

# THE Leader

  
American Federation of  
School Administrators  
AFSA, AFL-CIO

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## **Brown v. Board: 60 Years Later, Still Segregated**

On May 17, Americans marked the 60th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education*, a court case originating in Topeka, Kansas, that desegregated the U.S. public school systems.

The celebration of this remarkable day in history requires us to evaluate the advances of our education systems, but ultimately it reminds us how far we have to go.

Increasing issues with socioeconomic inequality have not been abolished and continue to barricade our nation from achieving *Brown v. Board* justice. Lack of integration occurs in U.S. schools in more subtle ways than designating schools for white and black; it's urban and suburban, poor vs. rich.

AFSA President Diann Woodard calls it "segregation with permission." She says, "Schools are inadequately staffed and maintained. All we've done is

changed the definition of what *Brown v. Board of Education* was about. Schools are still unequal, and they're getting worse."

A 2012 study conducted at Howard University found that "suburban and urban sectors of the education system are drastically different due to resources, teacher attrition rate, and lack of parental support. Funds are allocated to the top performing schools, leaving many low performing schools at a plateau to produce mediocrity."

Urban public schools have higher populations of lower-income kids and their more wealthy peers have the option of moving to private schools, charter schools or to better school districts. Segregation in schools today is a matter of how much money a family has rather than the color of the student's skin, as displayed in the Howard report.

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### **AFSA Day of Action on Capitol Hill**

*AFSA's General Executive Board (GEB) met Friday, May 2, in Washington, D.C., for AFSA's Day of Action on Capitol Hill. The emphasis was on critical federal education legislation, particularly the importance of federal support for principal professional development.*

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### **A Year in the Life of a New Union President**

*Sandra Inga has just completed her first year as president of AFSA Local 22, the Hartford Principals' and Supervisors' Association. A semiconductor engineer for more than 15 years, Sandra began her career in education in 1998 as a chemistry teacher with the Hartford Public Schools (HPS).*

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### **Schools Struggle to Implement Common Core**

*The nationwide rollout of Common Core State Standards during the 2013–2014 school year left many schools struggling to keep up with the rushed implementation, according to a report published in February 2014 titled "Common Core in the Districts: An Early Look at Early Implementers," from the Thomas B. Fordham Institute.*

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# A Common Core of Corporate Profit

June is always a jubilant time for school leaders as we preside over promotion ceremonies and high school graduations. We swell with pride over the accomplishments of our students as they leave for summer vacations, first jobs or college.

When the last student crosses the stage, planning begins for the next year—and today that means deciding how the school will implement Common Core State Standards. The idea of common standards is not a bad one. If the intent of the Common Core State Standards is to define specific

at the Brookings Institution, stated the standards were “built on a shaky theory.” He found no correlation between quality standards and higher student achievement. Nonetheless, the Gates Foundation used the common denominator of money to buy support from the left, the right, some unions and even the president.

“Really rich guys can come up with ideas that they think are great,” explains J.T. Greene, head of the department of education reform at the University of Arkansas. “But there is a danger that everyone will tell them

## The corporate appetite for profit and the willingness of policy makers to accommodate it trumped any involvement in the development of Common Core by the school leaders and teachers responsible for implementing it.

age-appropriate skills that students should know and be able to demonstrate in math and language arts, then school leaders are all for it.

But that lofty idea was shattered as I read a recent Washington Post article titled, “How Bill Gates pulled off the swift Common Core revolution.” The article makes clear that, with lightning speed, the power and influence of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation bankrolled and built political support across the country for the standards.

Within two years, Common Core State Standards found their way into most states, even before the full plan was written. Tom Loveless, policy expert

they’re great, even if they’re not.” Most policy makers weren’t even aware of what the Common Core State Standards were supposed to accomplish before they had signed on.

Another issue with the implementation was sheer lack of time. Many schools and teachers were unable to update their curriculum and materials before they were rushed to test students according to the new standards.

According to a report on early implementation published by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, “Two-thirds of Common Core math teachers are using textbooks that were in place prior to



*AFSA President Diann Woodard*

the adoption of the standards and are not sufficiently rigorous.”

Why the rush? Because both the states and the federal government, having disinvested in education, were desperate for money, a desperation that allowed anyone with enough money to be able to promote any plan he or she desired.

Gates required that implementing the new standards meant accommodating his “next best thing”—the next best thing (textbooks, tests and computer-assisted learning aids) all having been researched, developed and manufactured by the very foundation or its friends that had promoted the standards.

The corporate appetite for profit and the willingness of policy makers to accommodate it trumped any involvement in the development of Common Core by the school leaders and teachers responsible for implementing it. Yet it is these standards that would be used to evaluate our professions and that we, absent any training in these new standards, would have to blindly prepare our students to be tested on and judged by.

The Post article was clear in its indictment that money creates the culture in education. And it will be these corporate types, whose reputation as innovators masks their underlying profit motives, who will continue to advance “profit education,” a system that puts money ahead of what is best or educationally sound for creating quality education for all.

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# New Orleans Site of 2015 Triennial Convention

Let the good times roll! Next summer, AFSA will hold its 14th Triennial Constitutional Convention in New Orleans.

Delegates will be meeting at the Loews Hotel on July 23–27, 2015, under the banner “Engaged Leadership for a Brighter Future.” The convention will cover critical topics facing education and the next generation of American children, with workshops planned on

mobilizing for action, using assessments and accountability, understanding the impact of legislation and voting, and how to prepare for retirement.

