

# Reclaiming the Promise

## OUR MISSION

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

Randi Weingarten  
PRESIDENT

Loretta Johnson  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Mary Cathryn Ricker  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

**It's time to reclaim the promise of public education**—not as it is today or as it was in the past, but as it can be—to fulfill our collective obligation to help all children succeed.

Reclaiming the promise is about fighting for **neighborhood public schools that are safe, welcoming places for teaching and learning.**

Reclaiming the promise is about ensuring that **teachers and school staff are well-prepared, are supported, have manageable class sizes and have time to collaborate** to meet the needs of every child.

Reclaiming the promise is about making sure our **children have an engaging curriculum** that focuses on teaching and learning, not testing, and includes art, music and the sciences.

Reclaiming the promise is about ensuring that **children and their families have access to wraparound services** to meet their social, emotional and health needs.

The promise is under attack by those who demand and pursue austerity, polarization, privatization and deprofessionalization.

By uniting our voices and joining together around shared values and common goals, we can build a movement—parents, students, teachers, school staff and the broader community—with the power to reclaim the promise.

We will get there by bringing together everyone who believes in the future of public education and focusing on finding solutions rather than winning arguments. Through collaboration, we can create trust, enable risk-taking and foster shared responsibility to ensure that all children have the opportunity to achieve their dreams.

Together, we will put the public back in public education. We will help our public schools become centers of their communities, secure a voice and respect for those closest to the classroom, and fulfill public education's purpose as a propeller of our economy, an anchor of democracy, and a gateway to racial, social and economic justice.

**[aft.org/promise](https://aft.org/promise) | #ReclaimIt**