

THE Leader


American Federation of
School Administrators
AFSA, AFL-CIO

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A NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Cheating How Test Score Bonuses Ruin Education for Everyone

Throughout the last several years, our nation's educators have experienced increased scrutiny for illegally advancing scores on standardized tests, with case after case of accusation and scandal. Most recently, former Superintendent Beverly Hall of Atlanta was charged after receiving an accumulated \$580,000 in bonuses for falsified scores.

A March report from FairTest, the National Center for Fair and Open

Testing, found cases of cheating in 37 states and Washington, D.C., over the last four years. In response to the report, FairTest Public Education Director Bob Schaeffer said, "Across the U.S., strategies that boost scores without improving learning—including outright cheating, narrow teaching to the test and pushing out low-scoring students—are widespread. These corrupt practices are inevitable consequences

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Building Coalitions to Defend Public Education

The attack on public education is intensifying daily in our country. Now, more than ever, there is a need to unify groups and individuals in the fight against these attacks through the formation of coalitions.

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Congrats to 2013 AFSA Scholarship Winners

Each year AFSA provides the opportunity for members' students to apply for a competitive scholarship, which provides \$2,500 toward college tuition for five recipients. The winners are selected by the AFSA Scholarship Committee based on the demonstration of a strong work ethic, a commitment to their education and dedication to their communities.

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Healing in the Wake of Newtown

In our last newsletter, we featured two touching firsthand accounts by educators Paul Stringer, vice president of the Connecticut Federation of School Administrators, Local 22, and Dr. Anthony Salvatore, president of the Newtown Association of School Administrators, Local 113, who both had worked with slain Sandy Hook School Principal Dawn Hochsprung. In this issue, Salvatore continues his discussion, speaking to the process of moving forward and learning from the tragic events of the Newtown shooting.

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Jimmy Gittings, president of Local 25, joins fellow union members on Sept. 11, 2012, to protest the school board's decision to fire one principal and not reinstate another until late in 2013.

Education Policies Operating in the Dark

As a school leader in an economically troubled city, I learned to expect the unexpected each day when arriving at school: hearing the children buzzing about a horrific incident that occurred over the weekend; checking the faculty list to see the high number of teachers absent and the lack of class coverage their absences created; seeing an irate parent entering the front office; learning the buses would be late; or discovering one of your students had run away from home.

There were more uplifting times as well: celebrating the days when we won the big game; walking through the hallways to find classrooms humming with engaged students; watching your students perform at school assemblies; participating with pride in graduation days; or finding no students waiting for discipline, no phones

"All too often policy makers forget our role as instructional leaders and see only our role as managers. This oversight apparently blinds them to the knowledge that highly effective principals need quality training and preparation, the same as teachers."

—AFSA President Diann Woodard

ringing for once and no new messages in your e-mail box.

Every day was like riding a roller coaster—one moment your hands are flaying in the air with excitement, and the next there's a sinking feeling fluttering deep in the pit of your stomach. Yet, no matter the circumstance, the school's doors opened the next day, the bell rang and the roller coaster ride began all over again. By returning each day, we weren't acting as martyrs. We were completing our part of the equation to ensure learning takes place in the building for each child, every day.

All school principals are keenly aware of this leadership role and its relevance to student success. Unfortunately, a recent report, "Operating in the Dark," published by the George W. Bush Institute, makes it clear policy makers are oblivious to the fact that "25 percent of a child's academic success is linked to the principal."

All too often policy makers forget our role as instructional leaders and see only our role as managers. This oversight apparently blinds them to the knowledge that highly effective principals need quality training and preparation, the same as teachers.

"Principals manage the teaching force and they are the ones that are best positioned to ensure that every student has a great teacher year after year and thus the continued learning needed to be college and career ready," the Bush report acknowledges.



AFSA President Diann Woodard

"President Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan do not call for investment in school leaders. Instead, they perpetuate the notion that schools are businesses and principals are akin to corporate CEOs—no talents uniquely suited to school and community environments required!"

—AFSA President Diann Woodard

Given this critical need, why then do the president and his secretary of education continue to push Race to the Top (RTTT) and the school improvement initiatives that call for the removal of principals, rather than training to strengthen their roles as school leaders?

Instead, the administration invokes a simplistic, Donald Trump-like policy of ham-handed firings that create instability in the schools and cause chaos and uncertainty among students, teachers and the community.

Everyone wants to stay in schools they perceive have good leadership that involves them in the decision making process and cares about, values and understands quality instruction.

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Frontline Educators Keep Battling for Gun Regulation

The U.S. Senate put a stop to further discussions on gun control in that legislative body when it failed to pass the gun background check bill during an April vote. That hasn't stopped schools and communities around the country from taking the issue into their own hands, with some implementing buzzer systems at the doors while others have hired armed guards to patrol the entrances. Several schools even have gone so far as to have faculty carry guns.

With proper training, some think this would be the best way to ensure the safety of students and staff. Others, including AFSA, are lukewarm to the idea and have taken action by resisting such measures this year.

Opposition to Educators Toting Guns

Crystal Boling-Barton, principal of McKinley High School and President of AFSA Local 10 in Buffalo, N.Y., knows violence. McKinley sits in a part of Buffalo where more than 18,000 crimes are committed every year, according to NeighborhoodScout.com. Even with these statistics, she still doesn't think educators should carry guns.

"Educators are not members of police departments or special forces," said Barton. "We are teachers, counselors and administrators. Carrying firearms is not part of our daily responsibilities."

Those opposed to the idea think this tactic may be more dangerous than beneficial. By increasing the amount of firearms in schools, it also increases the potential danger to faculty and students. Schools can exhaust other precautionary actions, like hiring armed guards and better securing windows and doors before implementing such



drastic and potentially dangerous measures, these opponents say.

Barton does think faculty should be trained in emergency circumstances, but not to wield firearms themselves.

"Schools must train and prepare teachers and support staff to look for the specific signs and indicators that point to potential violence," she said. "Support staff must be dedicated specifically to deal with threats, bullying and community problems."

As the U.S. Senate voted to block the expansion of gun control, it served as a severe blow to all those who have lost innocent loved ones to gun violence, especially those affected by the tragedy in Newtown, Conn.

"Their unwillingness to deal with the issue is a direct result of corporate intervention," a frustrated Barton said. "This continues to jeopardize the health and safety of students, faculty, staff and administrators across the country and the lives of mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers in our neighborhoods."

While the vote initially was supposed to be the first of many in a debate that it was assumed would take days or weeks, the Senate leaders decided to

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School Closures Not the Answer in Chicago

Across the nation, districts are announcing hundreds of school closures advocates say will result in “better education.”