More information regarding the convention will become available on our website and in future newsletters as the date nears. Delegates will be selected by their local unions via elections next spring, in accordance with the AFSA Constitution. ■



*AFSA's 14th Triennial Constitutional Convention will be held in New Orleans July 23–27, 2015.*

## AFSA Member Wins Newark Mayor's Race

Former Central High School Principal Ras Baraka was elected as the new mayor of Newark, New Jersey, on May 13. Baraka is an active member of the City Association of Supervisors and Administrators (CASA), AFSA Local 20. He took office on June 30.

Baraka is also the son of renowned poets Anna and Amiri Baraka and is an accomplished poet himself. His latest poetry anthology, *Black Girls Learn Love Hard*, is dedicated to his late sister, Shani Baraka.

Baraka most recently served on the Newark Municipal Council. He also established Newark's Committee on

Violence and is a founding member and served as chairman of the 1st National Hip-Hop Political Convention.

“I am very pleased Ras Baraka will take the reins of Newark, New Jersey,” says AFSA President Diann Woodard. “Mr. Baraka has been on the ground level of public education and truly believes in a strong public school system. Ras is also a dedicated public servant and truly understands the needs of his community. We are proud to have such a strong, positive force of change in Newark.”

AFSA's General Executive Board had endorsed Baraka at its April meeting. ■



# AFSA Day of Action on Capitol Hill

AFSA's General Executive Board (GEB) met Friday, May 2, in Washington, D.C., for AFSA's Day of Action on Capitol Hill. The emphasis was on critical federal education legislation, particularly the importance of federal support for principal professional development.

The day began with conversations with Jeremy Ayers, education policy adviser for the House Education & the Workforce Committee; Sarah Bolton, senior budget and policy adviser for the Senate Budget Committee; and Jennifer Castagna, staff member for the Senate Appropriations Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies subcommittee.

The GEB met with congressional representatives from key states

conveying AFSA's support for revising the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title II, Part A funding for professional development. Right now, according to research conducted by the U.S. Department of Education, only 4 percent of these funds are used for principal development. AFSA, along with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), requests at least 10

percent of these funds be set aside for principal professional development.

The School Leadership Program was another professional development initiative backed by AFSA GEB members.

AFSA supports the proposed nearly \$9.3 million increase in FY15 appropriations for the School Leadership Program to ensure teacher quality and student achievement in schools. The additional funds, for a total of \$35 million, will assist principals and assistant principals to obtain training and professional development. With increased administrator responsibility in implementing college- and career-ready standards, new teacher evaluation systems, accountability requirements and transitioning to digital learning and online assessments, this increase is necessary to ensure adequate training for school leaders. ■



AFSA GEB

*AFSA Secretary Wendi Caporicci and AFSA Executive Vice President Jim Dierke outside the office of Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) during the AFSA Day of Action in May.*

# Building School Leader Coalitions

AFSA long has advocated for increased professional development opportunities for school leaders. Given the enormous impact principals have in their schools, and what is well known through research about the impact they have on student achievement, it is imperative school leaders receive increased support and high-quality professional development.

Recently, AFSA partnered with the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) to ensure

to meet the increased demands placed on them as the operational and instructional leaders of their schools.

In April, AFSA, NAESP and NASSP sent a joint letter to the Senate Appropriations Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies subcommittee requesting the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Fiscal Year 2015 appropriations bill "include language that requires local education agencies receiving Title II, Part A funds from ESEA to allocate no less than 10 percent

**"As the demands placed on principals and the roles and responsibilities they must fulfill continue to expand, it is critical the federal government invests in the growth and development of school leaders."**

—Diann Woodard, AFSA President

Congress provides increased support and professional development for school leaders.

One of the primary federal programs for professional development funding for principals and assistant principals is Title II, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). However, the Department of Education recently found that local districts only use an average of 4 percent of their allowable Title II, Part A dollars for principal professional development. This falls far short of what principals need

of the total funds available for professional development for pre-k, elementary, middle level and high school principals to improve instructional leadership."

The groups also met with Senate and House members' staff to advocate for increased professional development funding for principals and other school leaders. AFSA sincerely thanks all of the AFSA locals that signed on in support of the letter, and we will continue advocating for professional development opportunities and support for school leaders.


## ***School Leadership Funding Needed***

Another critical program for principals is the School Leadership Program, which is the only federal initiative that directly addresses the difficulty in attracting and retaining high-quality school leaders to serve in high-need districts. AFSA again partnered with NAESP and NASSP to work to ensure this critical program receives an increase in funding for FY 15. Our organizations worked with staff members of Rep. Susan Davis (D-Calif.), who authored a "Dear Colleague" letter urging the House Appropriations Committee to allocate no less than \$35 million for the School Leadership Program in the FY15 appropriations bill.

AFSA thanks the following 13 House members for signing on to the letter: John Conyers Jr. (D-Mich.), Joe Courtney (D-Conn.), Susan Davis (D-Calif.), Rush Holt (D-N.J.), Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Texas), Henry C. "Hank" Johnson Jr. (D-Ga.), Ben Ray Lujan (D-N.M.), Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.), Donald Payne Jr. (D-N.J.), Chellie Pingree (D-Maine), Jared Polis (D-Colo.), Charles B. Rangel (D-N.Y.) and Juan Vargas (D-Calif.).

"As the demands placed on principals and the roles and responsibilities they must fulfill continue to expand, it is critical the federal government invests in the growth and development of school leaders," says AFSA President Diann Woodard. "School reforms, such as the implementation of college and career-ready standards, new teacher evaluation systems, school improvement models and various accountability models, will not be successful unless school leaders are supported in carrying them out."

