

# THE Leader

  
American Federation of  
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A NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

## DeVOS GAINS CONFIRMATION

### Time to Organize: Woodard Concerned Over Exclusion of Principals from DeVos Meeting

AFSA President Diann Woodard has expressed great concern over the exclusion of principals and public educators from Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos' first official meeting with President Trump, a gathering heavily weighted with advocates for privatizing the nation's public schools. She strongly urged that the secretary convene a meeting with the major organizations representing school leaders.

Despite the fact that 80 percent of the nation's children attend public schools, the overwhelming majority of the 10 people invited to participate in the meeting are involved in private, charter, parochial or home schooling, while only one public school teacher was invited.

"DeVos' decision to dominate the meeting with privatization advocates largely to the exclusion of educators currently serving the needs of the vast majority of the nation's schoolchildren strongly suggests that DeVos is already pursuing an agenda devoted to increasing support for charters and private schools, as she did in our home state of Michigan, an approach that was shamefully devoid of accountability despite resulting in disastrous school performance at considerable cost to taxpayers," said Woodard.



Betsy DeVos

Woodard said the makeup of the meeting with Trump made it abundantly clear that DeVos' profit-driven motives for funding charter schools with taxpayers' money or voucher systems is bound to increase the number of schools organized on the basis of religion, ethnicity and income, all of which would undermine the democratizing role of public education.

"The effect of her crusade for largely unregulated, for-profit charter schools in Michigan, where we both live, has already proved disastrous," Woodard said.

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#### New Evaluation System for New York City Teachers, Principals

New York City Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña and the heads of the city's principals and teachers unions have agreed on a new evaluation plan that kicks off in the 2016–2017 school year.

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#### St. Louis Public Schools Significantly Reduce Disruptive Discipline

Five pilot schools in the St. Louis Public Schools district have reported extensive reductions in suspensions, detentions and office referrals after implementing Kickboard, a new school culture system.

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#### Elementary Schools Axing Homework to Give Younger Students a Break

Students love to hear the words "no homework" at the end of the school day. It's music to their ears. This past year a handful of elementary schools introduced a no-homework pilot program to give their youngest students a break from the after-school work, an approach that has left educators, parents and even experts divided on the issue.

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# Challenging the DeVos Privatization Scheme is Now on Us

By Diann Woodard

Unlike many school leaders across the country, those of us from Michigan know a great deal about Betsy DeVos, the newly confirmed secretary of education.

We know her as a zealous advocate for charter schools and for using federal funds to finance school vouchers. In fact, Mrs. DeVos lobbied to pass Michigan's first charter school bill that has allowed public funds to be used to finance for-profit schools for more than 20 years.

A recent investigation by the Detroit Free Press found that for-profit management companies that are not even required to file financial disclosures run two-thirds of the state's charter schools.

An analysis of Michigan test scores in the most recent "Nation's Report Card" by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) found that Michigan's charter schools score even worse than their traditional public school counterparts. Worst of all, the scores revealed that lower-income students were segregated into poorer-performing schools under the DeVos-led charter scheme.

Even the state's former education superintendent, who favors charters, said "in a number of cases, people are making a boatload of money and the kids aren't getting educated."

So, based on her record in Michigan, and Donald Trump's commitment to

a market-based educational system, there's little question about what Betsy DeVos will do as secretary of education. It will be charters and vouchers—all day, every day.

The real question is what have we learned about challenging such shameful privatization efforts, and what will we do to challenge them?

Will we sit on our hands and watch the public school system destroyed for profit? Or will we rise up as more than a million citizens did during her confirmation hearing by calling on elected officials at every level of government to prevent the funds designated for principal training in the Every Student Succeeds Act from being savaged to finance privatization?

Who do we think will prevent this if we do not? Because it hasn't mattered who has led public education. Neither Arne Duncan nor John King were our strongest supporters. Neither dismissed competition or an entrepreneurial view of education in favor of boosting public education. Each took the mindset that public education has failed and that competition is some sort of magic bullet.