In March, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Public Schools CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett announced the closure of more than 50 public schools with the goal of investing in quality education.

“Every student in every neighborhood deserves a high-quality education that prepares them to succeed. For too long, too many of our children have been trapped in underutilized, under-resourced schools,” said Mayor Emanuel in a press release about the closures.

In reality, the closures are expected to save the district \$560 million over the next decade, but will cost \$233 million in displaced student and closure costs in the short term, according to the *Chicago Tribune*.

Facts Dispute Far-Fetched Claims

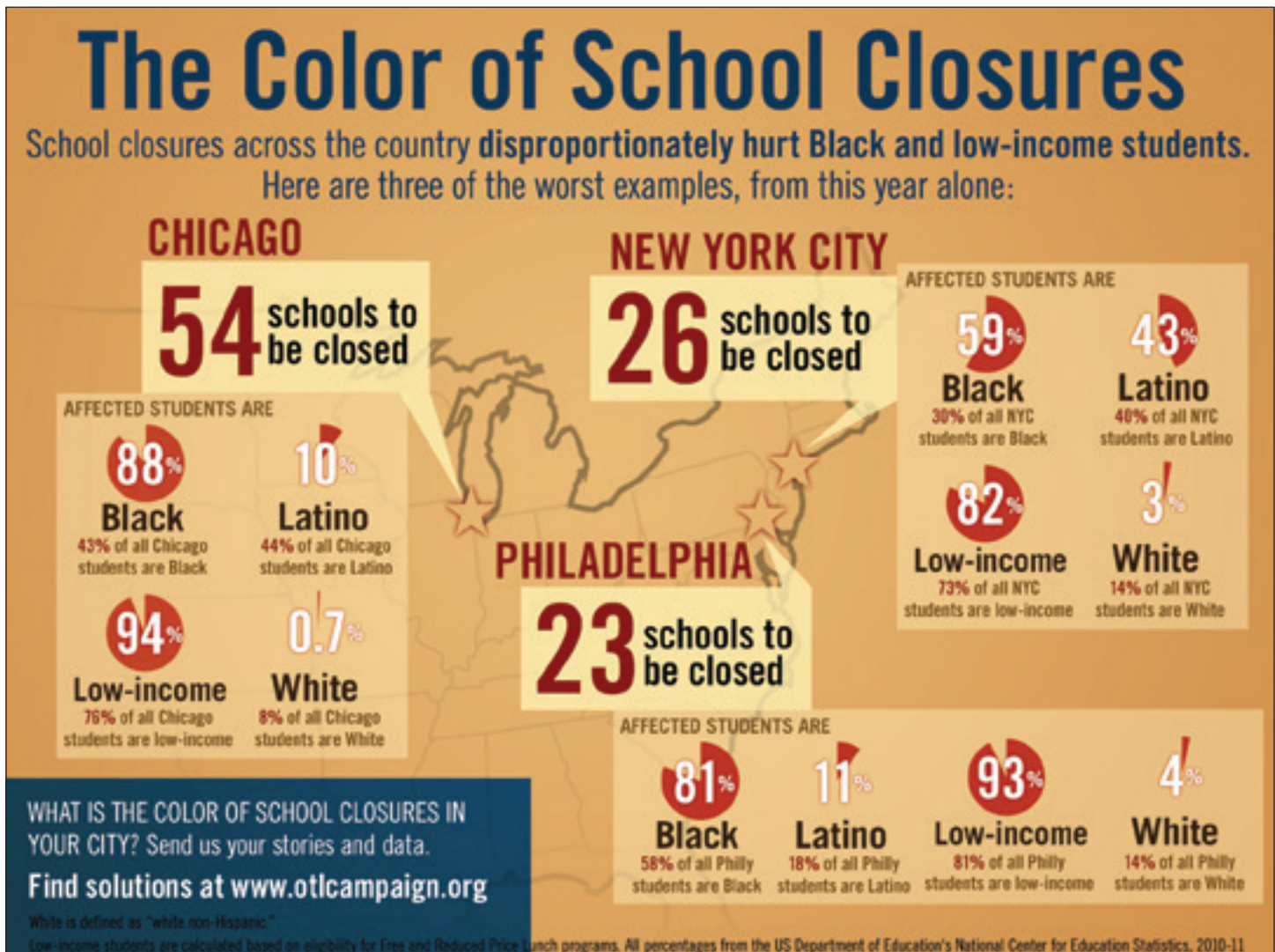
A 2009 University of Chicago study found achievement gaps are not closed by shuffling kids around schools. “One year after students left their closed schools, their achievement in reading and math was not significantly different from what we would have expected

had their schools not been closed,” the study states. That same study found most displaced students typically are moved from one underachieving school to another underachieving school (see <http://bit.ly/ccsrstudy>).

The study also found that displacing students decreases the number of emotional support systems students have, because the act separates students from trusted adults and friends who could help them adjust to the challenges of a new school.

In addition to adjusting to new school environments, students also have to

Infographic courtesy of the Opportunity to Learn Campaign.



School closures are both harmful and discriminatory to our students.

adjust to new travel routes to schools. Shuffling these students could increase the distance elementary students have to travel to get to school. Estimates of the increased distance range from just a few blocks to almost a mile or more, according to Chicago Public Schools and the *Chicago Tribune*. Since Chicago public schools do not offer transportation for students, these kids may have to walk through unsafe neighborhoods, placing children in further harm than necessary, which does not contribute anything to the quality of their education.

Closures Cripple Neighborhoods

The Chicago school closures also will add a number of empty buildings to

neighborhoods already struggling to attract growth. By failing to offer any reasons for growth, these closures run the risk of turning Chicago's primarily African American and Hispanic neighborhoods into wastelands. Taking schools away from these neighborhoods does not increase their livability, and may drive away community members with the means to move.

"While poverty and crime have decimated the population of many inner-city neighborhoods, shutting down schools in those troubled areas will depopulate them even faster," DeWayne Wickham notes in *USA Today*. "The result will be a growing expanse of urban wastelands that could well deepen the budget deficits of the cities that are closing public schools."

Closing 50 or more schools in a district has very real consequences for teachers, principals, families and students. Educators are displaced, finding themselves laid off because there are not enough jobs in the district to secure employment, while students lose the support and consistency previously present in their education.

The glut of school closures in Chicago and across the nation reduces education to a numbers game—and students shouldn't be figures in line-item budgets. According to research, the only outcome of this numbers game is a decrease in needed school spending. ■

The Ongoing Fight for Public Education

As the fight for public education continues and our schools are stripped of funds, forced into incessant standardized testing and required to use corporate-approved, scripted programs, educators, parents and students are moving from the sidelines into battle.

