

April 15, 2024

Dear AFT Affiliate Leader:

Thank you for being a leader of our union.

We are hoping you and your delegates are attending AFT's 88th convention in Houston this July. The convention represents the highest decision-making and agenda-setting authority of our union, where we set policy and elect the union's leadership. It is union democracy at work.

Since we last gathered in Boston, we have continued fighting to improve the lives of our members, our families and our communities, organizing for real solutions for a better life and taking on the extremists who want to destroy public education, dismantle our democracy, defund public services, decimate healthcare and demonize the vulnerable—and standing up to the privatizers who are more concerned about profits than people.

We also continue our other work, including helping our members access student debt relief; addressing learning loss, loneliness and literacy for students; expanding our Code Red campaign on nurse staffing; working in partnership with communities, and so much more.

And we understand now more than ever that the power to lift our members and help them gain access to the middle class starts with organizing and collective bargaining: we have helped more than 400 locals bargain contracts that provide family-sustaining wages and safe conditions to do our work. The AFT has officially become the fastest-growing union in the labor movement, with more than 130 wins since our last convention.

At our meeting this past February, the officers and executive council considered the challenges faced by our state and local affiliates and how the national union can best support and advance our work. The executive council has put forth two constitutional proposals:

Our Name

Our union is growing by leaps and bounds across all sectors of the workforce—healthcare, higher education and public services, in addition to preK-12 public education, which you'll hear more about in Houston this July.

Over the years, the AFT has amended our constitution to ensure the governance structure has represented the diversity of our membership. Now, we are asking you to consider one change—to use our initials "AFT" and refer to our sectors of membership—education, healthcare and public services—as well as our current

AFT, AFL-CIO

AFT Teachers
AFT PSRP
AFT Higher Education
AFT Public Employees
AFT Nurses and Health
Professionals
AFT Retirees

555 New Jersey Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
202-879-4400
www.aft.org

Randi Weingarten
PRESIDENT

Fedrick C. Ingram
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Evelyn DeJesus
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

VICE PRESIDENTS

J. Philippe Abraham
Shelvy Y. Abrams
Frederick R. Albert
Victor M. Bonilla Sánchez
Vicky Rae Byrd
Zeph Capo
Larry J. Carter, Jr.
Kathy A. Chavez
Donna M. Chiera
Jaime Ciffone
Melissa Cropper
Amanda Curtis
James C. Davis
Stacy Davis Gates
GlenEva Dunham
Francis J. Flynn
Jeffery M. Freitas
David Gray
Ron Gross
Anthony M. Harmon
David Hecker
Karla Hernandez-Mats
Jan Hochadel
Jerry T. Jordan
Frederick E. Kowal
Terrence Martin, Sr.
Kara McCormick-Lyons
Daniel J. Montgomery
Michael Mulgrew
Dr. Irene Mulvey
Shari Obrenski
Andrew Pallotta
Melinda Person
Donna Phillips, RN
Juan Ramirez
Andrew Spar
Denise Specht
Wayne Spence
Arthur G. Steinberg
Jessica J. Tang
Adam Urbanski
Debbie White, RN
Carl Williams
Sarah Wofford

tagline “a union of professionals.” Technically we are keeping our name, the American Federation of Teachers; but we’ll refer to ourselves as “AFT: Education, Healthcare and Public Services. A union of professionals.” We want all our members to see themselves and know they are seen.

You’ll see variations of this throughout the convention materials, and you will continue to receive guidance on how to use this in logos and other formats.

Per Capita

We know it’s still hard for many of us to make ends meet. Although President Biden is doing all he can to grow the economy, the inflationary pressures post-COVID-19 are real, even though union wages and benefits remain higher and better than most.

In response, the AFT is trying to move forward with as minimal a per capita increase as feasible. We propose no per capita increase in September 2024, and a 25-cent increase in September 2025.

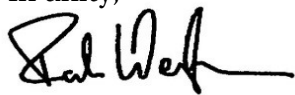
The per capita proposal typically allocates portions of that increase to specific funds, and the September 2025 increase allocates 10 cents of the 25 cents to the Solidarity Fund, which is the cornerstone of our union’s political strength at every level. It also supports our work in the field—from engaging members around key issues, to campaign support, to defeating dangerous ballot measures at the state and local levels. The 10 cents will be split with 7 cents to the national, and 3 cents to the state funds. The remaining 15 cents will be allocated to the general fund where it will, in large part, offset the AFL-CIO per capita increase of 10 cents that took effect in 2023 and 2024. This per capita proposal is very lean, but we are confident if we tighten our belts slightly, we will meet our members’ and our communities’ needs and continue advocating for their aspirations for a better life.