These leaders simply took the bandage off in inches rather than the way it will be ripped off by Betsy DeVos. So, at the end of the day, what is essential for the survival of public education is what we as school leaders want and how we intend to achieve it.



*AFSA President Diann Woodard*

On numerous occasions, AFSA has encouraged locals to lead their communities in exerting the pressures necessary to bring about change, because educating school communities and the organizations governing schools is the real answer. We can't just close ourselves up in our schools and think that the plague of "reformists" simply will pass away.

Nor can we ride the wave of the teachers' unions and avoid taking a stance. The fight to make our voices heard must be waged by us. As educators we must not fail to educate everyone around us in addition to the children. In our roles as school leaders, we should take every opportunity to educate people on the importance of public education and what it means to preserve a democratic society. To do this, we must stand shoulder to shoulder with parents and community organizations.

AFSA locals—each and every one of you—are being asked to make sure you have a school person attached to every local community organization surrounding your school. We need to actively involve ourselves in the local school councils and PTAs. Wherever possible, schools should open up and become hubs of activity for the community.

That is our challenge—especially now that Betsy DeVos has been confirmed. ■

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# New Evaluation System for New York City Teachers, Principals

New York City Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña and the heads of the city's principals and teachers unions have agreed on a new evaluation plan that kicks off in the 2016–2017 school year.



The updated rating system still is based largely on classroom observations, tests created by educators and evaluations of students' work, rather than on state test scores. The system will cover about 1,700 principals and more than 70,000 teachers, and will be used in decisions to grant tenure and impose discipline or fire teachers and principals.

In years past, the city's rating system has been heavily criticized for failing to produce accurate measurements on teacher and principal job performance. This time around, Fariña said, "the city got it right."

"We are pleased that we have been able to work collaboratively with the Department of Education, within the constraints of the law, to come to terms on a plan that is focused on school leader development," said Ernest Logan, president of the Council of School Supervisors & Administrators (CSA), AFSA Local 1. "The goal must be continuous improvement of our practice, and we feel that with proper implementation this can be another

step in that direction. We look forward with optimism as we remain focused on educating our city's 1.1 million students."

According to Politico, the plan introduces two new ways for schools to evaluate student work beyond testing, including two new categories for evaluation that are based on student work on long-term projects and student growth over time.

Schools now will be able to choose from four total options to assess student performance, including Measures of Student Learning, Measures of Teacher Practice or Measures of Leadership Practice. The new evaluation plan also eliminates the former percentage-based system that schools used to decide on ratings.

While some educators still question the updated system, union leaders are backing it and agree the city is ready for these changes. ■





## Spotlight Cast on Out-of-Pocket Spending by Those in High-Poverty Schools

An overwhelming majority of teachers (97 percent) and principals (98 percent) surveyed agree that equity in education should be a national priority, according to a new poll conducted by Scholastic Inc.

A total of 3,694 teachers (including 76 school librarians) and 1,027 principals (including 146 vice principals) completed the survey.

In the past year, the teachers who participated in the survey spent \$530 of their own money on items for their classroom or student use, with teachers in high-poverty schools spending nearly 40 percent more than other teachers. "Teachers across school poverty levels are spending their own money on a wide variety of items for their students

and classrooms," according to the report. Principals in high-poverty schools spend about twice as much of their own money than principals in low-poverty schools, and teachers are more likely to purchase food and snacks for students, as well as cleaning supplies.

A great deal of the money goes toward providing students with food and snacks, clothing, and supplies like notebooks and binders, as well as tissues, hand sanitizer and other sundries.

The report reveals that, on average, principals spent \$683 of their own money in the past year on items for school, classroom and student use.

Despite the challenges, 99 percent of teachers and principals involved in the report agree their career is rewarding and the challenges are worth it. ■

***Principals in high-poverty schools spend about twice as much of their own money than principals in low-poverty schools.***

# St. Louis Public Schools Significantly Reduce Disruptive Discipline

Five pilot schools in the St. Louis Public Schools district have reported extensive reductions in suspensions, detentions and office referrals after implementing Kickboard, a new school culture system. After seeing the tremendous improvements in disruptive behavior and an increase in positive behavior, the district is expanding Kickboard to 25 schools.