From Chicago, where teachers have organized a campaign to end non-state mandated standardized tests in public schools, to Portland, Ore., where students have worked to convince their classmates to stay home during the Assessment of Knowledge and Skills standardized test, the movement to end corporate-style education is growing.

In January, Seattle teachers at Garfield High School boycotted the state's rigorous standardized testing gauntlet. In an open letter to the district, teachers refused to administer the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test, outlining nine concerns that included not knowing what content is covered by MAP, concern over the amount of class and lab time consumed by the



test, and the fact that when the district purchased the test, then-Superintendent Maria Goodloe-Johnson was a board member of the company selling the exam, posing a potential conflict of interest.

Nearly every teacher at Garfield High School joined the boycott and 459 parents showed their support and solidarity with the district's teachers by opting their child out of the MAP test. Additionally, a group of about 250 educators nationwide, including Diane

Ravitch of New York University, signed a letter showing their support for the end of MAP in Seattle.

Concerns Spread Nationwide

During the recent second annual Occupy the Department of Education initiative April 4–7, approximately 175 protesters marched to and rallied at the White House to voice their concerns.

“The corporations are teaching our children,” said rally attendee Peggy Robertson, a parent and longtime teacher from Colorado. “We do not need these tests.”

“[W]e are driven like cattle to collect mounds of data, to divvy the data up into tidy and irrelevant skill categories, and finally to create individual action plans to remediate each student’s poor data points.”

—anonymous Seattle teacher

The crowd grew to its largest as Ravitch took the podium criticizing the Education Department for being allied with “some of the wealthiest people in America” and “aligned against public education, against teachers, against children and against good education.”

Some teachers and administrators say, “Enough is enough,” and have left their professions entirely in response to the numerous standardized tests that have been added to curriculums since the implementation of No Child Left Behind.

An anonymous Seattle teacher outlined reasons for leaving the profession in a blog post on [SeattleEducation2010](#), saying “[W]e are driven like cattle to collect mounds

of data, to divvy the data up into tidy and irrelevant skill categories, and finally to create individual action plans to remediate each student’s poor data points.”

Schools ‘Too Scripted’

In 2011, *The Washington Post* profiled Bill Kerlina, one of 20 Washington, D.C., principals who resigned due to disagreements with the district’s emphasis on standardized testing. Kerlina partially blamed the school district, saying, “The district evaluates teachers, but does not support their growth.” He criticized DC Public Schools (DCPS) for being “too scripted” and not allowing students to “think outside the box.” Kerlina says this limited approach to education drives D.C. students to private and charter schools. His suggestions for bettering the school district included a move toward “inquiry-based learning.”

Rhode Island teacher Stephen Round uploaded a video of himself to YouTube reading his resignation letter at the end of the 2012 fall semester; it went viral almost immediately.

Round blames the school district’s emphasis on testing for his departure, saying the district was “a great fit for several years” but the high stakes placed on test scores frustrated him. Round said that by placing such emphasis on standardized testing, “our new goal is to create good test takers,” not learners.

A 2012 ACT survey supports Round, with evidence that while students’ test scores remain the same, students are showing signs of being less prepared for college. Out of the 9,937 high school and college instructors surveyed, 89 percent of high school teachers thought their students were “well” or “very well” prepared for freshman-level college, while only 26 percent of college faculty members thought students were ready, yet another sign that teaching to a test accomplishes nothing for our nation’s children.

Round had similar thoughts as Kerlina regarding inquiry-based learning, but shied away from giving outright suggestions for his district.

“The top echelon of the corporate world is driving our education system. This slams teachers and it slams principals.”

—Wendi Caporicci, secretary of AFSA

Fighting Corporate Education

Educators across the nation are leaving the profession or staging massive boycotts and protests because of high-stakes testing. The billions spent on standardized testing each year could be better utilized by developing whole student evaluations and not tying teachers’ evaluations to the scores. But corporate-style education is a tough beast to slay, because it is funded by billionaires like Bill Gates and Sam Walton and is sanctioned by both political parties.

“The top echelon of the corporate world is driving our education system,” said Wendi Caporicci, secretary of AFSA and a 40-year veteran of the Oakland Unified School District. “This slams teachers and it slams principals.”

With the power of the wealthiest Americans standing in support of corporate-style education, this is an issue that will not simply fade away; we must continue the fight and refuse to accept a reality where profit comes before the education of our nation’s children. ■

Building Coalitions to Defend Public Education



By Dr. Leonard P. Pugliese

AFSA Regional Vice President

*Executive Director,
CASA, AFSA
Local 20*

The attack on public education is intensifying daily in our country. Now, more than ever, there is a need to unify groups and individuals in the fight against these attacks through the formation of coalitions.

It is undeniable that public education is facing an unprecedented period of assault from both the private sector, which has its collective eye on the potential for monetary profits, and the political sector, which too often is overly influenced by the private sector. These assaults are never-ending, highly destructive and dizzying. School budgets are slashed, positions are eliminated, public schools are closed while charter schools are opened, and without any sufficient evaluation, one new program after another is implemented.

While many oppose these attacks, our defense often is fragmented, disjointed and in some cases counterproductive. If our public education system is to survive, the time has come for like-minded groups and individuals to unify and form strong, active coalitions.

A Coalition's Importance

A coalition is a collection of people and/or organizations working together to solve a common problem. Through the power to address a common goal and provide concerned parties with a unified approach to a problem, coalitions eliminate duplicative efforts, minimize chances for wasted resources, and create a greater chance for effective and efficient action. In response to the maelstrom we are facing in our district of Newark, N.J., we have formed the Coalition for

Effective Newark Public Schools, composed of key groups and individuals working to fight back against the assault.

"It is essential for communities to come together and form coalitions that will save the schools and the educational system our forefathers so wisely implemented," says Tina Taylor, president of the City Association of Supervisors and Administrators (CASA), an active group in our coalition.

Reading our story, I am certain many of you will draw parallels to what is happening in your own cities and towns; I urge you to begin thinking about how to build coalitions in your communities. As Joseph Del Grosso, coalition member and president of the Newark Teachers Union said, "It is truly important for all, regardless of titles or job descriptions, to come together and form long-lasting coalitions. It is not important if one is an administrator or teacher; we must fight to protect public education at all costs."

An Active Coalition in Newark

The Newark, N.J., public school system is an urban district serving

approximately 37,000 students, 89 percent of whom receive either free or reduced-priced lunches. There is high unemployment in the city, basic services are lacking, the crime rate is high and many of our city residents struggle each day to provide for their families.