Of course, we will continue to do all the work we do now, using resources for everything from organizing, to supporting our work in professional issues, human rights, collective bargaining and student debt, to paying our staff.

Finally, I want to point out that we also received proposed amendments from one affiliate regarding the addition of the term “age” to the nondiscrimination sections of our constitution. Clearly, this should always have been in our constitution, and the amendment will be considered.

We can’t wait to see you in Houston. Thank you for all you do every day for our members, our communities, this union, and the people we serve.

In unity,



Randi Weingarten
President

Enclosure

PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE AFT CONVENTION

HOUSTON, TEXAS — JULY 22-25, 2024

NOTE: Constitutional amendments must be adopted by two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast. Bylaws are adopted by a majority vote. Underlined words indicate proposed new language. Lines through words indicate proposed deletions.

CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE I

Name (page 1)

This organization shall be known as the American Federation of Teachers, and/or AFT, which is a union of professionals that includes education, healthcare and public services; with divisions known as AFT Teachers, AFT Paraprofessionals and School-Related Personnel, AFT Nurses and Health Professionals, AFT Higher Education, AFT Public Employees, and AFT Retirees.

Submitted by: AFT Executive Council

CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE II

Objects (page 2)

Section 10. To fight all forms of bias due to race, creed, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and social, political or economic status.

Submitted by: AFT-Oregon Retirees

CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE III

Membership (page 4)

Section 11. No discrimination shall ever be shown toward individual members or applicants for membership because of race, creed, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and social, political or economic status. Locals may establish procedures for admission of new members except that no discrimination shall ever be shown toward individual members or applicants for membership because of race, creed, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and social, political or economic status.

Submitted by: AFT-Oregon Retirees

CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE IV

Charters (page 5)

Section 10. No charter of the American Federation of Teachers that defines or recognizes jurisdiction on a basis of race, creed, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and social, political or economic status or permits the practice of such jurisdiction shall be recognized as valid, and the practice of any local in limiting its membership on account of race, creed, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and social, political or economic status shall render its charter void.

Submitted by: AFT-Oregon Retirees

BYLAWS, ARTICLE VIII

Per Capita, Budget and Audits (pages 21-23)

Section 1. (a) ~~Effective September 1, 2021, each local shall pay a per capita tax of \$19.98 per month, of which \$1.20 shall be dedicated and to assist locals in crisis.~~ Effective September 1, 2023, each local shall pay a per capita tax of \$20.18 per month of which \$1.25 shall be dedicated to a special AFT fund to engage members and to assist locals in crisis. Effective September 1, 2025, each local shall pay a per capita tax of \$20.43, of which \$1.25 shall be dedicated to a special AFT fund to engage members and to assist locals in crisis. The national office shall pay back to the office of each state federation for each member of the state a per capita of 20 cents per month.

Section 7. ~~Effective September 1, 2021, \$2.75, and Effective September 1, 2023, \$2.80 and effective September 1, 2025, \$2.90~~ of each member's per capita tax shall be set aside each month in a special fund that will function to assist the AFT and its affiliates in participating in legislative and political activities with significant potential impact on members of the AFT and the institutions where they work. Such assistance shall be collected and utilized in accordance with the provisions of applicable state and federal law. The executive council will adopt guidelines to implement this provision, including the development of criteria and an application for assistance. Where a state affiliate has a fund that is approved by the AFT and similar to the Solidarity Fund, in that it functions to assist the affiliate in participating in legislative and political activities with significant potential impact on the members and the institutions where they work, then the AFT will pay effective ~~September 1, 2021, \$1.04 per member per month to be deposited in such similar state fund.~~ Effective September 1, 2023, the AFT will pay \$1.06 per member per month to be deposited in such similar state fund. Effective September 1, 2025, \$1.09 per member per month to be deposited in such similar state fund.

Submitted by: AFT Executive Council

April 15, 2024

