felton Walters; Cheryllyn Branche, PANOPSI President; Attorney Willie Zanders; Walter Goodwin, PANOPSI Community Liaison.

instrumental in garnering public support that has been sorely needed," said President Woodard.

One of the services that AFSA provides its local unions is legal assistance in local union cases; when the New Orleans educators were wrongfully terminated, AFSA was instrumental in bringing legal action against the LDOE, the OPSB, and the BESE, providing funding and council for the litigation.

The case's report shows that Superintendent Cecil J. Picard "drafted a letter to the U.S. Secretary of Education, Margaret Spelling, requesting \$2.4 billion in federal funding to help schools affected by Hurricane Katrina in September of 2005. He specifically cited a need to continue paying the public school district's staff that worked in districts closed after the hurricane.

Instead, the court-validated evidence presented by the union's legal team showed that in November 2005, the OPSB invested over \$500 million of the funds in creating charter schools and training 125 new teachers. OPSB "did not ensure that any of this money was

(NOPSE) and PANOPSI, AFSA Local 17, brought a wrongful termination, class-action lawsuit against the LDOE, the OPSB, and the BESE more than 5 years ago. AFSA has provided unparalleled support for their efforts ever since.

One of the services that AFSA provides its local unions is legal assistance in local union cases; when the New Orleans educators were wrongfully terminated, AFSA was instrumental in bringing legal action against the LDOE, the OPSB, and the BESE, providing funding and council for the litigation.

"Not only has AFSA provided legal council and funding since the beginning of this litigation, we have been

The trial phase of the case was completed on June 23, 2011 and, after much deliberation, on June 20, 2012, Judge Ethel Simms Julien ruled in favor of the Louisiana educators. Many who were involved see this case as a conspiracy targeted at American educators while others see the outcome as a step toward improving our school systems.

The involvement of AFSA in this court case exemplifies the value of AFSA's unrelenting defense of its members in the face of the nationwide assault not only on the rights of public school educators, but on all public employees. Thanks to AFSA's unremitting support, seven New Orleans educators have now received compensation for their wrongful termination.

"We are proud of AFSA's ability to respond to the needs of our members in every local throughout our country," said Woodard. "The ability to maintain solidarity during a crisis is what makes our union strong. Expressing that strength to those who would take away the rights of American educators is our passion and our calling." ■

ASSERTING OURSELVES AS COMMUNITY LEADERS *continued from page 2*

standing by and letting their sisters and brothers in public service lose their bargaining rights.

But what the last year or two has proved with chilling clarity—exemplified by Gov. Walker's sound defeat of the recall effort—is that if we don't stand tall for each other's rights when they're under attack, whether it's in the public or the private sector, all we stand to be is the next victim of the right-wing assault.

And with each of our adversaries' "victories," they got bolder, until they had governors elected like Snyder, Walker, Kasich, Scott and Christie who won't rest easy until every last one of our rights is dead and buried. And with the possibility of unseating the president in their sights, it's clear they will stop at nothing to elect a candidate like Mitt Romney, whose commitment to advancing the privatization of public schools is a matter of record.

Not that the record of the Obama administration has been exemplary on education issues—far from it. But there is little doubt the disappointments of the last three years would pale in comparison to the assault that will take place if the Republicans prevail in winning the presidency and seizing control of the U.S. Senate, which over the last three years has been the bulwark in defense of our rights.

So my message as we head into convention in July is as old as unionism itself: an injury to one is an injury to all. And unless we stand united in solidarity with our sisters and brothers throughout the labor movement to challenge every last attempt to replace our commitment to public good with the push for private gain, more than our jobs will be lost.

We'll lose the system of public education that, for better or worse, is still the bedrock of our democracy. We'll lose our capacity to be the community leaders who inform and educate a new generation of citizens who won't stand still for people's rights being savaged.

So, I urge every one of our members to assert yourselves as leaders in your communities by challenging those who would deny us our basic rights by working with the AFL-CIO central labor councils in your cities and states in support of candidates who take strong stands for our right to representation.