AFSA will continue advocating on behalf of all school leaders and urge Congress to provide increased professional development funding and support to our nation's principals, assistant principals and school leaders. ■



# New Charter School Bill Shows Misleading Approach to Education Reform

A charter schools bill passed by the House of Representatives in April threatens to undermine traditional public schools. H.R. 10, “The Success and Opportunity Through Quality Charter Schools Act,” would give even more

federal money to charter school programs.

“Giving more money to charter schools hinders the pursuit of improving the quality of public schools,” says AFSA President Diann Woodard.

The bill merges two existing programs—the Charter School Program and the Charter School Credit Enhancement Program. It would create more charter schools modeled after those deemed “high achieving” and increase accessibility for all students. This would mean another \$300 million each fiscal year would be allocated toward creating charter schools.

The term “high achieving” varies from state to state, as each has its own institutions that evaluate schools’ effectiveness. According to *The Washington Post* article “A dozen problems with charter schools,” these institutions are reporting that not only are the charter schools *not* “high achieving,” the evaluations are finding them ineffective.

AFSA continues to be concerned that legislators are embracing education reform at the expense of public schools. Many politicians, including Rep. John Kline (R-Minn.), think charter

schools are “a valuable alternative to failing public schools.” Kline, who serves as the chairman of the House Education & the Workforce Committee, pushed the bipartisan bill along with Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.).

**This is the wrong approach to fixing the education problems the United States is facing.**

This is the wrong approach to fixing the education problems the United States is facing. Legislators are focusing their efforts, and funding, on a failing approach—charter schools are not an effective alternative to public schools. Issues such as accountability and narrow curriculum, as well as fraud and corruption, impede the charter schools’ ability to deliver effective education. A 2009 study from Stanford’s Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) titled “Multiple Choice: Charter School Performance in 16 States” found that “there is a wide variance in the quality of the nation’s several thousand charter schools.” A 2013 update to that study found that,

*A bill in the House of Representatives would merge two existing charter school support programs, but it fails to address the problems facing public education today.*

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# Webinar Highlights Importance of Leadership Teams

while charter schools are improving, stronger accountability standards are needed to ensure high-quality education for students.

Even though charter schools are not the answer to public education, the proposed House bill does address concerns that affect all public and charter schools.

Beyond supporting state efforts to start, the bill would encourage more “special population” families, such as those with English-language learners, at-risk students and students with disabilities, to turn to charter schools to meet their needs, according to a fact sheet about the bill published by Rep. Kline.

One positive note: the bill aims to construct more inclusive charters, especially with regard to children with disabilities and English-language learners.

In the Senate, senators introduced the “Expanding Opportunity Through Charter Schools Act,” sponsored by Sens. Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.), Mark Kirk (R-Ill.), Mary Landrieu (D-La.) and Michael Bennet (D-Colo.). This measure focuses on the same initiatives of expansion, replication, creation and accessibility as H.R. 10. The Senate bill also allocates \$300 million for the 2015 fiscal year and recognizes that similar amounts may be needed for 2016 through 2020. ■

In April, AFSA partnered with the Council of School Supervisors & Administrators (CSA), AFSA Local 1 and CSA’s Executive Leadership Institute (ELI) to host the first of many webinars planned for this year.

The one-hour webinar, presented by ELI, focused on creating high-performance leadership teams.

School leaders are relied upon to provide their schools with smart and effective leadership as well as to promote student success across all areas, yet one leader cannot do it alone. The Executive Leadership Institute’s Sherry Gregory and Michael Schlar presented a lively and informative session addressing the need for effective leadership teams, the steps in building and evaluating existing teams and determining how to increase proficiency for each team. Participants also learned steps to develop plans

to create or update the leadership teams in their schools.

The Executive Leadership Institute is a not-for-profit organization designed to deliver practical, relevant and essential professional development for today’s school leaders. The intent of the various programs is to provide standards-based, results-driven leadership training to help school leaders successfully fulfill their responsibilities as instructional leaders. As an arm of CSA, the Executive Leadership Institute works to develop trainings for administrators, and it is working closely with AFSA at the national level to translate trainings into easily accessible webinars.

AFSA is working continuously to schedule helpful and meaningful webinar trainings for our members. Webinars are archived on the AFSA website at [www.AFSAadmin.org/events/past-webinars](http://www.AFSAadmin.org/events/past-webinars). Members are notified of webinars via email. ■

# Congrats to 2014 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 General Executive Board based on the demonstration of a strong work ethic, a commitment to their education and dedication to their communities.

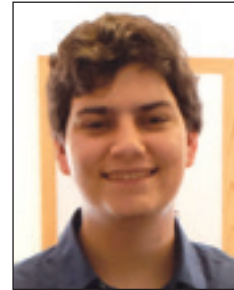


**Dylan Marie Burns**

*AFSA member: Diane Sheehan-Burns, Local 97*

Dylan is an honors student from Manchester High School in Manchester, Connecticut. During her high school years Dylan demonstrated an impressive academic, athletic and leadership record. Her achievements include leading the school's varsity soccer team as captain, serving on the school's Activity Planning Board and being named the Central Connecticut Conference All-Conference Player.

Dylan plans to attend Manhattan College and play soccer for the Lady Jaspers in the fall.



**Brian LaPlaca**

*AFSA member: Steven LaPlaca, Local 1*

Brian grew up in White Plains, New York, where he attended White Plains High School. He plans to attend Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations in the fall. His career interests are finance, business management and law.

Brian is a Boy Scout and recently attained the rank of Eagle Scout with the successful completion of his collaborative project with the city of White Plains and the nonprofit organization "Soles for Souls." He collected more than 4,000 pairs of shoes that were distributed nationwide to those in need. In addition to his volunteering efforts, Brian also plays the trumpet and served as the White Plains High School's Symphonic Band vice president and section leader. He also has a junior black belt in taekwondo.

