Three Crises and an Election: The Outlook of AFT Members

Key findings from a nationwide survey among 1,155 AFT members, conducted June 2020
Methodology

- Nationwide survey among members
  - 1,155 U.S. members
- Telephone interviews conducted June 17 to 24, 2020
- Margins of error: ±3.1 percentage points for full sample, larger for divisions and other subsamples.
The Coronavirus Has Impacted Members’ Lives

Impact of the Coronavirus on My/Family's Day-to-Day Life

- Very/fairly major impact: 37%
- Very major: 24%
- Small/no impact: 2%
- None: 76%

The coronavirus has affected me/family in these ways:

- Household member lost job/had hours reduced: 43%
- Household member has medical condition making them high-risk: 34%
- I or someone I know has been infected with the coronavirus: 29%
- Child at home whose school has closed: 27%
- Worry about family member in nursing home/care facility: 14%
Where Are Members Working?

- **All members**: 80% Working from home, 13% Going to job outside home, 7% Other
- **K-12**: 91% Working from home, 4% Going to job outside home, 5% Other
- **Higher Ed**: 88% Working from home, 7% Going to job outside home, 5% Other
- **PSRP**: 67% Working from home, 14% Going to job outside home, 19% Other
- **Public Employee**: 47% Working from home, 44% Going to job outside home, 9% Other
- **Healthcare**: 6% Working from home, 88% Going to job outside home, 6% Other

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Distance Learning Experience

**How well did your school system prepare/support staff for transition to distance learning this spring?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very well</th>
<th>Fairly well</th>
<th>Not well</th>
<th>Just okay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-12</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSRP</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Ed</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**In terms of student learning, how well has distance learning worked vs. traditional in-person teaching?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Worked just as well</th>
<th>Nearly as well</th>
<th>Much less well</th>
<th>Somewhat less well</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-12</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSRP</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Ed</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### How Should Schools Re-open in the Fall?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>K-12</th>
<th>PSRP</th>
<th>Higher Ed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Re-open on normal basis</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hybrid model (in-person and distance)</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue with distance learning</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Educators Strongly Endorse AFT Re-opening Standards

76% of educators would be comfortable returning if these conditions are met.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Essential + very important but not essential</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily deep cleaning and sanitizing of school facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional protections for at-risk staff and students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPE and training for staff and students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health/social/emotional services for students and staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consult w/parents, workers, unions, communities on plans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff/students social distancing in classrooms, hallways, buses, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement blended in-person and distance learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All education: K-12/PSRP/Higher Ed
Why Is Re-opening Schools Important?

*Best Reason for Schools to Re-open at the Beginning of the Traditional School Year*

If schools do not re-open, students will continue to fall behind academically. 45%

Schools provide critical nutrition, counseling, social services, esp. for disadvantaged students. 34%

Can't re-open economy, working parents can’t return to jobs if schools remain closed. 11%
Members Strongly Approve of AFT Initiatives

Strongly approve (9 to 10 on 0-to-10 scale) Somewhat approve (6 to 8)

- Working to increase funding for public schools to meet the costs of addressing the pandemic and helping students overcome lost learning time: 72% (Strongly) 21% (Somewhat)
- Advocated that necessary personal protective equipment be provided to healthcare and other frontline workers: 78% (Strongly) 14% (Somewhat)
- Developed detailed science/health-based plan for safely re-opening schools/public facilities: 73% (Strongly) 19% (Somewhat)
- Purchased personal protective equipment for healthcare members to keep them safe: 70% (Strongly) 18% (Somewhat)
- Working to pass federal aid to states, cities, schools, to support public services, re-open economy: 58% (Strongly) 30% (Somewhat)
- Working for legislation to advance racial justice and police reform: 59% (Strongly) 24% (Somewhat)
- Expanded student debt relief through an online app available to members: 36% (Strongly) 35% (Somewhat)
- Provided a new trauma benefit, free for all members: 33% (Strongly) 34% (Somewhat)
Some Are Concerned about Prospect of Cuts

From what you know, are states expected to cut funding for education and other public services as a result of the coronavirus outbreak and the economic slowdown?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Expected to cut a little/not cut</th>
<th>Expected to cut somewhat</th>
<th>Expected to cut a great deal/somewhat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>21%</td>
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<tr>
<th>Expected to cut a great deal/somewhat</th>
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<td>Healthcare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Employee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retiree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Concern about Impact of 20% Revenue Loss

Experts say that states and localities will see their tax revenues decline by about 20% this year on average. How concerned are you that this could result in each of the following where you work?

- **Loss of services for students** (K-12, PSRP, Higher Ed only)
  - Very concerned: 60%
  - Fairly concerned: 15%
  - Total: 75%

- **Inability to re-open safely**
  - Very concerned: 45%
  - Fairly concerned: 17%
  - Total: 62%

- **Layoffs and furloughs**
  - Very concerned: 47%
  - Fairly concerned: 14%
  - Total: 61%

- **Pension reductions**
  - Very concerned: 38%
  - Fairly concerned: 13%
  - Total: 51%

- **Salary reductions**
  - Very concerned: 37%
  - Fairly concerned: 14%
  - Total: 51%
Support for State Taxes and Federal Aid

*Proposals in many states to raise taxes on the wealthy to increase revenue and avoid large cuts in education, healthcare, and other public services*

- **74%** Favor
  - **49%** Strongly Favor
  - **25%** Oppose
  - **20%** Favored
  - **8%** Opposed

*Congressional proposal for $1 trillion federal aid to states, cities, towns, to replace lost revenue from economic shutdown, maintain public services such as healthcare/education*

- **86%** Favor
  - **58%** Strongly Favor
  - **28%** Oppose
  - **9%** Strongly Oppose
  - **9%** Opposed

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