In 1995, the state of New Jersey seized control of Newark's public school district, removing the elected board of education and replacing it with an advisory board of education. Beverly Hall (of recent Atlanta fame) was selected as the first state-appointed Newark superintendent of schools, with all other top-level administrators removed and replaced with new state appointees.

In the last 18 years of state control, New Jersey has replaced or eliminated thousands of educators in Newark while ending many programs and implementing others without accomplishing what was promised—raising student achievement.

"It is no longer about education. It is about occupation," says New Jersey State Sen. Ronald L. Rice. "With the state replacing boards of education



During a coalition brainstorming session, Annette Alston (center), president of the Newark Teachers Association, offers suggestions regarding future coalition actions while Wilhelmina Holder (back left), president of the Newark Secondary Parents Council, raises her hand, prepared to offer additional suggestions.



CASA Vice President Walter V. Genuario (left), CASA President Tina Taylor (center) and other coalition members look on as AFSA Regional Vice President Dr. Leonard P. Pugliese responds to a question posed by the coalition facilitator.

with powerless advisory boards in the takeover districts, the voters have become disenfranchised. It is blatantly discriminatory that the takeovers all have occurred in urban districts.”

After each failed initiative, the state distances itself from its failed program and introduces yet another initiative with more empty promises, using Newark as a disposable Petri dish for educational reform.

During the first 16 years of state control and occupation, we held on tightly to the roller coaster of educational reform.



Junius Williams, director of the Abbott Leadership Institute at Rutgers University, Newark, opens the May 11, 2013, coalition meeting by reading the minutes from the prior meeting. CASA President Tina Taylor (left) and Deborah Smith-Gregory, president of the NAACP Newark, N.J., chapter (right) look on.

However, in the last two years reform attempts have deteriorated to the point of being nothing less than apocalyptic, beginning with the 2011 appointment of State Superintendent of Schools Cami Anderson. Anderson has disrupted the lives of hundreds of families and thousands of students by closing schools, opening charter schools and hiring numerous highly-paid, outside consultants. She also has radically restructured schools, eliminated hundreds of instructional and noninstructional positions, and transferred hundreds of staff members. While accepting substantial salary bonuses, Anderson drastically reduced school budgets, leading to the recent school walkout of hundreds of high school students.

Additionally, her poor relationship with the nine-member School Advisory Board led to its unprecedented action of voting unanimously on a resolution of “no confidence” in her leadership at its April 2013 meeting.

“What an opportunity this might have been if parents, community and district staff had been involved in the process,” said former Superintendent of Newark Public Schools and coalition member Dr. Marion A. Bolden. “Instead, outsiders have imposed an audacious experiment on other peoples’ children; a system of schools versus a school system as we have known it. The pace of the

restructuring efforts has been quite disruptive and the lack of community ownership does not bode well for sustainability.”

In this atmosphere of state occupation, state domination and superintendent insensitivity, parents, community leaders, political leaders and workers created a coalition, coalescing behind the call for a return to local control of the Newark Public School System.

“It is vital that a sizable number of stakeholder individuals and groups have come together as the Coalition for Effective Newark Public Schools, to insist upon research-based, democratically conceived ideas for school reform in Newark,” said Coalition member Junius Williams, director of the Abbott Leadership Institute at Rutgers University.

Coalition member and Newark Municipal Councilman Ras Baraka echoes the importance of coalitions in the fight, stating, “The attack on public education is an attack on communities, parents, students and unions. It will take coalition building and collaboration of these three groups to restore public education in this country.”

Creating a Coalition

Step 1: Identify Your Issue and Coalition Members

“It is important that parents work with educators, school administrators and staff, because we reflect the strength of what is right for our children.”

—Wilhelmina Holder, president of the Newark Secondary Parent Council

Identify the issue or issues you want to address. Once you have that spelled out, identify potential individuals and groups with similar concerns or interests. Remember that the broader your membership, the better the coalition represents its key groups and individuals.

Step 2: Identify Your Key Groups

“It is imperative that we begin and maintain coalitions with the gathering of concerned students, unions, parents, teachers and community stakeholders. These like-minded individuals should

organize, galvanize and strategize to address immediate and pending educational concerns."

—Cuthbert Ashby, chairman of the Coalition for Effective Newark Public Schools

Key groups and individuals fall within three broad categories: stakeholders, community opinion leaders and policy makers.

Stakeholders are those most affected by the issue and are the most likely to be the driving force of any coalition. They are also the most likely to energize the coalition and voluntarily do much of the hard work necessary for a coalition to succeed in its mission. Identify and invite stakeholders to become members early in the coalition-building process. Their importance is indisputable.

Community opinion leaders, such as civic, clergy and business leaders, hold the power to influence others and spread the coalition's message. They also can raise the credibility of the coalition. These individuals often have a track record of positive leadership, bringing much-needed attention to the coalition and its mission.

Policy makers, such as state and local political leaders, have a wide sphere

of influence and are in the position to affect policy decisions that will bring about the coalition's desired changes. Their seats at the coalition table greatly increase the chances that tangible and positive change will take place as a result of the coalition's work.

Coda

As we close this school year and begin planning for the upcoming school year, I urge you to begin building coalitions in your school district. If a coalition already exists, recommit yourself to its mission and take to heart the words of James Harris, president of the New Jersey Conference of the NAACP, who said, "The current national movement to destroy and dismantle traditional educational opportunities is unacceptable and will be resisted wherever and whenever it occurs."

Make no mistake about it, this is a war, and for our public educational system to survive, we must unify and strengthen our best arsenal—our voices. Join others on the battlefield and form active coalitions.

For more information on forming coalitions in your school districts and communities, contact the American Federation of School Administrators



Michael James, deputy director of the Abbott Leadership Institute (with raised hand), offers suggestions for future coalition actions.



Newark Public School Instructional Director Deborah Mitchell-DeBerry and New Jersey State Sen. Ronald L. Rice discussing the positive impact of the growing coalition. (AFSA) at 202-986-4209 or visit AFSAAdmin.org/build-a-coalition. ■

COALITION FOR EFFECTIVE NEWARK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Below is a partial list of organizations and individual members that belong to the Effective Newark Public Schools Coalition.

Cuthbert Ashby, chairman

Abbott Leadership Institute, Rutgers University, Junius Williams, director

City Association of Supervisors and Administrators, AFSA Local 20, Tina Taylor, president

Dr. Marion A. Bolden, former superintendent of schools, Newark, N.J.