Farragut Elementary, Lyon Academy at Blow Elementary, Carver Elementary, Sigel Elementary and Patrick Henry Downtown Academy were the Kickboard test schools. The system helped educators and administrators collect behavior data, therefore allowing them to address issues related to that data, conduct responsive interventions and create a positive learning environment.

"We all know that when children are acting out, there is an underlying cause. Kickboard helps us track those behaviors," said Patricia Cox, principal of Farragut Elementary and member of Administrators Association of the St. Louis Public Schools, AFSA Local 44. "Teachers are required to input student behavior data every day into the system. Then we come to the table as a team at our daily morning meetings and discuss students' behaviors. We then bring in resources such as a social worker, counselor, trauma coach or the parent to have a bigger conversation about what's going on with individual students."

Throughout the 2015–2016 school year, the five pilot schools saw major changes. "At Carver Elementary, the number of office

referrals dropped from 250 per week to only 35 per week—an 86 percent decrease. Farragut Elementary recorded an 84 percent decline in recess detentions and a 64 percent drop in suspensions. Lyon Academy saw a 79 percent decrease in referrals to the school's reflection room. At Patrick Henry Downtown Academy, the number of suspensions fell from 48 in 2015 to only seven in 2016," said Kickboard in a statement.

"Instead of looking only at suspension rates and attendance, we're now looking at data such as the ratio of positive to negative behaviors in the classroom or in a school," said David Hardy, deputy superintendent of academics for St. Louis Public Schools. "Having that data available helps us align our thinking around the culture and the behaviors we want to see in our classrooms. It allows us to look at each child holistically, so we can provide targeted support to meet the needs of our students, teachers, leaders and schools."

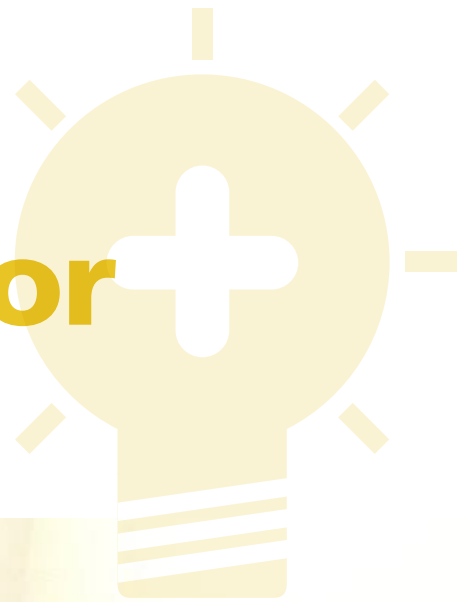
The Kickboard system's positive behavior management feature proved beneficial to the pilot school, Farragut Elementary. Cox described how her students were kept motivated by using a points reward system where they would earn scholar dollars for positive behaviors. Kickboard allows educators to easily keep track of behavior points for each student.

"Kickboard has helped us find that our students who were in transition by nature had some concerns that needed to be addressed to be successful. We are now able to better understand these behaviors and put the right resources in place. Kickboard has had a positive impact on our students' behaviors and students internalizing what those behaviors demonstrate, and in helping us to show that we value them," said Cox. ■



# The Power of the Administrator

by Lizzie Sider



## Who I Am

You may be wondering why you are reading an article written by an 18-year-old who has yet to go to college or make a monthly payment on any major asset. I still have a lot of life to experience. However, I am already years into a professional music and acting career, I am the spokesperson for multiple organizations such as GWEN (Global Women's Empowerment Network) and PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center, and I am a passionate advocate for bully prevention.