## UNION PLUS ALSO RECENTLY AWARDED \$150,000 SCHOLARSHIPS TO 116 STUDENTS REPRESENTING 39 UNIONS, INCLUDING ONE WINNER REPRESENTING AFSA.

Zachary Sawaged of Holmdel, New Jersey, son of AFSA Local 20 member George Sawaged, has been awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.

Zachary says unions have had a large impact on his value of education, service and hard work. "My entire life could be different if it were not for the unions that my parents are a part of," he says. Zach has worked hard to follow his parents' example, holding two jobs in high school while still excelling academically. For the next stage in his education, Zach will study biology, with the goal of becoming a physician.





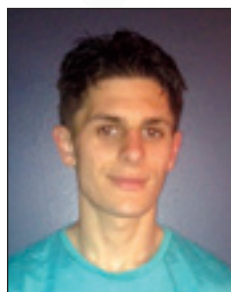
**Laura Bustamante**

*AFSA member: María Luz Agudelo,  
Local 3*

Laura grew up in San Francisco, an experience she says “influenced [her] interest in multicultural and inter-sectional work.” She volunteers as a bilingual tenants’ rights counselor at the Board of Supervisors in San Francisco’s City Hall to facilitate access of information and aid to underserved communities.

In the fall, she will attend Yale University to pursue interests in history, languages and public health. She believes “understanding diverse backgrounds and narratives is essential in the process of creating solutions to contemporary social issues.”

After college, she plans to become a human rights activist or immigration lawyer with a side interest in making jigsaw puzzles.



**Arthur Natalino**

*AFSA member: Dina Natalino,  
Local 18*

Arthur Natalino is a graduate of Notre Dame High School in West Haven, Connecticut. While maintaining a high GPA for all four years of high school and graduating with high honors, he also volunteered with St. Jude’s Research Hospital and aided his father in running the family’s video production business. He also completed internships with local record labels and helped produce boxing documentaries for the family business.

Arthur plans to attend St. John’s University in Queens, New York, as a finance major.



**Christine Puglisi**

*AFSA member: Judith Puglisi,  
Local 18*

Christine Puglisi is the class of 2014 valedictorian at Metropolitan Business Academy in New Haven, Connecticut. While at Metropolitan, she focused her studies by taking specialized courses in allied health and science and digital media and technology. Through these courses she was able to build skills that allowed her to learn video editing, animating and computer programming—skills that helped her create many of her proudest accomplishments, including a documentary about student-centered educational reform. Her short film, “Back Off Bully,” was a finalist at the Connecticut Student Film Festival and was partnered with a phone program that allows students to report bullying in schools anonymously.

Christine plans to attend the University of Connecticut as a biomedical engineering major; she hopes to double major in digital media and design.

**“These exceptional students have demonstrated the qualities and talent of future leaders of our nation,” President Diann Woodard said. “We are excited to support them on their paths to success.”**

# Collaborative Webinar Focuses on Protecting Student Privacy

Today, schools are responsible for keeping track of more personal information and data than ever before.

"It is critical that all stakeholders across the school spectrum keep student privacy protected," says Diann Woodard, president of AFSA.

AFSA, the U.S. Department of Education and Common Sense Media hosted a webinar in May to discuss the potential outcomes of student data collection. Student privacy is a top priority for AFSA; the "Protecting Student Privacy" webinar was a significant part of the union's efforts to keep students safe.

"Technology is everywhere in education today and it comes in many forms," noted webinar presenter Michael Hawes, statistical privacy adviser for the U.S. Department of Education. "More services have moved online, meaning more types of data are being collected."

One type of data being collected now is metadata. Metadata are pieces of information that provide meaning and context to other data being collected, such as activity date and time, number of attempts on a question or activity, or how long the mouse hovered over an answer before a choice was made. Metadata that have been stripped of all direct and indirect identifiers are not protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA); thus, this data can be used however the collecting agency sees fit.

The U.S. Department of Education is working to update FERPA laws to tighten regulations on student privacy and minimize protection exceptions. Sens. Edward Markey (D-Mass.) and Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) have introduced a discussion draft of a FERPA update titled the "Protecting Student Privacy Act of 2014," which intends to update the safeguards in place for student data.

Joni Lupovitz, vice president of policy for Common Sense Media, sees the positive impact of new data consumption techniques. "Through mobile apps, cloud storage and other technologies, more and more amounts of sensitive information are being computed. This has vast potential to increase efficiency and engage parents," she says.

Cecilia T. Proscia, assistant principal of data services at Susan E. Wagner High School in Staten Island, New York, told the attendees: "We need to be cautious of our actions at all times. We as



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supervisors and administrators know we are the first line of defense in protecting our students' data." Proscia is also a member of the Council of Supervisors & Administrators, AFSA Local 1, in New York City.

As online services grow and technology advances, protecting sensitive student information becomes harder, which is why AFSA is working diligently to ensure students' privacy is protected.

Watch AFSA's *Protecting Student Privacy* webinar: <http://AFSAadmin.org/events/past-webinars/protecting-student-privacy/> ■

**"We need to be cautious of our actions at all times. We as supervisors and administrators know we are the first line of defense in protecting our students' data."**

—Cecilia T. Proscia  
Susan E. Wagner High School Assistant Principal

# FERPA Update Proposal Floated by Pair of Senators

Forty years after the passage of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), much has changed in the world of education, including the use of technology in the classroom and throughout the school system. The thoughtful integration of technology into the school and classroom can enhance and personalize learning for students, facilitate school administration, and improve communication between school officials and parents. At the same time, new uses of technology and third-party vendors raise important questions around student data privacy.