Essex/West Hudson Central Labor Council, New Jersey State Assemblyman Thomas Giblin, president; Walter V. Genuario, executive secretary-treasurer

International Union of Operating Engineers Local 68 and its branches, Michael Lewis and Salvatore Costanza, business representatives

NAACP, Newark, N.J., chapter, Deborah Smith-Gregory, president

Newark Education Workers Caucus

Newark Secondary Parents Council, Wilhelmina Holder, president

Newark Teachers Association, Annette Alston, president

Newark Teachers Union, AFT Local 481, Joseph Del Grosso, president

New Jersey Communities United, Roberto Cabanas, lead organizer

Parents Unified for Local School Education, Sharon Smith, co-founder/CEO

Ras Baraka, member, Newark, N.J., Municipal Council; chairman, Newark Municipal Council Education Committee

Ronald L. Rice, New Jersey state senator and chairman, Black Legislative Caucus; co-chair, Joint Committee on Public Schools

SEIU Local 617, Rahaman Muhammad, president

Thirteenth Ave. School PTA, Lyndon Brown, president

Congrats to 2013 AFSA Scholarship Winners

Each year AFSA provides the opportunity for members' students to apply for a competitive scholarship, which provides \$2,500 toward college tuition for five recipients. The winners are selected by the Scholarship Committee based on the demonstration of a strong work ethic, a commitment to their education and dedication to their communities.

"These students have the qualities and talent of the future leaders and innovators of our nation," said President Diann Woodard. "We are proud to support them on their path to success."

AFSA thanks all of its 2013 applicants and wishes all seniors a happy graduation.



Riley Battaglia

*AFSA member: Chris Battaglia,
Local 25, Baltimore, Maryland*

Riley has demonstrated an impressive academic career during his time at C. Milton Wright High School in Bel Air, Md. Through his hard work and dedication, he was able to maintain a 4.25 GPA despite undergoing open-heart surgery during his junior year of high school.

Riley's plans include attending Towson University near Baltimore and pursuing a career in international relations and development, during which he wants to travel and help out in less-developed regions of the world. Riley says his plans after college are simple: "To impact one community somewhere in the world in a positive way, which I hope will grow and spread to impact other regions."



Accursia Gallagher

*AFSA member: Cornelia Sichenze,
Local 1, New York, New York*

Accursia grew up in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, where she attended Fontbonne Halle Academy for high school. She plans to attend Boston College in the fall as a pre-med student.

"For as long as I can remember, I have wanted to become a doctor," says Accursia. "I have always had a sense that this was what I was meant to do."

Her interest in medicine is complemented by a passion for humanitarian efforts and international affairs, interests she plans to pursue throughout her career in medicine.

"I hope to one day become a member of Doctors Without Borders," she says, "to bring the tools I have learned here to those in desperate need around the world."

I am extremely excited to start my journey towards fulfilling my dreams and I am so thankful to the AFSA for helping to make my dreams a reality."



Matthew Ehrlich

*AFSA member: Susan Ehrlich,
Local 1, New York, New York*

Matthew is the valedictorian of Bayside (N.Y.) High School's 2013 graduating class and plans to attend the Binghamton University (N.Y.) Scholars Program this fall.

"My interest in these fields stems from participating in Bayside's Math and Science Research Program," says Matthew. "In my freshman year, I switched off between an integrated sciences class and an applied statistics class. For my sophomore and junior years, I chose the math research track, culminating in me writing an original research paper." Matthew later submitted this paper, titled "The Fairness of the Different Systems of the NBA Draft Since 1947," to the New York City Science and Engineering Fair, which earned him a spot as a semifinalist.

While he remains undecided on his major, he is considering a double major in mathematics and science and is excited for the opportunity to engage in individual and group research projects throughout his college career. Matthew says his ultimate goal during his undergraduate studies is "to determine my intellectual interests and to further my studies through graduate school."



Catherine Moskos

*AFSA member: Stephanie Moskos,
Local 1, New York, New York*

Catherine was born in Flushing, Queens, and closely identifies with her Greek heritage. In the fall she will attend the Northeastern University Honors Program in Boston as a civil engineering major.

Catherine became interested in civil engineering after hearing it was a male-dominated field. "I want to challenge myself while empowering other women to pursue careers in the sciences," she says.

While in college, Catherine plans to take part in philanthropic organizations and develop her skills in music, physics, architecture and the environmental sciences.



Asya Shaw

*AFSA member: LaShella Stanfield,
Local 25, Baltimore, Maryland*

Asya is a senior attending the Baltimore School for the Arts, where she focuses on dance. She has received many honors and awards, including the honor roll and the principal's list, among others. She also was a Summer Intensive program participant with both Alvin Ailey Dance and Dance Theater of Harlem.

Asya serves as a volunteer youth dance instructor with the Kingsway Baptist Bible Church and volunteers with the Light a Night Campaign to raise money for cancer research. She is also a participant in the Academic League, the debate teams and has performed with the Morgan State University (Md.) Dance Ensemble. She loves writing poetry, listening to jazz music, bowling and examining and appreciating art exhibits.

Asya aspires to become a professional dancer and intends to major in dance with a minor in psychology at Towson University near Baltimore this fall. ■

Obama Administration Budget Update

President Obama's Fiscal Year 2014 budget proposes an increase of \$3.1 billion for the Department of Education. The president's request includes a major new investment in early learning, with \$75 billion in mandatory funds for Preschool for All, and increases to Early Head Start, Head Start and IDEA grants for infants and families.

The proposal also would prevent further education layoffs and restore many educator jobs that have been lost. In addition, it includes a major increase to the School Leadership program of \$98 million. This is the only federal initiative directly addressing the difficulty of attracting and retaining high-quality candidates to positions as principals in high-need districts, and helps ensure principals are included in ongoing professional development. The \$98 million request is triple the amount the program has been funded at in the past.

While AFSA is pleased with the budget's overall increase in education investments, we are concerned with the proposal to slash Social Security benefits by \$130 billion and shift \$64 billion in health care costs to Medicare beneficiaries over the next 10 years.

Immediately after the release of President Obama's FY 14 budget, AFSA President Diann Woodard released a statement expressing her concern over the cuts in these programs, saying "We are pleased the request includes additional revenues, but it does far too much harm to workers and asks far too little of the biggest, most profitable corporations.

"Public employees did not cause the recent economic collapse," she said, "yet time and again they are being asked to bear the heaviest burden by having their earned benefits and retirement security whittled away."

AFSA also urged members through an Action Alert to contact the president and express opposition to the plan to



cut cost-of-living increases for current and future Social Security beneficiaries.

Continuing Resolution/ House and Senate Budgets

In March, Congress passed the current continuing resolution (CR), which funds the federal government through Sept. 30, 2013. It also locks in the 5 percent across-the-board reductions required by sequestration, slashing funding for the Department of Education by \$2.5 billion.