Like it or not, the hard reality at hand is that ringing voters' doorbells will do more to save our rights than wringing our hands the day after the November election.

Only activism by those of us committed to saving public education will prevent it from being further privatized. Only our solidarity with the rest of the labor movement will stop the educational foundation of our democracy from being undermined.

We owe it to our children and grandchildren, if not to ourselves, to do whatever it takes between now and November to make sure that doesn't happen.

Diann Woodard

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES PAYING THE PRICE FOR BUDGET DEFICITS

continued from page 7

accrued sick leave credit toward retirement, eliminate the six-year buyback of air time you could purchase toward retirement if you had 25 years in the system, disallow retirees from working for the school system part time once they retire, and move the retirement age from 62 to 65 for full retirement benefits. He is finding it slow going in the state legislature at this time for his proposals, as teacher and administrative groups oppose his reforms," Dierke said.

All workers deserve a secure retirement and should receive the benefits they earned to retire with dignity and security. At the federal level, AFSA is opposed to the Public Employees Pension Transparency Act (PEPTA/H.R. 567/S. 347), because it would distort the health of state and local government pension plans, leading to confusion among policymakers and potentially leading to more states abandoning public pension plans.

AFSA delegates will vote on a resolution supporting retirement security and strengthening Social Security at the AFSA convention this July. ■

Audited Financial Statement American Federation of School Administrators as of August 31, 2011			
	2011	2010	
ASSETS			
Cash	\$ 788,021	\$ 1,671,601	
Investments	\$ 1,564,026	\$ 744,989	
Total Cash and Investments	\$ 2,352,047	\$ 2,416,590	
Security Deposits	\$ 10,160	\$ 10,160	
Property and Equipment	\$ 70,031	\$ 70,031	
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	\$ (65,757)	\$ (60,601)	
Property and Equipment, Net	\$ 4,274	\$ 9,430	
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 2,366,481	\$ 2,436,180	
REVENUE			
Per Capita	\$ 1,351,183	\$ 1,527,161	
Royalty Income	\$ 63,733	\$ 77,271	
Interest Income	\$ 33,721	\$ 35,376	
Unrealized Gain(Loss) on Investments	\$ 4,627	\$ 31,537	
Realized Gain on Investments	\$ 1,959	\$ 3,896	
Reimbursed Expenses	\$ 239	\$ -	
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 1,455,463	\$ 1,675,241	
EXPENSES			
Per Capita Dues	\$ 189,182	\$ 203,867	
Member Benefits	\$ 214,697	\$ 197,870	
Legal and Other Aid to Locals	\$ 35,211	\$ 35,860	
Leadership Conferences/Conventions	\$ 73,111	\$ 4,912	
General and Administrative	\$ 1,012,008	\$ 970,424	
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 1,525,209	\$ 1,412,933	
INCREASE IN NET ASSETS	\$ (69,746)	\$ 262,308	
NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF PERIOD	\$ 2,436,179	\$ 2,173,871	
NET ASSETS - END OF PERIOD	\$ 2,366,433	\$ 2,436,179	

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UPCOMING EVENTS

July 18–20	NAESP National Leaders Conference, Washington, D.C.
July 24–25	California Labor Federation Biennial Convention, San Francisco
July 26–28	AFSA Thirteenth Triennial Constitutional Convention, San Juan, Puerto Rico
July 31–Aug. 2	AFL-CIO Executive Council Meeting, AFL-CIO Headquarters, Washington, D.C.
July 28–29	AFL-CIO Battleground States Conference, Washington, D.C.
Aug. 5–6	National Labor Caucus of State Legislators Annual Meeting and Reception, Chicago
Sept. 9–12	Missouri AFL-CIO 26th Biennial Convention, Kansas City, Mo.
Nov. 9	AFL-CIO Executive Council Meeting, AFL-CIO Headquarters

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