

SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES SUPPORT STAFF ISSUES COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Bernie Kemp, Broward Teachers Union, Local 1975

Committee Secretary: Tina Solórzano Fletcher, AFT Guild, Local 1931

51. SUPPORTING SAFE WORKPLACES AND SAFE SCHOOLS FOR ALL

Committee recommends concurrence.

- 1 WHEREAS, students, teachers, and school and college support
2 staff have experienced increased stress, uncertainty, financial hardship
3 and emotional turmoil due to the coronavirus pandemic; and
4 WHEREAS, schools are meant to be a safe haven for all who enter,
5 including those who work in them; and
6 WHEREAS, funding and other resources for mental health, trauma,
7 emotional and behavioral supports have not kept pace with the
8 increased need for these resources and supports; and
9 WHEREAS, special education paraprofessionals and teachers are
10 at a significantly increased risk for “student related injuries” and had
11 the highest workers’ compensation claims rate (5 for every 100 full-time
12 employees) for such injuries, compared to all other school personnel;
13 and
14 WHEREAS, American Federation of Teachers affiliate locals have
15 reported an uptick in the number of members being injured on the job,
16 and a corresponding increase in the number of hospitalizations,
17 workers’ compensation claims, and resignations; and
18 WHEREAS, the AFT is committed to making schools and colleges
19 as safe as possible for students and our members:
- 20 **RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers will help**
21 **assist locals in collecting workplace safety and member injury**
22 **data; and**
23 **RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue to assist affiliates in**
24 **developing campaigns to address workplace violence, and school**
25 **and college safety issues; and**
26 **RESOLVED, that the AFT will advocate for the collection of**
27 **national school and college trends on violence, and provide**
28 **resources and supports to locals engaged in issue advocacy**
29 **around violence, workplace assault and injury.**

- Adopted Adopted as Amended Defeated Tabled
 Precluded by _____ Referred to _____

50. LIVING WAGES FOR ALL AFT MEMBERS

Committee recommends concurrence.

1 WHEREAS, all working people deserve a wage that allows them
2 dignity and the basic necessities of life; and
3 WHEREAS, no employer should pay wages so low that their
4 employees must rely on government assistance to meet their basic
5 needs such as food, rent and healthcare; and
6 WHEREAS, the federal poverty wage does not take into
7 consideration costs like child care and healthcare that not only draw
8 from one's income, but also are determining factors in one's ability to
9 work and endure the potential hardships associated with balancing
10 employment and other aspects of everyday life; and
11 WHEREAS, a living wage model is an alternative market-based
12 measure of basic needs that takes into consideration geographic
13 location and specific expenditure data related to a family's likely
14 minimum food, child care, health insurance, housing, transportation
15 and other basic necessities such as clothing, personal care items etc.;
16 and
17 WHEREAS, the living wage model would draw on these cost
18 elements and the relative effect of local, state and federal taxes to
19 determine the minimum employment earning necessary to meet a
20 family's basic needs while also maintaining self-sufficiency; and
21 WHEREAS, a living wage model is a more accurate reflection than
22 the federal poverty wage model of a family's true cost of living in a given
23 location; and
24 WHEREAS, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology has
25 conducted an extensive study on living wages at the county level and
26 created a living wage calculator based on their study; and
27 WHEREAS, the American Federation of Teachers has a
28 responsibility to advocate for workers to earn a wage that allows them
29 to take care of their family and be self-sufficient:

30 **RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers will**
31 **support state legislation or ballot initiatives that raise the**
32 **minimum wage; and**

33 **RESOLVED, that the AFT will provide information on metrics**
34 **available to advocates of a living wage; and**

35 **RESOLVED, that the AFT will offer tools, resources and**
36 **support to any local whose members earn less than a living wage**
37 **and wishes to undertake a campaign to raise wages to a living**
38 **wage standard.**

Adopted Adopted as Amended Defeated Tabled
 Precluded by _____ Referred to _____

52. SCHOOL MEALS FOR ALL

Committee recommends concurrence.