Additionally, the House and Senate adopted their budget resolutions for FY 2014. They are starkly different.

The House plan (H.Con.Res. 25) sponsored by House Budget Chairman Paul Ryan (R-Wis.), calls for transferring the defense sequester to domestic programs and reducing discretionary spending for critical programs overall. This could reduce funding for

the Department of Education by \$7.7 billion on top of the \$2.5 billion in FY 2013 sequester cuts, and also wipe out Head Start and other critical discretionary programs. It also calls for cutting Medicaid, partially privatizing Medicare and lays the groundwork for future cuts to Social Security. On March 20, 2013, AFSA President Diann Woodard sent a letter to the full House expressing strong opposition to this proposal.

The Senate plan (S.Con.Res. 8), by Senate Budget Chairman Patty Murray (D-Wash.), would replace the 2013 sequester with a combination of new revenue and spending cuts. The proposal would increase revenue by \$975 billion over 10 years to help stabilize the nation's debt.

AFSA supports the proposal by Sen. Murray, which would protect and strengthen investments in education and critical social programs while taking a balanced approach to reducing the nation's deficit. ■

Proposed Tobacco Tax Would Fund Early Education

Many children across the United States, predominantly those from low-income households, lack access to early education. Universal preschool is offered in some form in 39 states, but not every child is eligible due to deficient government funds.

According to the National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP), 2.6 million American children will not receive a satisfactory education each year due to lack of resources. “The state of preschool in America is a state of emergency,” said author Steven Barnett, director of the National Institute for Early Education Research at Rutgers University, in an April *Huffington Post* article.

As part of his 2014 budget plan, President Obama has proposed the “Preschool for All” plan, which has game-changing potential for early education, providing 4-year-olds from low- and moderate-income families with access to high-quality preschool and allowing parents in each state to enroll their child, regardless of income, in equal opportunity kindergarten—funded by an increased tax on tobacco.

According to the Center for American Progress, the tax would distribute \$75 billion in new funding over the next 10 years. Cigarettes, currently taxed at about \$1 a pack, would face additional taxes of \$0.94, which also would raise \$1.6 billion for the Early Head Start programs.

“We will work with states to make high-quality preschool available to every child in America, and we’re going to pay for it by raising taxes on tobacco products that harm our young people,” Obama said.

Tobacco-Free Kids

The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids said this proposal would prevent nearly 1.7 million children from becoming addicted to smoking, as well as 626,000 premature deaths by reducing the number of youth

smokers, and would save the nation \$42 billion in associated health care costs.

“This would constitute the largest expansion of educational opportunity in the 21st century,” Secretary of Education Arne Duncan told reporters after the plan’s April 10 announcement. For the first two years of the proposed plan, participating states would pay only 9 percent of the costs and the federal government would pay 91 percent. This government contribution would decline gradually over the next decade. After 10 years, the federal government would shift to paying 25 percent, while the participating states would begin paying 75 percent.

According to the Center for American Progress, the tax would distribute \$75 billion in new funding over the next 10 years. Cigarettes, currently taxed at about \$1 a pack, would face additional taxes of \$0.94, which also would raise \$1.6 billion for the Early Head Start programs.

“I believe in providing all children with equal opportunities, which includes the ability to obtain a high-quality education,” said AFSA President Diann Woodard. “This proposal is a step in the right direction.” ■



Healing in the Wake of Newtown



Dr. Anthony Salvatore, president of the Newtown Association of School Administrators, Local 113

In our last newsletter, we featured two touching firsthand accounts by educators Paul Stringer, vice president of the Connecticut Federation of School Administrators (CFSA), and Dr. Anthony Salvatore, president of the Newtown Association of School Administrators, Local 113, who both had worked with slain Sandy Hook School Principal Dawn Hochsprung.

In this issue, Salvatore continues his discussion, speaking to the process of moving forward and learning from the tragic events of the Newtown shooting.

Survival. We talk a lot about not just survival, but thriving and meeting the needs of our children and adults in Newtown. We have since the early 1990s, long before I began working there. Newtown uses the work of Dr. William Glasser and Choice Theory, which emphasizes the four psychological needs of every human being: love/belonging, power/competence, freedom/choice and fun. Newtown has long built into its policies and practices meeting these needs through instruction, curriculum, discipline and assessment.

Five years ago, I spoke with then-Superintendent Dr. Janet Robinson during the summer of her first year. I recommended we have every elementary school use "Responsive Classroom" for consistency of language and practice in K-4. Ironically, Sandy Hook School was the first school to adopt the research-based program 12 years ago and it had had great success. Dr. Robinson agreed and we began our journey to establish more consistency in our K-12 system as far as addressing the behavioral side of the Scientific Research-Based Intervention (SRBI) process required by law. I continually emphasized how the behavioral side of the Response to Intervention model was just as important (or more important) than the academic side. So, over the last five years, every elementary school implemented "Responsive Classroom," which requires a minimum of a week-long training for teachers, recommended for administrators, which I also participated in, as Dawn did.

Building On 'Responsive Classroom'

Our next step was to advance the program into grades 6-8, which we have been planning for the past two years. This program, called "Developmental Designs," is an extension of "Responsive

Classroom" for older students, where they have more choices and input into the program's design and outcome. In other words, it's not as scripted as "Responsive Classroom," but does use the same language. Up until now, it's been a slow process for support of this program's implementation and training because it's expensive; however, now we are looking at training all 6-8 teachers this summer with the monies received from donations, grants or outright in-kind donation from the company itself. It isn't final yet.

I have mixed feelings that a tragedy the magnitude of Sandy Hook had to occur before we implemented programs that make sense. I wonder if these programs would have prevented that tragedy if they had been put into place sooner. I don't think anyone knows the answer to that question. So, I continue to recommend and support practices and programs that will help us meet our needs.

We can only control our own behavior. This is one of the tenets of Choice Theory, but the choices we make can be based upon distorted reality and judgment. We try to help children and adults first identify the reality of a situation and then to explore workable options that satisfy their personal needs. Sometimes, this requires the help of someone else who can be neutral by asking such reflective questions as: *What happened?* (reality); *What did you need?* (basic human need); *Did your behavior get you what you needed?* (reality); *What would you do differently?* (choice) and *What can you do to make it right for the other person(s)?* (restitution).

Although I will never know the answer, I keep thinking of what the conversation was that was going on in Adam Lanza's head. How can we do better in school to help avoid this behavior again, even knowing we

can't control someone else's behavior, but we can control the conditions around that person. And that takes a whole global community, not just a school or a classroom. Suicide is a final act and one that tells me he saw no other option for meeting his basic human needs. Did he feel like he was loved and belonged to his family or community? I don't know. Did he feel like he had power in his life to feel competent about who he was? I don't know. Did he feel like he had a choice in his life besides taking his own life? I don't know. Did he feel like his life was filled with fun? I don't know.