After years of enduring bullying in my early school years, the words of my dad, "Nobody has the power to ruin your day," made me ultimately realize that the true power to overcome one's own struggles comes from within oneself. Looking back now, it was a life lesson that I was lucky to learn early on, and I have made it my mission to share that with others through my "Nobody Has The Power To Ruin Your Day" tour. In the last few years, I have personally visited more than 350 elementary and middle schools nationwide, performing my original bully prevention assembly that combines my personal story of being bullied with positivity, encouragement and music.

I recently released a free, interactive, on-screen adaptation of my live assembly, and as of January 2017, the video is currently being used in 3,100 schools representing about 1.8 million children worldwide.



*Lizzie Sider with a student she met during one of her school visits.*

Photo courtesy of Lizzie Sider

## *"Nobody Has The Power To Ruin Your Day"*



Lizzie Sider (center) engages students in a musical performance during her Bully Prevention Assembly. Photo courtesy of Lizzie Sider



## The Importance of a Positive School Culture

I have visited schools in well-to-do neighborhoods and low-income neighborhoods, with students and administrators of all backgrounds, races, religions, ethnicities and social norms, in many diverse corners of our country. One of the fundamental truths I have learned is that kids are kids, and once they are given the opportunity to do good and see that it's "the cool thing to do," they jump right on board. However, if a school environment is clouded with negativity and a lack of positive leadership, the whole school community suffers. Perhaps the most important thing that I have observed through my experiences is that the school administrators are the ones who set the tone for the school culture.

## It All Starts With You

As school administrators, you are in a uniquely powerful position. You have the ability to make ripples in your school, positive or negative, and to influence those around you, positively

or negatively. Here are three ways I have seen administrators take advantage of their position, for the benefit of the whole school:

- 1. Be the example for everyone in your school.** Your students and fellow administrators look up to you, so set a good example through the way you conduct yourself, your demeanor toward others and the way you talk about your work. If you are invested and purposeful, everyone else will be, too.
- 2. Establish mutual respect.** Mutual respect is the key to opening all doors for communication and progress among teachers, students and parents. If another feels they are being talked down to, the potential to approach a conversation or any matter openly and respectfully is immediately shut down.
- 3. Make everyone feel a part of your team.** Acknowledge work well done and get to know those around you, because they're your teammates. Everyone will work best together when they all feel part of

the team. This includes other administrators, teachers, students, parents and support staff alike.

## Be the Change You Want to See

Your work is so important, and it's not to be underestimated. As administrators, you set the bar for everyone in your school community with regard to how to act, how to speak, how to regard others and how to lead. Help everyone become the best of themselves. Be the change you want to see in your corner of the world, and inspire others to do the same. ■

*AFSA will hold a bullying prevention webinar featuring Lizzie Sider on March 21 at 2 p.m. EDT. Register at [AFSAadmin.org/bully-prevention-webinar/](http://AFSAadmin.org/bully-prevention-webinar/)*



# Social Media and Grieving Children: Helpful or Harmful?

When a child has experienced the death of a family member or close friend, can social media be a good thing? Or is it more likely to cause distress and harm?

Social media is a fact of student life today. The vast majority of teens spend time on social media sites, and many younger students do as well.

“The discussion is not whether grieving students should be using social media, or whether it is appropriate,” explains David Schonfeld, M.D., director of the National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement. “Rather, it is how best to adapt to its use in this context, and in what ways it can be used optimally.”

## Comfortable Space, Unique Opportunities

Adults are sometimes uncomfortable with the use of social media, especially when dealing with sensitive topics. For most children and adolescents, however, social media is a familiar and comfortable way to communicate.

Formats such as Facebook, Twitter, texting, Instagram, instant messaging and more offer unique and even powerful ways children can gain support and check in with peers. In fact, many children dealing with bereavement choose these avenues as their preferred methods of communication.

### Why?

**It’s familiar.** Young people communicate in these ways about all kinds of life events, including some that are quite serious.

**It offers control.** Grieving students can decide when to read and respond to a text, for example. They can monitor their reactions and only need to share what they choose to. They can opt to be more open and vulnerable with close friends, and a bit more distant with others. They can respond when they feel composed and are ready to do so.