1 WHEREAS, the AFT has long supported universal school meals as
2 a way to address food and nutrition instability, increase access and
3 equality in our education system, and to reduce systemic barriers to
4 school meals; and

5 WHEREAS, hunger creates poor outcomes for students of all ages,
6 including less ability to concentrate, graduate and more likely to have
7 health issues; and

8 WHEREAS, having access to meals at school will support students'
9 academic success; reduce childhood hunger; decrease childhood
10 overweight and obesity; improve child nutrition and wellness; enhance
11 child development and school readiness; and support learning,
12 attendance and behavior; and

13 WHEREAS, in other areas, students and families have accrued
14 hundreds of dollars in school lunch debt because they are unable to
15 afford to buy school meals, demonstrating that too many students fall
16 through the cracks and are not receiving free- and reduced-price
17 school meals; and

18 WHEREAS, prior to COVID-19, about 15 million children in the
19 United States—21 percent of all children—lived in families with
20 incomes below the federal poverty threshold, who struggle to afford
21 basic necessities like food; and United States Department of
22 Agriculture data showed that nearly 12 percent of households were
23 food insecure; and

24 WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic relief included issuing a
25 waiver authority to the USDA, which effectively created universal
26 school feeding for students and families for a limited time; and

27 WHEREAS, for the last few years, students and families have
28 become accustomed to receiving free school meals; and

29 WHEREAS, School Meals for All will help eliminate paperwork,
30 collections on unpaid meals debt, and increase federal
31 reimbursements as well as allow the continuity for students, especially
32 for those with families with unstable incomes:

33 **RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers will**
34 **advocate for and support federal and state legislative actions that**
35 **all students—regardless of income—have unimpeded access to**
36 **school meals; and**

37 **RESOLVED, that the AFT will work with community groups,**
38 **nutrition groups and other education groups to continue our**
39 **advocacy; and**

40 **RESOLVED, that the AFT will create lobbying and advocacy**
41 **tools to help individuals and communities advocate for school**
42 **meals for all.**

- Adopted Adopted as Amended Defeated Tabled
- Precluded by _____ Referred to _____

**49. DESIGNATING AND CELEBRATING NATIONAL
PARAPROFESSIONALS AND SCHOOL-RELATED
PERSONNEL DAYWEEK**

Committee recommends referral to Executive Council.

1 WHEREAS, the American Federation of Teachers represents more
2 than 370,000 paraprofessionals, bus drivers, custodial and
3 maintenance employees, health assistants, clerical employees,
4 secretarial staff, and other school and college support staff (PSRPs) in
5 schools and colleges across the nation; and

6 WHEREAS, members who perform this work may be called many
7 different things, from paraprofessionals and school-related personnel
8 to college support staff, to classified staff, to school-related personnel
9 or any other number of school support staff names; and

10 WHEREAS, the contribution of paraprofessionals and school-
11 related personnel to the school community is integral, significant and
12 deserving of recognition; and

13 WHEREAS, the AFT first demonstrated its commitment to PSRPs
14 and their important contributions to our students and our union in 1930,
15 with the chartering of the Education Secretaries of Chicago; and

16 WHEREAS, paraprofessionals and school-related personnel in
17 many states are members of both the American Federation of
18 Teachers and the National Education Association; and

19 WHEREAS, the National Education Association has declared the
20 third Wednesday of each November their version of a
21 Paraprofessionals and School-Related Personnel Day:

22 **RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers shall**
23 **designate the third Wednesday first week of each November**
24 **October as National Paraprofessionals and School-Related**
25 **Personnel-Day Week; and**

26 **RESOLVED, that the AFT shall uplift the contributions, work,**
27 **stories and voices of PSRP members in honor of National**
28 **Paraprofessionals and School-Related Personnel-Day Week.**

- Adopted Adopted as Amended Defeated Tabled
- Precluded by _____ Referred to _____