Created in 1974, FERPA was designed to protect the privacy of student educational records. Generally speaking, the law provides parents (and students age 18 and older) with the right to access their child's or their educational records and requires that schools obtain written permission to release information from those education records (with certain exceptions). The act has been congressionally amended nine times over the past 40 years and the U.S. Department of Education most recently updated its regulations in 2008 and 2011.

FERPA allows schools to disclose information from education records to school officials if the school determines those officials have "legitimate educational interests" in the information. In 2008, the department expanded the "school official's exception" beyond school personnel to include contractors, consultants, volunteers and other outside parties that perform functions that otherwise would be done in house or by the school itself. This category could include third parties, such as those that perform data management functions for schools or provide online education services and content.

The regulations still require that persons with access to student information have a legitimate educational interest in that information. Additionally, they require that the third-party provider be under the direct control of the school in terms of how they use and maintain the records and only use the records for the purpose for which they were shared. Despite these safeguards, there are concerns that there still are gaps in the law and in the protection of student data in this new digital age.

"As principals, assistant principals and leaders in their schools, there is perhaps nothing more important to AFSA members than providing their students with a safe and secure learning environment," said AFSA President Diann Woodard during a student privacy webinar. "But in today's world, we know that the meaning of keeping students truly safe has evolved."

Administrators are responsible at the school level for implementing school technology and data use initiatives while ensuring students' privacy rights are protected. However, the evolution of new technology has made it increasingly difficult to do so. This year, Google admitted to scanning student emails within Apps for Education. Due to a strong backlash to this announcement and a lawsuit, Google later announced it would stop scanning student emails for any potential advertisement purposes in the Apps for Education suite of applications. Additionally, strong concerns over student data privacy led to the end of InBloom, a third-party data-management company that was designed to help states and districts store student data and utilize the information to improve and customize student learning.

To address the advances in education technology and student data privacy concerns brought to light by such events as the demise of InBloom, Sens. Edward Markey (D-Mass.) and Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) circulated draft legislation titled the "Protecting Student Privacy Act of 2014" on May 14, 2014. While this proposal has yet to be officially introduced and considered in committee, the proposed measure places restrictions on private companies with access to student information in order to give parents more control over their children's records, according to Markey's press release.

Specifically, the bill would place security safeguards on student data held by private companies and provide parents with the right to access and correct their child's records held by private companies. It would minimize the amount of information that could be transferred from a school to a private company, as well as limit the amount of time it could hold that information. It also would make those companies that hold student records more transparent. Finally, it would prohibit the use of student records for advertising or marketing purposes. Overall, the draft legislation would help FERPA accommodate recent technological advances so schools could protect student information more thoroughly.

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan argued in February that schools should not have to choose between privacy and progress, stating "we can and we must harness the extraordinary potential of technology to empower teachers, students and families—without faltering in our duty to protect them." Woodard agrees, emphasizing that student privacy is of the utmost importance.

"It is absolutely critical that policy makers...and all stakeholders across the education spectrum fully understand the implication surrounding each student's personal information and that we all do our part to make sure that it is protected," said Woodard. ■



# Principals Take It to the Streets

By Ernest A. Logan

If you walked past PS 234 in Tribeca or PS 267 on the Upper East Side, or 35 other Manhattan or Brooklyn schools on a couple of different mornings in early April, you would have seen throngs of students and grownups carrying signs and chanting.

If you didn't know what I had learned from a few CSA members beforehand, you might have thought parents and kids were ticked off about some bureaucratic New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) decision and they were giving the department a piece of their mind. The demonstrations actually had nothing to do with the NYC DOE—and the protest leaders with the megaphones were school principals.

I confess to a surge of pride in these school leaders—37 strong—who took to the street on their own initiative to show their solidarity with kids who are being tested from here to kingdom come. The purpose of the demonstrations was to protest the latest New York State English Language Arts (ELA) test and the state's gag order

that stopped educators from explaining why they were so exasperated. The tests didn't reflect what kids had learned, but were being used for teacher and principal evaluations and to determine admission to some middle and high schools.

## Confusing Tests

The problems with the three-day, grades three through eight ELA tests were summarized by PS 321 Principal Liz Phillips in a New York Times op-ed: "In general terms, the tests were confusing, developmentally inappropriate and not well aligned with the Common Core standards. The questions were focused on small details in the passages, rather than on overall comprehension, and many were ambiguous."

Like most of the protesting principals, Liz is an enthusiastic advocate of the Common Core. Last year, many like-minded principals had let the state Education Department and Pearson, the assessment giant that has cornered the market on nationwide testing, know

exactly what they found educationally inappropriate about the test and how it worked against the Common Core. They'd expected their professional feedback to result in a somewhat better test, but the test got worse.

The salt in the wound here is that principals, assistant principals and teachers can't prove their point by going public with the test questions. Any educator involved with the test had to sign Appendix H of the Scoring Leader Handbook, agreeing "that [he or she] will not use or discuss the content of secure test materials, including test questions and answers, in any classroom or other activities." To discuss questions before or after the test had been administered would result in "disciplinary actions in accordance with Sections 3020 and 3020-a of Education Law." In other words, they could be fired.

Some testing cheerleaders tried to say the protests had to do with covering educators who didn't want to be evaluated. One look at the schools involved in the protest reveals they are among



the most highly rated, popular schools around. The schools' educators hold teaching and learning as their sacred mission. They're certainly not part of the anti-testing crowd.

### **Asserting Our First Amendment Rights**

It's easy to jump to the conclusion that the ban on transparency has to do with Pearson. It makes sense to look with suspicion on this behemoth that thrives despite years of notorious snafus, including scoring errors on Florida's FCAT, Minnesota's online science test, 4,000 SAT writing tests and, recently, on New York City's gifted and talented test.