### Others may share more openly.

The sense of privacy that users often feel with social media can allow classmates to share personal and sensitive responses they might not share as openly in person.

## Challenges and Cautions

It also is important for grieving children to have face-to-face time with supportive peers and adults. Social media interactions will be most helpful when they are balanced with real-world contacts. Relying only on social media can increase the sense of social isolation grieving children may feel.

People may say hurtful or inappropriate things through social media. This might include peers or strangers who are able to see a post related to a grieving student’s loss. Grieving students also may come across disturbing news items online about their own loss or other deaths.

Education professionals are among the more important face-to-face contacts

for grieving students. When talking with students, consider checking in about the kind of support they’re getting (or not getting) in social media. Teachers might suggest parents of grieving students consider monitoring their children’s social media feeds, or ask their children about the social media content on their sites.

Learn more about the benefits and pitfalls of social media and ways to offer support to students at the website of the Coalition to Support Grieving Students ([www.grievingstudents.org](http://www.grievingstudents.org)). AFSA is a member of the coalition. ■

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



# Elementary Schools Axing Homework to Give Younger Students a Break

Students love to hear the words “no homework” at the end of the school day. It’s music to their ears. This past year a handful of elementary schools introduced a no-homework pilot program to give their youngest students a break from the after-school work, an approach that has left educators, parents and even experts divided on the issue.

Some parents and educators are questioning the no-homework trend. Research shows there is a positive correlation between homework and student achievement; teachers say students need a break. Parents are conflicted about what to believe.

In 2006, Duke University psychology professor Harris Cooper released a comprehensive meta-analysis on homework at all grade levels. Cooper found evidence of a positive correlation between homework and student achievement, meaning students who did homework performed better in school. He later recommended further study of such potential effects of homework.

The analysis revealed “the correlation was stronger for older students—in seventh through 12th grade—than for those in younger grades, for whom there was a weak relationship between homework and performance.”

While his study noted that homework improves study habits, positive attitudes toward school and self-discipline, Cooper also showed that homework may cause physical and emotional fatigue, fuel negative attitudes about learning and limit leisure time for children.

Last August, TIME magazine reported that a no-homework policy introduced by Brandy Young, a second-grade teacher in Texas, earned praise from parents across the country. Young told parents she would not formally assign any homework this school year, asking students instead to eat dinner with their families, play outside and go to bed early.

A Massachusetts elementary school also announced a no-homework policy for the school year, lengthening the school day by two hours to provide more in-class instruction.

These are only two examples of putting an end to homework, sparking a conversation about its purpose.

The National PTA and the National Education Association recommend 10 to 15 minutes of homework per night depending on grade level. First-grade students might have 10 minutes of homework each night; second-grade students would have 20 minutes of homework; third-grade students would have 30 minutes of homework, and so on.

Schools that are extending the instructional day in lieu of homework are hoping to see improvements in classroom performance. For now it’s up to the teacher and school administrators to determine which method would work best in their school. ■







# Report Finds Head Start Program Quality Varies Widely by State

A new report released by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) at Rutgers Graduate School of Education revealed that access to funding per child, teacher education, quality of teaching and duration of services under the Head Start program all vary widely by state, resulting in the neglect of many children living in poverty.

NIEER focused on the 2006–2007 and the 2014–2015 program years of Head Start, a federally funded national program to promote the school readiness and healthy development of at-risk children.

Alabama, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota and West Virginia are the leading states for enrolling 3- and 4-year-olds living in poverty. Nevada, North Carolina and Oregon have some of the lowest enrollment figures for both ages.

“To be effective,” the report says, “Head Start must be funded sufficiently

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*“To be effective, Head Start must be funded sufficiently so that it can provide high-quality learning experiences to more children for longer periods of time per day and per year.”*

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so that it can provide high-quality learning experiences to more children for longer periods of time per day and per year.”

Children are eligible to participate in Head Start if they come from families living below the federal poverty level (FPL), are homeless, are receiving public assistance, or are in foster care.