Building Positive Relationships

I have hope that we will learn and choose to change our behavior as a global society one person at a time. It's what our teachers and administrators do best in school—build

positive relationships with individual students so they can learn how to make the best choice for meeting their own needs and for helping others in society meet theirs as well. I was part of the Strategic Planning Committee three years ago on a committee for character. As a result of two years of researching our community's values, we synthesized them into six core character attributes for the entire community. We use the symbol of a tree (so younger children can understand how the core character attributes relate to each other.) This year, our task is to develop a rubric so everyone can assess their level of character in our community.

Valuing Cooperation Over Competition

It's time to focus on cooperation instead of competition in our society. It won't bring back the lives of

the 28 victims who died on Dec. 14, 2012, but it will honor the sacrifice they made that day. My fear is we will make the same mistake other communities have made and not recognize that Adam Lanza also was a victim that day. This is where Newtown can truly be a leader toward a new vision and new understanding. We need forgiveness on so many levels, but we first need healing. We already know from research that isolating bullies in school is harmful to the individual and to the school climate. Alienating someone from a community only exacerbates the feeling of powerlessness and not belonging. We must forgive mistakes and nurture our capacity to do good. We have control of that. ■

Equity in Classrooms

Woodard Speaks at Wayne State

Each year Wayne State University holds an Equity Within the Classroom forum hosted collaboratively by the state of Michigan's Martin Luther King Jr.*César Chávez*Rosa Parks (KCP) Initiative and Michigan's colleges and universities, with the purpose of giving educators and administrators a place to discuss critical issues facing education.

The KCP Initiative, created in 1986, aims to provide "Michigan's most educationally disadvantaged citizens" with "the opportunity to complete college degrees and experience career success as active participants in a knowledge-based global society and economy."

This year's forum, held April 7–9, included a higher education board panel discussion to address diversity in education and how to prepare national students for global success.

AFSA President and Michigan State University Board of Trustees Member Diann Woodard took part as a panelist speaking to the critical role of principals in developing school diversity.

"Principals provide students with their first contact with colleges and universities," said Woodard. "They are the providers of the rigor in the curriculum that helps to propel students to success. To that end, we must be mindful of the diversity within our schools to ensure that all children have an equal chance at achieving their potential."

"We need to develop leadership to examine existing education policies and work with institutions to cultivate an environment of successful learning and human development," said Janice Green, assistant dean of academic services in the college of education at

Wayne State University and one of the forum's key organizers.

The forum also featured keynote speakers from Wayne State University, the University of Maryland and the University of Texas, and provided attendees ranging from community leaders to students with 38 workshop opportunities. With the overall theme focused on "building empowerment and excellence in education," speakers encouraged attendees to describe their personal strategies for promoting social justice and equality in their communities.

"I think for most attendees, the biggest takeaways were building networks and working collaboratively to create programs that will result in student achievement," Green said. "Also, the need to support initiatives that empower minorities and remove disparities in education." ■

April AFSA GEB Meeting

On April 19–21, the AFSA General Executive Board (GEB) met in Washington, D.C., to review the agenda for improving services for AFSA members and to begin developing a strategic, three-year plan for helping AFSA meet its newly adopted mission to be “the exclusive union for administrators, professionals and supervisors advocating for excellence and equity in all of our schools, workplaces and communities.”

Program Committee

The GEB approved a mock negotiations workshop for bargaining team members, which will take place in Cromwell, Conn., on July 25–26, 2013. For more information, please reach out to your local president.

Legislative Committee

The GEB reviewed the House and Senate budget proposals for 2014 and the president’s budget request for 2014. The GEB also considered, and has since adopted a resolution on school safety and immigration reform.

Scholarship Committee

The GEB selected this year’s five winners for the AFSA scholarship, who each will receive a \$2,500 award toward his or her college expenses.

A one-time donation of \$10,000 was authorized to go to the family of the late Sandy Hook School Principal Dawn Hochsprung and one of AFSA’s insurance providers, M&M Group Benefits Inc., has created a \$5,000 annual scholarship fund in memory of Hochsprung in Newtown, Conn.

Adopt-a-School Program: Regional School Grants

The GEB voted to support the AFL-CIO Adopt-a-School Program, which will award one-time grants of \$5,000 to 20 public schools covering four regions of the country. Winners for each region and category will be selected collaboratively by the American Federation of School Administrators, AFSCME and AFT. For more details, visit AFSAadmin.org/afl-cio-adopt-a-school/. ■



GEB member Peter McNally works in a group with fellow members James S. Dierke (left), James Smallwood (middle) and AFSA Affiliate Liaison Doris Reed (right), discussing “What does the GEB believe should be the organization’s priorities?”



Dr. Nia Haydel leads a strategic planning discussion with GEB members.



From left, AFSA’s General Counsel Bruce Bryant and GEB members Elaine Papas and Dominic Sacchetti pose during a breakout group session.

FRONTLINE EDUCATORS KEEP BATTLING FOR GUN REGULATION

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rush the process when they learned its chances began to fade.

Opponents of gun control from both parties said they based their decision on logic, and that passions had no place in the making of momentous policy.

Obama's Rare Outrage

President Obama, who has made gun control a top priority for his second term, referred to the vote as a "pretty shameful day for Washington." The

sight of Sandy Hook students and their families in the Senate gallery was not enough to force those voting to reconsider their positions.

Those in strong opposition to gun control, like the National Rifle Association (NRA), blanketed the Senate with phone calls, e-mails and letters. The NRA also created an advertising campaign targeting President Obama and New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who is a strong gun control advocate. On the day of the Senate vote, the organization

spent more than \$500,000 on this campaign.

Barton said educators are on the front lines in terms of fighting for gun control.

"When it comes to fighting [on] gun control, we [AFSA] must and do use our very loud voices on the front line," she said. "The problem of guns in our communities is growing, and our communities are shrinking as a result." ■



Photo Contest Winner

Congratulations to Principal Natasha Spann from John B. Russwurm Elementary School in central Harlem, New York City, for winning first place in our photo contest for her "Eating Green Eggs and Ham" photo from Dr. Seuss Day!

EDUCATION POLICIES OPERATING IN THE DARK

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However, President Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan's policies perpetuate the notion that schools are businesses and principals are akin to corporate CEOs—no talents uniquely suited to school and community environments required!

Equally troubling is the fact Race to the Top has tinkered with the states, forcing them to accept many Draconian initiatives to qualify for federal funding, despite the fact these initiatives have failed to yield results.