Yet, I was inclined to believe New York State Education Department spokesperson Tom Dunn when he told *The New York Times'* Jim Dwyer, "Pearson did not do it. It's our policy that does not allow teachers to talk about test questions." He says the state is trying to preserve the test for reuse in later years and to discourage schools from using it as test prep. That noble

**"In general terms, the tests were confusing, developmentally inappropriate and not well aligned with the Common Core standards. The questions were focused on small details in the passages, rather than on overall comprehension, and many were ambiguous."**

—Liz Phillips, PS 321 Principal

sentiment against "drill and kill" would be refreshing if it weren't so ironic.

What a gag order on educators does, intentionally or not, is protect companies like Pearson from exposure for blatant errors and plain old stupid questions. Principal Mark Federman of East Side Community High School told Jim Dwyer, "We're having a conversation about a document that is under lock and key." That kind of prohibition on dialogue can't help children and it could be a violation of educators' First Amendment rights. CSA is doing legal

research to determine whether that's the case.

Congratulations to these 37 principals for knowing when to raise their voices as a group. Principals don't do that often and, when they do, they can't be ignored. "It's increasingly obvious to me that people need some leadership," PS 234 Principal Lisa Ripperger told Chalkbeat. "And they're looking to school leaders to voice that."

They will keep it up as long as necessary—and they will be heard. ■

## **Council of School Officers, AFSA Local 4, Ratifies New Contract**

On Friday, May 30, 2014, the Council of School Officers (CSO), AFSA Local 4 in Washington, D.C., overwhelmingly approved a tentative contract signed by both CSO and DC Public Schools (DCPS); the pact then was sent to the D.C. City Council for approval.

"I'm very excited about this contract," says CSO President Aona Jefferson. "Many of our members have not had a raise in seven years. We hope the D.C. City Council will approve this contract very soon." It was still under consideration as of early July.

The CSO was able to secure annual wage increases of 12 percent for most members for four years. This contract will be effective through Sept. 30,

2017. CSO also achieved salary parity for related service providers (RSPs), so their pay will be in line with the salary of other DCPS related service providers. In addition, CSO secured additional time off for members during the Thanksgiving break, and more flexibility to ensure members can use the vacation time they have earned.

Equally important, language in the contract provides school leaders with

a say in the security coverage at their buildings. A principal task force will be formed to determine security changes.

In other economic matters, DCPS has agreed to provide \$50,000 annually over the life of the contract to be used by CSO members to pay membership dues in respective national organizations, while all CSO members who receive an end-of-year rating of "highly effective" will receive bonuses. Bonus amounts vary based on position. Members of the CSO negotiations team were Rahman Branch, Barbara Childs, Delisa Green, Aona Jefferson, Mark Murphy, Esq., Azalia Speight and Richard Trogisch. ■

# A Year in the Life of a New Union President

*Sandra Inga has just completed her first year as president of AFSA Local 22, the Hartford Principals' and Supervisors' Association. A semiconductor engineer for more than 15 years, Sandra began her career in education in 1998 as a chemistry teacher with the Hartford Public Schools (HPS). Currently, Sandra is employed by HPS in the Office of Curriculum and Instruction as the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) director; she is responsible for designing and implementing pre-K–12 science, math and technology curricula. Sandra is a passionate educator and has taught chemistry and mathematics in Nigeria. She enjoys tutoring students and engaging students in STEM-related content/careers, and is viewed as an outstanding educator, a dedicated mentor, and one who believes in the strength and importance of public education.*

I was told, "Don't do it...you'll be sorry...don't do it!" Like much of the time, I ignored the naysayers...and DID it! I wish that I could say that it was smooth sailing. I cannot. I wish I could say that everyone was on my side. I cannot. I wish that I could say that all of my colleagues were rooting for me to win the election. I cannot.

From even before the election for president of our union, I was off and running. Sometimes I glided, while at other times, I stumbled and almost fell. Through it all, however, were friends, confidants and people that I did not even know who knew me. They were all there cheering me on and pushing me forward and, sometimes, holding me up.

Although union business was "old hat" for many on my Executive Board, there were also a few "preemies" who were as new to this as I was. Fortunately, what each member brought to the table helped to strengthen the group and form a cohesive team. How lucky was I and how fortunate for our HPSA membership!

So, I may have gotten off to a rocky start with an interesting election that included Labor Board complaints, numerous grievances and grievance hearings, DCF complaints, phone calls during the week and on weekends, arbitrations that seemed to go on forever (and all of this within the first few

**"I was told, 'Don't do it...you'll be sorry...don't do it!' Like much of the time, I ignored the naysayers... and DID it! I wish that I could say that it was smooth sailing. I cannot. I wish I could say that everyone was on my side. I cannot. I wish that I could say that all of my colleagues were rooting for me to win the election. I cannot."**

—Sandra Inga, AFSA Local 22 President



months). What I can say is that this has been one heck of a year: Interesting. Informative. Exhilarating. Exhausting. And at times—downright baffling!

Through it all, the joy comes when a member is helped—whether it's via a grievance, sitting and listening or just meeting to resolve a dispute. I have learned the importance of sometimes just listening, without giving my opinion. Sometimes people just need to talk and be heard. For administrators, who are constantly being pushed to do something, say something, be somewhere... sometimes it's just good to talk and have someone listen in a nonevaluative way.