Head Start programs currently serve less than 40 percent of the number of 3- and 4-year-olds in poverty and less than 5 percent of the number in poverty younger than age 3. However, not all Head Start children fall below the federal poverty level.

Programs serve less than 20 percent of low-income 3- and 4-year-olds and less than 3 percent of low-income children younger than age 3.

The report suggests that Head Start does not have the resources to serve all children in poverty, let alone all low-income children who could benefit from the program.

In order to fully fund Head Start programs, the report estimates that more than \$20 billion is needed. NIEER Director Steven Barnett says, “Action should be taken to figure out how to improve quality and reach of Head Start programs in all states.” ■



# Principals at ED: Principals' Voices Are Part of the Conversation

School leaders from around the nation had the opportunity to make their voices heard at the most recent gathering of principals at the U.S. Department of Education.

The Education Department holds these annual sessions, commonly referred to as Principals at ED, to seek input and feedback from people who are impacted by the department's decisions, and to help principals gain a better understanding about changes in educational policy.

The day's theme was "Principal Readiness and Support." Edward Cosentino, principal of Clemens Crossing Elementary School in Columbia, Maryland, and president of Howard County Administrators Association (HCAA), AFSA Local 36, was among the 14 principals participating in the Dec. 20 gathering in Washington, D.C.

The group learned about the recent policy reforms related to the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, now known as the Every Student Succeeds Act. The principals spent the morning learning about Title IIA of ESSA, especially the provision that gives states the option to reserve up to 3 percent of Title II funds for state-level principal and school leader support. Both appointed staff and career staff



*Former Secretary of Education John King (left) discussing leadership thoughts and ideas with Edward Cosentino (right).*

from the Education Department shared their experiences during the journey of reauthorization through the law's implementation.

Through work sessions during the day, principals also shared their experiences in their schools and districts, which provided an opportunity for collaboration,

problem solving and coordinating feedback to the Education Department. The group participated in a work session in which the principals identified four problems of practice, including distributed leadership, teacher shortages, and teacher training and retention, and how

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***"It was refreshing to learn that the Education Department is actively seeking ways to engage principals, teachers, paraeducators, counselors and other educators so they can learn how the policies they develop and implement impact their jobs and ultimately the lives of our students."***

*—Edward Cosentino*

## PRINCIPALS AT ED: PRINCIPALS' VOICES ARE PART OF THE CONVERSATION

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the Title IIA funds could be used to help resolve those problems.

Principals at ED came to an end with Secretary of Education John King engaging the principals for more than an hour by listening to their ideas and asking probing questions.

"This was my first time at the United States Education Department," Cosentino said. "I was not sure what to expect...but when I left, I felt transformed and inspired. I gained a new perspective regarding the role of the federal government and how it affects the education profession."

"It was refreshing to learn that the Education Department is actively seeking ways to engage principals, teachers,

paraeducators, counselors and other educators so they can learn how the policies they develop and implement impact their jobs and ultimately the lives of our students," he said. "I applaud the leadership and staff of the Education Department for investing time and energy as they purposefully engage members of the education profession."

Cosentino also noted that his experiences had helped him gain a deeper understanding of policy advocacy, development and implementation, as well as make connections with educational leaders from around the country.

"I encourage all future Education Department administrations to continue this work and listen to all stakeholders,"

***"I...encourage people in the education field to actively seek out these opportunities to express their ideas and opinions."***

*—Edward Cosentino*

he said. "I also encourage people in the education field to actively seek out these opportunities to express their ideas and opinions. My experience made me feel valued as a professional, and I greatly appreciate that." ■

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Photo courtesy of Council of School Supervisors & Administrators

## Luis Eliado Torres

# Determined Principal Earns Innovative Educational Assets for Bronx School

Although PS 55 is located in one of the poorest communities—with one of the highest recorded crime rates in the Bronx—it has an abundance of state-of-the-art education assets, such as classrooms equipped with the latest technology, and full-service clinics.