The policy makers also have tinkered with teachers by imposing merit pay and other such standards—again with no results. There has been no substantive report concluding that merit pay, the loss of tenure or the increased use of test data for evaluation have resulted in increased learning or improved teachers.

The initiatives also have tinkered with the curriculum. Forty-five states have adopted the Common Core State Standards. The standards seemingly are a good thing, but they, too, require an investment in thoughtful planning and training before being attempted, let alone before being fully implemented. Indeed, AFT President Randi Weingarten has called for a moratorium on their implementation.

"Making changes without anything close to adequate preparation is a failure of leadership, a sign of a broken accountability system and, worse, an abdication of our moral responsibility to the kids we serve," Weingarten rightly points out.

Now, the Obama administration is beginning to head blindly down the same path with newly proposed policies on school leadership, bereft of data on which to base these policies and little, if any, hands-on knowledge

of how school systems relate to school leaders at either the local or state level.

Absent the critical data the Bush report points out is essential for policy planning, new legislation is being proposed that will continue the practice of operating in the dark, including the School Principal Recruitment and Training Act of 2013 and the Instructional Leadership Act, which awards competitive grants to develop and implement programs and sites to train principals in instructional leadership, in addition to requiring the secretary of education to establish a definition of an effective principal.

"Districts hire; however, the states control the entry point to the principalship, overseeing the preparation and licensure," the Bush report points out. "States are not effective[ly] using their authority and are failing to collect and monitor the outcomes of principal preparation and licensure policies. In too many cases, we found states making decisions without using current research or critical data and essentially operating in the dark."

If states are operating in the dark, then how do they hope to train and recruit the highest-quality principals? Most preparation programs require an aspiring principal to take a number of university courses to receive certification, a test, and in some instances require a candidate to attend an academy. But after completion, aspirants were placed on a list and waited for an appointment. After receiving that appointment, every three to five years, a principal had to renew those credentials. The issue at hand becomes: Was this sufficient training for the role of principal?

Principal preparation programs simply are no substitute for on-the-job experience. In addition to coursework, the training of a principal should involve working with a qualified,

seasoned professional who can mentor and work with the principal for the first two to three years. Much of what makes a successful school is the process of creating continuity in leadership along with continuity in instruction for students. Instead, policies are being pursued in which tough language is imposed in each new political season that does nothing but bring on more and more instability.

These chaotic circumstances are exacerbated by the current highly partisan atmosphere in Congress. There now are numerous bills in the House and Senate designed to impose more tinkering that will undermine the possibility of better school performance in one way or another. The current sequestration, for example, has clearly put the education community in harm's way. Because Congress failed to repeal or replace sequestration by March 1, 2013, all federally funded education programs, i.e., Head Start, Title 1, IDEA and career tech and adult education, were subject to a 5 percent automatic, across-the-board cut in Fiscal Year 2013.

These cuts continue to take effect as the president and the secretary of education keep talking "a good game" about the virtues of early childhood education, making children college and career ready, and closing the achievement gap, yet do nothing to prevent these initiatives from being destroyed.

More enlightened awareness of what is required in training and preparing school leaders and less simplistic rhetoric would go a long way toward getting education policy out of the dark and on the path of improving how schools are run, teachers are mentored and children are given the opportunities to learn, goals to which we all aspire. ■

CHEATING: HOW TEST SCORE BONUSES RUIN EDUCATION FOR EVERYONE

continued from page 1

"Our test scores go up, our principals are asked why—they're chastised and punished. Our test scores go down, our principals are asked why—and chastised and punished. There's a disconnection, a lack of communication."

—Jimmy Gittings
president of the Public School
Administrators and Supervisors
Association (PSASA), Local 25

of the politically mandated overuse and misuse of high-stakes exams."

While many of these cases unfortunately are founded in truth, the heightened focus on test scores leaves many innocent educators with marred reputations and blame for standardized test scores, whether they are too low or too high.

In June 2011, Dr. Andrés Alonso, Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) CEO, publicly accused two AFSA members, Marcy Isaac and Dr. Angela Faltz, of cheating to improve their students' scores in the BCPS testing program during the 2008–2009 school year. AFSA and Jimmy Gittings, president of the Public School Administrators and Supervisors Association (PSASA), Local 25, stood behind both women throughout the course of the allegations, calling the investigations flawed.

Despite the findings that Alonso's accusations were unfounded, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners chose to ignore the hearing officers' recommendation for reinstatement. Dr. Faltz since has been reinstated and will return to work in September 2013. For Isaac, Gittings says, "We are still going to fight for her and will probably take the case to the state board of education."

Alonso has placed a total of 16 Baltimore principals under investigation for cheating allegations, and has taken further actions to place four of the principals back into teaching positions. These principals have been publicly shamed, despite the fact that "No cheating has been proven up to this point," says Gittings. "Our test scores go up, our principals are asked why—they're chastised and punished. Our test scores go down, our principals are asked why—and chastised and punished. There's a disconnection, a lack of communication."

Meanwhile, Alonso accepted \$29,000 in annual bonuses as a reward for the raised test scores during his tenure as Superintendent at BPCS, including the scores he claims were falsified in 2008 and 2009.

In an April interview with *The Baltimore Sun*, Gittings said, "Dr. Alonso was the only one who saw financial gains when test scores increased in his first two years. Now he's trying to prove that cheating took place in his first two years. So he should give back the money he received for those scores. That would be the ethical thing to do."

On May 6, Alonso stated his plans to step down as CEO of BCPS on June 30. Alonso will be replaced by Tisha Edwards, who Gittings says "has the integrity and forthrightness to discuss concerns" and "is willing to work with all of the unions."

Using standardized tests as a basis for doling out rewards does nothing more than debilitate the potential capacity of our classrooms. When we turn the very root of our problem into a potential opportunity for monetary gain, we add insult to injury, paving the way to an ineffective system that leaves our educators panicked and our students unfulfilled.

As of June 22, 2012, AFSA has endorsed the National Resolution on High-Stakes Testing. Read the full resolution at <http://timeoutfromtesting.org/nationalresolution/>. ■



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UPCOMING EVENTS

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|----------------|--|
| July 11–13 | NAESP National Conference, Baltimore |
| July 24–25 | AFL-CIO Executive Council Meeting
AFL-CIO Headquarters, Washington, D.C. |
| July 29–Aug. 2 | California School Employees Association Annual Convention
Paris Hotel, Las Vegas |
| Aug. 8–10 | AFL-CIO Workers' Voice State Legislative Conference
The Westin Peachtree Plaza, Atlanta |
| Sept. 8–11 | AFL-CIO Quadrennial Convention, Los Angeles |

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