So, they warned me not to "do it," but I am so glad that I did. During this past year, I have had the opportunity

to meet and work with some amazing administrators around the country and in the Caribbean as well. I have had the opportunity to work with our national office [at] AFSA and learn more about [the] AFL-CIO, which I had heard of, but was not that familiar with what it had to do with me. So like the HPSA's Executive Board, [which] spends countless hours working (even during evenings and on weekends) in support of our members, so, too, do unions across the country and at the national level.

So, to all the naysayers, I say: I did it and would do it again in a heartbeat... at least for another two years. ■



# ASCD Snapshots Provide Look at ‘Whole Child,’ Promote Child Welfare

What does it take to educate all children to face the working world? ASCD, a global community dedicated to excellence in learning, teaching and leading, released a new compilation of data in May that highlights how well each state—and the nation as a whole—is meeting important tenets of ASCD’s Whole Child Initiative.

These “Whole Child Snapshots” evaluate the ability of a state to make sure children are healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged. Together, these five tenets provide a fuller picture of child well-being extending beyond standardized test scores. The snapshots pull data from organizations tracking one tenet of ASCD’s initiative and compile the data into one report. Data sources include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Center for Education Statistics, the Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health, the U.S. Department of Commerce, the American School Counselor Association, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center.

ASCD (formerly the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development) also provides suggestions for communities to make targeted and innovative improvements

to support the whole child and help students prepare for successful adult lives.

Educators could use this information to have a better sense of the challenges presented to children in their states as well as on a national level. Many of the challenges presented in ASCD’s report are exacerbated for children living in poverty and with little access to quality public education. Armed with the data to support what many educators already know, AFSA can push for programming and funding for a more comprehensive approach to education.

“As educators, it’s important to remember what students face outside of the classroom,” says AFSA President Diann Woodard. “We work to educate the whole child to be ready to join the workforce or succeed in college after high school. Being able to judge the welfare of children is a huge help in achieving this goal.”

## National data in ASCD’s report includes:

- 23 percent of U.S. children live in poverty;
- 34 percent of 4th graders and 34 percent of 8th graders scored proficient or higher on the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); and
- High school graduation rates are the highest they have been since the 1970s. In 2010, the graduation rate was 75 percent.



*ASCD’s Whole Child Snapshots synthesize data collected by many national organizations to provide a picture of child welfare across the country, including poverty and hunger rates.*

“Adequately preparing students for the future requires a more comprehensive approach to education that recognizes the crucial in-school factors and out-of-school influences that affect teaching and learning,” said ASCD CEO and Executive Director Dr. Gene R. Carter in a release about the Whole Child Snapshots. “We believe that families, educators and communities must be dedicated to raising learners who are healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged, and these snapshots and the accompanying action steps will bring us closer to reaching that goal.”

State-by-state snapshots and the full report can be found at <http://bit.ly/WholeChildSnapshot>. ■



# SCHOOLS STRUGGLE TO IMPLEMENT COMMON CORE

**T**he nationwide rollout of Common Core State Standards during the 2013–2014 school year left many schools struggling to keep up with the rushed implementation, according to a report published in February 2014 titled “Common Core in the Districts: An Early Look at Early Implementers,” from the Thomas B. Fordham Institute.





The Common Core State Standards were developed in 2009 by state experts, standards experts and teachers from around the country as a result of the vast inconsistencies within the American school system and the growing gap between international and American students. Developers tried to create a common standard of what students from kindergarten through 12th grade should know at certain levels in their education in regard to math and English/language arts. At the end of every year, students are tested to determine whether they are proficient in the material covered and are ready to advance to the next grade. However, there is a large gap between the intentions and the reality.

"It's like you're loading up a 747 plane while getting people off a horse and buggy," said Aona Jefferson, the president of the Council of School Officers, AFSA Local 4 in Washington, D.C. "We are always making the mistake of implementing things on a mass scale as opposed to developing it, learning it and then learning how to implement it."

Jefferson also sees an issue with lack of unity between state standards, since implementation largely was left to each state's discretion.

"There seems to be a disconnect, because each state is allowed to write their own Common Core standards," said Jefferson. "There needs to be something that connects them together holistically and nationally."

Although 46 states originally adopted the standards, a strong, bipartisan resistance to the standards has grown since the implementation, according to The New

York Times. Some states such as Massachusetts have delayed Common Core testing for a few years to give schools more time to prepare for the standards. Other states, such as South Carolina and

implementation efforts. They then broke down their research in five categories: communications, leadership, curricular materials, professional development, and assessment and accountability.

**"It's like you're loading up a 747 plane while getting people off a horse and buggy. We are always making the mistake of implementing things on a mass scale as opposed to developing it, learning it and then learning how to implement it."**

—Aona Jefferson, AFSA Local 4 President

Oklahoma, have repealed the standards entirely, while even more states are drafting legislation to follow suit. This backlash seemingly stems from frustration with the poorly executed implementation and the subsequent ineffectiveness of the standards.

The findings in the Fordham report support this idea of ineffectiveness, concluding that "the Common Core are presently undermined by three widespread deficiencies: ill-aligned curricular materials; state and district assessments that adequately measure the standards; and ineffective professional development for teachers and other key players."

The report is based on four promising districts that managed to implement the standards quickly and effectively. The researchers behind the report conducted interviews and gathered information on site at each of the four schools, and they analyzed training materials and local media coverage of

Ultimately, they found that one of the biggest issues with the rollout of the Common Core standards was the rushed implementation. Aligning curricular material and improving professional development for teachers requires an enormous amount of time—time the vast majority of schools did not have.