The school owes its good fortune to its hardworking principal, Luis Eliado Torres, a member of Council of School Supervisors & Administrators, AFSA Local 1, who has been leading PS 55 for 12 years. His ability to fundraise and recruit sponsors successfully has helped improve his community.

"I do what I call 'community matching.' I look at the resources I have in the community and I match them with the school's needs," says Torres. "You have to hustle in a good way for your children."

The school's \$1 million playground, SMART Tables, SMART Boards and wireless microphones in every classroom were paid for by Bronx Borough

President Ruben Diaz Jr. in collaboration with Success Academy Charter Schools, which has a school in the building.

The group Green Bronx Machine supplied the hydroponics garden where students grow vegetables. The iMacs in the school's computer room were provided by the New York City Department of Education. The Montefiore Hospital staffs the clinic with a doctor, dentist, nurse, community health coordinator and psychologist.

"Community leaders, and businesses and organizations, are willing to give you things if you're willing to talk and you're willing to involve them," says Torres.

Others have noticed his willingness to go the extra mile for students. Torres was the ASCD (formerly the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development) Outstanding Young Educator Award winner in 2011, and was named a 2013 New York Daily News Hometown Hero.

Although he was offered a position at another school, Torres declined. "For me, this is a calling, an opportunity to have an impact in this world. I'm a strong believer that your purpose in this world is to make it better than when you came here." ■

*If you would like to nominate an AFSA member for our next newsletter, please email [nspina@AFSAadmin.org](mailto:nspina@AFSAadmin.org).*

# TIME TO ORGANIZE: DeVOS MEETING EXCLUDES PRINCIPALS

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## Demanding a Voice for School Leaders

Woodard stated what was most troubling was the inclusion of only one school leader in the presidential meeting, which she said strongly implied the likelihood that DeVos may cut back on funding for principals' training authorized last year by Congress in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

"These training resources are crucial to the improved performance of public schools for the children they serve," Woodard said, "the central charge of your office and the centerpiece of your professed desire to serve as secretary of education. Therefore, as the president of the nation's largest union of school administrators, I call on you to refrain from cutting any of these training funds whatsoever in the president's upcoming budget."

Woodard strongly urged DeVos to meet with the leaders of organizations representing school representatives to "learn of our ideas for improving school performance, including representatives of my union, the American Federation of School Administrators, the National

Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Elementary School Principals."

"No action would do more to dispel the troubling implication that her first action as secretary of the Department of Education has been...allying herself and the president solely with advocates of privatizing the nation's public schools," Woodard said.

Woodard said, "our members can't afford to be silenced—and won't be. Our representatives in Washington will continue to demand that we be given a voice, and that the resources for principal training passed last year as part of the new ESSA law not be used to finance vouchers and privatization schemes."

Woodard urges AFSA members to contact their members of Congress and demand that public funds not be squandered on privatization schemes that yield, at best, mixed results and little or no accountability.

Although AFSA opposed her nomination, the union will seek to build a positive relationship with DeVos. ■

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*"Our members can't afford to be silenced.... Our representatives in Washington will continue to demand that we be given a voice, and that the resources for principal training...not be used to finance vouchers and privatization schemes."*

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# We Want to Hear from You!

Tell us what your school and community have been up to. Send us your news, photos or events to be featured in our newsletter. Get involved and share your organization's accomplishments!

Email submissions to [nspina@AFSAadmin.org](mailto:nspina@AFSAadmin.org).



## UPCOMING EVENTS 2017

**March 21**

**The Power of the Administrator:  
Bully Prevention Webinar**

*[AFSAadmin.org/bully-prevention-webinar/](http://AFSAadmin.org/bully-prevention-webinar/)*

**March 26–29**

**NAESP National Leaders  
Conference**

*Washington, D.C.*

**April 7–8**

**AFSA General Executive  
Board Meeting**

*Washington, D.C.*

**July 9–11**

**NASSP National Principals  
Conference**

*Philadelphia*



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Washington, D.C., Area • July 26–29, 2018



  
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