The result was that students were unprepared for high-stakes testing at the end of the school year. These tests not only determine whether students advance to the next grade, but they also serve as the foundation for teacher and principal evaluation. Even if schools were given more time to align curricular material and train teachers according to the standards, Common Core relies far too heavily on these tests that determine student, teacher and principal success. ■



# SAT Overhaul Coming to Reflect Common Core Learning

In March, the College Board announced changes to the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) to have the test more accurately reflect the Common Core State Standards being implemented in schools across the nation. The new SAT will be rolled out to college-bound students in Spring 2016.

In theory, Common Core State Standards are not a bad idea. "The Common Core's goal of determining age-appropriate skill sets that students should have, and having these standards be uniform across the country, is something administrators can get behind," says AFSA President Diann Woodard.

However, the current iteration of the Common Core State Standards is unproven and is more aligned with standardized test scores than with age-appropriate skills; aligning the SAT to such arguable standards is a step in the wrong direction for education reform. Many states signed on to the Common Core before the standards were written or the goals were defined. The lack of time from when the Common Core was conceived to when it was implemented is a huge stumbling block for teachers and administrators.

Woodard explains that the rush to implement the new curriculum was a result of "the states' and federal government's desperation for money, which allowed wealthy entrepreneurs to take hold of education reform and push any plan they desired. "

As high school students begin to take the new test in 2016, there are many fears that the students will not have had enough time to acclimate to the new curriculum, resulting in lower test scores. These low test scores not only would reflect poorly on the teachers, but also affect students' college application process.

David Coleman, an architect of the Common Core State Standards, accepted the position as president of the College Board in October 2012. In announcing the overhaul in March, Coleman said, "The redesigned SAT will be more focused and useful, more clear and open than ever before."

The new tests will be administered both in print and on computers. The reading portion will ask that students analyze texts of different disciplines, such as literature, history, science and social studies, in a manner similar to how they would be experienced in a classroom that has implemented the Common Core curriculum.

There will be less breadth in the math skills tested, but skills will be covered in greater depth. Topics covered will include data analysis, problem solving and analysis. While announcing the overhaul, Coleman said these are "topics that evidence shows most contribute to student readiness for college and career training."

The last SAT modification came in 2005, with the addition of an essay portion that expanded the possible points from 1600 to 2400. The redesigned SAT will decrease the possible number of points back to 1600. ■

**However, the current iteration of the Common Core State Standards is unproven and is more aligned with standardized test scores than with age-appropriate skills; aligning the SAT to such arguable standards is a step in the wrong direction for education reform.**



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## BROWN V. BOARD: 60 YEARS LATER, STILL SEGREGATED

*continued from page 1*

In March, the U.S. Department of Education released its annual performance report, which showed the two largest problems facing public schools to be improving performance at suffering schools and attracting high-quality teachers to those schools.

In a Huffington Post blog article, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan wrote, “I reject the notion that we can’t reduce or eliminate the opportunity gaps that we see today...There are big things we can do, and there are big things we are doing now at the federal level.”

President Obama requested an investment of \$300 million in his FY 2015 budget for a Race to the Top—Equity and Opportunity fund, available for states to improve school climate and safety, expand learning time, and to provide mental, physical and social/emotional support. However, mismatches in Race to the Top ideology and practice have led to delays and counterproductive implementation of key components of the plan. One of the largest outcomes of Race to



the Top is the Common Core State Standards, a widely criticized plan to standardize learning outcomes for all 50 states. While many educators see the potential benefit in producing a set of common standards, the accelerated rollout of the Common Core in all but a handful of states runs the risk of not providing adequate time for piloting and revision.

AFSA fully supports efforts to allocate funds toward the betterment of our nation’s schools; however, when creating reform, attainable goals and timelines must be established with room for change and input from our educators. Only then will we truly provide our public schools with the support and tools they need to achieve the intent of *Brown v. Board of Education*. ■

## A COMMON CORE OF CORPORATE PROFIT

*continued from page 2*

Ironically, when advocates of this system of “profit education” talk about the growing poverty that exists in schools and the need to be able to provide for the well-being of the total child, poverty is obfuscated by an insistent claim that it is an excuse, not a cause of poor performance.

The facts say otherwise. Overall, 20 percent of students in the United States live in poverty. Based on 2009 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results, U.S. students in schools with a poverty level of less than 10 percent performed best in the world in math, reading and science. However, as the poverty rate increased, the results showed, student

achievement decreased, and students in schools with poverty rates greater than 50 percent ranked in the bottom of all students internationally.

The fact that Gates can manipulate such a vast group of policy makers, politicians, education groups, researchers and the federal government into changing policies and laws in order to gain acceptance of unproven Common Core standards leads you to wonder if this influence isn’t being used to ensure public education fails.

The more urgent question that needs to be asked is, can every child have access to a quality education regardless of zip code? Or will we continue to develop

schemes that profit self-interested corporations by promoting policies designed to sell products in the absence of empirical evidence they will really help all children to learn?

I don’t know if we will really know the answer, but I’m reminded of a friend who used to say, “There’s money in poor people.” When I first heard it, I didn’t quite understand what she meant. But as the number of profit-driven schemes proliferate—always promoted in the name of helping guarantee that every child receives a quality education—her meaning is getting clearer all the time. ■



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| July 31–Aug. 1 | <b>AFSA Arbitration Training, Buffalo, New York</b>                          |
| Aug. 4–7       | <b>California School Employees Association Annual Convention, Sacramento</b> |
| Sept. 14–17    | <b>Missouri AFL-CIO 27th Biennial Convention, St. Louis</b>                  |
| Oct. 1–2       | <b>Illinois AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention, Rosemont, Illinois</b>        |
| Oct. 17–18     | <b>AFSA GEB Meeting, Washington, D.C.</b>                                    |
| Nov. 7         | <b>AFL-CIO Executive Council Meeting, Washington, D.C.</b>                   |

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